

# **Segregation for aggregation?**

The pattern and logic of spatial segregation practices  
of young affluent heads of households  
in the post-war city of Beirut

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## Declaration

' I, Nadia Alaily-Mattar confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.'

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Alaily-Mattar', written in a cursive style.

.....  
06 October 2010

## ABSTRACT

This thesis describes, conceptualizes and explains the segregated spatiality of everyday life of young affluent heads of households in post-war Beirut, Lebanon. It tracks how young affluent heads of households have come to produce the living spaces of their everyday life in a spatially segregated way that rejects the local and is stretched out over the totality of the city. Its main objectives are to *contribute to the literature on spatial segregation by (1) conceptualizing segregation in its residential and non-residential manifestations as actively and passively practiced by a certain profile of affluent individuals and (2) explaining the logic behind this type of segregation from the point of view of affluent individuals that are actively pursuing segregation.*

This research has utilized an ethnographic research approach that started from observing and understanding the motivations of individuals who are actively pursuing segregation. Based mainly on a qualitative research methodology, this research has utilized ethnographic field notes, qualitative interviews and participant observation with young affluent heads of households. The findings of this qualitative research have been supported by questionnaires that were distributed in five elite childcare nurseries in Beirut in which young affluent heads of households were outcropped. A total of 118 questionnaires were collected.

The four core chapters of this thesis discuss the relationship of affluence to the local place around the home, to places of play, to non--places and to places of passage in post war Beirut. They conceptualize the spatiality of affluence in Beirut and propose the concept of the layer as one that captures the pattern of this spatiality and unlocks its logic. This thesis concludes by raising questions related to the changing role of neighbourhoods in Beirut and the changing nature of its urban condition. Indeed, to affluent individuals in Beirut the neighbourhood has become a space with which they avoid getting in contact, while, paradoxically, the city is perceived as a small neighbourly space where everyone knows everyone else.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

BMR	Beirut Metropolitan Area
GC	Gated Communities
GBA	Greater Beirut Area
MOE	Ministry of Environment
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
VSE	Voluntary social exclusion

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

The starting point for this research has been the search for understanding the way affluent individuals have come to appropriate the city of Beirut during the post-war period. In Beirut, following the end of the civil war, gradually the perception accentuated that groups, or maybe communities, of up-scale flat dwellers, gated resorts and mall visitors, SUV drivers, luxury commodities consumers and bar-hoppers etc... that these groups are conspicuously detaching themselves from their localized spatial and social context, and connecting to largely invisible networks while being residentially dispersed throughout the city. But how can we conceptualise this detachment and connectivity? Is it a form of segregation? Is it a form of spatial and social exclusion? Is it practiced at the residential level only? How can we conceptualize the emerging spatiality of this type of detachment and connectivity? Why do affluent individuals seek to detach themselves from their localized contexts and connect to a dispersed network?

Clearly, one must be careful of the limitations of affluence to be an overarching attribute capable of grouping individuals into homogeneous groups or entities. Moreover, the relationship of people to place is quite complex. Several factors impact this relationship such as gender, age, length of residence and in Beirut specifically sectarian affiliation. With these reservations in mind, this research chose to focus on the spatial segregation practices of a selected profile of affluent individuals namely, young affluent heads of households who formed their households during the after-war period.

This analysis of spatial segregation and aggregation practices relies on ethnographic research carried out with young affluent heads of households in Beirut in the period between June 2005 and July 2006 and the two months of July and August of 2007. I lived in Beirut during these periods and conducted participant observation and semi-structured interviews and distributed questionnaires to different groups of affluent individuals. At the beginning my primary questions were focused around the relationship of affluent individuals with their *residential* context. My questions about the spatiality of everyday life emerged as I conducted my participant observation methodology of monitoring the everyday life of eleven affluent heads of households residing in different areas of metropolitan Beirut. This research also draws on the experience of 118 affluent parents of young children residing in the metropolitan region of Beirut. These parents were outcropped from a selection of elite private nurseries operating in municipal Beirut. An extended questionnaire was distributed at these nurseries with the aim of collecting data on the pattern and logic of spatial segregation practices of affluent parents of young children.

The characteristics of affluent individuals diverge from one context to the other, as do the cities in which they reside, and the local institutional context with which they are confronted. Therefore, the findings of this research do not provide a general formula that describes how *the* affluent appropriates *the* city. Nevertheless, some of the trends that this research has identified in the context of the city of Beirut are paralleled in other cities in the world as well. However, it is beyond the scope of this research to argue for the validity of the findings of this research as a theory to be applicable in other contexts as well.

This thesis is divided into ten chapters. Chapter one introduces the thesis by laying down definitions of the major terms used, introducing the research problem and objectives, spelling out the research questions and hypotheses and concluding with the significance of this research. Chapter two describes the methodology of research adopted. Chapter three provides background information on the city of Beirut, a short historical overview of the development of the city and an extended discussion of the development of the city during the post-war period. Chapter four reviews three key concepts namely, the urban, the neighbourhood and affluence. These concepts are the building blocks onto which the thesis is built. The objective of this chapter is to project these concepts onto the specific context of Beirut. Chapter five reviews the relevant literature on spatial segregation. Chapter six conceptualizes the spatiality of affluence in Beirut and proposes the concept of the layer as one that captures this spatiality. The three subsequent chapters- chapters seven to nine- present the main findings of this research. Chapter seven discusses the relationship of affluence to localized context of home in Beirut, chapter eight the relationship of affluence to the places of play and non-places in Beirut, and chapter nine the relationship of affluence to places of passage in Beirut. Chapter ten concludes this thesis by raising questions related to the changing role of neighbourhoods in Beirut and the changing nature of its urban condition.

### 1.1. ***Definitions***

To avoid confusion, it is useful from the onset to provide briefly the working definitions of two potentially vague terms that this research is using, namely segregation and affluence.

The term *segregation* is used to refer to the phenomenon of *spatial-for-social* detachment as it is actively practiced by individuals against others. Henceforth, the term segregation is used with this meaning in mind- a *spatial* detachment practised by individuals as a means to *socially* detach themselves from selective individuals with whom the segregator does not wish

to interact. The literature review chapter further fleshes out how segregation relates to voluntary social exclusion.

I use the term *affluent* rather than rich, high-income or wealthy, as the research is concerned with individuals that, first, command of a level of *surplus* resources (waged income, rent or otherwise) adequate to cover the expenses of practising this lifestyle of detachment and connectivity that I am hypothesizing and, second, a desire for this lifestyle. As such, the term affluent is used as it incorporates both of these conditions, namely, capacity and desire for connectivity and detachment. In addition, the term is used to denote affluence specifically within the Lebanese context. Chapter four further elaborates on the choice of this term.

## 1.2. ***Research problem and objectives***

With the intensification of the process of urbanization and under the uneven economic outcomes of the seemingly global expansion of neo-liberal practices, incomes are polarizing, inequalities are rising and cities are increasingly becoming the sites where affluence and poverty are geographically juxtaposed. However, concurrently, particularly in the context of developing countries, research in the social and spatial sciences continues to be rather focused on the poor and the spaces they live in. The literature is quite abundant in accounts of the slums of cities and the dynamics of poverty and poor neighbourhoods. On the other hand, critical research that addresses the spaces of the affluent and the dynamics of affluence remains relatively scarce.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, existent literature on spatial segregation in cities does not give a satisfying account of the type of segregation that this research argues to be existent in present day Beirut. Indeed, this research rejects the applicability of the rather convenient concept of duality to the context of divisions that exist in present-day Beirut – the formal versus the informal city (Sassen, 2001), walled in versus walled out (Caldeira, 2000). It also rejects the notion that city dwellers increasingly dwell in city fragments (Glasze, 2003) or partitioned city quarters (Marcuse, 2002). In the context of the city of Beirut the applicability of these concepts does not seem valid. All of these concepts are very attractive perhaps because they are neat dramatizations of the conditions that they are concerned with. This research searches for an alternative reading that is less exaggerated and closer to reality while being equally dramatic.

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<sup>1</sup> As Danziger (1996) points out, “Numerous studies have analysed longitudinal data and have documented the negative effects of growing up in a poor family or a poor neighbourhood on children’s life chances... few studies, however, have estimated models which test whether there are effects for children growing up in affluent families and in affluent neighbourhoods (Danziger, 1996: 413).

In deed the fabric of the city of Beirut attests, that socio-economic spatial divisions are not that neat. This might be due to several reasons. First, as a result of the extension of rent control over pre 1992 rent contracts, gentrification is slowed down and there continues to be a mixture of income groups particularly in parts of the city in which private renting was a dominant tenure. Second, the housing market is geographically segmented along lines of confessional association, resulting in the fact that residentially different socio-economic groups are relatively quite mixed in their simultaneous confessional enclaves. Third, as in other Mediterranean cities “vertical differentiation of urban functions as well as social classes is common and single land-use zoning is rare [in Beirut]: a significant portion of urban land serves multiple purposes. Many buildings have commercial, administrative or industrial uses at ground level and residences in their upper storeys” (Leontidou, 1990:13). Last but not least, in the context of slow economic growth and rising public debt, the number of affluent individuals remains rather small making the emergence of self-sustained enclaves to cater for this rather small group, a non-sustainable business.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, my formulation of the research problem is the following. Affluent individuals are residentially rather scattered in the city of Beirut. However, despite of this residential scattering, affluent individuals are socially and spatially *connected* to “largely invisible networks” (Caldeira, 2000). Moreover, affluent individuals are *detached* from their immediate residential and non-residential context. Spatial segregation as practiced by affluent individuals in the post-war city of Beirut is in need of conceptualisation as, first, it is more complex than the “ordered” duality proposed by various theories of spatial segregation that mostly focus on residential segregation, second, it presents a seemingly new<sup>3</sup> type of segregation in the city that is yet unexplored by the literature, and third, the logic driving it is one of connectivity and concentration rather than detachment.

The main objective of this research is to *contribute to the literature on spatial segregation by (1) conceptualising segregation in its residential and non-residential manifestations as*

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<sup>2</sup> Rodgers makes a similar comment on the case of Managua. He argues that “the relatively small size of the urban elites in Managua makes the emergence of self-sustained gated communities a non-viable proposition. These classically are spaces from which residents hardly ever need to leave, as they contain all the social, economic and cultural services that they require, with the businesses involved essentially serving isolated markets. The small size of the urban elites in Managua means that any enclaves would have to be modest in size, and businesses within them would therefore find it difficult to be profitable” (Rodgers, 2004: 120).

<sup>3</sup> It must be noted here that while this research insists on the novelty of this current type of segregation that emerged after the end of the war, the focus of this research is not investigating the divergence of this pattern from patterns of segregation that existed in the past. In other words, this research is not concerned with comparing the situation now with the way it was during or before the war.

*actively and passively<sup>4</sup> practiced by a certain profile of affluent individuals in the post-war city of Beirut and (2) explaining the logic behind this phenomenon of segregation from the point of view of affluent individuals that are actively pursuing segregation.*

### 1.3. **Research questions and hypotheses**

This research addresses the following questions:

*How and to what degree do affluent individuals detach themselves spatially and socially from lesser affluent individuals in a context, such as the post-war city of Beirut, where different income groups are juxtaposed spatially?*

*How can we conceptualise the spatiality of this type of segregation?*

*Why do affluent individuals seek to segregate in the city of Beirut? What is the underlying logic for this segregation? Is this segregation a means to enact voluntary social exclusion, that is, is this segregation a *spatial* detachment from the localized context of which individuals seek to *socially* disengage from? Or is this segregation rather part of a strategy exercised to attain linkage to a “largely invisible [social and spatial] network” (Caldeira, 2000)? In other words, is detachment a self-serving phenomenon or is it rather part of a process that serves to link affluent individuals to other selected individuals that are dispersed throughout the spatial fabric of the city of Beirut? Do affluent individuals segregate as part of a group or is this rather an individual activity? Can we talk of an affluent group(s) or even affluent communities?*

*What are the repercussions of this type of segregation on the *urban* condition of the city of Beirut?*

The main research hypotheses are as follows:

1. **Affluent individuals in the city of Beirut *detach* themselves socially and spatially from the immediate localized contexts of their residences and other functions.**

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<sup>4</sup> In many instances segregation is practiced passively. Such is the case in malls, for example, when the producers of retail space impose segregated environments on shoppers. The degree of segregation that the shopper actively seeks is blurred in this case. When the spaces that are produced are more what developers, architects and financiers think are good investments, one must be cautious to assume that this degree and type of segregation that is provided matches that which people actually want.

2. **Affluent individuals while residentially dispersed in the city of Beirut are socially and spatially *connected* to each other.**
3. **Detachment and connectivity produce a type of segregation that can be conceptualised as a *layer*. Temporarily and permanently detached spaces that are scattered throughout the city of Beirut are connected to each other to produce a *stretched-out living space* of everyday life of affluent individuals.**

#### 1.4. ***Significance***

Empirically, this research is a development of Glasze's "The fragmented *city*, causes and consequences of guarded housing complexes in *Lebanon*"<sup>5</sup>(Glasze, 2003, emphasis added). Glasze's research is an important reference for this research, particularly as it surveys and sets typologies for all guarded housing complexes that have been developed in Lebanon since the early 70's. However, I have identified two main shortcomings of Glasze's study. First, Glasze views these guarded complexes as fortified enclaves that contribute to the fragmentation of the city and signal the end of the open city. This is problematic, because Glasze's study shows that the majority if not all of these complexes have been developed *outside* of the city of Beirut, hence, his research does not explain how residential segregation is practised *inside* the city proper. As such, the first shortcoming is that Glasze argues that intensification of the spread of guarded housing complexes in the *country* of Lebanon is causing the fragmentation of the *city* of Beirut. Indeed, this shortcoming is evident in the title of his study which includes two spatial scales, the city and the country. The second shortcoming is that Glasze's argument of the fragmentation of the city appears invalid, in light of the fact that his research shows that residents of guarded housing complexes in Lebanon particularly since the 90's have more "outward tendencies" (Glasze, 2003: 255). Having identified these shortcomings, this research positions itself in this research niche, namely, investigating segregation as practiced by affluent individuals *within* the city of Beirut. This includes investigating segregation beyond the residential level and looking into gated and guarded exclusionary everyday life activities.

At a theoretical level, this research contributes to the literature on spatial segregation by proposing *the layer* as a concept that explains the way *the rest of the city* is appropriated/lived by individuals that conceive of themselves as belonging to a geographically scattered group. These individuals do not dwell in ghettos, enclaves or citadels (Marcuse, 2002) but

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<sup>5</sup> Translated from the German by the author, original title "Die fragmentierte Stadt, Ursachen und Folgen bewachter Wohnkomplexe im Libanon"

nevertheless voluntarily seek to exclude themselves socially and spatially from the immediate localized context of their activities. This perspective distinguishes itself from other perspectives of socio-spatial segregation that stress the fragmented (Balbo et al, 1995), carceral (Davis, 1990), walled (Caldeira, 2000) or quartered (Marcuse, 2002) tendencies of contemporary segregation patterns.

This research also contributes to the literature on gated communities by suggesting the layer as a developed version of the concept and practice of gated communities (GC's). If GC's are the embodiment of supply-driven residential segregation, the embodiment of gates in search of a community, the layer that this research proposes is the spatial embodiment of a residentially scattered group/community that searches for the gate at the level of the city and all of its activities rather than merely at the local residential level. Therefore, the layer can be conceptualized as a geographically scattered version of residential gated communities/proprietary communities. Rather than appropriating a certain delimited enclave of the city, users of this layer expand their gated activities over the totality of the city, while simultaneously being detached from their immediate context. The layer can also be conceived of as a mode of private urban governance with a multiplicity of actors with complex relationships and fragmented responsibilities.

The concept of the layer as suggested in this research also distinguishes itself from Rodgers (2004) concept of the "dis-embedded layer" and Marcuse's (2002) concept of the layered city. As I show later in Chapter 6, Marcuse (2002) applies the concept onto certain quarters of the city only while I apply it onto the totality of the city. Rodgers (2004) applies the concept on a space that is solely composed of physically and permanently networked places, while the concept of this research captures dynamic and temporary networking strategies. In addition, this research uses the theoretical tools of Atkinson and Flint (2004), namely, objectives, territories and corridors as building blocks that operationalize the concept of the layer.

However, perhaps the most significant contribution of this research is that it shifts the focus for explaining the logic of segregation from the desire of affluent individuals to detach to the search of affluent individuals to connect and concentrate, i.e. aggregate, with other affluent individuals. By shifting this focus this research arrives at an important finding, namely that affluent individuals in Beirut segregate in order to produce a living space of everyday life that is stretched out over the totality of the city rather than revolving around the vicinity of their residences. As a result, **to affluent individuals in Beirut the immediate context of their home, the neighbourhood, has become a space with which they avoid getting in contact with, while simultaneously and paradoxically the city at large is conceived of as a small**



**neighbourly space where everyone knows everyone else!** This research concludes, therefore, that affluent individuals residing in Beirut manipulate their experience of urban life in such a way as to avoid being exposed to diverse groups, by doing so affluent individuals in Beirut miss on a core determinant of the urban condition, namely, exposure.

## Chapter 2. Methodology

In describing, explaining and conceptualizing spatial segregation and aggregation practices of young affluent heads of households, this research has utilized an ethnographic research approach that starts from observing and understanding the motivations of individuals who are actively pursuing segregation and aggregation. Understanding these subjects of analysis allows us to understand and explain the pattern and logic of their living spaces. Based mainly on a qualitative research methodology, this research has utilized ethnographic field notes, qualitative interviews and participant observation with young affluent heads of households. In order to support the findings of my qualitative research I distributed a questionnaire in five elite childcare nurseries in Beirut. The purpose was to “outcrop” (Burton, 2000:315) young affluent heads of households. A total of 118 questionnaires were collected. This chapter lays down the research approach adopted. It lists the methods used and portrays the positionality of the researcher.

### 2.1. *Research approach*

Lebanon does not fit comfortably into analytic categories such as north/south, first/third world, developed/under-developed, core/periphery. As such, analytic concepts developed in the European and North-American contexts should be applied/adopted only with caution. Blind application of concepts might obscure the specificity of the socioeconomic reality of the Lebanese context. For this reason this research has chosen to use case studies, participant observation and ethnographic research methods as core methods in order to allow the emergence of new concepts.

My case studies were focused on young affluent heads of households; and I have used particularly young affluent female heads of households residing in Beirut as the entry point into these households. The interview, participant observation and positionality section further elaborate on the reasons of this choice.

In describing, explaining and conceptualizing spatial segregation and aggregation practices of young affluent heads of households, the living space of these affluent individuals has emerged as the proper object of analysis of this research. By living space I mean the space in which these affluent individuals spend their everyday life. The main variables measured are the degree to which this living space is detached from its immediate localized context, the way this living space is composed of places dispersed throughout the city and beyond and, finally,

the degree to which this living space concentrates affluent individuals. The aim was to understand the nature of this object, the living space, its logic and the way it relates to the rest of the city.

In studying this living space as an object, I started from case studies of young affluent heads of households as subjects that gave me insight on the way they construct and perceive their living spaces and the logic that drives this construction. I started from young affluent heads of households rather than a fixed spatial unit- an administratively delimited area, for example a neighbourhood or a gated community- for two reasons.

First, the spatiality of everyday life of these individuals is not confined to a fixed spatial unit around the home; indeed, I argue that the spatiality of everyday life of these individuals is detached from the localised context of the home. In other words, the expansion of living space beyond the local context of the home means that a fixed spatial unit is no longer a useful scale or tool to study the spatiality of everyday life or the spatial and social relations of everyday life worlds of young affluent heads of households.

Second, utilizing an everyday life perspective as a methodology, automatically yielded a preference of the view of the city as experienced over the view of the city from above. Certeau (1984) makes this important distinction between the view of the city from above and the view of the walker from below- although I do not use the walker as one who actually walks on foot in the city but rather as one who experiences the city from below. Certeau argues that viewing "the city" as a unified whole contrasts with taking on the perspective of the "walker", the flaneur who takes shortcuts or meanders aimlessly in spite of the utilitarian layout of the grid of streets.

Adopting the view from below as a methodology of research, explains the scarcity of maps of the city of Beirut in this thesis and the favouring of storytelling of the unmappable and slippery tactical activity of my subjects of research.

It must be noted here that I consciously use the term tactics to describe the actions of my subjects. This is so because I use Certeau's (1984) distinction between strategy and tactic. To Certeau "strategies" are linked to institutions and structures of power, while "tactics" are utilized by individuals to negotiate environments defined by strategies. Certeau argues that "the city" as a "concept" is created by *strategic* interventions of governments and other institutional bodies who produce maps that describe the city as a unified whole, as it might be experienced by someone looking down from above. By contrast the walker at street level

moves in ways that are *tactical* and not really determined by the plans of organizing bodies. It is within this context that I use the term tactics.

## 2.2. **Methods used:**

Qualitative Methods	<p><b>Semi structured Interviews &amp; participant observation</b>  <i>Subject of Analysis:</i>            Young affluent heads of households  <i>Method of sampling:</i>            Networking/ snowball/ nurseries  <i>Objective:</i>            To sketch “living space” and understand its logic  <i>Time frame:</i>            June 2005- July 2006            August 2007</p>	<p><b>Ethnographic field notes/Observation</b>  <i>Subject of Analysis:</i>            Users of segregated environments  <i>Objective:</i>            To identify mechanisms of segregation  <i>Time frame:</i>            Nov. 2004 –May 2005 (Intermittent visits)            June 2005- July 2006            July – Aug. 2007</p>
Quantitative Methods	<p><b>Standardized interviews</b>  <i>Subject of Analysis:</i>            Young affluent heads of households  <i>Method of sampling:</i>            Outcropping  <i>Objective:</i>            To sketch “living space” and understand its logic  <i>Time frame:</i>            July –August 2007</p>	

**Table 1** Summary of methods used in this research

### 2.2.1. Choice of subjects of research

This research is concerned with affluent individuals. In Chapter 4, I discuss the term affluent and analyze affluence in the context of Beirut. I define affluence as access to surplus income, desire to spend it and desire to display it. I arrive to the conclusion that in the context of Beirut the practice of affluence is related to status-confirmation. Nevertheless, the term “affluent” carries a number of methodological problems<sup>6</sup>. How can the *level* of affluence be

<sup>6</sup> Danziger (1996) states that “one reason for the inattention to the causes and consequences of affluence relates to measurement issues. Researchers adopted a common definition of poverty (the official poverty line) in the late 1960’s. In the most recent decade several measures of the underclass or concentrated poverty have found their way into the research and policy mainstream (Mincy 1994). There has been little discussion however, about how to define or measure affluence and the Census Bureau does not publish an annual time series on affluence as it does for poverty” (Danziger, 1996: 414).

measured? Is it sufficient to use a money-metric measure of affluence? If yes, should this measure be based on a level of surplus income or level of expenditure and display? If it is based on surplus income how can the cut-off point be set above which a person is considered affluent? For example, Massey and Danziger agree on defining affluence as a multiple of the national poverty line, but disagree on what multiple to use. Massey defines the affluent as those persons living in families whose incomes are at least four times the poverty level for a family of four- about \$54,000 in 1990 US Dollars” (Massey, 1996) while Danziger and Gottshalk say it should exceed seven times the poverty line- about \$94,000 in 1990 US Dollars (Danziger, 1996: 414).<sup>7</sup>

Similar to non-money metric measures of poverty that use health and education indicators, a non-money metric measure of affluence could address the income versus expenditure problematic by shifting focus from input to outcome. But what indicators could be used to measure the outcome of affluence, and again how can the cut-off points for these indicators be set? Based on the reputational method, a positional analysis and contingency analysis, Domhoff (1970) in his study of the American Upper-class devised a series of indicators such as membership in certain social clubs, attendance of private schools and universities. Using for example society editors and other prominent figures as informants, some indicators could be drawn and cross-examined using the positional analysis. These indicators could include residence in exclusive clubs, pattern of circulation, practice of certain leisure activities, dress code, knowledge of certain cultural practices, practise of certain cultural routines, and ownership of status goods etc... Formulating a composite indicator, perhaps the Human Affluence Index (HAI), would incorporate both money-metric and non-money metric measures, but such an index would still not resolve the problematic of these measures, namely the problematic of setting the threshold cut-off line..

To overcome these serious shortcomings of the measurement of affluence, the bulk of the data generated for this research emanates from case studies of affluent individuals rather than a wider scale survey of affluent individuals. The increased detail and focus that the case studies enable, allow us to keep an eye on both income and expenditures.

As for the cut-off line of income I use the income range suggested by Haddad (1997) as an indicator and only with caution as it is not sensitized to the size of the household, financial obligations and other constraints on extracting from this income a surplus to be spent. Haddad (1997) perceives of a middle income category of households in Lebanon whose income

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<sup>7</sup> “Unlike Massey’s measure, their measure also includes unrelated individuals and varies by family size: an unrelated individual in 1990 was rich if her income exceeded about \$47,000; a couple, if their income exceeded about \$62,000; a family of four, about \$94,000” (Danziger, 1996: 414).

ranges from 1,000-5,000 USD. He breaks down this category into upper middle income (3,000-5,000USD) and lower middle income (1,000-3,000USD). He refers to the “upper middle income” households as “the affluent” – *maysoreen*- a term which he borrows from 1960’s IRFID report. As such, Haddad (1997) sets the income range for affluent individuals in Lebanon at 3,000-5,000 USD/month. This affluence standard is then specifically a Lebanese one. Within another context such an income range could be considered middle income or upper income<sup>8</sup>.

In addition, I chose to focus my research on a certain profile of affluent individuals, namely, *young* heads of households who grew up in or close to affluence. My deliberate decision to focus on people who come from a background of affluence – as opposed to newly rich- is related to the fact that I wanted to research people who have been raised with the values, codes, habits and customs that they now practice, that is, people to whom their mores come about naturally. That is why I did not choose newly rich heads of households, even though research on the newly rich could also yield quite interesting findings.

The decision to focus my research on *young* heads of households has been a pragmatic decision that sought to address mainly the difficulty in acquiring access to affluent individuals. Affluent individuals are difficult to access. Where can a researcher start? You cannot knock on their doors and ask for information. Nor can you access them in their places of concentration as these places are equally guarded. Even when gatekeepers unlock the doors, it is difficult to do ethnographic research on affluent people as they guard their privacy and are suspicious of the motivations of people wanting to research them. Indeed, during the interviews that I conducted I was frequently asked- half jokingly, half seriously- whether I was working with the secret service.<sup>9</sup> In addition, convincing people of the idea that the banality and routine of their everyday are “worthy of theoretical engagement” (Chaney, 2002) and scientific research required walking this fine line between conveying scientific curiosity without being intimidating. It is mainly out of this limitation that I chose to capitalize on my insider position and to utilize my social network to acquire access.

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<sup>8</sup> Unlike Beal (2000) who uses the term to denote to individuals that are wealthy not only within the framework of the Jordanian society but by virtually any standard, this research chose to sensitize the standard to the context. This decision is based on the fact that this research is concerned with the behaviour of individuals within a specific context. Monitoring the behaviour of these individuals in a different context in which their affluence is put in question could yield quite interesting findings as to the specificity of the behaviour of these individuals.

<sup>9</sup> Many times it was a struggle for me to convince my interviewees of the seriousness of this research. In retrospect, I think the merit and value of this research was acknowledged only by a few and many looked at me as doing research as a pastime.

It must be noted here that my profile assisted me in acquiring access to these people. This will be further elaborated on in the positionality and limitations section of this chapter, however, a few words are in order here. Even though the people that I interviewed did not know me, it was obvious that they could identify with me due to my profile. As a young affluent Lebanese female co-head of household with young children going to private schools, I was perceived by the interviewees as “one of us”. Simultaneously my dual German/Lebanese background and nationality was also helpful. The interviewees suspicion over my curiosity as a researcher “doing research on us”, as one of my respondents introduced me in an outing, was overcome by the fact that they related this curiosity to a scientific quest impelled by my German/European/Western background<sup>10</sup>.

As a result, even though there was no immediate trust especially among people that I have accessed based on the questionnaires, whose trust I only acquired after I was placed, nevertheless, it was possible to build this trust and as a result I was granted access to these people and they opened up eventually. The drawback was that I “outcropped” people whose profile is very much like mine, young heads of households, particularly young women with children. This poses its limitations on the findings of this research mainly on representativeness and generalizability. However, focusing on this particular profile of affluent individuals has a number of advantages.

First, these young households formed in the after-war period, meaning that they are relatively newcomers to their areas of residence as they moved into their residences during the after-war period and have not experienced any prolonged periods of conflict while they were residing in their particular parts of town. Hence, the decision to choose this profile of individuals overcomes the limitations posed by lumping people into one income group and then carrying out the analysis, bearing in mind that the relationship of people to place is complex and several variables impact this relationship.

Second, Haddad (1997) estimates that in the 20-30 years and 30-40 years age group the percentage of individuals that fall in the Middle income category (1,000-5,000USD / month) in Lebanon is 11% and 15% respectively- as opposed to 38% and 32% for the 40-50years and 50-60years age category respectively. As such, it is reasonable to assume that in the 20-40 years range the minority status of the affluent category is accentuated. This accentuated condition is useful for the research as it is likely to highlight the segregation tendencies of affluent individuals at home/work/play.

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<sup>10</sup> I made sure to foster the interviewees’ perception of me, the researcher, as an insider that understands and as an outsider that wants to know more. It was my outside disinterested position that triggered my curiosity.

Third, this profile of affluent people saw me, the researcher, as one of them. This in turn allowed me to go beyond the qualitative interview and engage in participant observation edging sometimes onto anthropologic research. Snowballing was also facilitated through this approach.

### **2.2.2. Ethnographic field notes**

In line with Holdaway's (2000) recommendation, this research started with a period of observation and participation in the world of those that I was researching. I involved myself in the life of those I was researching. I attended social gatherings, dinners, weddings and birthday parties. I kept a daily research diary, and wrote regularly fieldwork notes in order not to confuse my private concerns with the documentation of other people's doings and sayings. I followed "the basic rule of qualitative research" (Ibid) – that is being patient, observing and listening, in order to see and hear about the worlds of my subjects of analysis. Holdaway (2000) notes that "The time to ask questions is when you have become sufficiently familiar with the context observed and skilled in interpreting its apparent meaning" (Ibid: 166). In the case of this research, I started this research with a reasonable familiarity of the field and the period of observation was a period that enabled me to put on the lens of scientific research and to distance myself from the taken for granted issues in order to arrive at the proper questions that dig beneath the surface and uncover hidden truths.

After this period of observation, this research commenced by conducting systematic and qualitative observation in selected everyday public, semi-public and private social settings in order to pursue greater understanding of significant, fundamental social behaviour that occurs in different settings. Hence, an empirical observation of social practices was conducted to document these social practices as experienced in situ by the people studied. Field notes were written to record routine, extraordinary, and significant social processes that occurred in these selected settings. Specifically, the field notes were geared at observing behaviour and documenting the mechanisms used to enforce and bolster detachment and to achieve connectivity in different settings. These settings were categorized as the following (a) places of concentration (b) hinge spaces (c) mobile space and (d) non-spaces. Refer to Table 2. The places of concentration visited were selected mainly based on recommendations by the case studies that have been interviewed.



A. Places of concentration	Elite gym
	Elite children swimming school
	Prominent women hairdressing shop
	Two prominent coffee shops
	Two prominent malls
B. Hinge spaces	Drop-off points at the car parking
	Pedestrian entrance of two prominent malls.
C. Mobile space	Two traffic junction points in which traffic jams are common.
D. Non-spaces	Airport waiting hall
	Corniche (The seaside promenade)
	5 selected public gardens(Hassan Khaled, Sanayeh, Solidere/Roman Bath, Sin ELFiL, Siyoufeh)

**Table 2 Areas in which ethnographic field notes were taken in this research**

The places of concentration included an elite gym, an elite children swimming school, a prominent women hairdressing shop, two coffee shops and two prominent malls. The choice of the gym and the swimming school was based on the fact that they are among the most expensive in Beirut, as such I term these facilities as “elite”. The women’s hairdressing shop, the coffee shops and the malls are termed “prominent” as they were selected based on the fact that they were recurrently referred to as the “in-places” in town by the case studies or other people that were interviewed. Hinge spaces included drop-off points at the car parking and pedestrian entrance of two prominent malls. Mobile space included observation at two traffic junction points in which traffic jams are common. Non-spaces included the airport waiting hall, Corniche (the seaside promenade) and 5 selected public gardens.

With the exception of the gym and the swimming school both of which were visited once a week for a period of three months, all other places were visited at least twice for the purpose of taking notes. The observation lasted between 1 and 4 hours. The notes were written during the visit wherever possible or immediately afterwards.

The strategy of observation that I followed was the following. For the first 15 minutes of my visit I observed the physical quality of the place and noted down an objective description of it.

I henceforth noted down a subjective perception of its physical quality, maintenance, cleanliness etc... In the places of concentration and non-spaces I fixed my observation on a number of individuals that I selected. As my research progressed I found out that I was able to observe a maximum of 4 individuals at a time. I selected these individuals mainly based on age and I tried to select two women and two men, again noting objective information, dress code, age and so on. I observed these individuals for a time frame ranging between 30 minutes to two hours noting down whom he/she was accompanied with his/her behaviour in space, the activities he/she undertook, how she/he maneuvered with whom s/he interacted, how they interacted with space. I noted down signs of annoyance, anxiety, relaxation and joy. I was subsequently able to subdivide my subjects' experience of these places into three distinct phases/intervals, the entry / arrival phase, activity phase and exit phase. Observation of hinge spaces and mobile spaces were more of a fast nature as people did not linger long enough to be observed for longer than a few minutes. Yet the same method of observation was used, noting first objective and physical characteristics and then moving on to behavioural observation. It should be noted here that this period of research was vital in understanding motivations and strategies of affluent individuals. It raised a number of pertinent questions and helped me frame my interview questions. Moreover, as I undertook participant observation I engaged in many of the activities that I had previously observed.

### **2.2.3. Qualitative interviews and participant observation**

I interviewed and observed a total of 11 case studies (the names of all case studies have been altered to preserve anonymity). Refer to Table 3. Six of these case studies were identified based on my social contacts who put me in contact with suitable respondents. With suitable I mean criteria related to age, religion and place of residence. The remaining five respondents I came in contact with based on the questionnaire that I distributed in elite childcare nurseries in town. I consciously selected the case studies in such a way that their residences are somewhat evenly distributed in the Beirut geography. In addition I took care to have the main five religions (Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Shiite, Sunni, Druze) represented.

I met with the case studies a minimum of five times. The purpose of the first meeting was to conduct the extended interview. Prior to the interview I asked for the interviewee's spouse to be present (in the case of the interviewees who are married). I indicated that I was interested in interviewing both. This interview was semi-structured. It started by profiling the interviewees, their background, level of education, family status. I then asked questions pertaining to housing trajectory, political activism, social activism. I asked questions pertaining to their

perceptions, logic, definitions of social and spatial segregation in the home/work/play/mobile context. I only recorded the first interview that I conducted. I took the decision not to record the interview based on the fact that clearly my respondents were not at ease being recorded, indeed, the interview was much more relaxed as I sat listening to my interviewee and took notes.

Code name (couple: Female/male)	Source of contact:	Area of residence	Religion	Period of interview
1. Hanan/ Rami	Recommendation	GC in Doha Hoss/ BMR	Shiite/ Shiite	Aug 05
2. Nahla/Sami	Recommendation	Badaro	Druze/ Druze	March 06
3. Nahed/ Ahmad	Recommendation	Zareef	Shiite/Sunni	May 06
4. Rim/ Zein	Recommendation	Talet El-Kayyat	Sunni/Sunni	May 06
5. Vahe	Recommendation	Solidere	Armenian Apostolic	July 07
6. Malek	Recommendation	Verdun	Shiite	July 07
7. Layla/Majed	Outcropped	Jnah	Shiite/Shiite	Aug '07
8. Iman/ Faysal	Outcropped	Sodeco	Druze/Druze	Aug '07
9. Jana/ Kameel	Outcropped	Achrafiyye'	Greek Orthodox/ Maronite	Aug '07
10. Sourayya/ Gilbert	Outcropped	GC in Baabda/ BMR	Maronite/Maronite	Aug '07
11. Camille/ Pierre	Outcropped	Achrafiyye'	Maronite/ Greek Orthodox	Aug '07

**Table 3 List of case studies interviewed in this research**

Based on my first interview with each respondent I asked for permission to meet with them a number of subsequent meetings were thus arranged. I would usually meet the case study at home and start with my case study the journey to the locale of socialization. As I acquired the trust (sometimes even the friendship) of my respondent I asked to spend a whole day with them in which I would show up in the morning (at around 9 o'clock) and spend the whole day with my respondent with the purpose of observing the activities of my respondent while I participated in them. "Kluckhohn (1940) defines participant observation as a conscious and systematic sharing, in so far as circumstances permit, in the life-activities and, on occasion, in the interests and affects of a group of persons. Zelditch (1962) argues that the participant observer actually employs three methods, not one: participant observation (to describe

incidents); informant interviewing (to learn institutionalised norms and statuses); and enumeration or sampling (to document frequency data)” (Jackson, 1983: 39). Participant observation was vital in understanding spatial segregation and aggregation strategies and the motivations, logic and rationale of the phenomenon of segregation.

Through participant observation, I was capable of observing at close distance how the case studies managed the signals they sent out about who they are. Particularly the full day spent with the case studies as they went back and forth from home to the objectives was instrumental in illuminating the fact the home was indeed a “back stage” (Goffman, 1959) and the objectives the “front stage”<sup>11</sup>. Although I acknowledge that I was not fully allowed “back-stage” in the sense that a significant amount of “impression management” (Ibid) was undertaken by the case studies in front of me when we were “back stage” at home.

#### **2.2.4. The questionnaire**

In order to compensate for the limitations of my primary method (that is, the use of case studies) on issues of representativeness and generalizability, I ran standardized interviews/questionnaires, using outcropping as a method of sampling. “Outcropping is a method of sampling that targets population in a geographic location or area in which they routinely congregate with a view to surveying them... As with network sampling there is no guarantee that a sample drawn from a particular setting is representative of the wider population beyond the sample” (Burton, 2000:315). My initial aim was to distribute a short survey in certain nodes, mainly malls, using the mall intercept method that asks passerbys for short information. The objective was, first, to *identify* demographic structures of users (age, gender, family status, religion, income groups, origin, education etc...), second, to understand why these people choose to come to these places and, third, to get access to people who use these places in order to solicit their input for extended interviews. Unfortunately, the volatile security and political condition in Lebanon did not enable me to run such a survey.

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<sup>11</sup> In “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life” Goffman (1959) argues that social action is like a theatrical performance. People in everyday life engage in performances in which they become actors portraying a character. Through “impression management” people manage their clothing, language and other actions to give a particular impression of themselves. Through “maintenance of expressive control” they stay in character by making sure that they send out the correct signals. Goffman identifies what he terms “front stage” and “back stage” behaviour, whereby “front stage” actions are defined as actions undertaken knowing that they are visible to an audience, while “back stage” actions are ones in which no audience is present. Hence “front stage” actions are part of the performance.

I decided to conduct a more extended questionnaire in elite childcare nurseries in Beirut. I selected five nurseries evenly distributed in the geography of Municipal Beirut. These nurseries cater for children between 6 months and 4 years. The average tuition fee of these nurseries is 350 Dollars per month, the highest in Beirut. The average tuition fee of nurseries was around 175 USD/month in 2007 (Mrs. Joujou, head of the syndicate for owners of nurseries in Lebanon, in interview with the author in 2007)

I approached these nurseries with a formal letter that explained who I am and the purpose of my research. I followed up on this letter a few days later by a telephone call with the nursery owner/principal asking for an appointment. Out of the six nurseries that I had approached only one refused to distribute the questionnaires. In one of these nurseries the owner did not allow for direct access to the caretakers and the questionnaire were handed out by staff. In this nursery out of 200 questionnaires distributed only three were responded to. In the remaining four nurseries I insisted to hand out the questionnaire myself. As such in each of these 4 nurseries, I handed out the questionnaires in person to the childcarers. As I handed out the questionnaires I was accompanied by a nursery staff member that introduced me. With each childcarer I spent a few minutes explaining the nature of my research and the purpose of the questionnaire. I found out that childcarers were more responsive in the afternoon as they picked up their children than in the morning when they were rushing to work or morning activities and I focused my handing out on the afternoons. However, in the afternoon it was usually the mothers that picked up their children and as such the majority (88%) of the respondents were women. In some instances I was not able to access the parents as it was the driver or the nanny that picked up or delivered the child. Out of a total of 400 questionnaires distributed in these 4 nurseries the response was 115. As such a total of 118 questionnaires was distributed (see Annex). 88% of the respondents were female, 63% aged between 25 and 40 years. The sectarian make up is as follows Maronite 14%, Catholic 3%, Druze 2%, Sunni, 54%, Protestant 3%, Armenian Apostolic 0%, Shiite 14%, Greek Orthodox 10%. 58% of the respondents conceived of their income group as higher or higher middle income, while 42% conceived of their income as middle income. 68% indicated that their income has not been affected by local circumstances. 42% have besides the Lebanese nationality another nationality and 47% are in the process of acquiring citizenship in a country other than Lebanon.

Variable	Percentage
Female	88%
Age between 25 and 40 years old	63%
Religion	
Maronite	14%
Catholic	3%
Druze	2%
Sunni	54%
Protestant	2%
Armenian apostolic	0%
Shiite	14%
Greek orthodox	10%
Income group ( <i>higher and higher middle</i> )	58%
Income affected by local circumstances	32%
Have other nationality	42%
In process of acquiring a second nationality	47%

**Table 4 Profile of questionnaire respondents**

The questionnaire was used as a tool that systematically, first, *profiles* these individuals. That is who are they, where do they reside, what sectarian educational background do they have? Second, the questionnaire *traced the* “living space” of the interviewee. It asked *where* the interviewee lives, works, studies, shops, entertains. It asked how s/he moves in the city and traces his/her daily orbits in the city. The aim was to comprehend the interviewees perception of his/her spatiality of everyday life. Third, the questionnaire *measured the degree* of real and perceived social and spatial detachment at home, work/study/play and mobile space. It identified the mechanisms used to enforce detachment, and the *reasons* for detachment. The aim was to find out whether affluent individuals are detached and to understand why they feel it is necessary to achieve detachment Fourth, the questionnaire *measured the degree* to which the interviewee seeks and is actually connected to non-local networks, the *mechanisms* s/he uses to attain connectivity, and the *reasons* why s/he searches for connectivity. The aim was to find out whether affluent individuals are connected to non-local networks and to understand why they feel it is necessary to achieve this kind of connectivity. Fifth, the questionnaire tracked the perception of the interviewee of these detached and scattered-but-connected spaces of everyday life as his/her living space. The aim was to find out how the interviewee relates to the rest of the city. Refer to Appendix 1.

### 2.3. *Limitations and positionality*

This research faced three main limitations. The first limitation is related to the affluent condition of my subjects of research. The second limitation is concerned with the political and security context in which the fieldwork took place. The third limitation is related to my position as a researcher vis a vis the field.

The first limitation is related to the difficulty in acquiring access to affluent individuals. I have already addressed this difficulty in section 2.2.1. What needs to be added here is that another limitation pertaining to acquiring access to affluent individuals is that they are slippery as a group. The size and location of this group fluctuate mainly according to season and security conditions.

Second, I wrote my research proposal in 2004-2005, that is during the last rosy days of Lebanon that preceded a period of political uncertainty and occasional insecurity. In the words of one of my interviews describing these rosy days, “The political context was boiling, but we did not feel the heat”. I suppose I too did not feel the heat, just at the time when I was preparing for my fieldwork, Lebanon entered a new and difficult phase in its development. Lebanon’s former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri – broker of the Taif peace treaty- was assassinated on February 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 and the whole country entered a period of political crisis marked by intermittent phases of conflict on the streets of Beirut. Tourism was impacted, businesses closed, security was shattered, a series of assassinations of prominent political figures was carried out, Israel waged a 40 day war on Lebanon in the summer of 2006, there was fierce political struggle in the country geared particularly against the resistance movement, the country essentially broke-up into two opposing political camps, and intermittent battles raged on the streets of Beirut in May 2008.

Within this context, it seemed odd to me to be doing this kind of research. In deed in between the rounds of armed struggle and assassinations, I could not get permission to conduct surveys in places of concentration, and it was not possible to engage consistently in participant observation in the places of work or study. As a result, I decided to limit the analysis to the places of play and to non-places. Moreover, as the country was battling existential issues and opposing political camps competed with who could pack the squares of Beirut with the biggest demonstration, I assumed that the minds of people that I was interested in interviewing must be fixated around existential issues. It seemed to me that my research was set in a pre-Hariri assassination mentality/ mood. Surprisingly, my hypotheses stood fast

despite the unsettling nature of this period. Hence, while the lack of security limited my access to information, it simultaneously accentuated the condition that I was researching.

Third, as a young affluent co-head of household I lived in Lebanon with my family during the fieldwork period and I was actively engaged in the social life that I was researching. This made it difficult sometimes to untangle fieldwork from my personal life. Many of the places that I visited for ethnographic research I revisited also for my own personal socializing purposes. At times it felt like I was continuously researching, at other times it felt I was merely socializing. An acquaintance asked me once how come I was taking notes while my daughter is taking swimming lessons, another acquaintance of one of the case studies that I was accompanying could not understand how socializing can be part of a research activity.

Indeed, I was doing research *in* and *on* my own layer, on people that I do not personally know but who are probably at the peripheral end of my social network.<sup>12</sup> During the early phase of this research, I tried to resist my position as an insider. Every time I interviewed a subject of analysis and was “placed” or I met people I know while doing fieldwork, I was shattered. I wanted to go as far away as possible from my own social network and to exit my layer. I spent considerable time during the early phase of my research trying to revise my research methodology and find alternative ways to conduct the research. With time it dawned to me that I was, indeed, an insider wasting time and energy trying to get out in order to go back in. I came to the conclusion that the most appropriate way to address this bias and subjectivity is to acknowledge it as a researcher and to devise ways to capitalize on my insider position while admitting its limitations. It was then that I decided to use my own social network to access and to lobby for access to people.

In addition, I was challenged by the fact that by focusing on my research activity, I was not capable of consistently “staying in [my old] character” (Goffman, 1959), mainly because I was distracted from maintaining “expressive control” (Ibid). This challenge was particularly accentuated later on in the research when I was accompanying case studies on outings to their -and my- places of concentration. In addition by accompanying case studies on “front stage” (Ibid), I had to perform along with them in order not to disrupt their “impression management” (Ibid). With time I became accustomed to the fact that *while doing participant observation I became a supporting actor on a stage on which I usually performed.*

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<sup>12</sup> Many of the people that I met became members of my social network and my relationship with them has continued after their interview.



It must be noted though that out of sheer coincidence (and luck) my family and I left Lebanon just when I was done with the major part of my fieldwork. Leaving Lebanon was crucial to the analysis of my fieldwork material. As I was immersed in two completely different settings (Doha, Qatar and Munich, Germany) I got to experience firsthand the impact of place particularly on young affluent working mothers like myself. I got to understand the restrictions that place imposes, the meaning and value of neighbourhood, how alternative support networks are woven in the absence of family support, how cities can be restricting and enabling and how the living space of everyday life is contracted and expanded by factors related to structure as well as agency. Indeed, being away from Lebanon enabled me to look at my fieldwork material from a new perspective; it enabled me to leave the stage and assume the position of the *disinterested observer*.

### Chapter 3. Background information on Beirut

As the title suggests this chapter provides background information on the city of Beirut. The first section recounts the rise and evolution of the city and how it became the capital of modern day Lebanon. It contextualizes the development of Beirut amidst the troublesome emergence of Lebanon as a country. The second section discusses the civil war period 1975-1989 and the gruesome division of the city into East and West Beirut. The third section recounts the developments linked to the end of the war in 1989 and the initiation of the reconstruction of the city. Business tycoon, Rafik Hariri, who became prime minister in 1992 and headed five cabinets, is inextricably linked to this phase. In the fourth section I discuss the developments that occurred following the assassination of PM Hariri in 2005.



Figure 1 Terrain Map of the Middle East

(Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Near\\_East\\_topographic\\_map-blank.svg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Near_East_topographic_map-blank.svg) accessed on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008)

#### 3.1. *The rise and evolution of the city and becoming the capital of modern Lebanon*

Since around the third millennium B.C the peninsula located approximately at the midpoint of the eastern coastline of the Mediterranean, termed Beirut, has been continuously inhabited. (Jidejian ,1973) Refer to Figure 1. The first documented mention of Beirut is found in the ancient Egyptian Tell el Amarna dating to the 15th century BC. Quoting the French

geographer Reclus (1905), Kassir notes that the origin of the evolution of the city of Beirut can be traced back to the function of this peninsula as a natural protective port (Kassir, 2006: 49). Davie (1987) focuses on the site's particular local topography, particularly the function of the two hills of Beirut<sup>13</sup> for defence and communication as the determinant in the choice of this peninsula as the site of urban settlement. Refer to Figure 2.

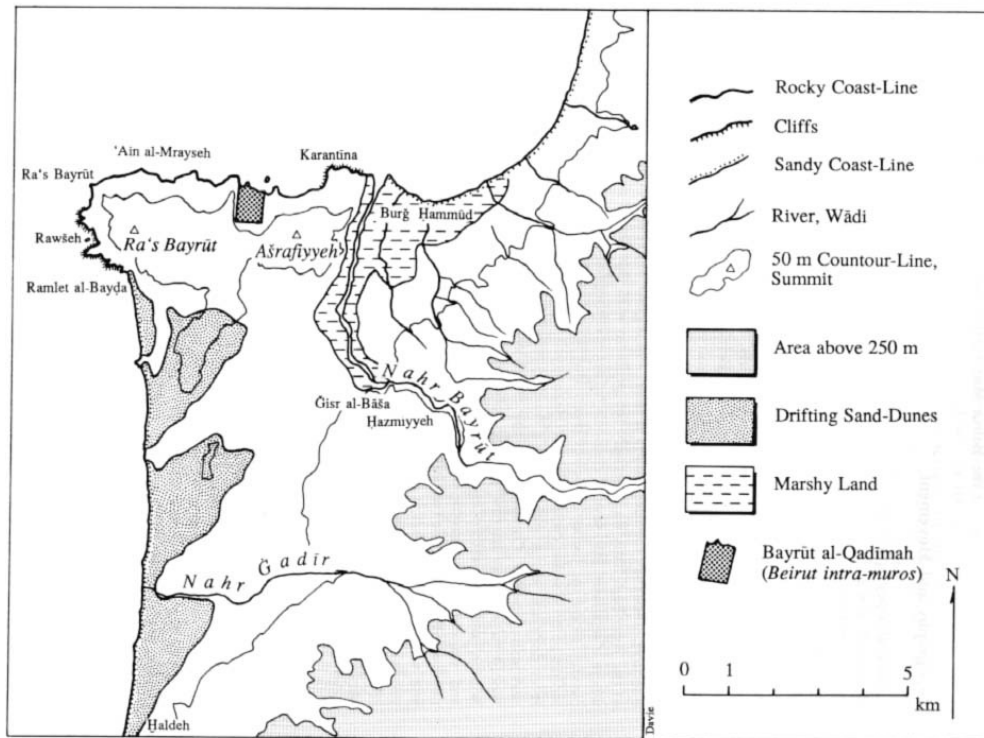


Figure 2 Physiognomy of Beirut, with Beirut intra murus shown (Source: Davie, 1987)

Political boundaries shifted continuously in the Levant area and Beirut was part of numerous empires and political regimes including, Phoenician (in antiquity), Persian (6<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century BC), the empire of Alexander the Great (4<sup>th</sup> BC), Hellenistic Seleucid Kingdom, Roman (1<sup>st</sup> century BC, part of the Roman province of Syria), Byzantine, Crusader, Mamluk, Ottoman and French under the mandate. Most recently, in the history of its evolution, Beirut has become the capital of the Republic of Lebanon.

Rural to urban migration accelerated the growth of Beirut in 1860's during the civil war that raged between the Maronite and Druze population in Mount Lebanon. The population of Beirut estimated at 22,000 in 1856, more than tripled in the span of 7 years to reach 70,000 in

<sup>13</sup> “Two hills (named the Asharafiyyeh and Ra's-Bayrut hills for convenience) occupy the northern part of the peninsula. The Ra's-Bayrut hill falls steeply into the sea at the Rawsheh cliffs, while the eastern edge of Asharafiyyeh was cut by the Beirut river forming an escarpment at Siufe and Karm az-Zaytun. These two hills overlook low-lying areas to the North and South” (Davie, 1987).

1863 (Kassir, 2006). In the years that followed Beirut became a very cosmopolitan city with close links to Europe and the United States. It became the centre of missionary activity which targeted particularly the education sector, for example, American Protestant missionaries established the Syrian Protestant College in 1866, that eventually became the American University of Beirut (AUB)<sup>14</sup>. The qualitative rise in the importance of the city (Kassir, 2006) came in towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Beirut was made the capital of a vilayet in Syria including the sanjaks Latakia, Tripoli, Beirut, Akka and Bekaa. The semi-autonomous status of the Lebanese province came to an end in 1915, when the region was placed under direct Ottoman rule during the First World War.

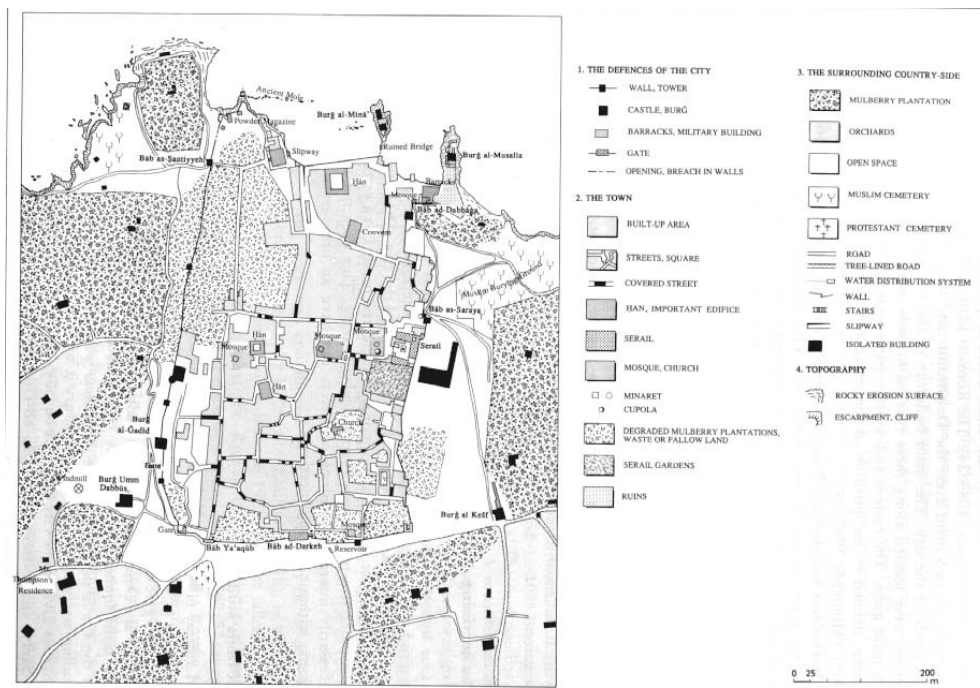


Figure 3 Beirut ca 1841 (Source: Davie, 1987)

The Ottomans initiated major projects for the rehabilitation of the Beirut, for example, the place de canons, the Grand Serail and the Perit Serail, in 1909 the tramway was put in to service. In 1912 the city center was modernized through the introduction of indoor markets, new khans. Some argue the Ottomans were the first urban planners of Beirut. The Ottomans were responsible for much of Beirut's early modernization. Saliba (2000) The "Tanzeemat"<sup>15</sup>,

<sup>14</sup> On November 18, 1920, the Board of Regents of the State University of New York changed the name of the institution from the *Syrian Protestant College* to the *American University of Beirut*. (Source: <http://www.aub.edu.lb/about/history.html> accessed on February 22, 2009)

<sup>15</sup> "The Tanzeemat or "regulations" was an overall reform program launched under the rule of the Ottoman Sultan Abd al-Majid (1839 - 1861). Its official purpose was to "put into force the current European standards of law and administration, with civil equality and standard liberties for all" (Saliba, in Diwan El-Maimar, 2000).

which is the Ottoman reform program, modernized Beirut's building regulations and upgraded its infrastructure. Saliba (2000) notes that this modernization was "second-hand", "In that period of late-Ottoman control over the Levant (1830's-1910's), planning models were mostly Western ones that were first applied to Istanbul, and then to the different provincial capitals of the Ottoman state" (Saliba in Diwan El Mimar, 2000).

As described by Davie (1993, 1996), from 1840 to 1920 Beirut underwent three successive stages of inner transformation and urban expansion. Accordingly, already before the establishment of the French Mandate in 1920, the image and status of Beirut changed from a *medieval Arab-Islamic* city to a "ville bourgeoise Mediterraneenne" (Saliba, 1998: 9)<sup>16</sup>.

In 1918 Syria and Lebanon were occupied by the Allies following the defeat of Turkey in the First World War. In response to fierce lobbying by the Maronite community Greater Lebanon was established as a state under the tutelage of France in 1920. The territory of the old province of Lebanon was extended to its present boundaries by adding the coastal regions of Beirut, Sidon, Tyre and Tripoli, as well the Bekaa Valley.<sup>17</sup> Beirut was the seat of the Mandate for Lebanon and Syria. In 1926, the state of Greater Lebanon ended and the Lebanese Republic was established under the French Mandate; Beirut became the capital of the Republic of Lebanon.

"Since its inception in 1920, Lebanon faced internal confessional conflicts as well as regional claims by parts of its territory both of which have constituted factors contributing to the country's political instability and military confrontations" (Kisirwani 1997: 88). In 1943 a power sharing arrangement was reached between the Muslims and Christians, known as the National Pact<sup>18</sup> and Lebanon gained its independence with Beirut as its capital. A confessional parliament was created, where Muslims and Christians were given quotas of

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<sup>16</sup> This swaying between two worlds is evident in Kassir's note of the clock tower built in Beirut in 1898 and striking at both French and Ottoman timing. Kassir (2003) notes that the clock's dual strike was confirming the way the city was swaying between the time of a world governed by European expansion and the time of an Empire refusing to die (Kassir, 2003: 168).

<sup>17</sup> Significant differences existed between the proponents of the creation of the sovereign state of Lebanon concerning the extent of the boundaries of this state. Hartman and Olsaretti (2003) point to the struggles for power during the French mandate between those supporting an overwhelmingly Christian *Petit Liban* (Smaller Lebanon), and those advocating a *Grand Liban* (Greater Lebanon) inclusive of the Beqa'a and the northern port of Tripoli, and therefore including a large Muslim minority. "There were strategic reasons for a *Grand Liban* with enlarged borders guaranteeing it a measure of self-sufficiency. However, the main difference between the two positions lay in outlook: a *Petit Liban* would have relied heavily on French support for its continued existence, while a *Grand Liban* would have had greater autonomy from France at the price of coming to terms with a large Muslim population." (Ibid: 39)

<sup>18</sup> "The pact sought an end to the Sunni-Muslim demand for unity with Syria, or any Arab state, in exchange for the Maronite Christian's relinquishing French protection. The National Pact had the positive aim of putting an end to the conflicting communal outlooks by recognizing the full and complete independence of Lebanon from East and West, affirming its national identity as part of the Arab World, and denying any concession or privileged position for any foreign state" (Kisirwani, 1997).

seats in parliament. As well, the President was to be a Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of Parliament a Shia Muslim. The development of Beirut since 1920 is directly linked to this troublesome emergence of Lebanon, a country “willed into existence by a community of its own people, albeit one community among others” (Salibi, 1988: 28) and to the unresolved “dispute over the question of territorial integrity of Lebanon, and the legitimacy of the Lebanese state as established” (Lenezowski in Kisirwani, 1997). Johnson (1989) sees this troublesome emergence as linked more to the informal compact in 1943 between leading merchants and financiers who belonged to Christian and Sunni Muslim communities or confessions and who wanted to create a Lebanon that is good for *their* business<sup>19</sup>. Within a context of fundamental disagreement particularly between Christian and Muslim Lebanese over the historicity of their country (Salibi, 1988: 3), its territorial integrity, Beirut periodically became the battleground to fight and negotiate the lack of consensus between the Lebanese concerning what makes of them a nation or a political community (Salibi, 1988: 18). The modern history of Beirut must be understood within this context.

As Beirut became the capital of the independent state of Lebanon, the city started to play an increasingly important role in the region. It became a major regional centre for trade, banking, air-sea-land transport and communication, tourism and professional services.

Another leap in the development of city of Beirut can be dated to the 1950's and 60's in the span of which the population of Beirut quadrupled from 300,000 in 1950 to reach an estimated 1.2 million in 1970. This increase was mainly due to a substantial influx of Palestinian refugees that Beirut received following recurrent wars with Israel and due to rural to urban migration in which Beirut as the primate city of Lebanon was the major magnet for migration. During this time Lebanon benefited from the expansion of oil production in the Gulf region. Growth was further enhanced by the Suez Canal crisis of 1956, which resulted in the relocation to Beirut of several major corporations in Egypt, including regional offices of

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<sup>19</sup> “Lebanese independence in 1943 came about largely as a result of an informal compact between leading merchants and financiers who belonged to Christian and Sunni Muslim communities or confessions. They agreed they should cooperate in building a liberal political system that would encourage free economy based on Beirut and its hinterland lying within borders of “Greater Lebanon” (Grand Liban)... In alliance with rural landlords, political representatives of the commercial and financial bourgeoisie took control of the state and implemented policies to promote trading, banking and insurance sectors of the economy” (Johnson 1986: 119). “A confessional conflict was quite simply bad for business, political leaders usually sought to moderate the prejudices of their followers and in the cities they developed sophisticated political machines to distribute patronage and control their clients.... The Lebanese war that began in 1975 thus caused mainly by developments external to what I called the ‘clientlist system’ of political control which had so effectively sustained a relative order since independence. Two communities were excluded from the clientlist system, the Palestinian refugees who were not citizens of Lebanon and were therefore unable to trade their voices for services and the recent Shia migrants to Beirut who were registered to vote in their villages of origin and were thus excluded from the patronage structures of the city” (Johnson, 2001: 5-6).

banks, aviation and oil companies During the 1960s, Lebanon enjoyed a period of relative calm. Prosperity focused though in and around Beirut; it was driven mainly by the tourism and banking sector. Other areas of the country, however, notably the South, North, and Bekaa Valley, remained poor in comparison.

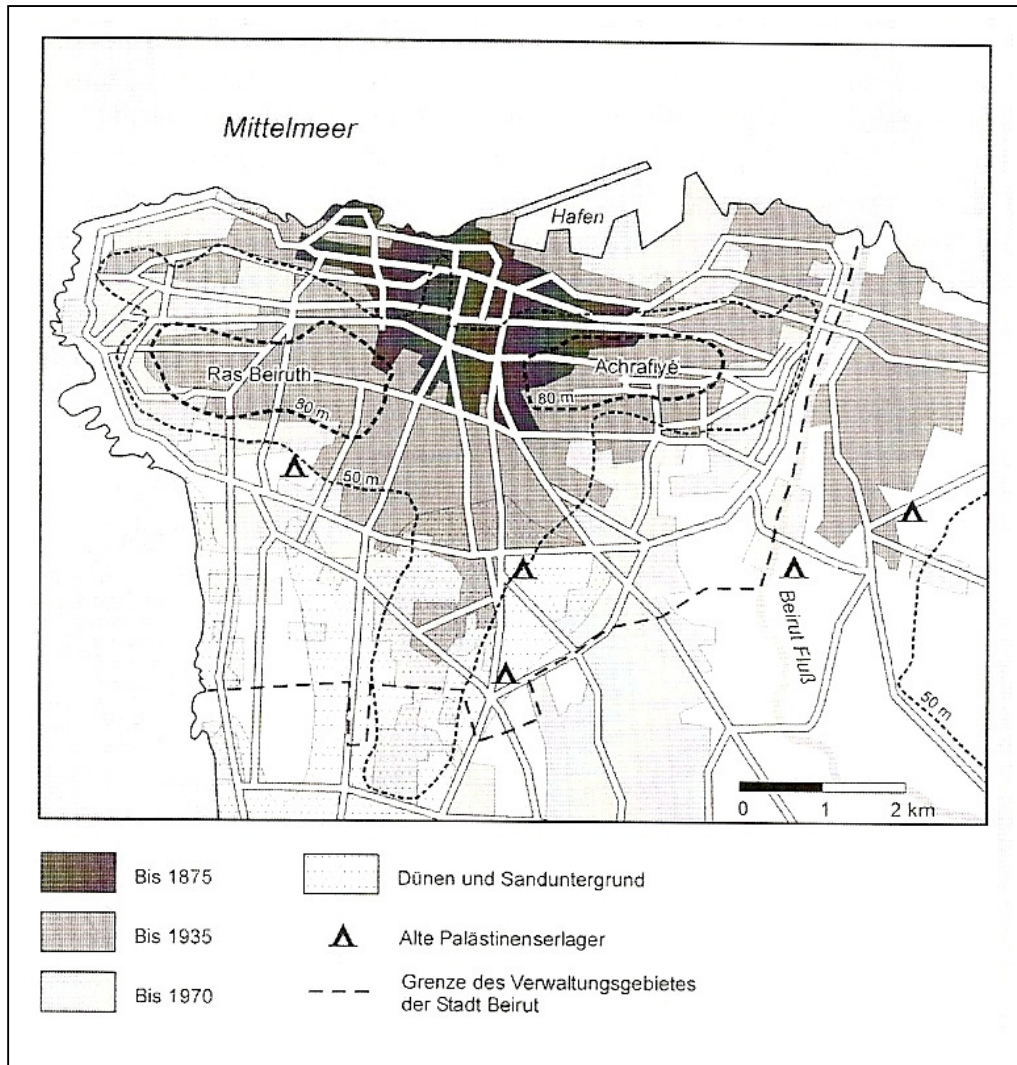


Figure 4 Expansion of Beirut 1840- 1945 (Source: Gebhardt, 2008)

Rural to urban migration brought to Beirut a population in search of education and job opportunities. While many migrants found such opportunities, a significant number of others did not and remained impoverished in a belt of misery that began to form around the capital. The absence of a social housing programme, compounded further by a general lack of official concern with regard to the welfare and living conditions of the newcomers, are believed to have exacerbated and even contributed to the tensions that led to the 1975-1990 Lebanese

war.<sup>20</sup> Relying largely on a policy of laissez-faire that has its roots in post-independence Lebanon of the 1940s, Lebanon is a free-market economy characterized by a laissez-faire state. Some scholars even argue that Lebanon has a long tradition of “sauvage laissez-faire” and that there is not anything ‘neo’ about neo-liberalism in Lebanon (Dib, 2004). Within this context, development in Beirut has mostly been driven by the private sector with little monitoring by the State. Indeed, development has depended more on powerful individuals imposing their will- many times against the will of the Lebanese populace- rather than a powerful State.

Year	1856	1863	1900	1950	1970	2000
<b>Population</b>	22,000	70,000	120,000	300,000	1,200,000	1,300,000

Table 5 Population of Beirut 1856- 2000

(Source: author, compiled from Kassir, 2006)

### 3.2. *The civil war period, the division of the city*

The Lebanese civil war was a complex multi-faceted war; analysis over the reasons of this war filled the pages of numerous books and articles. A number of factors contributed to triggering and sustaining this war. Injustice in the distribution of power in Lebanon, mingling of international powers in the affairs of Lebanon, the Arab Israeli conflict, the weak make-up of the Lebanese political system and the sectarian make-up of the Lebanese society all contributed to the eruption of civil strife in Lebanon. While the war started in 1975<sup>21</sup> between the Christian Lebanese who identified themselves in terms of Lebanese particularism and the Muslim Lebanese who identified themselves with pan-Arabism (Salibi, 1988: 1), soon

<sup>20</sup>In the early 60’s the International Institute for Research and Training for Harmonized Development (IRFED) was invited to examine the social and developmental situation in Lebanon. In his introduction to the “IRFED” Mission study in 1961, Father L. Lebreton observed that if Lebanon could not manage to reduce the economic disparities, then it would “face extremely serious social problems, the events of 1958 being merely a symptomatic manifestation of what is yet to come.” L. Lebreton, “*Besoins et possibilités de développement du Liban*”, vol. I, in *Situation Economique et Sociale*, (Ministry of Planning, IRFED Mission, Beirut, 1961).

<sup>21</sup> It is largely agreed upon that the first sparks that ignited the war in Spring 1975, were first the assassination of Sunni Muslim politician, Maaruf Saad in March 1975, and second the attempted assassination of Maronite leader Pierre Gemayl on Sunday April 13, 1975 and the retaliatory ambush by his followers later that day of a bus carrying 27 Palestinians in Ain El Rummaneh. The war became real probably on December 6, 1975, a day later known as Black Saturday, a bloody day throughout which road blocks were set up by militias and the identification cards of Beirutis were inspected for religious affiliation. The total death count to between 200 and 600 civilians and militiamen. After this point, all-out fighting began between the militias.



repeated clashes occurred even between the different sects and political parties on each side. The ideological war became soon a war fought between militias that portended to be fighting for the ideologies of their respective religious sects. Thus the war became a sectarian war, even though these militias also fought for the interests of those international powers that armed and funded them.

Hence, from 1975 to 1991 intermittent battles raged in Lebanon and resulted in a mass exodus of Muslims and Christians, as people fearing retribution fled to areas under the control of their own sect which have hardened the lines of the divisions (Salibi, 1988: 2). During the civil war, state power was subdued, as militias took over the management of their respective territories. The differences between the Lebanese came to be reflected geographically by the effective “cantonization of the country” (Ibid). In Beirut, the ethnic and religious layout of the residential areas encouraged this process, and East and West Beirut were increasingly transformed into an effective Christian and Muslim Beirut (Davie, 1991: 2). Beirut thus was divided by a demarcation line known as the Green Line<sup>22</sup>, in reference to the foliage that grew because the space was uninhabited. Many of the buildings along the Green Line were severely damaged or destroyed during the war.

As such Beirut became a divided city, an Eastern predominantly Christian part - *Sharqiyeh* in Arabic- and a Western predominantly Muslim part- *Gharbiyeh* in Arabic. The displacement and relocation of a large number of people created new poles. The population of the southern suburbs of Beirut increased significantly due to the displacement from South Lebanon. Moreover, the northern suburbs underwent intense construction that resulted in an uninterrupted urban sprawl reaching the town of Jounieh, some 15 kilometres north of Beirut.

The war inflicted “deep changes to the demography of the city’s population, its social structure, its networks (social or economic), its movements... the demarcation line was the excuse for homogenising the sectarian composition of its population... the East-West divide had also deeply affected the commercial and transport networks: bus lines stopped at the demarcation line; roads were closed and only a few “gates” were kept open. Goods were searched and taxed, citizens hindered in their movement or kidnapped on their way... Two very distinct territories were slowly emerging, each with its own internal organization and

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<sup>22</sup> Michael Davie (1991) explains that the term “Greenline” refers to a line on Israeli maps which identified “Cease-Fire Lines”. The terms was later adopted by UN-Observers in Cyprus. Beirutis explain the name by the vegetation growing in the no-man’s land between the two sectors of the city, thriving on burst water pipes and drains.

ideological affiliation, in short with a particular geographical identity, However, these large territorial units were further fragmented into smaller units because of the ambitions of local militia leaders. The mental geography of *Beirutis* could thus be extremely complex” (Davie, 1993: 5-6).

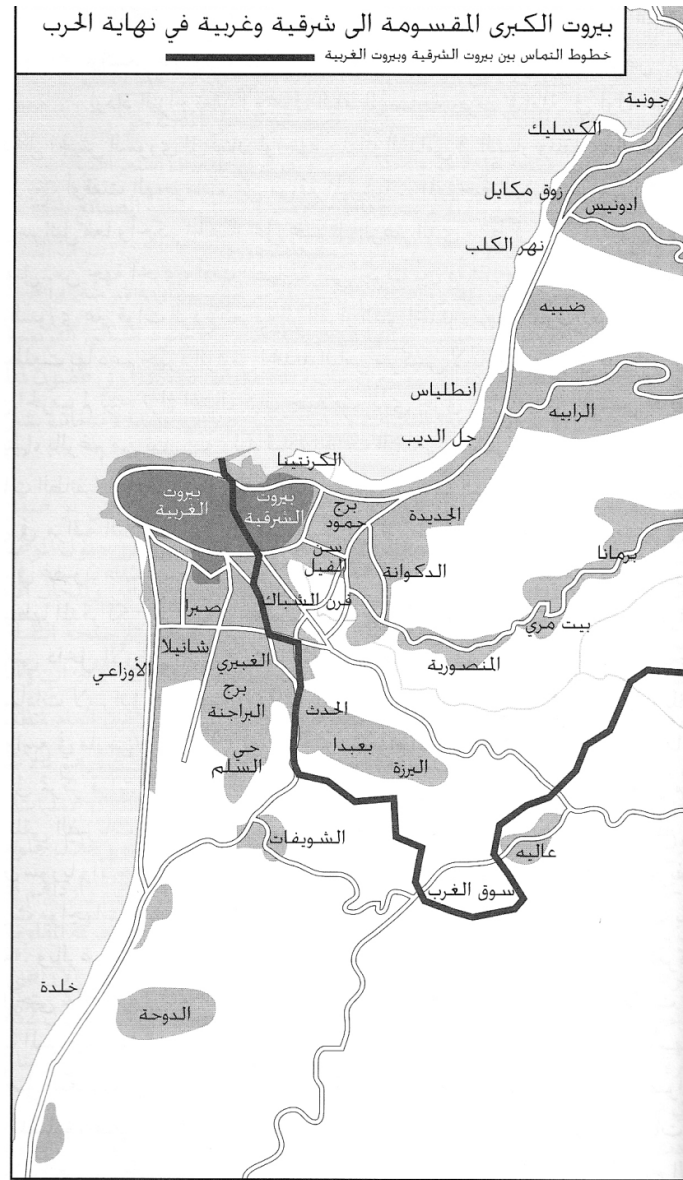


Figure 5 Beirut green line (Source: Kassir, 2006: 555)

“In addition the war eliminated the centre of Beirut as a commercial and financial centre for the economy of Lebanon and for large sectors of the Arab Middle East. It has not been entirely replaced by the numerous replacement centres located in and around the capital. However, each one of them has played an important role in allowing a relative degree of autonomy for the area or quarter in which they were placed. Each sector or sub-sector of the

city and its outskirts is now more or less independent and free from the centralization of functions that characterized pre-war days” (Davie, 1993: 7).

The Ta'if Agreement of 1989 marked the beginning of the end of the war.<sup>23</sup> Following the cessation of hostilities the country was left with significant human, material and economic losses. In terms of human losses, these have been estimated as follows: 170,000 persons died, 800,000 were displaced and 900,000 emigrated (Baz, in Rowe and Sarkis ed., 1998). The material losses were equally substantial. A total of 300,000 dwellings were damaged; hospitals, schools, roads, water, electricity, and telecommunication were severely affected; and total material damages were estimated at \$12 billion, while opportunity costs rose to a minimum of \$60 billion.<sup>24</sup> The war resulted not only in physical changes to the city but also in “deep changes in the demography of the city’s population, its social structure, its networks (social or economic) and its movements” (Ibid).

### 3.3. *Post-war Beirut: The Hariri era*

In August 1990, parliament and the new president agreed on constitutional amendments embodying some of the political reforms envisioned at Ta'if.<sup>25</sup> After the election of a new parliament in 1992 Prime Minister Rafik Hariri formed a cabinet. Bearing in mind that the Taif agreement shifted executive authority from the Maronite President of the Republic to the Council of Ministers and that the Sunni post of the prime minister became the central position in the affairs of government<sup>26</sup> (Salem, 1991: 77-8) the formation of a government headed by a

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<sup>23</sup> The "National Reconciliation Accord," known as the Taif Agreement was an agreement reached to provide the basis for the ending of the civil war and the return to political normalcy in Lebanon. It was negotiated in the city of Taif, Saudi Arabia and was designed to politically accommodate the demographic shift to a Muslim majority, reassert Lebanese authority in South Lebanon (then occupied by Israel), and legitimize the Syrian occupation of Lebanon. It was signed on October 22, 1989 and ratified on November 4, 1989.

<sup>25</sup> The Chamber of Deputies expanded to 128 seats and was divided equally between Christians and Muslims (with Druze counted as Muslims). In March 1991, parliament passed an amnesty law that pardoned all political crimes prior to its enactment. The amnesty was not extended to crimes perpetrated against foreign diplomats or certain crimes referred by the cabinet to the Higher Judicial Council. In May 1991, the militias (with the important exception of Hizballah) were dissolved, and the Lebanese Armed Forces began to slowly rebuild itself as Lebanon's only major non-sectarian institution. Post-war social and political instability, fuelled by economic uncertainty and the collapse of the Lebanese currency, led to the resignation of Prime Minister Omar Karami in May 1992, after less than 2 years in office. He was replaced by former Prime Minister Rashid al Sulh, who was widely viewed as a caretaker to oversee Lebanon's first parliamentary elections in 20 years.

<sup>26</sup> Paul Salem (1991) mentions that under the Taif agreement the Maronite President of the Republic was stripped of most of his executive powers and became a largely ceremonial figure who reigns but does not rule, in contrast the post of the Sunni Prime Minister was strengthened as he controls the agenda of the Council of Ministers and oversees the daily operations of the state bureaucracy. In addition the appointment and dismissal of the Prime Minister became no longer controlled by the

construction tycoon was widely seen as a sign that Lebanon would make a priority of rebuilding the country and reviving the economy. Self-made billionaire Hariri was Prime Minister of Lebanon from 1992 to 1998 and again from 2000 until his resignation in October 2004. Hariri dominated the country's post-war political and business life and is widely credited with reconstructing Beirut. During Hariri's time as Prime Minister public debt rose from \$2.5 billion to over \$40 billion.

Immediately after Hariri came to power he declared he would restore Lebanon's pre-war position as a regional business and finance hub. Lebanon, he said, would become the "Singapore of the Middle East." Towards this end an ambitious reconstruction project, termed Horizon 2000, was kickstarted by government in 1992. "Horizon 2000 was prepared by International Bechtel Incorporated and Dar-Al-Handash Consultants for the Lebanese government represented by the Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and the *Hariri Foundation*"<sup>27</sup> (International Bechtel, 1992: 43, emphasis added). The total cost of Horizon 2000 was estimated at 10,995 million USD<sup>28</sup>. Refer to Table 6. Horizon 2000 prioritized the financial sector over agriculture and industry, and emphasized the development of physical infrastructure rather than human capital. Proponents of this plan argued that a revitalized financial sector would become an engine driving economic growth for the entire country. In addition, putting Beirut back on the regional map was very much the focus of Horizon 2000. Indeed the years that followed showed how Beirut was rebuilt at the expense of the country as a whole. Within this context Hariri's choice of the city-state of Singapore as a model for a Lebanon whose economy emanates from its capital city Beirut is quite telling.

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President but only through a decision of parliament. The Shiite post of the Speaker of Parliament was also strengthened under Taïf by extending his term to four years and by centrally involving him in designating a prime minister.

<sup>27</sup> Reference in Bechtel's report (1992) to the Hariri Foundation as "*representative of Lebanese government*" (Ibid, emphasis added) is quite telling of the public/private roles confusion that governed the Hariri era. The Hariri Foundation is a non-profit organization founded by Hariri in 1979 to organize the handing out of education loans and grants to Lebanese students studying in universities in Lebanon, Europe and the United States. As the work of the Foundation and its alumni base expanded, Hariri used the Foundation, particularly in his early years of office, as an advisory expert group that supported the work of his office.

<sup>28</sup> "Bechtel and Dar al-Handasah identified three major financing sources. First is the surplus from the Lebanese national budget that is expected to be achieved by the beginning of 1996. Secondly, internal borrowing through treasury bills could be used to cover unfinanced local costs' (International Bechtel, 1993 (37): 1). Thirdly, foreign financing would be obtained from various donors and financial institutions; this would consist of funds provided either on an outright grant basis, or concessional loans, or a mix of grants and loans (Bashir, 1994 (42): 67)" (Kisirwani, 1997).

Sector	Cost (Million US\$)
Electricity	1,800
Health	825
Waste Management	180
Communications	620
Transport	2,845
Water	415
Education	1,135
Social Welfare	600
Agriculture	585
Industry	350
Fuel Oil	70
Services	300
Public Buildings	170
Management	150
Housing	950
Total	10,995

Table 6 Lebanon's Ten-Year Reconstruction Programme 1992-2003  
(Source: Republic of Lebanon, 1992)

The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) was made responsible for leading and coordinating the reconstruction effort in the country. However, the redevelopment of the center of Beirut- *el-balad* in Arabic- was considered as a separate item in the reconstruction programme. A consultancy firm, Dar Al Handasah, developed a project for the Lebanese Government<sup>29</sup> for an area termed as the Beirut Central District (BCD) and delineating what is conceived to have been the center of Beirut. Owing to an exhausted national treasury, the project failed to be implemented. “A law passed in December 1991 gave the municipal administration the authority to create real estate companies in war-damaged areas, and to entrust them with the implementation of the urban plan and the promotion, marketing and sale of properties to individual or corporate developers... The Real Estate Company has been formed by the compulsory association of property owners and occupants with property

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<sup>29</sup> Hariri already offered his services in 1982-1983 to former president Amine Gemayel by sponsoring studies for the city center, which started the process of large-scale destructions during the brief reconstruction effort of that time. Further studies by Hariri's consulting firm explored various scenarios expanding the logic of *tabula rasa*, which were partially enacted in Solidere's final schemes for the city center.

investors, the former offering their rights as equity and the latter the equivalent, after evaluation, in cash. Thus shares will, in effect, replace title deeds of ownership” (Salam in Rowe and Sarkis ed., 1998:131). Subsequently, a single real estate company, namely, Société libanaise pour le développement et la reconstruction de Beyrouth, termed as Solidere, was established to develop the BCD.

The project bore the imprint of Hariri (although he was still not prime minister at the time). Solidere’s board of directors were predominately Hariri loyalists and Hariri’s shares in Solidere a well-kept secret. Solidere became Hariri’s most notable achievement that he prided himself with<sup>30</sup> and indeed it symbolizes best Hariri's strategy to link economic recovery to private sector real estate investment.

The objective of the Solidere project was to reshape the image of the city center- *el-balad*- and to use it as a tool and symbol for the economic recovery of the country. Solidere promised to make the center- *el-balad*- a place for healing war-torn Lebanon, a place in which Beirutis and by projection Lebanese from all confessions can meet peacefully. Reuniting the war divided city was to start from the center. However, gentrification marginalized lower income groups and the ownership of the project by one political party excluded the populace of opposing political factions. The center -*el-balad*- became Solidere<sup>31</sup> and Solidere became the symbol of Hariri’s regime of governance.

Two other major Real Estate Companies (REC) formed after the passing of the 1991 law. Linord<sup>32</sup> and Elyssar<sup>33</sup> were entrusted with developing the northern costal line and the southern suburb respectively. “[Solidere, Linord and Elyssar] follow substantially different processes of implementation, ranging from public and private sponsorship to a build-operate-and-transfer set-up in the case of Linord.” (Sarkis in Rowe and Sarkis ed., 1998:16)

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<sup>30</sup> When the French president Jacques Chirac paid Lebanon an official visit in 2004, PM Hariri took Chirac – a close personal friend of PM Hariri- to the Solidere area to showcase his achievement. Also in one of the last interviews PM Hariri made with CNN shortly before his assassination, PM Hariri was interviewed strolling in the Solidere area with his grandson.

<sup>31</sup> Indeed, people started to refer to the center as Solidere – *I am having lunch in Solidere, I am going shopping in Solidere etc...*- that is, as a homogeneous totality the same way one would refer to a mall or a resort.

<sup>32</sup> Linord is a private company that “was conceived as a way to enhance the northern entrance of Beirut”. (Source: Linord homepage, [www.dm.net.lb](http://www.dm.net.lb) ) One of its tasks is the rehabilitation of the Borj Hammoud Garbage Dump. Its broader objectives, however, are to develop high value reclamation land on the sea front which it will turn into a luxurious residential area.

<sup>33</sup> Elyssar is a public agency created in 1995 with the mission to develop the southwestern suburb of Beirut. One of the objectives of Elyssar was to resettle illegal residents in a legally built 7,500 units’ social housing complex in order to vacate high value terrains particularly along the seashore.

Linord, is developing upper-class residential neighbourhoods along a pattern similar to that of Solidere. While the main objective is to develop a modern urban setting, the project has, to date, executed a landfill and constructed a grid of roads surrounding plots in preparation for real estate development (Arbid in ESCWA, 2005). On the other hand, Elyssar is a situationally sensitive variation of the Solidere type. The local political circumstances of the southern suburb necessitated more pronounced public involvement. The area is densely inhabited by a poor Shiite population that illegally carved a place for itself at the outskirts of Beirut during the war period. The two main Shiite political parties are strongly represented in the area. Significant changes to the original formulation of the Elyssar project were a result of the pressure that they have exerted (Harb in Rowe and Sarkis ed., 1997:16). Hence, Elyssar was developed as a semi-public agency with representatives of the two main Shiite political parties on the administrative board. Moreover, Elyssar considered relocating a major proportion of the inhabitants of the area into 7,500 purpose-built low-income housing units, rather than financially compensating them (Ibid). Launched in 1995, the Elyssar master plan has still not kicked off and is unlikely to do so in the near future as it is entangled in political wrangling between opposing interest groups.

Solidere, Linord and Elyssar with an area of 1.8 km<sup>2</sup>, 2.39km<sup>2</sup> and 5.86 km<sup>2</sup> respectively, occupy approximately 5% of Greater Beirut Area. Solidere and Elyssar's understated mission is high-income gentrification of residential and commercial settings<sup>34</sup> while Linord attempts to build from scratch this "village of union", to borrow Robert Owen's term. These interventions are conceived of as strategic.<sup>35</sup> In deed strategic and tactical interventions augment a vision that is best summarized in the words of Fadi Fawaz, CEO of Linord, "They will work in Solidere and live in Linord." (Fawaz, June 1996 in an interview with the author of this research)

As the expenditures of the Hariri governments and the debt compounded, many questioned whether these investments were more geared to benefit a limited elite rather than the

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<sup>34</sup> Saifi "urban" village is an example of an up market residential enclave in Solidere. The entries to the Saifi area are guarded by a privately hired security agency that protects the area from "contamination" by mundane street life of Beirut. Filipino domestic workers carry their "masters'" garbage across the street outside the limits of Solidere. The colour schemes remind of Disneyland. In deed there are many reminders of Disney, its detachment and seclusion from its surrounding urban fabric, its *fake* portrayal of community and its kitschification of authenticity.

<sup>35</sup> They contrast with the state's tactical interventions through projects with limited scopes such as the beltway, the Pan Arab highway, the new airport, Beirut gateways program etc..... (Source: [www.elyssar.com](http://www.elyssar.com))

Lebanese society as a whole<sup>36</sup>. Makdisi (1997) argues that with the coming of Hariri to power, state repressive activity increased parallel to state involvement in profit oriented planning practices. “Harirism”, a term Makdisi uses to refer to the political system of post-war Lebanon, indeed Hariri employed “the same neoliberal rhetoric of Reaganism and Thatcherism” (Makdisi,1997: 696). This has happened by orienting the reconstruction efforts first and foremost towards the goal aiming at putting Lebanon and in particular its capital Beirut, back on the map of competitive cities. Towards this end, new methods of urban governance were devised to set up vehicles for property-led regeneration which in turn facilitated the use of “city as a growth machine” (Molotch, 1976) that can attract investment. The underlying ideology was that in the context of Beirut segregation by status is less politically volatile than segregation by sectarian association.

Others accused government of turning Beirut into “an entertainment capital for the Arab world” (Haddad, in [www.worldviewcities.org/beirut/elipsis.html](http://www.worldviewcities.org/beirut/elipsis.html) accessed in March 2007) Indeed, in 2003, more than 1 million tourists visited Lebanon of which 43 per cent were Arab nationals, representing the highest number in 24 years.<sup>37</sup>

The infrastructure of leisure services expanded during this period. These services cater for an indigenous “leisure class” (Veblen, 1899), exogenous leisure consumers namely tourists particularly post 9/11 gulf tourists and Lebanese emigrants who visit Lebanon periodically and whose spending patterns during their visits resembles that of tourists. The number of Lebanese residing outside Lebanon is estimated at threefold the resident population (United Nations, 2003). With the level of unemployment increasing as a result of a lack of a strong productive sector, this number is on the rise as young Lebanese are emigrating for jobs. Lebanese migrants periodically return to Lebanon for holidays. Servicing visiting Lebanese is contributing significantly to the Lebanese economy, as are their remittances that they send home.

The spending practices of the endogenous leisure class, the tourists and visiting emigrants conform to the “culture ideology of consumerism” (Sklair, 2003). The servicing of these

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<sup>36</sup> Arbid (2005) argues that “In order for the city to emerge from its trauma and recover from the war, more than a showcased centre is needed. While it is hoped that the atomization and the eventual success of BCD will favourably impact both the national economy and the adjoining neighbourhoods, it is crucial to address the whole city with concerted efforts. Through public participation and incentives, such neighbourhoods as Hamra, Clemenceau and Ashrafiyeh are being upgraded. Less fortunate districts, including Hay Al Sellom, Borj Hammoud and Al Nabaa, which count for a significant proportion of the population of Greater Beirut, are still waiting to be developed. It is in those less fortunate neighbourhoods that the real challenge of a liveable city resides” (Arbid in ESCWA, 2005).

<sup>37</sup> According to the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism, 837,072 tourists visited Lebanon in 2001, compared to 231,868 tourists in 1995.



people is concentrated in the glamour zones of Beirut. The number of restaurants and café's in downtown Beirut rose from around 40 in late 2001 to over 70 in the summer of 2002, 99 in autumn of 2003 and more than 110 in spring of 2004 (Schellen 2004). It is worth noting that restaurants and café's have a high rate of closures and reopening. This could be taken to suggest that they cater to a certain category of leisure consumers whose frequency of leisure consumption imposes expiry dates on items of their leisure consumption. The retail sector also expanded at a fast rate. "At least 11 new projects have either been planned or are under construction across the country, with the majority going over 40,000 square meters... According to Ramco, new projects will radically expand Beirut's shopping center density from 58 square meters per thousand inhabitants to 232; while boosting the same indicator for the nation as a whole from 23 to 53 square meters" (Battah, 2003)<sup>38</sup>. Average per capita shopper center density in Europe is around 150m<sup>2</sup> (Ibid). Major developments include Solidere's souks (100,000 m<sup>2</sup>), ABC Achrafiyye' (120,000m<sup>2</sup>), Verdun Five (52,000 m<sup>2</sup>), Habtour Metropolitan City Center (14,000 m<sup>2</sup>) Beirut Mall (175,000 m<sup>2</sup>); and the Metropolitan City Centre in Sin El Fil. The most popular outlets in the current developments are women's wear and restaurants; home accessories, footwear, jewellery and men's wear in close pursuit (Karam 2004). At first glance the fierce competition that is practiced in the supply of retail space seems to be targeted at driving competitors out of the market, especially because the dramatic surge in retail space will not be likely to be matched with an increase in GDP per capita, which according to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia was at US\$ 4,960 in 2001. However, the scale of these developments suggests

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<sup>38</sup> The significant increase in the scale of projects is not only limited to department stores or shopping malls and the retail sector but can also be replicated in residential development; it has resulted in what Arbid (2005) calls "an architecture of gigantism". "This trend is reflected by the number of building permits that were submitted by the Order of Engineers and Architects of Beirut and that, in terms of surface area, reached 833 hectares in 2003, compared to 763 hectares in 2002. The cityscape began to change in the 1970s following the building ordinance that eliminated the height limit. However, the first high-rise buildings, including the Murr Tower and the Rizk Tower, were generally exceptions in the city silhouette until the end of the war. Since the 1990s, the number of high-rise buildings have increased significantly and continue to be erected in various neighbourhoods, including the waterfront of Ain El Mreisseh; the hills overlooking Beirut, such as the Cap sur Ville complex; and the waterfront of BCD, which, given its prime location, was able to attract investors from the Gulf region. Within that context, the Beirut Tower, with costs estimated at \$135 million, consists of 64 flats on 27 floors; and the Marina Tower and the Platinum Tower each comprise more than 25 floors. Moreover, a major project by SOLIDERE involves the construction of a 40-storey tower in Riad Al Solh Square in BCD, called the Landmark Beirut Trade Centre. Costing an estimated \$200 million, including \$60 million allotted for the purchase of the land, the high-rise building is set to become the largest structure in Lebanon, with 71,000 square metres of office space, conference, restaurant and banqueting facilities, in addition to an underground parking facilities for 600 cars. Consequently, the balance that had been maintained between the two-storey traditional Lebanese houses and the six-storey buildings is currently under threat by giant towers, whose appearance have irreversibly changed the scale and character of neighbourhoods. Similarly, major hotels that were renovated in the 1990s, including the Phoenicia and the Riviera, saw their pre-war elegance being replaced by ostentatious luxury, largely to cater to a clientele from the Gulf region. Additionally, massive hotels were built in and around Beirut, including the Metropolitan Palace Hotel in Sin El Fil, and Le Royal Hotel in Dbayeh" (Arbid in ESCWA, 2005).

rather that investors are speculating on attracting exogenous consumers such as “tourists who will add shopping on their Lebanon agenda” (Ibid).

Also worth noting has been the export of leisure consumption products via the media. Lebanon is the place where super star and star academy were launched and broadcasted to the Arab region. The Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) developed a “Big-Brother”-like show where 16 female candidates live together for 6 weeks to compete on the title of Miss Lebanon 2004. Their daily life of other reality TV shows is transmitted to Arab viewers around the clock on a purpose-built satellite channel. This points to the role that Beirut acquired during this period as a *cultural relay center* where Western cultural products are repackaged to better fit Arab taste when regionally exported.

### 3.4. ***Post-Hariri Beirut***

In February 2005, architect of the reconstruction project and broker of the Taif peace treaty PM Rafik Hariri was assassinated in a brutal car explosion in Beirut. Huge demonstrations filled central Beirut as a result of the assassination demanding withdrawal of Syrian<sup>39</sup> troops.

I term this period as the post-Hariri period as for the time being it is possible to name it only with reference to its break from the period that has preceded it. Since Hariri’s emergence on the Lebanese political scene- whether inside government or outside of it as briefly in the late 90’s- Hariri exerted a huge impact on political developments in Lebanon and developments in the city of Beirut in particular. In addition Hariri was a prominent public figure. As such, one can convincingly argue of the existence of a post-Hariri Beirut. Indeed, after the assassination of Hariri, Beirut was in a state of shock and grief. The pro-Hariri media worked to foster this sense of loss<sup>40</sup> continuously reminding of Hariri’s absence and using this state of shock as a force that can *reestablish* the political power, a “revolt of the Pashas” (Petran,

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<sup>39</sup> Followers of PM Hariri and anti-Syrian parties in Lebanon blamed the Syrian regime as being behind the assassination of PM Hariri. Shortly before the assassination, PM Hariri was increasingly distancing himself from the Syrian regime and refusing to play by its rules. At the time of the writing of this thesis an international tribunal established by the United Nations to investigate this crime had still not come to a verdict as to who has been behind the assassination.

<sup>40</sup>For example, for the first few years after his assassination, the Hariri owned Future news network continued to run a count of the days since Hariri’s passing. A number shown on the screen and on the front page of the Future newspaper showed on a daily basis the number of days that Hariri had been gone. Also numerous music pieces and music clips were aired with various intensity to commemorate the passing away of Hariri.

1987: 50-52) of sorts<sup>41</sup>. Using the terminology of Regulation theory<sup>42</sup> the post-Hariri era can be explained as a search for a new institutional fix in Lebanon, perhaps Hariri's assassination was prompted by this search.

Of significance in the context of this thesis is that the passing away of Hariri from the political scene in Lebanon removed Syrian military presence in Lebanon and reshuffled the players of the political game in Lebanon into new political constellations. A period of political uncertainty and turmoil followed. There was fierce political struggle in the country geared particularly against the resistance movement and its party, the Hezbollah, allied to Syria. The country essentially split into two opposing political camps, these camps first competed with who could pack the squares of Beirut with the biggest demonstration. Each side claimed legitimacy from its respective biggest demonstration which it staged, the date of which gave it its name. Thus the country and its people broke up into what became known as the March 8<sup>th</sup> and March 14<sup>th</sup> movements<sup>43</sup> Noteworthy in this context are two observations. First, unlike Lebanon's civil war, which pitted the Christian communities against the Moslem ones, the post-Hariri constellation mobilized the Sunni and Shiite Muslim communities against each other, with Christians divided between the two camps. Second, the March 14<sup>th</sup> demonstration brought to the streets "many unlikely protestors" to the point that it has been termed it "the Gucci revolution" (Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middleeast/4315223.stm>) "There are girls in tight skirts and high heels, carrying expensive leather bags, as well as men in business suits or trendy tennis shoes. And in one unforgettable scene an elderly lady, her hair all done up, was demonstrating alongside her Sri Lankan domestic helper, telling her to wave the flag and teaching her the Arabic words of the slogans." (Ibid) Clearly, the middle and upper income population, particularly in Beirut, felt threatened by the assassination of Hariri, so threatened that it felt compelled to take to the streets.

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<sup>41</sup> The late 50's saw Lebanon's first civil war. Different labels have been used to refer to this war ranging from rebellion to insurrection, the wide array of labels reflects the different perceptions around the nature and cause of the war (Denoeux, 1993). Among these terms has been the "Revolt of the Pashas" (Petran, in Denoeux, 1993: 125) which sees this war as an attempt of the country's most prominent leaders to re-establish political power.

<sup>42</sup> See for example Jessop (2001).

<sup>43</sup> "On one side is a coalition around the American-backed government that claims legitimacy from a series of demonstrations that culminated March 14, 2005, and led to the end of Syria's 29-year military presence in the country. On the other is an alliance between Hezbollah, a Shiite Muslim group supported by Iran and Syria, and Christian followers of Michel Aoun, a former general" (Source: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/22/AR2007112200832.html?nav=rss\\_email/components](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/22/AR2007112200832.html?nav=rss_email/components) accessed on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009).

The demonstrations were peaceful. However, the polarization of the Lebanese into two opposing camps that had at stake fundamental questions pertaining to Lebanon's identity, the influence of foreign patrons, and the balance of power among the country's communities, created intolerable tensions. Soon intermittent battles raged on the streets of Beirut between the followers of each movement and a series of assassinations of prominent political figures followed. Tourism was impacted, businesses closed and security was shattered

Two events that occurred after the assassination of Hariri are of particular significance in the context of this thesis, first the Israeli war on Lebanon in July 2006, and second, the May 2008 clashes in Beirut. These two events are significant because the first presents an attack on Lebanon from outside while the second event was an attack on Lebanon triggered by the malfunctioning of the Lebanese system, that is, an attack from within. Each of these incidents initiated a different set of insecurities and solidarities.<sup>44</sup>

The Israeli war refers to the 40 day war that Israel raged on Lebanon in the summer of 2006 following the kidnapping by Hizbullah of Israeli soldiers at the Lebanese Israeli border. Among the first targets in this war were all the runways of Lebanon's International airport, thus closing down the airport for the duration of the war. Municipal Beirut was not shelled in this war. Indeed Hizbullah openly warned the Israeli's that Beirut is a "red line" not to cross.<sup>45</sup> However, with the airport closed down and receiving huge influxes of refugees particularly from south Lebanon and major infrastructure projects being damaged, particularly highway bridges and electricity stations, Beirut, like the rest of Lebanon was at a state of emergency during and after the war. The tourist sector was crippled during the war and repercussions were severe for the year to come. "Israel's July-August 2006 war inflicted severe devastation on Lebanon's human and physical resources. The country's socio-economic development progress was greatly undermined. The trail of devastation has left the country with a series of serious rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery challenges" (ESCWA, 2006: 3).

The May 2008 clashes refer to the incidents that started May 7 and lasted a few days. The fighting was sparked mainly by a decision from government headed by March 14<sup>th</sup> movement to shut down Hizbullah's telecommunication network and remove Beirut Airport's security

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<sup>44</sup> The first event occurred while the fieldwork of this research was in process, while the second event occurred during the write-up of this thesis, that is, after the fieldwork was over. Nevertheless, I contacted my interviewees via telephone to gauge their reactions.

<sup>45</sup> Hizbullah's secretary general Hassan Nasrallah defiantly declared in a speech during the war that if Israel crossed the red line and attacked Beirut, Hizbullah would retaliate by attacking Tel Aviv. Interestingly the red line here seems to refer to the boundaries of Municipal Beirut and not Greater Beirut as Israel attacked the southern district, *aldahyeh* in Arabic, ferociously inflicting heavy civilian casualties and physical destruction.

chief over alleged ties to Hezbollah. Hezbollah has justified the telecommunications network as part of its resistance struggle against Israel and viewed government's decision as a "declaration of war"; it demanded that the government revoke it. As the government refused to do so, Hezbollah-led opposition fighters clashed with Future Movement militiamen loyal to the government, in street battles in Beirut. After a few days of intermittent fighting and in a bid to save face, government passed the decision to deal with the telecommunications issue onto the army. The violence ended when the army froze measures taken by the government against the Hezbollah movement, and called for all armed militants to withdraw from the streets.

What exactly happened during the May clashes in Beirut is difficult to assess. At the time of writing of this thesis, there has not yet been an independent inquiry into these incidents, in addition news reporting has been shamelessly biased. Indeed news reporting reflected sectarian tensions and worked to further fan their flames; each side involved in these clashes continues to tell its own version of the truth and vows to have more evidence to support its version.<sup>46</sup> Irrespective of whose version is true, it is safe to say the May 2008 clashes were the worst sectarian violence that occurred in *Beirut* since Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war<sup>47</sup>. They fermented sectarian tensions particularly between Sunni and Druze sects from one side and the Shiite sect from the other. These incidents nearly drove the country to a new civil war. Hence, unlike the Israeli war, the May incidents were, first, an attack from within and second they occurred mostly within the limits of Beirut's "red line".

Yet following both events life in Beirut was quick to recover back to normalcy owing perhaps to the famous adaptability of the Lebanese to conditions of uncertainty. Bearing in mind that after the attacks of 9/11, the Madrid bombings and London bombings, uncertainty became structural in many regions in the world, it is perhaps not that surprising that Beirut was named the number one Place to Visit in 2009 by The New York Times<sup>48</sup>. It was also listed as one of the top ten liveliest cities in the world by the Lonely Planet list of the top ten cities for 2009.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The battle was also one fought between the media. As such, opposition fighters occupied all the media outlets related to the pro-Government Future Movement and forced them to close for a number of days.

<sup>47</sup> PM Siniora said that even Israel did not dare do to Beirut what Hezbollah did. Religious leader of the Sunni sect, Mufti Qabbani addressed a statement to the Lebanese people in which he accused Hezbollah of *occupying* and *kidnapping Beirut* and violating its security. Hardliners of the March 14<sup>th</sup> movement continue to refer to the incident as *ghazwat Beirut*, the invasion of Beirut, thus suggesting that the Hizbullah and its followers are outsiders to the city.

<sup>48</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/01/11/travel/20090111\\_DESTINATIONS.html](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/01/11/travel/20090111_DESTINATIONS.html)

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/lebanon/beirut>

### 3.5. *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have reviewed as briefly as possible the rise and evolution of the city of Beirut. Providing background information on a city is a difficult endeavor, so much happens in and around cities, choosing what is relevant to portray an image of what the city is about is a difficult and subjective task. I have focused on the developments that the city has witnessed during the post-war period, as it is this period that the research is concerned with. Beirut was a divided city throughout much of the civil war, reuniting the city and its people was one of the main tasks of post-war governments headed by Hariri. The choice of reconstructing downtown Beirut as the site of encounter and reunification and a place for Beirutis of all different sects and by projection Lebanese of all different sects is indicative. The lack of data makes the task of assessing the success of the reunification efforts a difficult one. In what follows I argue that for the profile of individuals that this research is concerned with Beirut was transformed from a divided city to a city of layers.

## Chapter 4. **Understanding the urban, neighbourhood and affluence in the context of Beirut**

This chapter is concerned with three main concepts, namely, the urban, the neighbourhood and affluence. The aim of this chapter is to illuminate the different facets of each of these loaded concepts, to ground and sensitize them to the specific context in which they are used in this research. This chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section reviews the concept of the urban; it is followed by the second section that discusses the urban in the context of Beirut and raises questions related to *where* Beirut is and *what* Beirut is. The third section reviews the concept of neighbourhood, section four that follows it looks at neighbourhoods in the context of Beirut. The fifth section reviews the concept of affluence; the following sixth section explains affluence in the context of Beirut. The seventh section discusses the main conclusions of this chapter.

### 4.1. **Definitions of the urban**

One of the research questions that this research is addressing pertains to the repercussions of the type of segregation that this research is concerned with on the *urban* condition of the city of Beirut. As such it is important to be clear about what is exactly meant when I mention the urban. In this section I discuss this concept of the urban.

“The urban is most forcefully evoked by the constellation of lights at night, especially when flying over a city- the dazzling impression of brilliance, neon, street signs, street lights, incitements of various kinds, the simultaneous accumulation of wealth and signs...The urban is... a place of encounter, assembly, simultaneity” (Lefebvre, 1970/2003:118).

Susser (2002) argues that in the academic literature it is possible to distinguish two distinct senses of the term urban. “On one extreme is a definition linked to the spatial concentration of a population on the basis of certain limits of dimension and density (Bogue and Hauser, 1963; Davis, 1965) and on the other extreme is a definition linked to the diffusion of the system of values, attitudes and behaviour called ‘urban culture’, (Bargel, 1955; Anderson, 1959-60, 68; Friedmann, 1953; Sirjamaki, 1961; Boskoff, 1962; Gist and Fava, 1964)” (Susser, 2002: 21) or “urbanism as a mode of life” (Wirth, 1938). One extreme is concerned with urban *form* and the other with urban *life*. Urban form is usually the domain of urban planners, urban designers,

transportation engineers, architects, while urban life is the domain of social scientists and sociologists. In both extremes of the definition of the urban, the difficulties begin when one attempts to use these definitions in a concrete analysis. Castells (1977) asks “On the basis of which levels of dimension and density can a spatial unit be regarded as urban? What in practice are the theoretical and empirical foundations of each of the criteria? ... The thresholds vary enormously... The United States Census (1961) takes the threshold of 25000 inhabitants as the criterion of an urban district... the European conference of Statistics at Prague takes 10 000 inhabitants as its criterion” (Castells, 1977: 9). Davis (1965) states that the harder question to ask is not the floor of the urban category but rather ascertaining the *boundary* of places that are clearly urban by definition.

Perhaps even harder to answer is the question related to urban life. What variables make of life an urban one? Louis Wirth (1938) asked the fundamental question, what does it mean *to be* urban? Wirth (1938) defines what he terms as “the urban mode of living” mainly around the change of human relations towards relations that are segmented, anonymous, superficial, transitory and associated in character<sup>50</sup>. Lefebvre uses the term ‘Inhabiter’ to describe urban life. ‘To inhabit’, Lefebvre (1968) explains in *Le Droit à la Ville* “meant *to take part* in a social life, a community, village or city” Lefebvre (1968:76 emphasis added). Urban life possessed, amongst other qualities, this attribute. It bestowed dwelling, it allowed townspeople-citizens to inhabit. It is thus that “mortals inhabit while they save the earth, while they wait for gods . . . while they conduct their own being in preservation and use” (Ibid). Webber (1964) argues that “The unique commodity that the city offers to location seekers is *accessibility*. Individuals and groups who locate there are usually more able to deal with other individuals and groups who are located there than they can with those who are distant... The city is interactive to them because it offers the economies of urbanization, which facilitate that establishment and maintenance of these *contacts*” (Webber, 1964: 85 emphasis added).

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<sup>50</sup> “For sociological purposes a city is a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of heterogeneous individuals. Large numbers account for individual variability, the relative absence of intimate personal acquaintanceship, the segmentalization of human relations which are largely anonymous, superficial, and transitory, and associated characteristics. Density involves diversification and specialization, the coincidence of close physical contact and distant social relations, glaring contrasts, a complex pattern of segregation, the predominance of formal social control, and accentuated friction, among other phenomena. Heterogeneity tends to break down rigid social structures and to produce increased mobility, instability, and insecurity, and the affiliation of the individuals with a variety of intersecting and tangential social groups with a high rate of membership turnover. The pecuniary nexus tends to displace personal relations, and institutions tend to cater to mass rather than to individual requirements” (Wirth, 1938).



As such, urban form is related to the physical and spatial condition of the urban such as concentration, proximity, propinquity, density, *bodily* co-presence, heterogeneity of inhabitants; urban life is related to the social condition of the urban such as *exposure*, encounter, intense human interaction, accessibility, communication, contact.

It is usually assumed that urban form and urban life are interconnected, that urban life emanates from urban form and that urban form is shaped by urban life. Many studies of the urban make reference to both, urban form and urban life and particularly the interconnectivity of both.

To Mumford (1937) defining a city in terms of population size, density or attributes of the physical environment is inadequate. Rather the human side of cities is their very essence and city streets are a stage on which life's drama is played out. The city he writes is "the theatre of social action" (Ibid). Jane Jacobs (1961) was concerned with the impact of bad architecture and urban planning on human beings. Architecture and urban design may not determine human behaviour but bad design can have negative effect. Charles Keith Maisels (1993) sees urbanism as synoecism defined as "interdependence arising from dense proximity". Soja (2000) uses the term synekism to connote "the economic and ecological interdependencies and the creative- as well as occasionally destructive- synergies that arise from the purposeful clustering and collective cohabitation of people in space in a "home" habitat" (Soja, 2000: 12)<sup>51</sup> In other words the "spatial specificity of the urban" (Soja, 2000), mainly dense proximity, is linked to particular configurations of social relations and human activity in a city. Davis (1965) suggests that "The large and dense agglomerations comprising the urban population involve a degree of human contact and social complexity never before known. They exceed in size the communities of any other large animal; they suggest the behaviour of communal insects rather than of mammals".<sup>52</sup>

Two questions pertinent to the understanding of the term urban pose themselves here. First, does urban form necessarily lead to urban life? In other words if we reduce urban form to dense bodily co-presence and urban life to exposure, does bodily co-presence necessarily lead to exposure? Second, what are the consequences of exposure? Or to put it in simpler terms, what is this fuss about urban life all about?

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<sup>51</sup> Synekism is directly derived from synoikismos, literally the condition arising from dwelling together in one house (Soja, 2000: 12)

<sup>52</sup> I am reminded here of Heilbroner's caution that "man is not an ant conveniently equipped with an inborn pattern of social instincts. If his relatively weak physique forces him to seek cooperation, his inner drives constantly threaten to disrupt his social working partnerships" (Heilbroner, 1995: 18).

Let us turn to our first question first. Wirth (1938), Webber (1964), Lefebvre (1970) divorced urban life and urban form from each other. Webber (1964: 132) and Lefebvre (1970) associate the urban with urban life which they dissociate from urban form. Wirth (1938) paved the way for this dissociation. He states “as long as we identify urbanism with the physical entity of the city, viewing it merely as rigidly delimited in space, and proceed as if urban attributes abruptly ceased to be manifested beyond an arbitrary boundary line, we are not likely to arrive at any adequate conception of *urbanism as a mode of life*” (Wirth, 1938: 4, emphasis added) Wirth (1938) argued that “that while the city is the characteristic locus of urbanism, the urban mode of life is not confined to cities...the city, statistically speaking, is always an administrative concept” (Wirth, 1938: 5).

Lefebvre (1970) argues that we must no longer talk of cities as such, but rather of an *urban society* He argues that society has been completely urbanized and an urban society results from a process of complete urbanization. To speak of the urban then is to look beyond the “city,” to encompass an entire way of being, thinking and acting. Absorbed and obliterated by vaster units, rural places have become an integral part of industrial production, swallowed up by an ‘urban fabric’ continually extending its borders, ceaselessly corroding the residue of agrarian life, gobbling up everything and everywhere that will increase surplus value and accumulate capital. ‘This term, “urban fabric”’, he qualifies, ‘doesn’t narrowly define the built environment of cities, but all manifestations of the dominance of the city over the countryside. In this sense, a vacation home, a highway and a rural supermarket are all part of the urban tissue’ (Lefebvre, 1970/2003: 3–4).

Webber (1964) uses the term *urban realm* to refer to the extension of urbanness beyond the confines of the city. According to Webber, urbanity, which is the essence of urbanness is a function of diversity and volume of information that an individual receives<sup>53</sup> (Webber, 1964: 132). Urbanity is communication and “an urban realm is neither an urban settlement nor a territory, but heterogeneous groups of people communicating with each other through space

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<sup>53</sup> Webber (1964) asks to see urbanity- the essence of urbanness- not as buildings, not as landuse patterns, not as large, dense, and heterogeneous population aggregations, but as a quality and a diversity of life that is distinct from and in some measure independent of these other characteristics. Urbanity is more profitably conceived as a property of the amount and the variety of one’s participation in the cultural life of a world of creative specialists, of the amount and the variety of information received. This urbanity is no longer the exclusive trait of the city dweller; the suburbanite and the exurbanite are the most urbane of men; increasingly the farmer themselves are participating in the urban life of the world (Ibid: 88-89). This must be understood by taking into consideration that there used to be a clear distinction between what was rural and what was urban, particularly in the western world, when cities had walls clearly demarcating the social and political distinction. The urban and the rural had distinctive rhythms of life and work. Today these distinctions are blurred to the extent that one cannot talk of the city as city anymore.

(Ibid: 116). He argues that “while it is commonly recognized that governmental boundary lines are really inadequate bases for defining urban areas, since they are not important indicators of either the physical patterns of settlement or of the conduct of activities within settlements, it is apparently less commonly seen that physical separation is not a necessary criterion of urbanness, either (Ibid: 82).

Let us turn now to our second question pertaining to the consequences of exposure that is resultant of the condition of being together in space. Here we can distinguish two main perspectives in the literature.

On one hand, urban places are described as having the power to spawn collective action, and enabling mobilization and collective public protest. Proponents of this perspective argue that spatial proximity inspires collective action, on different occasions urban places provided a site where number of participants could and would gather as such urban places encourage public display of political activism. As such, this perspective on the consequences of exposure sees urban form as the locus of diversity, tolerance, sophistication, sociation, public participation, cosmopolitanism, integration, specialization, personal network-formation (Fischer 1977, 1982), coping, frequent spontaneous interactions, freedom, creativity- i.e. community as a coming together in local collective projects requiring civil negotiations of differences that are inevitable (Young in Gieryn, 2000).

On the other hand, “urban places are also described as the locus of anonymity, detachment, loneliness, formalized social control, segregation, individualism, withdrawal, detachment, isolation, fear, seclusion, mental illness (Halpern, 1995)- i.e. the last place on earth one could find community” (Gieryn, 2000: 467).

We also find in the literature a perspective on the consequences of exposure that mixes and matches the above two perspective. This perspective sees the city as a place of freedom- first perspective- and a place of anonymity- second perspective. For example Allen et al (1999) argue that, “Historically the city has been a place of freedom. It has attracted those formerly enslaved: it was where serfs went when they ceased to be serfs, where slaves went to escape their masters, where women went to evade censure. The *anonymity* of the city appeared to promise *freedom*, and often it delivered it” (Allen, Massey and Pryke, 1999: 76, emphasis added) .

Hence, the consequences of exposure that is resultant of this condition of being together in space are contested. “Put crudely the possibilities are two- engagement or estrangement (Sennett 1990) – and debates over the conditions making one for the other outcome constitute perhaps the most celebrated and enduring contribution of sociologists to the study of place” (Gieryn, 200: 467). As such, this fuss about urban life is really about the debate about how co-presence and exposure that results from co-presence impacts the formation of communities.

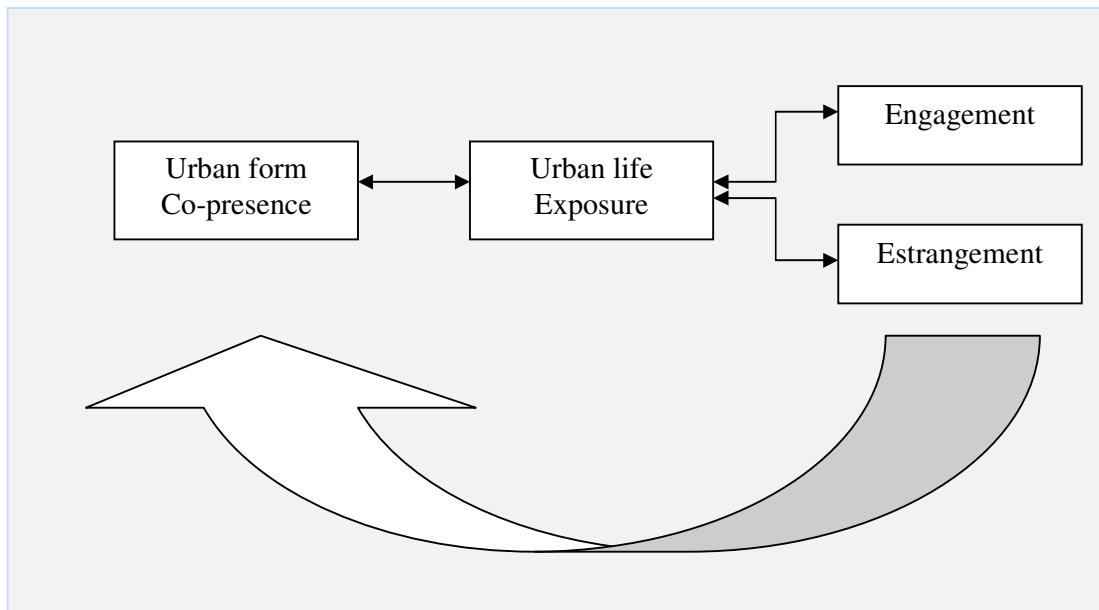


Figure 6 Constituents of the “urban” as a concept

#### 4.2. **Where and what is Beirut?**

*“Within the ring of boulevards that circumscribe the municipal perimeter of Beirut today, the dominant feature of the urban landscape is the high density of concrete structures, mostly indiscriminate mid-rise and high-rise buildings that cast their shadows on the remaining vestiges of villas or low-rise “yellow” houses of the French Mandate period. The buildings’ irregular setbacks create discontinuity in the urban fabric, and the scarcity of sidewalks, frequently occupied by cars, reduces pedestrian space, aggravated by the quasi-absence of urban parks and public spaces. In the middle of the city, the wartime dividing line remains desolate, with large tracts of no-man’s land and bullet-ridden facades. The war has accentuated the chaotic spreading of the city alongside the highway, where the hills surrounding the capital provide substitute residential suburbs for the middle classes fleeing the high real estate prices in the city.” (Eric Verdeil in <http://www.worldviewcities.org/beirut/urban.html> accessed in March 2007)*

As mentioned earlier, since around the third millennium B.C the peninsula located approximately at the midpoint of the eastern coastline of the Mediterranean, termed Beirut, has been continuously inhabited (Jidejian, 1973). The origin of the evolution of the city of Beirut can be traced back to the function of this peninsula as a natural protective port (Kassir, 2006) and the site's particular local topography (Davie, 1987), particularly the function of the two hills of Beirut for defence and communication. Hence, it is the physiognomy of this peninsula that has probably been the trigger of what Jacobs (1968) calls the "spark of [Beirut's] city economic life". In the course of the development of the city, however, Beirut expanded beyond the geographic limitations of this peninsula. Today, there is an ambiguity as to the boundaries of Beirut. Where does Beirut end and where does it begin? This section addresses this ambiguity and attempts to answer the question: "Where and what is Beirut today?"

At the time of writing of this thesis the term Beirut refers *officially and legally* to the administrative area known as Municipal Beirut- *Baladiat* Beirut. Refer to Figure 7. This administrative area is -uniquely in Lebanon- simultaneously also a governorate- *Muhafazat* Beirut.<sup>54</sup> As such, *official* Beirut has both a governor appointed by central government and a mayor elected by the registered population of Beirut. The geographic borders of the municipality/governorate of Beirut, henceforth referred to as Municipal Beirut are synonymous . The area of Municipal Beirut is 19.6 km<sup>2</sup> (MOE, 2001: 9) Based on 2004 household survey , which did not include the Palestinian camps located within the boundaries of municipal Beirut, the estimated<sup>55</sup> population of Municipal Beirut is 390,503 (MOSA, 2006:

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<sup>54</sup>Unlike other municipalities, the Municipal Council of Beirut has no executive power. It meets, discusses, takes decisions; but implementation is the prerogative of the *Mohafez*. All the employees of the Municipality work effectively for the *Mohafez* (an employee of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) who is appointed by the Council of Ministers) and not for the Mayor (an elected official). The relations of the Beirut Municipal Council with the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs MOMRA are yet to be clearly defined.(Team International) The duties of the Governor [Muhafiz] are primarily administrative and involve the local implementation of policies of the central government and the co-ordination among the central government office and officials within the *muhafaza*. The Governor represents all the ministries except for the Ministries of Justice and Defence. His functions according to articles 4 to 26 of Decree 116 of 1959 include the following: implementing laws and regulations; putting into practice political directives from the central government and informing the government of the general political situation in the *muhafaza*; administering all matters relating to personal status and inspecting and controlling all central government bureaus and civil servants in the *muhafaza*; guaranteeing public security; personal freedom and private property; and co coordinating with internal security forces placed under his command. (Source: [http://www.zgharta.com/municipalities/local\\_government.html](http://www.zgharta.com/municipalities/local_government.html)).

<sup>55</sup> "Given the absence of comprehensive population surveys, and with the last census held in 1932, sample studies provide the only option for estimating the number of residents in Lebanon, as well as to identify their demographic, educational, professional, health and other characteristics. The National Survey of Household Living Conditions 2004-2005 (The Multipurpose Survey) is considered the most recent in this domain, and it reveals numerous characteristics related to households and individuals residing in Lebanon." (MOSA, 2006: 26)

27). This amounts to approximately 10% of the Lebanese population<sup>56</sup>. The density of inhabitants is 21,938 persons per square km (Source: MOSA , 2006: 26). Municipal Beirut is divided into twelve municipality recognized neighborhoods - Ahy'a. (Source: <http://www.beirut.gov.lb/> accessed Nov 25, 2008) Four of the twelve official Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon are located in municipal Beirut: Burj el\_Barajneh, Shatila, Mar Elias and Dbayeh. Of the fifteen unregistered or unofficial refugee camps, Sabra, which lies adjacent to Shatila, is also located in Municipal Beirut.

*Functionally and morphologically* the borders of Beirut extend well beyond its official/ legal/ administrative borders. Refer to Figure 7. However, there are no official public entities that organize or administer this functional and morphological extension. As such, what the Central Administration for Statistics (CAS) terms as “Beirut and its suburbs” (CAS, 1998), the Ministry of Environment (MOE) as “Metropolitan Beirut”, (MOE, 2003 ) the Schema Directeur (SD) as “Beirut Metropolitan Area” (BMR) (SD, 1986), and the Team study as “Greater Beirut Area” (GBA) (Team Report) are all depictions of *visions* that delineate the extension of Beirut. At the time of writing of this thesis there exists no law or decree that documents this extension and as such these delineations do not have any administrative, official or legal existence.

“Metropolitan Beirut” – also termed as “Beirut and its suburbs” -covers an area of 252 km<sup>2</sup> and has an estimated population of 1,303,129 (MOE, 2003 ). This research has not come across information that clearly provides the exact boundaries of “Metropolitan Beirut”/“Beirut and its suburbs”, however, it is clear that this delineation contains areas that belong to other Muhafazas to include portions of the Cazas of Metn, Baabda, Chouf and Aaley (MOE, 2003).

On the other hand, the boundaries of Beirut Metropolitan region (BMR)- also termed as Greater Beirut Area (GBA) are defined by Nahr El-Kalb from the north, Damour River from the south and 400 m altitude to the East. Refer to Figure 7. The BMR/GBA extends over an area of 218 km<sup>2</sup> and had in 1984 approximately 1.3 million residents (SD, 1986) that account to 45% of the Lebanese population that thus lived in 2.1% of the whole country thus making the gross residential density in the BMR 5,500 persons/km<sup>2</sup>. The GBA/BMR includes many municipalities. These municipalities lie in two Mohafazas, the Mohafaza of Beirut and the Mohafaza of Mount Lebanon. The municipalities of BMR/GBA do not belong to a federation. This means that “The largest metropolitan area of Lebanon, which includes over 1/3 of the country's population and the nation's capital is at its heart, has no municipal coordinating

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<sup>56</sup> An added complexity is that some estimates consider the population of the Palestinian camps located within the borders of municipal Beirut, e.g. CAS estimate while others don't e.g. the MOSA estimate.

body” (Team report). As such, there are no formal processes for coordinated planning and decision-making at the metropolitan level (Ibid).<sup>57</sup>

	Population/ year	%of total pop	Surface Area (km2)	Density persons/km2
Mohafazat Beirut Municipal Beirut(1)	403,337 (1997)	10%	19.6	20,167
<b>Beirut Suburbs (2)</b>	899,792 (1997)	22%	233	3,862
<b>MB/ “Beirut and its suburbs” (3)</b>	1,303,129 (1997)	32%	252	-
<b>BMR/ GBA (4)</b>	1,300,000 (1984)	45%	218	5,500

Sources:  
 (1) CAS Study, No. 9/1998  
 (2) CAS Study, No. 9/1998  
 (3) CAS Study, No. 9/1998  
 (4) Schema Directeur, 1986

Table 7 Population, area and density of different versions of Beirut  
 (Source: author)

*Psychologically*, the borders of Beirut are quite elastic in the popular and political imagination of the Lebanese. The elasticity of the borders of Beirut is particularly evident in political rhetoric, but also in the references of Lebanese. Sometimes Beirut is conceived of being synonymous with Lebanon at large<sup>58</sup> while at other times, it is perceived to be limited to a few key streets of Municipal Beirut. On hand of the following illustration of the conceptions of Bchamoun residents of where Beirut is, it is possible to better explain this elasticity. Bchamoun is a village that belongs to the BMR, particularly after the end of the civil war there has been intense residential construction in this village. Many of its current residents work in BMR.

*Siham is a registered Sunni Beirut who has moved to the village of Bchamoun when she was seventeen years old. In 1991, her father’s family sold a family-owned parcel of land and bought several flats in the Bchamoun area. Her extended family (uncles and grandparents) live in the same building. Siham is Sunni. When she got married she moved into one of the flats in the building that was rented out in the past. Her sister lives across the street. Her daily life is centered in Bchamoun but her social network is rather anchored in Municipal Beirut. She has better relationships to their*

<sup>57</sup> Before the civil war, the Council for Projects of Greater Beirut was set up as a quasi-planning board for the area. It reported directly to Central Government (not ministries) and there was no municipal involvement. After the civil war, it was transformed into the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). The CDR is today the main agency in charge of major reconstruction projects, especially involving external sponsoring agencies or lenders.

<sup>58</sup> “Hariri wanted *Lebanon* to be a beautiful copy of the most fabulous *cities* in the world” (Khachan, 2008, emphasis added).

*old neighbours in Municipal Beirut than to her new neighbours in Bchamoun. To her Bchamoun is at the periphery of a Greater Beirut Area, a place close to Municipal Beirut and convenient because housing is cheaper. "Original" Beirut to her though is Ras Beirut where the Beirutis used to live. Even though she does not live in "original" Beirut, she possesses a strong sense of belonging to that place.*

*Sawsan and Raja are both Druze. They both come from the village of Bchamoun, they were raised in Bchamoun and when they got married they moved into a flat in Bchamoun. They perceive themselves to be living in the village of Bchamoun and not in Beirut. To them Beirut is Municipal Beirut. Although Raja's office is located in Municipal Beirut, they would not want to live in Municipal Beirut because they do not think Municipal Beirut is a proper place to raise their girls. Raja is a member of the mayors council in the village. Their village is the setting for their cultural practices.*

*Hanan comes from Saida and resides in Bchamoun. Her kids go to IC school in Municipal Beirut and her husband works in Municipal Beirut. Her daily life routine involves trips to Municipal Beirut, sometimes several trips a day. For Hanan, there is no conception of a Municipal Beirut, Bchamoun is part of Beirut and she perceives herself to be living in Beirut.*

When I introduced myself to Sawsan and Raja and asked them for information regarding residents of Beirut, Sawsan and Raja's first response was that they lived in Bchamoun and not Beirut. Hanan and Siham on the other hand understood immediately. Sawsan and Raja's Bchamoun is the center of their universe. It is the setting for the social and cultural practices. It is part of their history. The village has meaning to them. Its history is not the same as that of Beirut. Raja took arms to defend Bchamoun during the war. Hanan and Siham are newcomers to Bchamoun. They do not feel a sense of attachment to the place and do not feel being part of its history. When asked whether they would take up arms to protect it they clearly said they would not. Siham feels expelled from "original" Beirut by land prices, while Hanan senses that she is living now closer to the cultural vibe of Beirut.

This psychological and imagined stretching and shrinking of the borders can perhaps be attributed to three main reasons. First, there is a perceptual ambiguity of where the city actually starts/ends. As a result of the functional and morphological growth of the city beyond its administrative borders, these administrative borders loose on perceptual validity. Simultaneously, urban sprawl inhibits the creation of new clear-cut perceptual borders and expands the everyday lifeworlds of people well beyond the borders of municipal Beirut. In



other words the *urban realm* of Beirut is not synonymous with the spatially delimited territory of administrative Municipal Beirut or its physical and functional extension Metropolitan Beirut. *The city has ceased to be a contained physical entity but has become rather a condition- of fluctuating intensity- expanding and contracting in the territory.* Particularly for the profile of individuals with which this research is concerned, this transformation of the city from a contained physical entity into a *condition* is further accentuated by their perception of the synonymousness of the Beirut condition with the practice of a specific Beirut lifestyle that can be described as relatively liberal and ostentatious - although this lifestyle is practiced mostly by non-Beirutis... registered Beirutis, that is, “original” Beirutis, as Siham would describe them, are rather conservative! Whenever this lifestyle is practiced in other parts of Lebanon, the Beirut condition is perceived to be operative.

In the year following the Israeli war on Lebanon in the summer of 2006 a number of Lebanese television stations (namely Future television and the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation “LBC”) hosted shows that broadcasted from resorts, restaurants, nightclubs and other tourist oriented facilities. The aim was mainly to send a message that the tourism industry has recovered from the war - in a way that the party has resumed. A recurring chant among many of the people shown dancing, eating out and having a good time was “This is Beirut”, or “Beirut is back”. Interestingly the site of most of these chants was outside Beirut, in Rmeileh, Jounieh, Jiyeh or Faqra!<sup>59</sup> The Beirut locality has induced an *urban lifestyle specificity* that has overpowered the locality itself to the point that when referring to the city reference is made to its urban lifestyle rather than to its locality. As such the proper question to be asked is not *where* Beirut is but rather *when* Beirut is, the former question refers to the urban form of Beirut while the latter to its urban life.

Second, due to the particular political situation in Lebanon loyalties continue to be territorially defined in Beirut despite the fact that interests are based in other places. This needs some further elaboration here. In Lebanon there exists a discrepancy between the actual place of residence and the place of registration. The place of residence carries duties (mainly paying taxes) while the place of registration brings rights (the right to vote and hence be represented). In Lebanon the place of registration is considered a person’s place of origin. Only women alter their places of registration when they marry men from other places of registration, other than that the place of registration is inherited and it is rather difficult to alter one’s place of registration in Lebanon. This continued fixation of the place of

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<sup>59</sup> Indeed, this Beirut condition can be even exported outside the country. In 2004 a prominent pub in Beirut organized a party in London. Tickets for the event were bought mostly in Lebanon. Many of the people purposefully travelled from Beirut to attend the event, a “this is Beirut” feeling in London.

registration reflects a political will to ground loyalties territorially as a mean to sustain political alliances that are confessionally-based by nature<sup>60</sup>.

A condition arises in which loyalties of people are anchored in territories that are not part of their everyday spatial domains. Only people that have Beirut listed in their ID's as their place of registration are officially considered "Beirutis" and are thus eligible to vote for parliamentary and municipal elections in Beirut. This place of registration is limited to administrative Beirut. In other words, in order to be officially a Beirutis, one's place of registration has to be within administrative Beirut.

"The available data within the National Survey of Household Living Conditions demonstrate the presence of a significant percentage of the population who do not reside in their place of registration..... significant percentages of the registered population in the periphery governorates (especially the Bekaa, South Lebanon and Nabatieh) reside in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, as only 60.9% of Beirut's residents are registered in Beirut and 39.1% are registered elsewhere, mostly in Mount Lebanon (14.6%) and Nabatieh (10.5%)" (MOSA, 2006: 37). This means that 39.1% of residents of Beirut are not registered "Beirutis" and are thus not entitled for political representation at the municipal or parliamentary level in Beirut.

Third, the city has many internal psychological borders that predate the war years but were definitely accentuated by the war-time demarcation lines particularly by the division of the city into a predominantly Muslim West Beirut and an almost exclusively Christian East Beirut. As Beirut is made up of fragments, the city is reduced to the respective fragments of its population. To a resident of Achrafiyye' Beirut is Achrafiyye', to a resident of Ain El Mraiyye', Beirut is Ain El Mraiyye'.

In conclusion *where* Beirut is can refer to the following:

- *Administrative /official/ legal* Beirut termed as the municipality or governorate of Beirut. This officially recognized entity has an area of 19.6 km<sup>2</sup>, an estimated population of around 390,503 in 2004 and a population density of 21,938 persons/km<sup>2</sup> (MOSA , 2006: 26) .
- *Functional and morphological* Beirut termed as either the Beirut Metropolitan Region (BMR) by the Schema Directeur of 1986, as Greater Beirut Area (GBA) by

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<sup>60</sup> Salibi states "Yaziji was correct when he began his essay on mount Lebanon with the statement that it was bilad 'asha'ir or a country of tribes." (Salibi, 1988:144)

some studies (e.g. the TEAM study), “Beirut and its suburbs” by CAS and “Metropolitan Beirut” by MOE. The BMR and GBA are synonymous. This region extends over an area of 218 km<sup>2</sup> and had an estimated population of 1.3 million in 1984. “Beirut and its suburbs” and “Metropolitan Beirut” are synonymous. This region has an area of 252 km<sup>2</sup>, its estimated population in 1997 was 1,303,129.

- Psychological/ imagined Beirut reduced to the Beirut Central District, Ras Beirut, Achrafiyye’, Basta or Verdun by some and expanded to Lebanon at large by others. Psychological/ imagined Beirut spans an area of a few streets to the whole of Lebanon with a population ranging from a few thousands to around 3.7 million.<sup>61</sup>

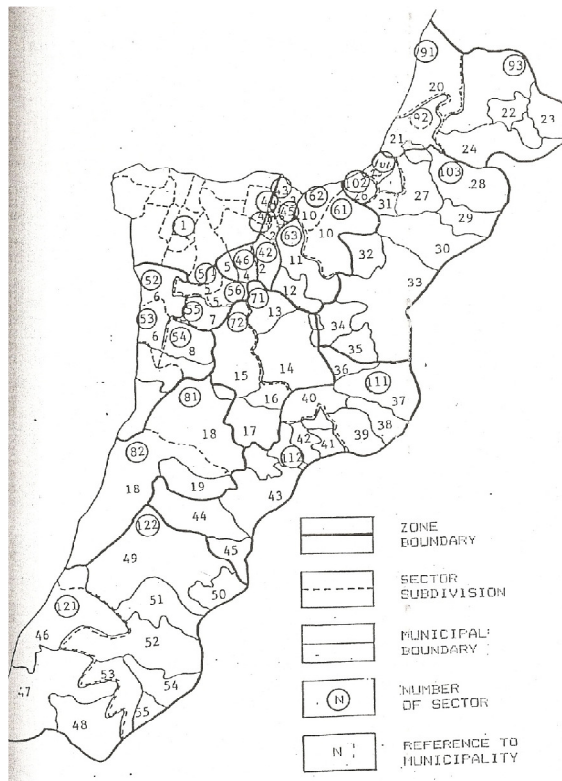


Figure 7 Municipal Beirut, Metropolitan Beirut  
(Source, MIT, AUB, 1995)

Regarding the question “*What is Beirut?*”, I choose to answer it with an expert from the lonleyplanet.com that although very non-academic I nevertheless found portrays quite well the complexity of what Beirut can be.

“What Beirut is depends entirely on *where* you are. If you’re gazing at the beautifully reconstructed colonial relics and mosques of central Beirut’s Downtown, the city is a triumph

<sup>61</sup> The population of Lebanon in 2004 is estimated by MOSA to be at 3,755,034 (MOSA, 2006: 27)

of rejuvenation over disaster. If you're in the young, vibrant neighbourhoods of Gemmayzeh or Achrafiyye', Beirut is about living for the moment: partying, eating and drinking as if there's no tomorrow. If you're standing in the shadow of buildings still peppered with bullet holes, or walking the Green Line with an elderly resident, it's a city of bitter memories and a dark past. If you're with Beirut's Armenians, Beirut is about salvation; if you're with its handful of Jews, it's about hiding your true identity. Here you'll find the freest gay scene in the Arab Middle East, yet homosexuality is still illegal. If you're in one of Beirut's southern refugee camps, Beirut is about sorrow and displacement; other southern districts are considered a base for paramilitary operations and south Beirut is home to infamous Hezbollah secretary general, Hassan Nasrallah. For some, it's a city of fear; for others, freedom.

Throw in maniacal drivers, air pollution from old, smoking Mercedes taxis, world-class universities, bars to rival Soho and coffee thicker than mud, political demonstrations, and swimming pools awash with more silicone than Miami. Add people so friendly you'll swear it can't be true, a political situation existing on a knife-edge, internationally renowned museums and gallery openings that continue in the face of explosions, assassinations and power cuts, and you'll find that you've never experienced a capital city quite so alive and kicking – despite its frequent volatility.” (Source: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/lebanon/beirut> , emphasis added)

### 4.3. *The concept of neighbourhood*

My first hypothesis states that affluent individuals seek social and spatial detachment from the localized contexts of their home, work/study and play. Underlying my hypothesis is that “locally based social [and spatial] interaction” (Forrest and Kennet, 2006: 715) is decreasing. Hence, in investigating the pattern and logic of spatial segregation practices of affluent individuals in the city of Beirut, this research is concerned among others with the relationship of affluent individuals with *local* place. In this section I focus on the localized context of the home and review the literature on the concept of neighbourhood. Of particular importance in the context of this research is the fact that the neighbourhood is viewed by many authors as a *useful scale* for studying the social relations of ‘everyday life-worlds’ (See for example Healey, 1998). Meegan and Mitchell (2001), for example, term the neighbourhood as the “*living space* through which people get access to material and social resources, across which they pass to reach other opportunities and which symbolises aspects of the identity of those living there, to themselves and to outsiders” (Meegan and Mitchell, 2001: 2172 emphasis added). This is important as I argue that for affluent individuals the neighbourhood is no longer “living space”, and as such, perhaps not the proper scale for studying the social

relations of everyday lifeworlds. As such what follows pinpoints the different issues involved in the concept of neighbourhood. This is important for grasping the logic of social and spatial detachment at the residential level that this research is concerned with.

### 4.3.1. Physical or social?

The concept of neighbourhood is accused of being a “chaotic” (Forrest and Kennett, 2006: 715) and “deceptively simple concept” (Meegan and Mitchell, 2001: 2192). However, there seems to be general agreement that neighbourhoods are both physical and social spaces. “Different definitions of neighbourhood emphasize different aspects including evident physical boundaries, local sense of belonging engendered through the routinized daily practices of residents, administrative boundaries or more pragmatic measures such as the size of the populations or *the area within walking distance of home*” (Forrest and Kennett, 2006: 715, emphasis added). Davies and Herbert (1993) group the main features of the definitions of neighbourhood into three basic domains. The first domain which they term the areal content domain relates to the physical or social differences in areas. The second domain, the behavior/interaction domain, is associated with the behaviour or interaction of people—with the way they engage in social and economic contacts with others, in and around their area of residence (Davies and Herbert, 1993: 63). The third domain is termed conceptual identity domain. It is in this domain that issues relating to sense of community and affective, generalized feelings about place—the ‘sense of place’—come into play.<sup>62</sup>

Glaster (2001) criticises all extant definitions of neighbourhood as suffering from two common shortcomings, firstly, that they presume either a certain (if unspecified) degree of spatial extent and/ or social interrelationships within that space, and secondly, that they underplay numerous other features of the local residential environment that clearly affect its quality from the perspective of residents, property owners and investors (Glaster, 2001: 2112). As such, Galster (2001) defines a neighbourhood as “the bundle of spatially based attributes associated with clusters of residences, sometimes in conjunction with other land uses” (Glaster, 2001: 2112). These attributes include, proximity, environmental characteristics, characteristics of buildings, demographic characteristics of the population, political characteristics, social-interactive characteristics and sentimental characteristics (Ibid). Some

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<sup>62</sup> There are two main sub-domains of conceptual identity which they label ‘cognitive’ and ‘affective’. The former concerns the way in which neighbourhoods and place-communities are perceived and defined by their inhabitants as revealed in naming and territorial marking and the mental maps that their inhabitants have of them. The latter sub-domain relates to the meanings and attitudes that people have about their neighbourhoods and place-communities—their social valuation of them, their sense of place (Davies and Herbert, 1993).

of the characteristics that Galster proposes clearly relate to the people who inhabit the neighborhood, others to the geography. These characteristics are highly correlated with one another, making it difficult to untangle causality, as Lupton (2003) points out. Thus, Lupton concludes that neighborhoods are not fixed entities, independent of the people who live in them, rather they are being constantly re-created as the people who live in them simultaneously consume and produce them (Lupton, 2003). Galster (2001: 2112) adds that the consumers and simultaneous producers of neighbourhoods are not just the households who live in them but also property owners, business people, local government and visitors (he adds in a footnote).

### 4.3.2. Different scales

Another pertinent issue to consider in the discussion of the concept of neighbourhood is that neighbourhoods exist at different scales (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001: 2103) or in the words of Galster (2001), there are different perceptions as to the boundaries of neighbourhoods. In a slight adaptation of Suttles' (1972) schema<sup>63</sup>, Kearns and Parkinson identify three different scales, each with its own predominant purpose or function (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001: 2103). These scales are, the home area, the locality and urban district, whereby the 'home area' is defined as an area of 5 to 10 minutes walk from one's home, the locality as the scale at which residential activities and the provision of local shops and services operate, and, the urban district or region as the scale at which wider social & economic opportunities are provided (Ibid). In utilizing the concept of neighbourhood in the context of this research it is important to be aware of this issue of different scales/perceptions of boundaries, since it is the valuation (or lack of it) of the attributes and externalities associated with affluent individuals' "bounding of neighbourhood" (Galster, 2001: 2114) that is relevant.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> "Suttles' (1972) suggests a multilevel spatial view of neighbourhood. He argued that urban households could identify four scales of 'neighbourhood'. At the smallest scale was the block face, the area over which children could be permitted to play without supervision. The second level was labeled the 'defended neighbourhood' —the smallest area possessing a corporate identity as defined by mutual opposition or contrast to another area. The third level, the 'community of limited liability', typically consisted of some local governmental body's district in which individuals' social participation was selective and voluntary. The highest geographical scale of neighbourhood, the 'expanded community of limited liability', was viewed as an entire sector of the city. Surveys conducted by Birch *et al.* (1979, ch. 3) have revealed that residents do, indeed, conceive of four distinct spatial levels of neighbourhood, which correspond closely to Suttles' theory .... it is precisely these *perceptions* of boundaries that are most critical in constructing theories or predictive models of neighbourhood change" (Galster, 2001: 2114).

<sup>64</sup> Galster (1986), terms this as "neighbourhood externality space". "A person's externality space is defined as the area over which changes in one or more spatially based attributes initiated by others are perceived as altering the well-being (use value, psychological and/or financial benefits) the individual derives from the particular location. Three (quantifiable) features are formulated of these externality spaces.

Scale	Predominant function	Mechanism(s)
Home area	Psycho-social benefits (for example, identity; belonging)	Familiarity Community
Locality	Residential activities Social status and position	Planning Service provision Housing market
Urban district or region	Landscape of social and economic opportunities	Employment connections Leisure interests Social networks

Table 8 Conceptions of neighbourhoods  
(Source: Kearns and Parkinson, 2001: 2104)

### 4.3.3. Social ties in neighbourhoods

In the context of this research in which I argue that affluent individuals increasingly seek to detach themselves from the local contexts of their home, the first two scales/boundary perceptions of neighbourhoods, that is, the home area and the locality become of particular interest. Understanding the nature of the human relationships that exist at these levels will enable us to understand what it is exactly that affluent individuals are rejecting.

When we consider the neighbourhood in terms of the human relationships that it yields, we are in fact looking at how “dwelling in nearness”<sup>65</sup> (Casey, 1997), which results in recurrent encounters between people, produces social relationships ranging from a mere nodding acquaintance to stronger and more committed and intimate relationships. These relationships are important for psychological purposes related to feelings of comfort and security that result out of predictable and familiar encounters<sup>66</sup>. They are also important for social purposes

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—*Congruence*: the degree to which an individual’s externality spaces correspond to particular, predetermined geographical boundaries.

—*Generality*: the degree to which an individual’s externality spaces for different spatially based attributes correspond.

—*Accordance*: the degree to which externality spaces for different individuals located in close proximity correspond.

<sup>65</sup> “The philosopher Edward Casey, in his book *The Fate of Place* (1997), utilises Heidegger’s concept of ‘nearness’ to argue that places are about ‘dwelling in nearness’ to others- ‘nearness’ entailing face-to-face contact and a reciprocal relationship; and that this ‘nearness’ brings about neighbourhood” (Forrest and Kearns, 2001: 2104)

<sup>66</sup> “If cities are ‘landscapes of marginal encounter’ (Gornick 1996), then neighbourhoods are arenas of predictable encounter (which for many people would also mean comfortable and secure encounters)

related to what Henning and Lieberg (1996: 22) call the bridging of weak ties- most of which do not extend into the world of work- with networks of strong ties. Weak ties are of particular importance for vulnerable and marginal groups<sup>67</sup> (Forrest and Kearns, 2001: 2133), and of lesser importance to affluent individuals. This is so because affluent individuals function in different social networks, at different scales, across different times and spaces. Depending on how and where they spend their time they have greater opportunity to develop “nearness” not only in their home area but in other places also. Faced with problems, they have a range of choices for seeking support including the possibility of buying in expert advice (Ibid). As such affluent individuals have a wider choice about how far their social life is constituted around the neighbourhood (Thomas, 1991: 20).

Finally, the role and nature of the family is also important in the discussion of the social ties that exist in neighbourhoods. The strength or weakness of family ties affects patterns of residential mobility and impacts the degree to which neighbourhoods act as containers of kinship relations<sup>68</sup> (Forrest and Kennett, 2006: 715).

#### **4.3.4. Important to whom?**

Another important point is that the neighborhood might have different and varying meanings to people in different points in the life course, with different circumstances or different characteristics. The connection with the neighbourhood is apparently affected by income, age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or indeed any other characteristics that impact on lifestyle and the extent and nature of involvement in the local area (Ellen and Turner 1997). Forrest and Kearns (2001) describe how neighborhood is relatively more important for many people in low income communities than for people in more advantaged areas. “Because of high unemployment, high levels of lone parenthood and perhaps a high number of poor pensioner

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where, to use Beauregard’s (1997) terminology, people know the narrative rules of encounter and have the appropriate discursive strategies easily to negotiate public space: they feel ‘at home’. Residents in their own neighbourhoods can read encounters correctly and can respond appropriately without having to resort to assertiveness and inventiveness since lower levels of discursive and social competence will suffice” (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001: 2106).

<sup>67</sup> Elsewhere, Forrest and Kearns (2001) mention that “residentially based networks perform an important function in the routines of everyday life and these routines are arguably the basic building blocks of social cohesion through them we learn tolerance, co-operation and acquire a sense of social order and belonging” (Ibid: 2130).

<sup>68</sup> Forrest and Kennett (2006) point out that “some European societies exhibit a more public sociable culture in which family life spills over into the public spaces of the neighbourhood compared with more privatised home-centred societies (Ibid: 715).



households, residents of poor neighborhoods spend more time in their local areas than do residents of wealthier neighborhoods” (Ibid: 2133). This is accentuated by work and car use enabled out-of-neighborhood activities. Atkinson and Kintrea (2000) state that women tend to be more involved in the neighborhood than men because children’s activities were often locally based. McCulloch and Joshi (2000) argue that children of different ages experience neighbourhoods differently (McCulloch and Joshi in Lupton, 2003). In early childhood, transactions outside the home are limited and qualified by parents. Older children are influenced more directly by peers, teachers and other adults, and adolescents have a wider range of formal and informal neighbourhood associations<sup>69</sup> (Ibid). As such, it is important to stress that the relationships between people and local place are quite complex and vary according to factors such as age, gender, length of residence, stage in the lifecourse and social class (Forrest and Kennett, 2006: 715).

Meegan and Mitchell (2001) argue that it in this context that the neighbourhood provides a useful focus, seen not as socially and spatially integrated *Gemeinschaft* community, but as a key living space through which people get access to material and social resources, across which they pass to reach other opportunities and which symbolises aspects of the identity of those living there, to themselves and to outsiders. The neighbourhood as a key living space entails that place-based advantage and disadvantage exists not just because of the position of a place in local housing markets and the social maps people have of their city, but rather due to the social experience that arises out of the concentration of people and the homogeneity of their exposures.

Finally it is important to note that community and neighbourhood are sometimes used as synonyms. Davies and Herbert (1993) highlight the distinction by pointing to the fact that usually neighbourhood is much more restricted in spatial dimensions. It relates to the area around a residence within which people engage in neighbouring, which is usually viewed as a set of informal, face-to-face interactions based on residential proximity (Davies and Herbert, 1993: 1). This definition of ‘neighbourhood’ as ‘living space’ clearly has both social and spatial dimensions (Meegan and Mitchell, 2001: 2172).

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<sup>69</sup> It is important to mention here that the experience of children of neighbourhoods and the city at large is impacted by the conception that their guardians- usually their parents- have of the competencies of children, caretaking responsibilities of adults and assessment of security conditions. These are impacted by local customs, culture and traditions. For example, the sight of children as young as five or six years old going alone to school is quite customary in Germany, while in other contexts, this sight is quite unc customary. Valentine (1997) discusses children and parents’ understandings of kids’ competence to negotiate public space safely.

#### 4.4. *Neighbourhoods as sectarian enclaves in Beirut*

Administratively, Municipal Beirut is composed of 12 neighbourhoods called, Ahy'a . These are Ashrafieh, Bashoura, Rmeil, Saifi, Mdawar, Marfa'a, Mazra'a, Mousaitbeh, Dar Mreiseh, Ras Beirut, Zoukak EL-Blatt, Minat el-Hosn. .(Source: <http://www.beirut.gov.lb/> accessed Nov 25, 2008) However, if we are considering another scale of urban Beirut, such as Metropolitan Beirut a number of villages fall into this category, which can also be considered Ahy'a.

Nevertheless, in this research I am not concerned with the neighbourhood as an administrative concept. In terms of scale I define the neighbourhood as the localised context of the home. I am interested in the way affluent individuals engage in social contacts within this localized context, how and whether this context is the space of everyday life worlds of affluent individuals and the way this context is a sanctuary that induces feelings of belonging.

Before discussing the primary role of neighbourhoods in Beirut as sectarian enclaves, it is important to note two facts. First, as in other Mediterranean cities (see for example Leontidou, 1990), single land-use zoning is rare in Beirut. The core functions of working, living, recreation and traffic- as recorded by Le Corbusier in 1941 in the Charter of Athens- overlap on top of each other in Beirut. In a Corbusian sense then Beirut is thus a very "un"functional city; the commercial ground floor is common in residential buildings, numerous buildings feature also administrative or industrial uses on their ground, first or underground floor. As a result of this vertical differentiation of urban functions, purely residential streets or neighbourhoods do not exist in Beirut and there is a multiplicity of activities occurring on streets in Beirut. As a result social classes become quite mixed.

Second, rent control continues to exist in Beirut thus slowing down the pace of full-scale gentrification. "Rent control goes back to law 10/74 passed by government in 1974 just before the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon. This law froze all rents at their hitherto current levels and inhibited any rent increase. As inflation hit the Lebanese pound in the 80's, many rents in Lebanon became virtually worthless. In the 70's, 43.7% of households in Lebanon were owner occupiers and 48.4% tenants <sup>70</sup>(ESCWA, 2000c: 20).73.23%of tenants were concentrated in Beirut and its suburbs (Baydoun in Takeddine, 1993:11). In 2003, the private renting sector in Lebanon was eclipsed to 20.6% of the stock. In an effort to address the stagnant private renting sector, rent regulations were revised in 1992 and a new law 159/92

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<sup>70</sup> 7.9% were categorized as living free of charge (ESCWA, 2000c)

was issued that would liberalize all rent contracts issued after 1992 and extend all contracts issued before 1992 till 2001. In 2001, a bill was drafted to liberalize all rent contracts along a timetable; however, this bill has still not been approved. In light of the economic difficulties that the country has been undergoing since the mid 90's the socioeconomic climate does not seem opportune" (Alaily-Mattar, 2004). Therefore, old rents persist in Beirut and as a result there exists housing in prime locations of the city in which residents reside almost for free.

Hence, neighbourhoods in Beirut are, first, functionally mixed rather than purely *residential* areas, and, second they house different socio-economic groups. The dominant characteristic of neighbourhoods in Beirut though is that they are sectarian enclaves in which people of the same sect reside voluntarily. I move now on to discuss this primary feature of neighbourhoods in Beirut.

Barakat (1973) argues that Lebanese society is closer to a mosaic than to a pluralistic society.<sup>71</sup> This is due to the fact that "The dominant cleavage in Lebanese society is *religious* rather than tribal, regional, ethnic or even economic" (Barakat, 1973: 302-303). Confessional loyalties persist strongly in Lebanon. Joseph (1997) argues that alongside confessionalism, the Lebanese experience kin as the anchor of their security<sup>72</sup>. "Political leaders have used kinship to mobilize their relatives into public offices. Lay people have expected their relatives to give them privileged access to the resources and services at their disposal regardless of whether the relatives were positioned to do so. In expecting kin to act as conduits to resources and services regardless of where they were situated, the Lebanese have transported the structures, modes of operation and idioms of patriarchal kinship with them into these multiple spheres" (Joseph, 1997: 79). Khalaf (1968) argues that primordial ties (i.e. kinship, religious

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<sup>71</sup> Barakat (1973) notes that the traditional distinction that scholars make between homogeneous and heterogeneous societies is not enough. He uses the term "pluralistic" and "mosaic" as two forms of heterogeneous societies. "Pluralism refers to harmonious relationships of several interest, religious, and/or ethnic groups within unified social order. In a pluralistic society, there is a consensus on fundamental principles and provisions are made for a fairly balanced participation of several groups of which it is composed and this, for fairly balanced distributions of rewards and powers. A society is pluralistic in as much as it allows for the participation of all groups so that no one group, or an alliance of a few of them, can possess monopoly of rewards or dominate others and dictate to them what they should do. A mosaic society on the other hand is defined here as composed of several groups whose relationships are regulated by provisions making for the introduction of some system of checks and balances among these groups without, however, being accompanied by a consensus on fundamental issues facing these group" (Barakat, 1973: 301).

<sup>72</sup> Joseph (1997) even analyses the fact that by referring to each other by kin terms of address, the Lebanese evoked the expectations and obligations of kinship for instrumental and affective purposes. She notes that "Persons in all social classes and religious/ethnic communities regularly have justified many long- and short-term relationships in kin terms, calling each other brothers, sisters, uncle/aunt/niece/nephew, cousins in places of work, in the market place, in politics, civil society and other non-governmental activities" (Ibid:79).

and fealty ties) continue to constitute the basic patterns of social organization of the Lebanese society to the extent that political blocs and fronts “are so absorbed with parochial and personalistic rivalries that they fail to serve the larger national purpose of mobilizing the population or the broader aims of society” (Ibid: 243).

Hence, the typical Lebanese seems to be more attached to his family and religion than to the country as a whole<sup>73</sup>. Kamal Jumblat went even further to suggest that “there is no such thing as a Lebanese community. There is no Lebanese social unit. Lebanon is a collection of sects and socio-religious communities. Thus it is not a society, nor a community, nor a nation” (Jumblat in Barakat, 1973). “Confessionalism and familism constitute the most pervasive, diffuse and enduring loyalties that undermine nationalism in Lebanon” (Barakat, 1973: 309).<sup>74</sup>

The reason why I mention this at length in the context of our discussion of neighbourhoods in Beirut is that confessional and family-based solidarities translate spatially in Beirut. What Barakat (1973) calls “social mosaic” is spatialized as well “Even in shape and form, Lebanon looks mosaic. The different religious groups tend to live and control specific and isolated geographical regions of Lebanon. ... Furthermore, in districts composed of several religious groups, one finds towns and villages inhabited by one group to the almost total exclusion of others. Even where different religious groups live in the same city, town or village, they tend to live in separate neighbourhoods” (Barakat, 1973: 312).

The civil war that divided Beirut into a predominantly Christian Eastern part and a predominantly Muslim Western part is thought to be the generator of sectarian enclavism. However, as Michael Davie (1991) states, the origin of the line between the western and eastern part of Beirut predates the war although it never took the hermetic and military aspect of the 70's and 80's. As per Davie (1991), the origin of this East-West divide of Beirut goes back to the nineteenth century when Beirut was still a walled city of secondary importance in the Levant. Its population was mainly Sunni population, a Christian Greek-Orthodox

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<sup>73</sup> Barakat (1975) notes that “...self-aggrandizement tendencies among some Lebanese nationalists manifested in exaggerated descriptions of Lebanon's beauty and its role in the world...could be partly explained as a social psychological reaction to the expressed doubt of a substantial number of Lebanese in the nationhood of Lebanon. There has been a threat from within to the Lebanese ego, and self-aggrandizement is an announcement of its existence in the face of such a threat. There has been an enduring challenge to the Lebanese ego, and consequently, it has tended loudly to proclaim itself and assert its being” (Barakat, 1973: 305).

<sup>74</sup> Barakat (1973) adds that “What adds to the complications of the lack of loyalty to the country as a whole is individualism which the Lebanese share with other Arabs. This individualism is reflected in lack of cooperation on important enterprises of benefit of the society as a *whole*, in the misuse of public properties and facilities and in the weakness of voluntary associations” (Barakat, 1973: 310, emphasis added).

community constituted around 25% of the total number of inhabitants. This Christian community lived and worked in a well-defined quarter, to the south east of the city, where their main church and archbishopric was located. They were mainly merchants and craftsmen. Their quarter was well placed, in close proximity to the two main gates of the city. “The boundaries were quite permeable and transparent, and the movement was possible from one area to the other. The small size of the walled city, the importance of the souks and the role of the port guaranteed freedom of movement through economic necessity. Through the souks, the city functioned as a complex urban entity, each sector depending on the other, independent of religion. Some sectors would be ‘reserved’ to a certain community, but *business knew no segregation*” (Davie, 1991: 2, emphasis added).

During the civil war years the lifeworlds of the inhabitants of Beirut was constrained to a few streets or blocks of the city. “The war made physical boundary imposition of hermetic boundaries between the radically different sectarian territories” (Davie, 1991: 5). As the center of Beirut became a no man’s land, new centers developed in the east and west of the city and the different areas of the city became self contained. “Numerous smaller sized commercial financial, commercial and business centres replaced the Beirut centre that was eliminated during the war and the East-West divide. Neither of these centres entirely replaced the Beirut centre, but each played an important part in allowing a relative degree of autonomy for the area or the quarter in which they were placed. Each sector and sub-sector of the city became independent and free from the centralizations of functions that characterised the pre-war days” (Ibid).

After the end of the war the demarcation line between East and West Beirut was dismantled, however, “the Demarcation Line is still deeply anchored in the minds of the Beirutis, and the previous commercial or transportation networks and circuits are still in place... the habit of dealing with particular banks or businesses have continued.... Post-war mental geography still integrates the division of the city, even though the official distinction does not exist. A very clear association is still made between East Beirut, Achrafiyye’, and the ‘Christian enclave’; West Beirut is still felt having a Muslim, Arab and strong ideological identity. Inhabitants from one side still feel apprehensive at crossing to the other side. Replacement business centres so not make it necessary to do so; there are very few movements linked to jobs or leisure from one sector to the other, and hardly any residential movements, mainly due to this mental geography barrier” (Davie, 1993: 6-8 emphasis added).

The situation that Davie portrays is that of 1993, in which the end of the war brought freedom and ability of movement in the city but not necessarily the urge or need for such movement.

Today there is a certain degree of movement between the different quarters of the city particularly for leisure activities, but residentially the “geography of fear” (Khalaf, 2002) persists. Beirut might be one of the most heterogeneous cities in the world as far as sectarian make-up of its population is concerned but this heterogeneity is not translated spatially as spatially these communities reside in quite homogenous quarters of the city with little everyday interaction between the different communities.

Religious segregation has profound effects in social interaction and behavior. As one moves from one neighbourhood in Beirut to the other it is possible to sense differences, from the dress code of people on the street, to opening hours of shops, the language spoken and the accent with which it is spoken. For example, one is less likely to encounter veiled women in the Christian areas, the dress code in the Christian areas and in some Sunni areas is more liberal than in the Shiite areas where the *Tschador* is more widespread. In some areas of Beirut, commercial establishments close on Fridays in others on Sundays, some observe Christian holidays, others Muslim ones. In some areas, church bells can be heard on Sundays, in some the regular prayer call of the *muezzin* is a familiar sound in the background.

Hence, as confessional and family-based solidarities are anchored territorially in Lebanon, it is possible to associate a religious community to any place in Beirut. An address in Beirut is an indicator of sectarian association. As a result, neighbourhoods function as sectarian enclaves in Beirut. Refer to Figure 8.

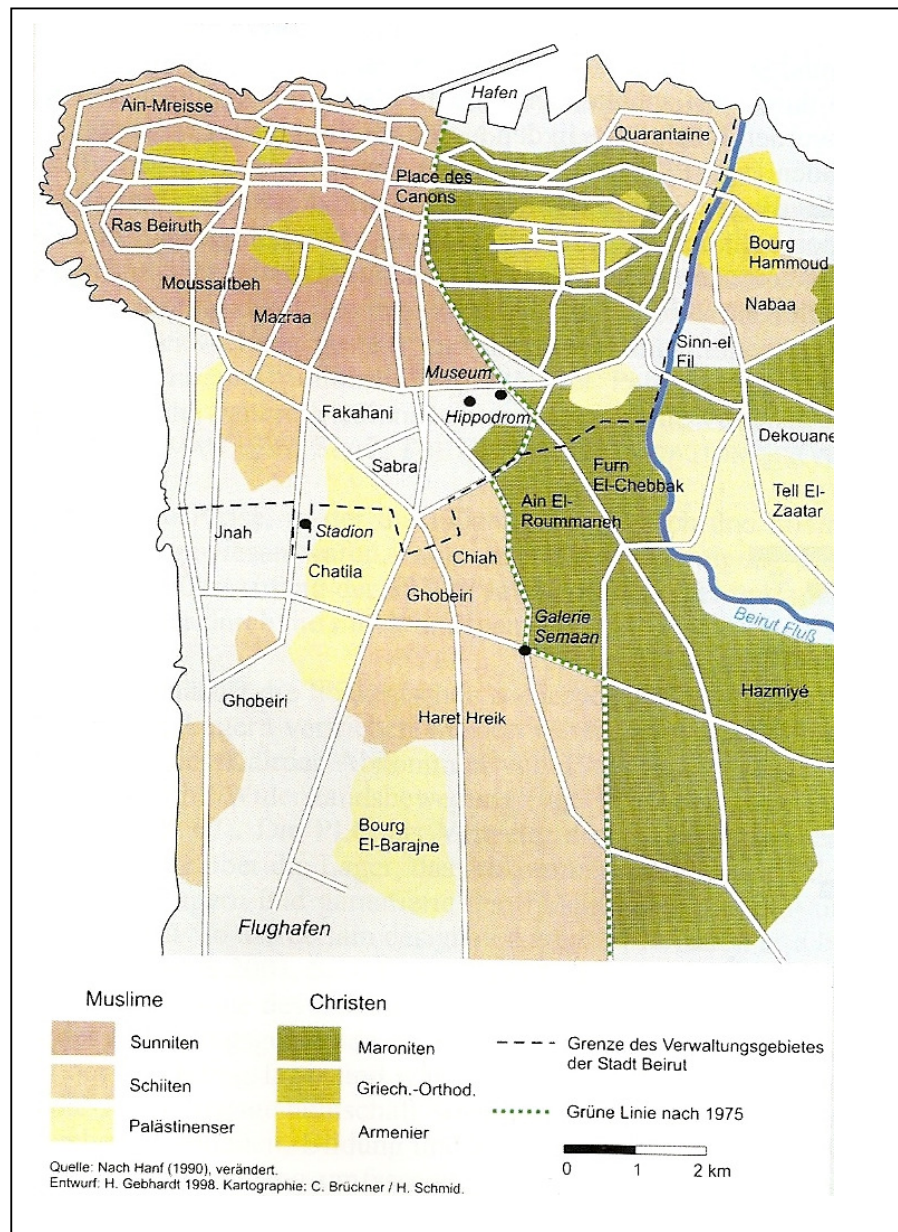


Figure 8 Sectarian divisions in Beirut (Source: Gebhardt, 2008)

Exceptions to sectarian enclavism include Beirut's downtown area, the Hamra district of Ras Beirut and the southern extension of Beirut. As mentioned earlier, the downtown area is being developed by Solidere, a private real estate development company. At the time of writing of this thesis the residential areas of downtown have not been fully developed yet, however, it is clear that these areas are exclusively targeting upper income people. Hamra is a district of the Ras Beirut neighbourhood in which two internationally renowned universities are located.<sup>75</sup> Shortly before the civil war period, Hamra began to compete with downtown

<sup>75</sup> "Historically, this neighborhood has been home to internationally recognized universities (American University-Beirut and Lebanese American University) and a refuge for persecuted cultural producers,

area as the center of Beirut and indeed during the civil war period Hamra assumed the role of the center of West Beirut. Hamra's culture of individualism and cosmopolitanism is unique in Beirut (Seidman, undated) and it has been frequently heralded as the truly urban part of Beirut (Khalaf, 1973).

The southern extension of Beirut is a place in transition. The Druze villages of Aramoun, Bchamoun have been transformed in the 90's to become suburbs of Beirut, inhabited mostly by middle income Sunnis and Shiites who sought affordable housing in proximity to Beirut and leapfrogged the southern Shiite suburb- Dahye- to suburbanize the Druze villages. Today as Dahye is already saturated with its predominately Shiite population escaping the high density of the Beirut southern suburb, middle income Shiite households are increasingly searching for housing in the abutting Druze areas. Some (e.g. prominent Druze leader Walid Jumblat) have periodically perceived this urbanization as a threat to replace the domination of one sect with another. Jumblat even went so far as to caution against the Shiite residential encroachment to Druze territory (May 4<sup>th</sup> 2007, Annahar). However, urbanizing the southern districts could also be an opportunity to assimilate the sectarian logic of territoriality. This view is not entirely new; Khuri back in 1975 argues of a "process of transformation" occurring in what he terms "suburban society" (Khuri, 1975: 6). Kodeih (2009) shows in her thesis how after the war households from various sectarian backgrounds have settled in Haret El-Qobbe, located in this southern area of Beirut. With downtown in the making and the Hamra case being exceptional, it is this southern extension of Beirut that offers perhaps hope for the de-territorialization of confessional solidarities in Beirut and the creation of an "*experimental* society whose groups and institutions have not yet taken shape" (Khuri, 1975: 6, emphasis added). It is worth noting that within such an endeavour, the private renting sector can be a powerful tool. For now though, the grounding of confessional solidarities in space remains the rule in Beirut.

As the housing market in Beirut is geographically segmented along lines of confessional association, urban functions are differentiated vertically resulting in the fact that purely

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minorities, and immigrants. Between 1947 and 1967, the population of Hamra increased from 2400 to 15,000. Many of its residents were young, educated, middle class and well aligned with an essentially service oriented, white collar economy. Despite being disproportionately Christian, its white collar, secular, professional and entrepreneurial population forged a dynamic public culture of cinemas, clubs, cafes, theatres, and bookstores (Khalaf and Kongstad, 1973, Khalaf 1979). Longtime residents and visitors recall Hamra in the 1960s and the early 1970s as a magnet for adventurers, tourists, intellectuals, political activists, and writers and artists from across the Middle East. It was also Hamra's good fortune to have avoided becoming a key battleground during the war years. In fact, as merchants and bankers abandoned the ruins of the Central District for outlying regions, Hamra benefited. Its educated, relatively affluent population and proximity to the Central District and to the sea, and its infrastructure attracted waves of capital and human investment through the 1990s" (Seidman, undated).



residential areas do not exist, rent control continues to slow down full scale gentrification and the “geography of [sectarian] fear” (Khalaf, 1997) continues, different socio-economic groups become relatively quite mixed residentially in their designated confessional enclaves. Put in simpler terms, in Beirut it is more likely that people of the same sect reside in close proximity than people of similar income. However, while neighborhoods in Beirut are spaces in which different socio-economic groups reside in nearness, this does not necessarily mean that this residential nearness results in *dwelling* in nearness for affluent individuals.

#### 4.5. ***The concept of affluence***

This research is concerned with individuals who use different tactics of segregation in order to ensure socio-economically homogeneous encounters within a socio-economically heterogeneous fabric. As such, these individuals seek to detach themselves from their immediate localized contexts. Who are these individuals? What compels them to detach? In this section I look at the term affluent and uncover some of its meanings.

An immediate answer that emerges is that they are individuals who can afford the costly affair of enacting these tactics. They can afford the costs of dwelling in guarded buildings, spending their leisure time in gated resorts, shopping in gated malls, owning SUV’s, consuming status goods, hiring “buffer”-personnel drivers, concierges, maids, tipping valet parking personnel... I use the term affluent to refer to these individuals rather than wealthy, high income or rich for the following reasons.

In “The affluent society” Galbraith, argues that “as a society becomes increasingly affluent, wants are created by the process by which they are satisfied” (Galbraith, 1984: 131). As higher levels of production create higher levels of want creation (Ibid) this “dependence effect” forces the affluent society to produce despite the “declining marginal urgency of product” (Ibid: 256) and to consume beyond its basic needs “to satisfy the increasing urgency of desires” (Ibid: 126). Ransome states that “ ‘affluence’ is defined in the first instance, and quite simply, as ready access to surplus income” (Ransome, 2005:4). As such, the term “affluence” connotes the existence of both, command over surplus income<sup>76</sup> - owned or borrowed- and second, a desire to spend this surplus income. Within such a definition, then, a wealthy, rich or high income miser, for example, is not considered affluent, as the second

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<sup>76</sup> “Although affluence and the various sub divisions which can be described within it are socially constructed all members of a particular society have a pretty clear idea of who is affluent and who is not. The desire to be affluent, to live within the affluent strata of a society, to enjoy the pleasures and satisfactions which affluence makes possible, ranks very highly in the hierarchy of motivations. It is right up there with the urge to survive and the urge to reproduce” ( Ransome: 2005: 40).

criterion of affluence is not fulfilled, namely, the desire for *spending* surplus income. On the other hand, an indebted and even bankrupt surplus income spender is considered affluent as long as surplus income continues to flow to finance expenditure; the source of surplus income and the sustainability of its flow are irrelevant in this context.

However, while affluence, as command over surplus income and desire to spend it, is a precondition for the *practice* of segregation, the link between affluence and the *desire* for segregation needs further explanation. In other words, why do individuals who can afford segregation desire it? In addition, is this desire another criterion for the definition of affluence?

My hypothesis is that in Beirut by nature of the position of affluent individuals in the social hierarchy, affluent individuals need opportunities to display their command over surplus income. This will be further explained in the next section. To display their command these individuals need to pursue their activities in contexts that are concentrated with individuals with whom they share similar positions on the social hierarchy.

Veblen's "Theory of the leisure class" is useful in explaining this logic (Veblen, 1899). Veblen proposed the existence of a class, which he terms the leisure class, that engaged in non-productive activities such as leisure and conspicuous consumption. Veblen argued that members of this class "advertised their superiority" (Heilbroner, 1995: 232) by displaying their wealth. "Its lavish or subtle display became the modern counterpart of scalps hanging on one's tepee" (Heilbroner, 1995: 232). Veblen identifies two main ways in which an individual can display wealth: through extensive leisure activities and through lavish expenditure on consumption and services (Veblen, [1899] 1994: 85). Both methods are equally effective as long as there are means for "word to get around about a person's degree of leisure and the objects he or she possesses" (Trigg, 2001). This brings the demand for socio-economic segregation into the foreground. By concentrating people with similar status, socio-economic segregation produces settings with the "correct" target audience to whom these activities are exhibited. As such socio-economic segregation becomes a mechanism to ensure an efficient communiqué.

Veblen argues that members of the leisure class are status-seekers who expose their 'conspicuous consumption' and leisure activities for the purpose of affirming their status. By consuming wastefully, status-seekers relay the message that they can afford waste.

Bourdieu (1979) argues that it is taste rather than waste. Whether waste or taste, for our purposes, what is important is that people engage in an act that aims to send messages about who they are. These messages, if delivered to the right audience, confirm the status of the messengers. I argue that segregation enables affluent individuals to target and deliver their messages, whether of waste or taste. In other words, segregation creates the desired audience.

Veblen argues that affluent individuals are status-seekers who perform non-productive activities with the aim of sending messages to a target audience for the purpose of confirming their status. These activities are not solely the domain of one class as Veblen suggested. Indeed, as these activities are emulated by other classes as well, the leisure class seeks continuously to reinvent these activities (Veblen, 1899).

As such, affluent individuals are characterized as follows. First, they command over *access* to surplus income. Second, they desire to *spend* this surplus income. Third, they demand to *display* it to confirm their status to other affluent individuals. As such segregation is a mechanism that produces settings that concentrates like individuals to whom access to surplus income is displayed.

In what ways do affluent individuals constitute a community? Do these individuals belong to the same *class*? Do they share similar *status*, income bracket etc...? Do they share only similar consumption practices? Let us now search for a term to refer to the sum of these individuals.

The term community is avoided because while these individuals may be perceived by others as a community and while in deed there might be evidence that this group is one in which “everyone knows everyone”, it remains questionable to what degree this association of individuals *functions* as a community. Moreover, it might be the case that this group of individuals is divided into a number of communities. As such, I cautiously refrain from using the term “community” without investigating how the association of these individuals actually operates as a community or communities.

I also avoid using the term class to refer to the sum of individuals that this research is concerned with. I do so in order to avoid the Marxian-Weberian controversy surrounding the definition of class. Marx used the term class to define “groups by their place in the production process that is their place in the economic sphere” (Giddens et al, 1982: 101), while Weber used a consumption-based approach. The usage of the term class in the context of this research might become confusing as I am focusing on a group as defined by its lifestyle. This

lifestyle is influenced by the group's place in the economic sphere, because of the level of expenditure that this lifestyle demands. However, alternative sources of financing not derived by the production process exist e.g. possibility of boosting disposable income, access to credit, availability of wealth, fame, reputation etc... As such, the individuals that this research is concerned belong to the same class along a Weberian definition, and to different classes along a Marxian definition. It should be noted here, that the Lebanese conceive of class, *tabaqah*, in the Weberian tradition as a social category of distinct social position not just an occupational or income group. Income, occupation, expenditure, education and other related criteria, become class indices only if translated collectively into a social position, a way of life (Khuri, 1969: 34). It is within this context that I use the term class in this research, although I refrain from using the term to refer to the sum of individuals this research is concerned with.

The term group seems to be the most befitting. The term is convenient because it is devoid of reference to mode of social interaction or mode of production. Rather, the term *group* merely points to the existence of certain common determinants of individuals which as a result of this commonality can be described as a group. However, the conception of the sum of these individuals as a group could connote that the behaviour of these individuals is group behaviour rather than an individual choice, a conception that is yet to be validated. As such, this research will refrain from using the term group to refer to these individuals and will continue to use the term *individuals* until research findings prove otherwise.

To draw this section to an end, I conclude that the term *affluent individuals* refers to the sum of individuals who share the following characteristics. First they command over access to surplus income, second, a desire to spend it and third, a desire to display it to an audience that matters. It is within this context that the concept of affluence is used in this research.

#### **4.6. *Affluence in Beirut, a matter of class or lifestyle?***

As mentioned in the previous section, to avoid confusion I refer from using the term class to denote the sum of affluent individuals that this research is researching. However, my avoidance of the term does not mean that a study of class structure in Lebanon does not contribute to our understanding of affluence in this context. As such, in this section I look at class structure in Lebanon in order to understand the social context of affluence in Lebanon.

Perhaps one of the most comprehensive studies on class structure in Lebanon is that by Fuad Khuri (1969), and on class structure in Beirut that by Michael Johnson (1986). Nasr (1993)

and Haddad (1997) argue that the Lebanese class structure underwent changes after the war. In what follows I first provide an overview of the class structure that existed before the war based on Khuri (1969) and Johnson (1986), I discuss the war-induced changes to this structure based on the findings of Nasr (1993) and Haddad (1997), I then discuss why despite the existence of such a class structure in Lebanon “it is still inappropriate to use the concept of class to study social structure in Lebanon, the more so of this study involves power structure” (Khuri, 1969: 29). Finally I conclude that in Beirut affluence is more of a lifestyle linked to status confirmation desires of individuals rather than the outcome of the surplus production capacity of a class, as such I profile the dominant features that characterize the lifestyles of affluent individuals in Beirut today.

Khuri (1969) states that before independence in 1943, two broad classes could be identified in Lebanese society, namely, the elites, called *al-khassa* and the commoners, called *al-amma*. In turn, Khuri sub-divided the elites into two types: the *al-khassa* proper, composed of the ruling regimes and their officials, normally of foreign origin; and the *a'yan*, composed of local leaders- acting as intermediaries between the ruling regimes and the commoners- and rich merchants who initiated the former's way of life, attended their parties and kept their company. While the rank of the ruling regimes was derived from their politic-military power that of the local leaders was derived from their wealth, family background, religious scholarship and their admired style of life. The commoners on the other hand were composed of trading and working people who possessed neither office nor learning nor wealth (Khuri, 1969: 33).

According to Khuri (1969), following independence a fluid class structure evolved replacing this rigid, broad two-class division. This fluid post-independence class structure was composed of four main classes, namely, class I, the notables (*al-wujaha'*) or the known (*al-ma'rufin*); class II the affluent (*al-mubahbahin*); class III the honorable poor (*al-masturin*) and class IV the needy (*al-muhtajin*). Refer to Table 9.

According to Khuri (1969), “the notables are distinguished from the affluent not by their education expenditure or profession, but by belonging to the “established houses” called *biyut ma'rufi*. Used in this sense, an established house refers to preeminent extended family, a part of a larger kin who trace descent to a known ancestor after whom they are named. The pre-eminence of the extended family is derived from wielding community power for at least three generations. After three generations of pre-eminence, the modest origin of a house tends to be forgotten and this house is established among the notables in the community. But the pre-eminence of one house and a kin group does not automatically turn all the kin into a cluster of

established houses; it does nonetheless affect class mobility within it. ... The notable is a leader of some sort not just a potential one. His leadership is generally derived from his control of people, not of land, which means, first, that the upper class is not necessarily a landed aristocracy and, second, that mechanized agriculture, which replaces labor on the farm, reduces the political influence of landlords. Some notables control their kin only; others control a larger social group. The latter type, who control kin and non-kin alike, are the *zu'ama* who exercises regional influence and practice national politics. Regional or local, however, all notables exert political influence (*nufuth*). They are called "the possessors of influence" (*ashab nufuth*), the possessors of popularity (*ashab sha'biyyi*), the front of the town (*sidir el-baladi*), election keys (*mafatih intikhabiyyi*), men of eloquence (*ahil mantiq*), the protectors of people (*humat el-nas*). These terms signify *control* of people, particularly of the needy class, also called *sh'biyyi* class, the dependents, or simply "the people" (*al-sha'b*). The non-kin whom a notable controls normally belong to the needy class, but the kin he controls may belong to different classes: the needy, the honorable poor (*masturin*) or the affluent. When a *mastur* or affluent supports a notable he does so because the latter is either a relative or has rendered the former a special political service. In the latter case, the *mastur* or the affluent's support unlike the needy's support is provisional subject to change" (Khuri, 1969: 35-36).

Except for the wealthy landowners and some merchants who have inherited their wealth most of the men who belong to class II, the affluent (*al-mubahbahin*), have achieved their status through education or emigration. Their emphasis on achievement makes them more than any other class receptive to modernization. This class includes wealthy landowners and merchants, university graduates, and the professional class of medical doctors, engineers and lawyers. (Khuri, 1969: 35-37)

Class III the honorable poor (*al-masturin*) comprises those who earn their living independently by owning and managing their own capital and resources: small landowners and shopkeepers, teachers, technicians, tradesmen, and minor clerks, secretaries and ordinary soldiers often employed by central administration, the commercial and industrial firms and the army. Implied in the term *masturin* is the honourable means by which these men earn a living. "The two middle classes are distinguished from each other by economic criteria, the *masturin* live in austerity, the affluent in affluence" (Khuri, 1969: 35-38, emphasis added).

Class IV the needy class (*al-muhtajin*) comprises those who are dependent on others for survival. The term dependence here is used broadly to include dependence on patrons and on

relatives. They include sharecroppers, peasants, day labourers, dustmen, watchmen, barbers (Khuri, 1969: 36).

Pre-independence		Post-independence	
Elites ( <i>el-Khassa</i> )	<i>El-kassa</i> proper (Ruling regimes, normally foreigners)	Upper class	Class I: Notables ( <i>al-wujaha'</i> ) or the known ( <i>al-ma'rufin</i> );
	<i>A-yan</i> (local leaders, rich merchants)	Middle class	Class II: Affluent ( <i>al- mubahbahin</i> )
Commoners ( <i>al-amma</i> )			Class III: Honorable poor ( <i>al-masturin</i> )
		Lower class	Class IV: Needy ( <i>al-muhtajin</i> ).

Table 9 Class divisions in Lebanon as per Khuri, 1969 (Source: author)

The IRFED <sup>77</sup>report breaks the classes in Lebanon in 1959-1960 as follows, upper income 4%, middle income 46% and lower income 50%. Dubar and Nasr (1967) argue that in 1973 the upper income class grew to 10%, the middle income to 68% and the lower income was eclipsed to 22%. Refer to Table 10. This was the situation before the civil war.

The civil war in Lebanon inflicted changes to this class structure. A major element in this change, according to Nasr (1993) has been a major reshuffling of entrepreneurial class, particularly its sectarian make-up, and the attrition of the professional middle class and skilled workforce.

“The pre-war bourgeoisie, or economic upper class- contractors, bankers, international financiers, international traders- has largely left the country. The old entrepreneurial class has been largely replaced by a number of emergent groups inside Lebanon. Most notable among these is what has been called “Gulf entrepreneurs”: a growing nucleus of a dynamic contractors returning to Lebanon after amassing quick and large fortunes in the Gulf. The most prominent, of course being, Rafik Hariri. There are, however, others, mostly Shiite

<sup>77</sup> IRFED is a mission that studied the social and developmental situation of Lebanon in 1961 Refer to footnote 20

émigrés returning from West Africa. Added to these area a strata of war profiteers and new riches associated with the militias. The rise of this group has led to a re-equilibration of the sectarian composition of the bourgeoisie, a phenomenon of considerable importance. In 1960, for example, 75 per cent of the economic upper class of Lebanon has been Christian and only 25 per cent Muslim (see Dubar and Nasr 1976). By 1975 the gap had already narrowed through various social transformations to reach some 65 per cent Christian and 35 per cent Muslim. By 1988-89, however, it had become roughly evenly divided between the two major groups. Thus while these transformations were underway prior to 1975, they were accelerated by the war... The result was a quasi-complete equilibration of the upper bourgeoisie in its Christian and Muslim components<sup>78</sup> (Nasr, 1993: 72).

Nasr (1993) points also to the increased number of associations between Christian and Muslim capital. In a study of fourteen new banks established between 1975 and 1987, Nasr (1993) found eleven to be characterised by religiously-mixed capital. Before the war most businesses were largely family enterprises, and they tended to reflect a single community. “Many enterprises are now joint sectarian ventures” (Nasr, 1993: 72).

Year (Source)	1959-1960 (IRFED)	1973 (Dubar)	1990 (Nasr)	1994 (Haddad)
Upper income	4%	10%	Became more religiously mixed	5%
Middle income	46%	68%	Many emigrated	35%
Lower income	50%	22%	-	60%

Table 10 Percentage of class make-up in Lebanon 1959-1994  
(Source: author)

Nasr’s (1993) findings are in line with Haddad’s (1997) who suggests that in 1994 the upper income class composed 5% of the population while the middle income class was eclipsed to just 35% of the population and the lower income class bulged to 60% of the population. Unfortunately, I have not come across studies that update these findings to the present day and look at the impact that the post-war era and “Harirism” had on the composition of the classes. While the class of the notables stayed very much the same<sup>79</sup>, Hariri definitely

<sup>78</sup> There was then an over representation of Christians and underrepresentation of Muslims in the upper class while a reverse situation characterised much of the lower classes (Nasr, 1993: 72)

<sup>79</sup> El-Akbar newspaper points to the high incidence of intermarriages between political families in Lebanon (see Akhbar, 2008); Writer and journalist Nasr Sayegh in an interview profiles the make-up of parliament in 2008 where the seats of the major political families of the post-independence period have been inherited by the grandchildren of these political families to the present day parliament. He refers to a picture taken of parliament’s eldest with two of its youngest additions. El-Zein the eldest parliamentarian in office uninterruptedly for some 60 years is flanked to his right by Nayla Turieni, 6<sup>th</sup>



changed the make-up of the affluent class. The affluent class might not have grown during the Hariri period, nevertheless Hariri brought new people into this class, particularly in the context of Beirut. This is so, because as Hariri came to power in the early 90's he gradually created an army of supporters and followers that drew salaries from companies and institutions affiliated to him. Because Hariri was a newcomer on the Sunni political scene in Beirut<sup>80</sup> and because he did not belong to a notable family, he had to create a structure of support from scratch. He lured in supporters that were either hitherto "clients" (Johnson, 1989) to other established houses or that were looking for a patron. By doing so he definitely disrupted the status quo. In addition, he mobilized his own team into government<sup>81</sup>, this team he recruited from his business empire.

*"Parts of Hariri's team were immediately superimposed on the state's administrative structure, while others were established alongside it. The result was the emergence of a new, partly private and partly governmental administrative structure directly controlled by the prime minister. This structure overlaps with the state but is distinct from it. It consists of Hariri's business empire and of those components of the state apparatus that are controlled by the prime minister and his key associates. Thus, Hariri employees were put in charge of such critical institutions as the Central Bank (responsibility for which was given to Riyad Salameh, who had handled the Hariri account at Merrill Lynch), the Ministry of Finance (presided over by Fuad Siniora, chief financial officer for Hariri's enterprises), and the Governorship of Mount Lebanon (in the hands of Suhail Yamut, former director of Hariri business interests in*

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generation of her family to go into office and to his left by Nadim Gemayel 4<sup>th</sup> generation of his family (Sawt El-Mada Radio station). Saad Hariri, son of assassinated PM Rafik Hariri has become Prime minister of Lebanon in November 2009, his vice minister is Elias El-Murr son of Michel EL-Murr who had the same post 15 years ago in Hariri senior's government.

<sup>80</sup> Hariri made his fortune in Saudi Arabia in the late 70's. Hariri was born and raised in the coastal city of Saida, south of Lebanon. His family background is modest. Indeed, the fact that Hariri's family was not a notable one was a source of hope for many Lebanese who saw Hariri as a break with the politics of the past. The name that Hariri chose for his political movement, namely, *Al-mustaqbal*, which is the Arabic term for Future, feeds on that hope.

<sup>81</sup> That state was, as it has always been in Lebanon, an uneasy assemblage of conflicting interests and leaders with widely different and often irreconcilable objectives and priorities. Like the country as a whole, it consisted largely of fiefdoms controlled by particular interest groups and their leaders. In this system, the bureaucracy operates primarily as a dispenser of patronage to sectoral interests, while public offices and funds are used to promote the objectives of sectarian institutions and leaders. Hariri knew that such a state could not be committed to development objectives. He probably reasoned that he could not reform that state, both in light of the vested interests embedded in it and because Syria would not let him do so. So, instead of modernizing the state and then relying on it to implement his reconstruction model, he simply decided to leave the existing state more or less in place, and proceeded to carry out his reconstruction strategy by mobilizing his own team, recruited from his business empire (Denoeux and Springborg, 1998: 161).

*Brazil). These and numerous other individuals, whose official salaries amount to less than \$1,000 per month, have been kept on Hariri's payroll, from which they derive several times their governmental earnings. Simultaneously, numerous private and quasi-public agencies have been formed or taken over by Hariri and his team and charged with implementing various aspects of his reconstruction plan. (Denoeux and Springborg, 1998: 162)*

Having discussed class structure in Lebanon, both Johnson (1986) and Khuri (1969) agree that class has not been a motor for political action in Lebanon. “Not that the Lebanese, as groups, lack class consciousness, but they have been unable to translate their consciousness into collective organized power<sup>82</sup> ... *Family and sect interest, not class interests, dictate the course of political rivalry*” (Khuri, 1969: 29, emphasis added). Beirutis identified themselves politically with their confession (Johnson, 1986: 4). This is so because as Johnson argues “Capitalism in Lebanon did not give rise to widespread industrialization and the creation of a large proletariat in conflict with the bourgeoisie. Rather it led to a distorted service economy with a class structure particular susceptible to *clientelist* and *confessional* consciousness” (Johnson, 1986: 4, emphasis added).

Johnson (1986) argues that Lebanon’s trading and banking economy produced a particular kind of class structure, characterised by individualism and extreme competitiveness, in which confessionalism or the “politicisation of religion” was a resource in a continuing conflict over the distribution of social and economic resources. “In Beirut [the sub-proletariat] tended to be individualistic, its members competing with one another for work, customers and patrons, rather than cooperating together as a self-conscious political force. For them the language of politics involved wheeling and dealing, personal ambition rather than class solidarity and individual success rather than class action (Johnson, 1986: 37). “Generally speaking Beirut’s political and socio-economic structure was characterized by petty bourgeois and sub-proletarian individualism. The poor competed with each other for work and welfare services and members of the salariat competed among themselves for promotion within the office hierarchy. *Intra*-class relations were competitive rather than cooperative and *inter*-class conflict was contained by the vertical structure of the clientele (Johnson, 1986: 41).

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<sup>82</sup> “... Class difference do exist: either in the sense that a community as a whole is ranked higher or lower than another, as when the Christians are reputed to be richer than the Muslims, or villagers poorer than city dwellers, or that each community is internally stratified into graded classes, called *tabaqat*. The classes of one community overlap with those of other communities- that is membership in a class extend across the boundaries of ethnic-religious groups” (Khuri, 1969: 29).

Khuri (1969) argues that “partly in response to the fragmented and individualistic electorate, Lebanon’s liberal-democratic polity became dominated by *locally powerful political bosses or za’ims*, who in the cities developed sophisticated machines to recruit and control their clientele. As well as responding to the culture and ideology of the electorate these machines actively encouraged fragmentation and individualism, thereby actively contributing to the control and suppression of a potential class consciousness amongst the urban poor. It is within this sense that one can begin to talk of a clientelist system” (Johnson, 6: 1986). “The absorption of national tension by intermittent clubs and assemblies and the recruitment of middle class people in family, sect or region associations, not class association, means that social classes in Lebanon lack class organization which fact dilutes class consciousness and handicaps the rise of classes as political forces” (Khuri, 1969: 42).

The situation that Khuri (1969) and Johnson (1986) describe is that of the 60’s, 70’s and 80’s. As the Lebanese economy continues to be heavily dominated by trade, banking, tourism and other services I argue that it holds today as well. As Johnson has described in the 80’s, today too the urban social structure of Beirut is not characterised by the growth of a working class in conflict with an industrial bourgeoisie. In Beirut, the banking centre for the Arab Middle East, the vast majority of the labour force is employed in the service sectors. Just as there was peasant individualism in much of the Lebanese country side, so there was “sub-proletarian” and “petty bourgeois” individualism in the city. Objectively Beirut society was divided into classes in which members of a class shared a “common situation” or a “common interest” but there was little or no class consciousness in the sense of a “class-for-itself” and political parties, trade unions and other interest groups were weak to the point of insignificance (Johnson, 1986: 4). Many Lebanese of upper, middle or lower standing in society, who have migrated to the city, still, like peasants, retain their former family connections and also their village political commitments. ... in the city of residence the migrant’s political influence is practically nil” (Khuri, 1969: 35-39).

Confessionalism, clientilism and the lack of the power of class make citizenship rights conditional on the relationships one has with people who can secure access to resources and privileges. Joseph (1994) calls this “a relational notion of rights - a notion that rights are generated in and embedded in significant relationship ... With relational rights one comes *to have rights by having relationships with people* who have access to the desired resources and privileges... Citizenship in Lebanon has entailed investing in relationships giving access. Citizens have practised and experienced their rights as a matter of knowing people upon whom they can make claims and who are located in critical places of access or who can link each other to critical places of access. This relational notion of rights is very different from

that assumed in the classical liberal construct where rights inhere in the individualized person as parts of her or his membership - citizenship - in the political community” (Joseph, 1997: 86, emphasis added).

Therefore to understand affluence in Beirut it is important to understand two things. First, in the particular context of Beirut clientilism, individualism and confessionalism curtail the political power of the affluent class and transform citizenship rights into “relational rights” (Joseph, 1994). Second, in such a context affluence- as command over surplus income, desire to spend it and desire to exhibit this expenditure.- is not an outcome or bi-product of the desire to dispense the surplus income generated by the production capacity of a class. Rather affluence in Beirut is an instrument utilized with the purpose of confirming status in order to access relationships that can mobilize power. In other words, affluence is not practiced by members of an affluent *class* only “with the purpose of distinguishing themselves from the honourable poor” (Khuri, 1969)<sup>83</sup>, but rather affluence is a *competitive* exercise practiced in-between the affluent and serves the purpose of *securing access to relationships*. As such the practice of affluence is a mean to maintain their position among the affluent. “Status is confirmed by consumption rather than production and refers to a person’s style of life and social prestige. In contrast to production, the definition of a person’s status is subjective it involves drawing together the impression held by the person under investigation and more important by the people with whom he or she interacts (Johnson, 1986: 6).

*I conclude therefore, that affluence in Beirut is divorced from the surplus production capacity of class and linked to status-confirmation and power production capacity of consumption*<sup>8485</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> “The two middle classes are distinguished from each other by economic criteria, the honourable poor live in austerity, the affluent in affluence (Khuri, 1969: 38).

<sup>84</sup> In the view of the writer of the following article even war lords and terrorists had to keep up appearances. “Recently I watched a documentary ... about the Black September gang, who caused the gruesome slaughter of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics. The ringleaders were a handful of privileged young lefty Beirutis, mostly Palestinian... The documentary showed a film clip of a Beirut press conference they gave then. They were so young and cool, so dazzlingly chic, with a kind of Cap d’Antibes glow. *In those days, in Beirut, even warlords and terrorists had to keep up standards*. I’ve racked my brain for years: What did it mean, that you could be at once so hip and so bloody?” (Source: [http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2009/03/special\\_report\\_3.php](http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2009/03/special_report_3.php) accessed 2009, emphasis added)

<sup>85</sup> The plastic surgery loan, launched by the Lebanese bank, First National Bank (FNB) in 2007 just after Lebanon was struggling to recover from the 2006 Israeli offensive, is a good illustration of this argument. This loan is an index of a society in which status has become key to survival, so much that this society perceives belonging to standards of beauty as a necessity. As a result the permanent alteration of physical appearance to fit in a certain standard and the borrowing money to achieve these standards have become morally justified. (See [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/6577497.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6577497.stm), accessed June 2007)

Understanding affluence as such we can perhaps forgive Michel Chiha (1945) and his ideological heirs in their claim that the average Lebanese is elite.<sup>86</sup>

I conclude this section by sketching some of the dominant features that characterize the lifestyles of affluent individuals in Beirut. They live in large lavishly furnished flats that they usually own, these flats are usually financed through funds originating from their immediate families or through inheritance money. They wear ostentatious clothing, jewellery and accessories supplemented by hairdos and bodily physique. Their cars are new usually SUV's. Affluent individuals employ guest workers (usually from the Philippines) as nannies, housekeepers and cooks, in addition to local chauffeurs. Domestic employees are particularly significant for women. Working as a team, these employees free women from the responsibility of executing household chores and as such leave women ample time to pursue paid employment and/or socializing.

The "rounds of socializing and reciprocal hospitality" (Beal, 2000) keep women very busy. Women's schedules are busy with social occasions of all types particularly rounds of visits to carry out what is conceived to be obligatory socializing activities termed as *wajbat*- Arabic term for responsibilities. *Wajbat* visits include mainly visits to pay condolences- *ta'azi*- congratulations- *tahani*- and reciprocating a *wajeb*<sup>87</sup>.

Wedding parties are especially important occasions for the display of wealth. Wedding parties are typically held in major hotels, and the purported costs of such affairs are a subject of open speculation among both invitees and nonparticipants.

Access to educational institutions for their children is not solely dependent on financial resources but also on mediation, *wasta*<sup>88</sup>. They send their children to prestigious private schools in Beirut that virtually guarantee their students acceptance by universities (and in

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<sup>86</sup> Chiha claimed that "By carrying out their duties generously, average Lebanese people (which, unparadoxically, means the elite) should be able to understand that they are the backbone of this country and the very condition upon which its continuity rests" (Chiha,1945).

<sup>87</sup> Reciprocating a *wajeb* means that if someone is visited by a person, the person visited is obliged to visit this person back.

<sup>88</sup> The word *wasta*, translates into "medium" into English. A *wasta* refers to the act of mediation (or the person rendering this act) by a patron on behalf of a client to obtain an advantage for the client. This advantage can translate into access to a job, securing admission to university or access to funds etc.. For an in-depth discussion of the *wasta* refer to Cunningham and Sarayrah (1993) "Wasta: The Hidden Force in Middle Eastern Society".

many cases by foreign universities), graduation from which confers significant prestige (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993:145).

Leisure time is spent in private clubs in and around Beirut. International travel is also an avenue of recreation among affluent individuals. It must be noted here that the ability to obtain a travel visa to European countries and to the US is a status marker in Lebanon. Many Lebanese affluent individuals hold foreign citizenship and in recent years many Lebanese have delivered their babies in countries like the US and Canada in order to have their children obtain a foreign citizenship.

#### **4.7. *Conclusion***

In this chapter I have reviewed the concepts that form the building blocks of this research, namely, the concept of the urban, neighborhoods and affluence. I have projected these concepts onto the city of Beirut.

This chapter arrives at three main conclusions pertaining to Beirut. First, by breaking-up the term urban into conceptions of urban form and urban life I highlight the fact that the term Beirut can refer to anything from a small street in municipal Beirut to a lifestyle specificity associated to Beirut but practiced in other places in the world. Second, while neighbourhoods in Beirut are not necessarily the space of everyday life for affluent individuals, they nevertheless remain sectarian sanctuaries in which people of homogenous sectarian belonging reside in nearness as opposed to the definition of neighbourhoods as dwelling in nearness. Third, by defining affluence as access to surplus capital, desire to spend it and desire to exhibit it, affluence in Beirut becomes more related to the status confirmation desires of individuals seeking relationships to people that can mobilize power and less to the surplus production capacities of a class.

In the next chapter I review the literature on spatial segregation.

## Chapter 5. **Spatial segregation a literature review**

The objective of this chapter is to understand the different facets of the phenomenon of spatial segregation and to organize some of the literature that deals with spatial segregation and is relevant to this research. The review is organized into three sections. The first section discusses the spatial and social manifestations of the phenomenon of spatial segregation. The second section identifies the main factors promoting spatial segregation in cities. The third section organizes the literature that deals with spatial segregation into three main perspectives.

### 5.1. ***Spatial segregation as a spatial and social phenomenon***

As the title suggests, this section looks at spatial segregation as a spatial and social phenomenon. In order to untangle the social and spatial manifestations of this phenomenon from each other this section isolates for a moment the social from the spatial and vice versa. The first part looks at spatial partitioning and spatial divisions, the second part links spatial segregation to social exclusion, the third part discusses the segregatory capacity of gated communities, and, finally in the fourth part I look at notions of the public and private.

#### 5.1.1. **Spatial segregation and spatial partitioning/divisions**

Spatial segregation is a phenomenon through which groups or individuals are separated spatially from the rest of society. It results from the process in which agencies *divide* space and *allocate* the dividends to different separate groups. Spatial segregation is not a natural phenomenon; it is the result of an *active* process. In other words, cities do not naturally include segregated spaces. Rather, spatial segregation occurs when an agency imposes spatially its own logic of how the city should be appropriated. As such, understanding the logic through which cities are *actively* divided is crucial in understanding the phenomenon of spatial segregation,

Spatial segregation must be distinguished from spatial division, partitioning, fragmentation and segmentation. All of these terms refer to the break-up of space. However, spatial segregation contains a qualitative undertone that implies that there is an element of power involved in this process. In contrast, partitioning and division are absolute terms; they do not

indicate the presence of active or passive actors- although such actors are always present. Moreover, unlike fragmentation and segmentation, the terms partitioning and division do not provide clues as to the nature of the dividends. Fragmentation refers to the division into *incomplete* parts, the sum of which do not make up a *homogenous* whole (Balbo et al, 1995). Segmentation refers to the division into *distinct* elements, the sum of which make up a *homogeneous* whole (Ibid).

As mentioned earlier understanding spatial segregation entails understanding the logic through which divisions are implemented in cities. A range of possible logics of divisions is possible for cities. In the context of this research, three categories identified by Marcuse and Van Kempen are relevant; these divisions are: divisions by function, culture and status. (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 1997: 293) “Functional divisions are often the result of economic necessities or physical planning” (Ibid), for example some areas are fit to become areas for manufacturing others for office space. “Cultural divisions include divisions of the residential population in terms ethnicity, religion, place (or country) of origin or lifestyle” (Ibid). Cultural divisions can be the result of free choice- for example the Turkish immigrants living in certain areas in German cities- or could be enforced through manipulation, in which case they overlap with status divisions. “Status divisions explicitly refer to relationships of power, domination or even exploitation... Here we talk about of separations by class (UK), caste (India), wealth (almost everywhere), race (US) and political power (the former Eastern Europe). Security guarded luxury residences near central business districts in American cities, on one hand, and Black townships in South Africa or American urban ghettos, on the other hand, may be the extreme examples here” (Ibid). In the context of Beirut it is also possible to talk about sectarian divisions, that is, divisions that are linked to the concentration of people along sectarian association. It remains to be noted that different categories of division do overlap; moreover, sometimes they may contradict or reinforce each other.

*This research is concerned with spatial segregation that is practiced in a city in which the predominant logic of division remains that of religious association, despite post-war governments' efforts to facilitate and promote divisions by status.*

### **5.1.2. Spatial segregation and social exclusion**

The type of segregation that this research is concerned with is one in which a certain profile of individuals voluntarily withdraws from the *spaces* of the rest of society. However, does withdrawing from the *spaces* of society entail withdrawing from society? In other words, how



does spatial segregation relate to social exclusion? Are these two parallel conditions, or is there a causal link?

Let us first define and operationalize the concept of social exclusion in order to link it to the pattern of spatial segregation that this research is concerned with. “An individual is socially excluded if: (a) s/he is *geographically resident* in a society but (b) for reasons beyond his/her control s/he cannot participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society” (LSE Center for analysis of Social Exclusion, 2002, emphasis added ). Barry (2002) suggests that there are two thresholds of social exclusion, a lower involuntary one that divides those who regularly participate in the mainstream institutions from those outside of them and an upper voluntary threshold that divides those in the middle from those who voluntarily detach themselves from the mainstream institutions<sup>89</sup>. The type of exclusion that this research is concerned with is related to the upper threshold of exclusion “in which a minority is in a position to exclude the majority” (Ibid). Burchardt et al identify five dimensions of (involuntary) social exclusion, namely, production, consumption, savings, social interaction and political engagement (Burchardt et al in Hills ed., 2002: 30). I have not come across research that operationalizes voluntary social exclusion (VSE) and as such I take Burchardt’s dimensions to be applicable to VSE as well.

I have argued elsewhere that in the context of Beirut young affluent heads of households remain dispersed in the city rather than being concentrated. The dispersal of young affluent heads of households entails that they produce, consume and save in a manner that contrasts sharply with their immediate contexts. As such, in the absence of spatial segregation, affluent individuals are continuously exposed to diverging practices. Hence, spatial segregation can be explained as a defensive strategy that responds to this exposure.

With regard to the last two dimensions of VSE, namely social interaction and political engagement, I argue that the type of spatial segregation that this research is concerned with has a causal relationship with these two dimensions of VSE. Spatial segregation isolates people and is likely to decrease their level of spatial and thus social exposure to those whom they exclude; as such, it is likely to decrease their level of social interaction with the society

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<sup>89</sup>Quoting Aristotle who said that to live outside society one would have to be either a beast or a god, Barry remarks that “We would not be altogether missing the spirit of that remark if we were to identify those below the lower threshold with the beasts and those above the upper threshold as the gods: one group lacks capacity to participate in the common institutions while the other group has no need to” (Barry in Hills et al, 2002: 24). “The more sharply the thresholds are defined e.g. in the US, the more those above and below the thresholds are a mirror image of each other e.g. the inhabitants of inner-city ghettos in the US receive little police attention, as do inhabitants of gated communities as they employ their own security guards” (Barry in Hills et al, 2002: 17).

that resides within their proximity. With regard to political engagement, the political concerns of those who segregate are likely to diverge from those whom they spatially exclude. In deed, the profile of individuals that this research is concerned with, namely, young affluent heads of households might be politically engaged, but their agenda is likely to be different from that of their immediate context.

Hence, in conclusion spatial segregation as practised by young affluent heads of households while triggered by the first three dimensions of VSE, namely, consumption, production and savings, also works to bolster VSE, by accentuating the social interaction and political engagement dimensions of VSE. Therefore, I may conclude that the spatial segregation of young affluent heads of households is a form of voluntary social exclusion, in which these individuals *disengage* from their context and fasten their connection to a dispersed network of individuals. They “*belong* not to their immediate surrounding but to a largely invisible network” (Caldeira, 2000: 258, emphasis added). The network is invisible, because it is not anchored permanently in space. It is a type of spatial segregation that does not concentrate people geographically, but nevertheless *concentrates the encounters* of people with a selective profile of people. It ensures homogeneity of *encounters*. Massey argues that the geographic concentration of poverty and wealth results in diverging subcultures, heightened social tension and spatially induced advantages and dis-advantages (Massey, 1996). Likewise, I argue that non-geographic concentration yields similar results, whereby the advantages and disadvantages would be concentration-induced rather than spatially induced. Indeed, I am concerned here with the advantages that are concentration-induced. Understanding these advantages would enable us to understand why young affluent heads of households demand spatial segregation.

### **5.1.3. The limitations of the concept of gated communities**

Recent literature on spatial segregation is quite abundant with discussions on the segregative nature of gated communities (GC's), also known as communal interest developments (CID's). The definitions of GC's tend to cluster around housing development that restricts public access, usually through the use of gates, booms, walls and fences. These residential areas may also employ security staff or CCTV systems to monitor access. In addition, GC's may include a variety of services such as shops or leisure facilities (Atkinson and Blandy, 2005:177). Another important aspect of GC's is that residents resort to private modes of public goods provision. Residents own or control common areas or shared amenities, and this in return “carries with it reciprocal rights and obligations enforced by a private governing body” (Judd

in Glasze et al ed., 2006: 46). Hence, the basic criteria for the definition of GC's are first, the restriction of public access, second, the resort to private modes of public goods provision and third, the adherence to the laws of a private governing body. However, as Atkinson and Blandy point out "the apparently 'unique' characteristics of GC's present immediate problems for an accurate definition" (Atkinson and Blandy, 2005:177). In what follows I challenge this uniqueness of definition based on a number observations that pertain to the context of Beirut.

First, if restricting public access is one of the basic criteria of the definition "should we include flats with door entry systems, tower blocks with concierge schemes or partially walled housing estates, even detached houses with their own gates in the definition?" (Atkinson and Blandy, 2005:177) In deed in Beirut, tower blocks seem to be particularly close to the definition. Gated and fenced off from their immediate context, tower blocks frequently also feature a number of communal facilities such as a gym, communal swimming pool, concierge scheme etc... Hence, in the absence of a specification of the scope or threshold at which public access is restricted, the condition of public access restriction does not seem to be a unique characteristic of GC's and hence cannot be used as one of the basic criteria for the definition.

Second, if resorting to private modes of public goods provision is taken as one of the basic criteria for the definition of GC's, the following argument presents a challenge to this definition. In the context of unreliable services provision by the state and decaying public utilities infrastructure, resorting to alternative means of public services provision (e.g. infrastructure services such as electricity, sewage, water, telephone or security services, social services) either as a substitute or as a standby option are quite common in Beirut. For example, privately managed generators provide electricity to be collectively consumed in neighbourhoods during power cuts. Another example pertains to the events following the series of assassinations in 2005. At the time the security condition was perceived as rather unstable. A number of residential neighbourhoods mobilized their local youth to gate their turf and provide collective security. Indeed, what might be termed Lebanese adaptability, as the willingness and capacity of the Lebanese to bypass the state, bend the rules that govern the public and take things into their own (private) hands<sup>90</sup>, enables the materialization of alternative modes of collective service provision, whose ownership or control is shared by private entities rather than by the state. As such, in the context of Beirut, resorting to private modes of public goods provision is not uniquely restricted to gated communities and hence cannot be used as a one of the basic criteria for the definition of GC's.

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<sup>90</sup> This capacity might have been acquired during the war years but it has also been supported by the laissez –fair attitude of the Lebanese state.

Third, if the consumption of collective goods in an excludable fashion is the determinant factor of the definition, does it matter whether this “club good” (Tiebout, 1956, Foldvary, 1994) say the private swimming pool, is located *in* the premises or in other part of town? As mentioned elsewhere, in the context of Beirut, young affluent heads of households are not concentrated in “islands of well being” (Glasze, 2003) but remain relatively dispersed throughout the city. There might be a pattern of clustering of tower blocks with concierge schemes particularly around high value terrain, e.g. Saifi village, Ramlet el Baida, Tal el Bahr, Verdun, Bliss, the Surssock quarter, Achrafiyye’ hills etc.. but these clusters are not “totalising” entities. As such, this residentially dispersed group, consumes a number of geographically dispersed club goods, does that make of the residences of this group a gated community?

In light of the vagueness of the definition of GC’s and taking into consideration the observations above, I propose that the type of spatial segregation which this research is concerned with and which I am arguing takes the form of a layer, that this layer is an *expanded* form of a gated community, one that occupies the totality of the city rather than being confined to a particular totalizing enclave or citadel (Marcuse, 2002). If GC’s are the embodiment of supply-driven residential segregation, the embodiment of gates in search of a community<sup>91</sup>, our layer is the embodiment of individuals/ group/community that search for the gate. In deed I are concerned with individuals that are scattered in the city but non-the-less circulate in a particular ensemble of nodes and corridors.

#### 5.1.4. The public and the private

The terms ‘public’ and ‘private’ are used in many and often contradictory ways in the academic literature. Weintraub (1997) notes that ‘different sets of people who employ these concepts mean very different things by them – and sometimes, without quite realizing it, mean several things at once’ (Ibid: 1–2).<sup>92</sup> Sheller and Urry (2003) point to the need of differentiating and sorting the various meanings of public and private. While the categories of ‘public’ and ‘private’ are familiar its varied bases have not been sufficiently recognized and social scientists have not adequately distinguished between them (Ibid).

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<sup>91</sup> Although several authors question the degree to which the people inside the gates actually become a community. (See Caldeira, 2000 and Low, 2002) Moreover, the seedling for some gated communities, particularly earlier versions, was a nucleus of a community searching for “ideal town”. The case of Rabieh is one such example.

<sup>92</sup> He refers to four major approaches: the liberal-ekonomistic model, the republican virtue (and classical) model, the ‘sociability’ or dramaturgic approach, and a range of feminist critiques/analyses.

Some familiar conceptions of the public/ private include ideas of public/private interest, sector, sphere, goods, life, space and place. Table 1 summarizes the meaning of the private/public distinction in each of these conceptions. Coupling the terms private/public with these different conceptions result in different meanings and different ways in which the boundaries between what is public and what is private is drawn. For example, a public school is owned, managed and supplied by the public sector. However, only users (students and teachers) are allowed to use the school facilities (for example the school's playground), thus, in effect restricting the degree to which the school facilities function as a public space. Another example pertains to shopping malls. A shopping mall is a private property owned and managed by the private sector. This property is accessible to non-owners and used by a wide range of the public.

In what follows I discuss the issues that determine the way that a distinction is made between what is private and what is public.

Private *interests* versus public interests, or the private *sector* versus the public sector is a public/private distinction focused on the distinction between the market and the state. The state is presumed to operate in the public interest, while economic actors pursue their own 'private' interests. "Referring to this as the liberal-economistic model, Weintraub (1997) notes that 'this orientation defines public/private issues as having to do with striking a balance between individuals and contractually created organizations, on the one hand, and state action on the other'" (Ibid: 8).<sup>93</sup>

Private *sphere* versus public sphere is a public/private distinction focused on the distinction between individuals on one hand and the coming together of individuals as a collective to mediate between the state and the private sphere. "The public *sphere* is viewed as a space of rational debate and open communication mediating between the state and the private sphere of family life and economic relations. The private sphere is seen as part of civil society from which potential solidarity, equality and public participation can arise. Thus inclusion or exclusion from the public sphere occurs through the self-organization of social actors into

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<sup>93</sup> "From a neo-liberal point of view, the public is seen to have become over-extended into affairs that ought to be the concern of private sector interests. Thus many neo-liberals call for privatization of state-owned sectors, deregulation of business, cuts in taxation and extension of free trade agreements as an appropriate response to the state overstepping its proper boundaries.... Others concerned with the 'public interest' argue that private economic interests are overwhelming the public realm, and undermining the common good, which the state is meant to represent and protect. In neo- Marxist approaches private economic interests always pose a fundamental threat to the public good and must be closely regulated and controlled" (Weintraub, 1997).

associations that can act publicly or speak as the ‘private citizens come together as a public’ (Sheller and Urry, 2003).

Public *life* versus private life is a public/private distinction focused on the distinction between what takes place within politics, the workplace, religion, education and other public spaces, as opposed to private life which is seen as occurring within the domestic realm.

Public *good* versus private good is a public/private distinction focused on the distinction between who and how goods are consumed. “Noting that it is the *attributes* of a good, not the physical good itself that are consumed and that any single good can yield many different kinds of benefits that extend over different spatial realm, Webster states that “It is the consumption characteristics of a good or service that make it public or private; there are degrees of publicness; and there are different publics” (Webster, 2002: 5). Webster makes a distinction between four types of goods: pure private goods, pure public goods, local public goods and club goods (Webster, 2002). According to Webster, *pure private goods* are consumed competitively such that the consumption by one individual prevents consumption by any other; *pure public goods* are consumed jointly in the sense that all consumers consume the same good; *local public goods* are those with distance-attenuated benefits; *club goods* are conventionally contrasted to local public goods, being jointly consumed goods that can be rendered excludable, in the sense that individuals can be prevented from consuming them. Webster (2005) argues that if a good can be made excludable then costs can be recovered from users and it can, in principle, be supplied by voluntary action or by entrepreneurs via markets. Whether a particular good can be made excludable depends on technical, legal, financial and cultural factors. The boundary between club goods and local public goods is blurred. Municipal governments may be compared to entrepreneurs, supplying collective services on the basis of taxes (fees). Gated communities with their own management companies, member fees, local services budgets and contractual regulations are mini-versions of city-clubs. Webster argues therefore that public goods theory suggests a more subtle classification of urban space than the simple division into public and private realms, which fails to capture the realities of *publicness* and *privateness* within cities. Webster (2002) argues that *clubs* may be a better metaphor than the more open-ended *public*, therefore, when thinking about collective consumption within cities.

Public space/ place versus private space/ place is a public/private distinction focused on the distinction between on the one hand the domestic, the familial, the personal, the bodily and the intimate inner world of the individual (Ariès and Duby, 1989; Elias, 1982, Madanipour, 2003) and on the other hand everything that is outside the household. Feminist approaches

refer to everything outside the household as ‘public’, including economic institutions such as the workplace or corporations, *and* political institutions of the state *and* public spaces. The form of exclusion and inclusion on either side of the boundary is grounded in law, contract and the recognition of property before the law as either private or public. However, although private space and public space are a “category of law” (Berlant, 1997), Sennett(1977) argues that social relations play a significant role in the physical and symbolic demarcations between different spaces (Sennett, 1977). Therefore, in this distinction of what is private and what is public, what is conceived of as private/public is a spatial as well as a social arrangement.

<b>Conceptions of public/private</b>	<b>Focus of the public/private distinction</b>
Interest/ sector	State versus market It is presumed that states operate at least in part to fulfil the public interest (via public sector institutions) which would not be met by those pursuing private interests, whether they are individuals, families or large corporations (all private sector institutions)
Sphere	Mediating the state versus family The public sphere, where open and rational debate can take place, is the social space that lies between the state, on the one hand, and the private sphere of family life and economic relations, on the other
Life	Politics/religion/education/ work versus home Public life takes place within politics, the workplace, religion, education and other public spaces, as opposed to private life which is seen as occurring within the domestic realm
Goods	Collective or individual consumption
Space/ place	Public spaces are those areas and locales, especially in towns and cities, outside the private spaces of the home and workplace, where people can congregate, socialize and organize in relatively unregulated ways
Publicity/Privacy	Publicity involves the bringing of private relationships into the public domain, through ‘exposure’ in various media(radio, print, TV, Internet); privacy implies a right to non-exposure

Table 11 Focus of the public/private distinction  
as per Sheller and Urry (2003) and Webster (2002)  
(Source: author)

The erosion of boundaries between public and private has been frequently lamented in the academic literature as the cause of democratic decline. “On every front, it seems, the ‘public’ is being privatized, the private is becoming oversized, and this undermines democratic life” (Sheller and Urry, 2003: 107). It is frequently implied that maintaining or restoring the boundary is crucial to the continuance of democratic citizenship in the contemporary world. This is so because the ‘public sphere’ of civil society has normally been conflated with that of

‘public space’ (Weintraub, 1997). The power of civil society crucially depends on the ‘space’ between these public and private spheres. Arendt (1958), for example, traces the origins of the public sphere back to the Ancient Greek *polis*, in which *private* citizens met in the public space of the agora. Habermas (1992) argues that in the late 18th-century European cities, it was the coffee-houses, table societies and masonic lodges that helped form a public sphere particularly as the conjugal family was privatized. Landes (1988) points to the fact that in these idealized public places, an informed rational debate could take place at least among the elite men who could gain entry to these specific ‘public’ locales.

In the context of this research the conception of the public and private is concerned with the idea of public *space/place* and private *space/place*. However, I take Webster’s warning that “It is overly simplistic to think in terms of private and public space. Reality is far more complicated than this” (Webster, 2002: 14 ). Indeed most public realms serve *particular* publics and are better conceived of as *club* realms (Ibid: 3). In addition, what makes a place “public” is not legal or economic ownership but whether it is treated in practice as a place where strangers freely enter, and where one will be among people who are strangers to one another (Katz, 2000). As such, to overcome these limitations, I limit my usage of the public and private space terminology to the very extreme legal definition. Public space is space to which everybody has entitlement to access; private space is space to which only owners have entitlement to access.

My concern with public and private space in this research does not revolve around who owns, manages and provides and is *entitled* to access space , but rather the capacity of individuals to “*expose* or *conceal*” (Nigel in Madanipour, 2003: 105) themselves in space. As such public space becomes a “front stage” (Goffman, 1959) while private space a “back stage” (Ibid) irrespective of whether one has entitlement to access either. Madanipour (2003) argues that public space is a space of *exposure* while private space is a space of *concealment*. The space of concealment includes the internal world of the mind, the personal space of the body, the exclusive space of property and the intimate space of the home (Ibid). Public space, on the other hand, the space of exposure, includes the interpersonal space of sociability the communal space of the neighbourhood, the material and institutional spaces of the common world, the impersonal space of the city (Ibid). Madanipour’s (2003) distinction between a space of exposure and a space of concealment is important in the context of this thesis as it provides shades of what *functions* as public and to what *functions* as private in the sense of “front-staging” and “back-staging” (Goffman, 1959) rather than entitlement to access.



It is these shades of private and public, these spaces in between the extremely private and the extremely public that I am interested in. It is in these spaces that interaction occurs or is inhibited between private selves and public others. I term these spaces as interpersonal spaces. Interpersonal spaces can be public, private or club spaces. Interpersonal spaces expose individuals to strangers, yet tactics to achieve concealment can be used to limit and control exposure. For example an individual can be located in a space of exposure but be simultaneously concealed, inversely, an individual can be located in a space of concealment, but be exposed.

## **5.2. *Factors promoting increased spatial segregation***

In this section I identify some of the main factors promoting the accentuation of the phenomenon of spatial segregation in cities. These factors are, first, the transnationalization of elites and the accentuation of what Ellin (2001) calls their “postmodern fear”, second, efforts by affluent individuals to counter democratization tendencies, third, supply –led segregation, fourth, cities looking for a role in the global economy and fifth, institutional evolution.

### **5.2.1. The trans-nationalization of affluent individuals and the accentuation of their “post modern fear” (Ellin, 2001)**

Spatial segregation is intensified by the growing national detachment of identities of affluent individuals and their agendas and their substitution by systems and sub cultures that are alien to the local cultural context. Sklair (2002) envisages the rise of what he terms “a transnational capitalist class” (Ibid: 98), whose members are people from around the world who consider themselves citizens of the world as well as of their places of birth, they tend to have global rather than local perspectives on a variety of issues and they tend to share similar lifestyles, particularly patterns of consumption of luxury goods and services (Ibid).

The spatial needs and aspirations of this class are increasingly at odds with their localized contexts, particularly in countries with chaotic urbanisms and inadequate supply of urban services. Members of this class are also increasingly spatially unbound, that is, they depend more and more on their linkage to global and regional networks rather than on their immediate spatial context. As a result, members of this class increasingly demand that their “touching down places” (Marcuse, 1997) are detached from their immediate localised contexts.

Moreover, affluent individuals increasingly suffer from what Ellin (2001) calls “postmodern fear” related to the acceleration in the rate of change, the decline in public space and the increased influence of intelligent machines (Ellin: 2002: 872). The responses to post-modern fear include re-tribalization, nostalgia and escapism (Ibid)<sup>94</sup>.

### 5.2.2. Efforts to counter democratization tendencies

The literature shows that the coincidence of increased segregation tendencies with the onset of processes of democratisation is repeated in other cities of the world. In the case of Sao Paulo, Caldeira (2000) notes that a type of undemocratic space has emerged at the moment when the Brazilian society was undergoing political democratization. “While the political system opened up, the streets were closed” (Caldeira, 2000: 309). Robins (2002) draws attention to a similar chain of events in Cape Town, where despite the dramatic political reform of the 1990’s in South Africa, the racialised geographies of post-apartheid Cape Town reproduce the spatial logic of capital under apartheid (Robins, 2002: 671). Ironically, “the post-apartheid context is creating a socio-spatial context that is virtually identical to the included/excluded socio-spatial system of the apartheid” (Lemanski, 2004: 109). A possible explanation of this apparent paradox is as Caldeira argues, that the democratization process results in the unsettling of social boundaries; an event that is particularly upsetting for the elite (Cladeira, 2000: 334). Thus, “faced with the sudden proximity of difference, citizens emulate the fear-management strategy they previously witnessed the state operating, that of socio-spatial exclusion and segregation” (Lemanski, 2004: 110). These explanations suggest that, *as democracy is launched, the built environment becomes an alternate arena for contesting political processes particularly processes of democratization, social equalization and expansion of citizenship rights*. Giddens point out to what he terms “the paradox of democracy” (Giddens, 2002: 71), namely, that democracy is expanding in simultaneity with widespread disillusionment with democratic processes particularly in the more established and mature democracies. The explanation of the spread of segregated environments as spatial

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<sup>94</sup> According to Ellin, re-tribalization is a means to counteract the hegemony of the “global village”. The mass media have contributed to increased homogenization but they have also flared new desires to affirm cultural dissimilarities - sometimes even inventing new traditions. On the other hand, nostalgia is a desire to return to the past as a mode of rejecting elements of contemporary life. The building of fortified enclaves feed on these desires, in many instances using them as marketing strategies. Escapism is a more extreme form of retreat from the larger community or a flight into fantasy worlds (Ellin, 2002). The rising tide of fear fuels the desire to escape. However, more importantly is the increased rejection of new unexpected experiences or encounters. This impulse to retreat and substitute the urban experience with a staged experience of the predictable is epitomized in the expansion of fortified enclaves.

strategies to undermine democratization processes is another more powerful aspect of this paradox.

### 5.2.3. Supply-led segregation? The role of development firms

Detachment and concentration once kick-started become self-perpetuating processes. Concentration leads to diverging subcultures which in return accentuates the sense of detachment. However, we must avoid understanding segregation as purely demand-led and should also acknowledge a role of supply factors and a role of government.

The market finds a business opportunity in responding to the demand for VSE and the demand for concentration. In addition, businesses also thrive on segregation. By delivering segregated space, businesses become capable of isolating market segments, which in turn increases their targeting efficiency. The abundance of advertisement of how “better” segregated space leads to a happier and better life is one example which illustrates how spatial segregation is also supply-led.

Moreover, as the globalisation of finance has instigated the rise of networked urban economies, cities have increasingly become immersed in the competition for “luring capital to come to town” (Harvey, 1989). This also entails *luring in* affluent groups. In deed the yardstick for measuring the success of cities is increasingly reduced to how attractive these cities are for these groups. Cities increasingly resort to the use of neo-liberal practices to make “the city a more comfortable place for urban elites” (Rodgers, 2004: 119). Interestingly, these practices might at times be at odds with neoliberalism as a theory (Harvey, 2005: 19)<sup>95</sup>. In the case of Beirut, the coming to power of the Hariri government in the early 90’s with a definite agenda of putting Beirut back on the regional map, has mainstreamed a vision of the success of the city as being linked to the degree in which its spaces of affluence are interconnected and organized. In the early 90’s, a lot of public money was spent by government to upgrade the roads infrastructure of the city. Many of these roads were linking strategic nodes of affluence in the city. In addition, great concessions were given to private urban development

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<sup>95</sup> Harvey (2005) points to a tension between the theory of neoliberalism and the actual pragmatics of neoliberalization. “The scientific rigour of neoclassical economics does not sit easily with its political commitment to ideals of personal freedom, nor does its supposed distrust of all state power fit with the need for a strong and necessary coercive state that will defend the rights of private property, individual liberties and entrepreneurial freedoms. .... And there are enough contradictions in the neoliberal position to render evolving neoliberal practices unrecognizable in relation to the seeming purity of neoliberal doctrine” (Harvey, 2005: 21).

companies, such as Solidere and Linord<sup>96</sup>, to participate in the implementation of this vision. This attempt of organizing the spatiality of affluence is perhaps best portrayed by a statement delivered to the author by Fadi Fawaz, CEO of Linord at the time, in an interview with the author in 1996 “they will work in Solidere and live in Linord”.

As such, while, the *demand* for spatial segregation can also be explained as government-driven, the *pattern* of spatial segregation described in this research can be conceived as being resultant of the failure of this vision to come to full fruition- a reality in which young affluent heads of households still have to go through the trouble of organizing their spaces and where government supports every effort to “lure [them] to come to town” (Harvey, 1989 ), but nevertheless fails to realize a fixed, continuous and “totalizing” (Marcuse, 2002) “enclave of well being” (Glasze, 2006).

#### **5.2.4. Cities looking for a role in the global economy**

One of the predominant features of the process of globalisation is the increasing integration of financial markets and the rise and spread of networked economies. However, the object of this process is *not* the construction of a ‘global’ economic space or arena, but rather “the restructuring and extension of *networks of flows* (of money, goods and people) and their articulation with areal or ‘regional’ spaces at different scales” (Low in Smith 2001: 3, emphasis added). Sassen argues that global economic restructuring has led to the emergence of spatialities with command-control functions “where the work of globalisation gets done” (Sassen, 2002:8). These spatialities are increasingly located in “global cities” (Ibid), but they are also dependent on what can be termed *global fragments*, that is, fragments of non-global cities that are assuming “global-city capabilities” (Ibid: 28).

This process of extending the network of flows has led cities to increasingly compete for the assumption of “gateway functions for the circulation in and out of national and foreign capital” (Ibid: 18). Consequently, many cities throughout the world are engaging in developing Glamour Zones- spaces whose function is to tap on global or regional flows by “luring capital to come to town” (Harvey, 1989). Glamour Zones are city fragments competing to assume “specialized capabilities” (Sassen, 2002), aspiring to connect to circuits of flows by partaking in the servicing of the global economy. This development has been supported by the reoriented role of government from the provision of welfare and services to the enabler of

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<sup>96</sup> Solidere is the private urban development company in charge of reconstructing downtown Beirut. Linord is the private urban development company in charge of developing a residential area on reclaimed land to the north of Beirut.

policies that aim to foster growth and economic development. As Wu (2004) illustrates in the context of Beijing, it has also been propelled by the fact that “cities are willing to adjust their regulatory regimes to attract investment”, thus allowing foreign capital to penetrate into property markets, especially the upper sections of the market (Logan in Wu, 2004).

Glamour Zones are frequently located in contexts with poor infrastructures and poor urban services. Hence, they are developed as “disembedded spaces” (Rodgers, 2004), that are detached from their localized contexts. This detachment induces fragmentation and often the fortification of fragments. Fragmentation and fortification are simultaneously a reflection of the exercise of power over space and a mechanism to overcome the “free-riders” problem. (Webster, 2002) *Thus, the process of extending the network of flows is encouraging the development of “Glamour zones” as global fragments and as such is contributing to the accentuation of spatial segregation.*

### **5.2.5. Intuitional evolution: Less government, more market**

Reduced state participation alongside a strengthened role of the private sector in the economy and the production of the city’s built environment is widely advocated by major opinion formers such as the IMF, World Bank and UN organizations. Efforts to downstream the exhaustion of traditional forms of state intervention and the necessity of searching for a new form of governance better adapted to the context have manufactured a crisis of governability that is geared towards globalizing the development of the “Minimalist State”. Regulation theory explains this crisis of governability as a search for “a new institutional fix” that would “regulate and reproduce a given accumulation regime through application across a wide range of areas” (Amin, 1996: 8). This model of less government/ more market is a type of “institutional fix” gaining currency throughout the world today. It’s spreading has been encouraged by the political organizers of global capitalism.

The adoption of the Minimalist State model has led to institutional restructuring, deregulation and privatization, thus making new institutional forms for spatial organization possible. This has *facilitated* the development of segregated environments.

Moreover, the adoption of the Minimalist State has also led to diminished public resources. Consequently, degenerating areas where unsatisfactory services are provided for by the state have accentuated the failure of the public sector. This is particularly evident in Third world cities. This in turn has *promoted* the development of segregated environments as “new territorial organization on a sub-local level which enable the exclusive consumption of

collective goods, and in which political decisions are taken in a kind of shareholder democracy” (Glasze, 2000: 3).

### 5.3. ***Recent debates of spatial segregation: Two main perspectives and a third one***

In the current debate on urban spatial segregation it is possible to identify two main perspectives. The first perspective argues that spatial segregation patterns that are quite visible in cities today reflect a spatialisation of the social and economic divorce of higher and lower income groups in the city. On the other hand, the second perspective argues that current spatial segregation patterns in cities are reflect of a new reality, in which higher and lower income groups are inter-dependent *despite* growing polarization and *spatial* segregation. Both of these perspectives link the spatial to the social and vice versa, what they do not agree about is whether the emerging social condition is one of increasing *divergence* of income groups or rather of growing *interdependence* between different income groups. It is possible to identify also a third perspective in the literature that divorces the spatial from the social and that argues that the two do not always reflect each other.

Before proceeding, it is useful at this point of the discussion to list some of the most prominent terminologies used in the literature to refer to segregated space alongside their definitions by their respective authors. Marcuse (1997) provides a useful typology of segregated spaces. In his view “ghettos, enclaves and citadels” are leading to a “quartered city” (Ibid: 315). He defines ghettos as “a spatially concentrated area used to separate and limit a particular *involuntarily* and usually racially defined population group held to be and treated as inferior by the dominant society” (Ibid, emphasis added). Today’s new ghetto of the excluded differ from the traditional ghettos<sup>97</sup> in that race is combined with class in a spatially concentrated area where resident’s activities are excluded from the economic life of the surrounding society, which does not profit significantly from its existence (Ibid).

Marcuse (1997) defines the enclave as “a spatially concentrated area in which members of a particular population group, *self-defined by ethnicity or religion or otherwise*, congregate as a means of enhancing their social economic political and/or cultural development” (Marcuse, 1997:315, emphasis added). Exclusionary enclaves differ from other forms of enclaves such

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<sup>97</sup> Marcuse (1997) defines the traditional ghetto as that in which confinement of residents is desired by the dominant interest of society because that confinement facilitates a strong measure of control over resident’s activities, activities that further dominate economic interests.

as immigrant or cultural enclaves in that its residents, intermediate and insecure in their economic, political and social relationships to the outside community, wish to “protect” themselves from a perceived danger from below (Ibid). He defines citadel as “a spatially concentrated area in which members of a particular population group, *defined by its position of superiority in power, wealth or status in relation to its neighbours*, congregate as a means of protecting or enhancing that position. They are exclusionary through the use of social and/or physical means of fortification, although in some the restrictions on access may be very subtle in deed. They protect established positions of superiority and power seen as secure, deserved and permanent” (Marcuse, 1997: 315, emphasis added).

The term “fortified and fortress enclaves” is used by Caldeira (2000) to refer to “the privatised, enclosed and monitored spaces for residence, consumption, leisure and work” which are leading to the development of a “city of walls”. Glasze (2000) uses the term “islands of wellbeing” and Coy and Poehler (2002) “islands of wealth” to stress the exclusive nature and isolated spatiality of these enclaves. In Glasze’s view these “islands of wealth” are signalling the “end of the open city” (Glasze, 2002). Friedmann and Wolff (1982) describe the citadels of affluence as the “touching-down places” for an increasingly detached urban elite residing in world cities. Sassen (2001) uses the term “Glamour Zone”, to stress the exclusivity and distinct qualities that distinguish the “command and control” areas in cities. Rodgers (2004) views spatial segregation in the city of Managua as occurring through the constitution of an “exclusive fortified *network*” for the urban elites. On the other hand, Balbo et al (1995) argue that space-wise the third world city is a “city of fragments”, although, they stress that it remains to be proven whether such physical fragmentation is in any way related to a similar social and economic fragmentation.

### **5.3.1. Spatial segregation reflecting the social, spatial and economic divorce of income groups**

This perspective argues that groups in society are increasingly becoming divorced from each other socially *and* spatially.

*“Elites are becoming less dependent on the services of lower status groups in neighbourhoods. People are increasingly independent of each other. The life world of the wealthy is clearly larger than their living neighbourhood. Melvin Webber’s (1964) old idea of “communities without propinquity” seems to become more important for those at the upper end of the economic spectrum today; the “urban realm” becomes “non-spatial”. For the very poor, by the same token, their spatially*

*defined neighbourhoods become more and more irrelevant to the functioning of the mainstream economy. The location of either with relation to the other recedes dramatically in importance.” (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 1997: 286)*

Within this perspective, three main strands can be identified. The first strand focuses on the increasingly *defensive, gated and carceral* character of urbanism. The work of Caldeira (2000), Low (2000), Davis (1990), McKinsey (1994) and Glasze (2003) can be placed within this strand. The second strand addresses the quartered spatial nature of this divorce. Marcuse’s quartered city of experience highlights the multiple cities of business and residences that the city is increasingly composed of. The third strand focuses on the vengefulness through which the social and spatial divorce of income groups is enforced in the city. “*Revanchist*” urbanism, as Smith (1996) terms it, is the result of gentrification, it is an urbanism “that takes its revenge against those who are “accused of “stealing” the city from the white upper classes’ (Smith 1996 : xviii).

What all of these strands have in common is a conception of *concentrations* of affluence *geographically abutting concentrations* of poverty (Massey, 1996). These perspectives while insightful do not explain the patterns of divisions in a city such as Beirut, in which there are incidents of concentrations of poverty, but in which the spaces of wealth nevertheless remain rather dispersed throughout the urban fabric.

### 5.3.1.1. **Defensive, gated, carceral urbanisms**

Within this strand, literature on gated communities and communal interest developments is plentiful as this residential typology illustrates quite vividly the exclusionary capacity of segregated space (see for example McKenzie, 1994; Caldeira, 2000; Low, 2000) This literature criticizes spatial segregation for having important implications for democracy, by “being sources of [social] segregation, social inequality and the disintegration of society” (Caldeira, 2000; Low, 2003). The walls surrounding segregated spaces “have come to reflect and to reinforce, hierarchies of wealth and power; divisions among people, races, ethnic groups, and religions, and hostilities, tensions and fears” (Marcuse, 1997: 103). This critical discourse is most prominently represented by the LA school of urban studies or authors influenced by them (Davis, 1990; Caldeira, 2000). These authors recover Michel Foucault’s notions of spatially exercised power. They argue that the element of power is involved in spatial segregation tactics and suggest that spatial segregation is the way power is translated into space. They relate the creation of fortified enclaves to the increasing levels of crime, immigration and social inequality that the post-industrial city suffers from. As such they view



spatial segregation as imposed by those who hold the power to exclude spatially those who are deemed redundant.

Caldeira's study of gated communities in the context of the metropolitan region of São Paulo is set within this perspective of spatial segregation. In "City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo", Caldeira examines how the three variables of crime, fear of violence and disrespect of citizenship have intertwined to produce a new urban spatiality that is characterised by segregation. Caldeira's main argument is that São Paulo has increasingly become a "city of walls". She argues that the practice of new techniques of exclusion has transformed the city into a new urban form whose objective is to keep social groups apart. These techniques have been practiced by groups which feel threatened by the city and as a result start building fortified enclaves for residence, work, leisure and consumption. "The result is urban space in which inequality is an organizing value" (Caldeira, 2000: 7). Caldeira believes that the main instrument for this new type of segregation is "the fortified enclave". These "privatised, enclosed and monitored spaces for residence, consumption, leisure and work" (Ibid: 213) constitute the core of the new mode of segregation. Its users are those "who fear the heterogeneity of older urban quarters" (Ibid: 4). Its manifestations are gated residential communities, shopping malls or office complexes. She explores particularly its residential version, the closed condominium. According to Caldeira's analysis the fortified enclaves exemplify a new way of organizing social differences in urban space. They constitute a new model of segregation "that *separates social groups with an explicitness* that transforms the quality of public space" (Ibid: 4, emphasis added). She analyses the changes in public space and in the quality of public life that occur in a city of walls. Upper and middle classes are segregated thus generating another type of public space and interaction among citizens. Caldeira confirms that it is essentially an *undemocratic* and *non-modern* public space and notes that this type of undemocratic space has emerged at the moment when the Brazilian society was undergoing political democratization.

Similarly, Davis (1990) argues that cities have become divided into fortified places of affluence whose walls battle against the intrusion by the poor who in turn are pushed to the decaying spaces of the rest of the city. Described as the "heir to Engels" (LeGates et al, 2003: 201), Davis focuses on exposing the hopelessness and despair of those on the other side of the wall. "We live in fortress cities brutally divided between fortified cells of affluent society and places of terror where the police battle the criminalized poor. Freeways allow middle class suburbanites to navigate the city as a whole without encountering the lives of the residents of inner city neighbourhoods (Davis in LeGates et al, 2003: 201) The city of Quartz is the result of an unprecedented tendency to merge urban design, architecture and the police

apparatus into a single, comprehensive security effort (Ibid: 203). The consequence of this “crusade to secure the city” (Ibid), the use of design deterrents such as overhead sprinkler systems and barrel shaped bum-proof bus benches, is a carceral urbanism in which an affluent society incarcerates itself in fortresses of wealth and incarcerates the *other* in ghettos in the name of security.

#### 5.3.1.2. “Multiple” urbanisms

This strand of the perspective of spatial segregation stresses the quartered/ enclave nature of this segregation. Marcuse (2002) makes the distinction between residential quarters and business quarters, arguing that “one may speak of separate *residential cities*” and “multiple cities of business” (Ibid: 94). Each of these residential and business cities *within* the city is identified with a certain social group, meaning that different social groups have their own separate quartered spaces for residence and work. Marcuse provides a listing of these residential and business cities. Refer to Table 12. The *luxury areas of the city* are identified with the residences of the wealthy. The *gentrified city* serves the professionals, managers, technicians, yuppies in their 20’s and college professors in their 60’s. The *suburban city* serves the better paid workers, blue and white collar employees, the lower middle class the petit bourgeoisie. The *tenement city*- the slums- caters for the residences of lower paid workers while the *abandoned city* is the place for the very poor, the excluded, the never and permanently unemployed, the homeless and the shelter residents (Ibid).

The residents of these cities have their own respective cities of business. The *controlling city*- the city of big decisions- includes a network of high-rise offices, for some it includes yachts for some, the backseats of limousines for others, airplanes and scattered residences for others, meaning that this city is not spatially rooted (Ibid: 98). The *city of advanced services*, “recognizable at a glance” is composed of professional offices tightly clustered in downtowns (Ibid: 98). The *city of direct production* including manufacturing and the production aspect of advanced services, is located in clusters and with significant agglomerations but in varied locations within a metropolitan area. (Ibid: 99) The *city of unskilled work* and the informal economy is closely intertwined with the cities of production and advanced services and thus located near them but separately and in separate clusters. The *residual city* is the city of the less legal portions of the informal economy, the city of storage where otherwise undesired NIMBY facilities are located. (Ibid)

However, Marcuse cautions us that the cities of business are not congruent in space with the residential city and its divisions (Ibid: 95). As such, there is passage from the residential and

business quarters by most people and generally everyday (Ibid: 105). In addition this movement of people takes place at different times of the day, meaning that “different spaces are occupied by different persons at different times for different purposes” (Ibid: 106). As such Marcuse suggests the “metaphor of a *layered city* as one that begins to capture these complex dimensions of division.... Each layer shows the entire space of the city, but no one layer shows the complete city. *Each one reflects the quartering and the walls*, but most in different spatial configuration from the others” (Ibid: 106, emphasis added). However, Marcuse does not elaborate much on this concept of “the layered city” and leaves the reader the task of explaining this concept. Rather, Marcuse uses this concept to *correct* the mistaken image of a quartered city permanently walling in its users. As some socio-economic groups defy the idea of a *quartered city* by residing in residential quarters and working in business quarters that are not congruent in space, Marcuse (2002) uses the concept of the “layered city” to salvage his argument that socio-economic groups are starkly segregated spatially despite their movement in space. This is so because their movement remains a movement *in-between* their respective quarters.

The power of this concept of the layered city is that it illustrates how different socio-economic groups link their respective cities of business with their respective cities of residence in a way that voluntarily or involuntarily dims out the rest of the quarters of the city and that results in “multiple urbanisms’ co-existing *within* the city. While this research does not agree with Marcuse on the validity of the existence of residential or business quarters in the context of Beirut, it taps on to this powerful concept of the layered city, as one that is capable of illustrating the way certain residential, business and leisure *spaces*, as opposed to quarters, are linked in space by affluent individuals in a way that dims out the rest of the city and the rest of its inhabitants.

The <i>residential</i> cities	Catering for	The multiple cities of <i>business</i>
The <i>luxury areas</i> of the city (the disposable city)	The wealthy	The <i>controlling</i> city (not spatially rooted. network of high-rise offices, yachts etc...)
The <i>gentrified</i> city	The professionals, managers, technicians, yuppies in their 20's, college professors in their 60's	The city of <i>advanced services</i> (professional offices tightly clusters in downtowns)
The <i>suburban</i> city	Traditional family, better paid workers blue and white collar employees, the lower middle class, the petit bourgeoisie (Not parallel!!!)	The city of <i>direct production</i>
The <i>tenement</i> city (previously called slums)	Lower paid workers	The city of <i>unskilled work &amp; informal economy</i>
The <i>abandoned</i> city	Very poor, the excluded, the never employed and permanently unemployed	The <i>residual</i> city

Table 12 The quartered city as per Marcuse (2002)  
(Source: author)

### 5.3.1.3. “Revanchist” urbanisms

This strand focuses on the way gentrification as urban development *vengefully* spatializes the divorce of different income groups in cities. Smith (1996) derives his concept of “revanchist urbanism” from the French word *revanche*, literally meaning “revenge”. His referent is the right-wing revanchist populist movement which in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century reacted violently against the relative liberalism of the Second Empire and the socialism of the Paris Commune. These revanchists mixed military tactics with moral discourses about public order on the streets (Smith, 1996).

Smith’s revanchist thesis derives from his analysis of the battle to stretch the gentrification frontier of Manhattan’s Lower East Side and the brutally repressive policing practices deployed to ‘take back’ Tompkins Square Park which was deemed to have been stolen away from gentrifiers and the wider public by the homeless. These vengeful state tactics intensified under Republican mayor Rudy Giuliani (Smith, 1996). Amid his growing concern about “disorder in the public spaces of the city”, Giuliani identified certain groups- homeless people, prostitutes, unemployed people and graffiti artists- as “enemies within” and as instrumental in

fostering an ecology of fear among those he considered decent, honest New Yorkers. In response he ordered New York Police Department officers to pursue with “zero tolerance” those groups perceived to be a genuine threat to the “quality of urban life” (Smith 1996: 3,4)

As such Smith’s revanchist city embodies a revengeful and reactionary viciousness against various populations accused of “stealing” the city from the white upper classes’ (Smith, 1996: xviii). “The revanchist city is to be sure a dual and divided city of wealth and poverty.... But it is more, It is a privileged city where the victors are increasingly defensive of their privilege, such as it is , and increasingly vicious in defending it... The benign neglect of the “other half” so dominant in the liberal rhetoric of the 1950’s and 1960’s, has been superseded by a more active viciousness that attempts to criminalize a whole range of “behaviour”, individually defined, and to blame the failure of post-1968 urban policy on the populations it was supposed to assist (Smith, 1996: 227) . The development of downtown Beirut by a private development company can be seen as an instance of revanchism.

### **5.3.2. Spatial segregation alongside the economic interdependence of income groups**

This perspective argues that, while reflective of social inequalities, spatial segregation *does not* necessarily imply that the rift between spatially segregated groups is an all encompassing phenomenon. Rather this perspective emphasizes the *socioeconomic inter-dependence* of an increasingly polarized society irrespective of spatial segregation patterns. The higher segments of society increasingly live in a kind of “socioeconomic symbiosis” with low-income groups (Marcuse et al, 1997: 286). The former demands services and products which the latter can supply. Thus, this perspective argues that although groups of society might be spatially segregated, this segregation does not reflect a “divorce” of different socio-economic groups nor does it reinforce such a condition. Rather, this segregation is a division in space of a polarized but inter-dependent society.

#### **5.3.2.1. The dual city thesis**

*“The dual city is the social expression of the emerging spatial form of the postindustrial society while the global city is its economic expression, and the informational city is its technological expression, (Mollenkopff and Castells ed., 1991:415)*

My interest in the dual city thesis in the context of this research is as follows.

Deindustrialization and the rolling back of the state is believed to produce structural and spatial dualisms. Manufacturing jobs have been lost in urban areas, creating insecure and low paid jobs primarily in the service sector; the ‘rolling back’ of the state and the adoption of the neo-liberal economic agenda has led to the reduction of public services and the eliminations of social safety nets.

The development of an ‘hour-glass’ society (Liepietz 1998) in which the richer get richer, the poorer more poor and the middle classes are shrinking is a product of this structural dualism. This structural dualism leads at the same time to spatial segregation and to spatial segmentation, to sharp differentiation between the upper level of the information society and the rest of the local residents as well as to endless segmentation and frequent opposition among the many components of restructured and destructured labour (Castells 1989: 227).

The crux of this theory, however, is as Sassen shows that the upper and lower parts of the hour-glass society *depend* on each other. One has services and the other has money to pay for these services.

#### 5.3.2.2. **The city of clubs**

Adherents of this perspective focus on the alternative mechanisms- physical or institutional- through which certain spatial strategies achieve the provision of public goods in a context of pluralism. Within this perspective Foldvary (1994) views gated communities as a more efficient way of providing collectively consumed local public goods. For example he argues that as a reformed alternative to municipal governance, gated communities overcome the free-rider problem of local public goods by rendering these goods excludable and transforming them into “club goods” (Buchnan, 1965)- the institutional make-up of gated communities ensures that those who profit from local public goods pay fees and thus no free-riding is possible. Similarly Webster argues that “gates may be viewed therefore not so much as demarcations of separate communities but *as mechanisms for more creative community engineering and urban service and infrastructure supply*” (Webster, 2001: 161).

#### 5.3.3. **Do social and spatial realities always reflect each other?**

There exists another perspective in the academic literature that refutes the views held by the other two perspectives mentioned, that is, it asks not whether spatial segregation reflects a

break or the birth of a new relationship between different income groups in the city, but rather whether the spatial says anything about the social and vice versa. Indeed, this perspective argues against spatial determinism and proposes that social and spatial realities do not necessarily coincide and might at times be even contradictory. As such, this perspective argues that the relationship between divisions in space and divisions in society is not a straight forward one, meaning that one must not always lead to the other. This can be illustrated through the work of Rodgers (2004) and Balbo et al (1995). Rodgers (2004) argues that social segregation does not necessarily lead to the development of fortified enclaves and segregated spaces while Balbo et al argue that the fragmentation of the city is not always indicative of social segregation. Rodgers' research on the city of Managua shows that although social inequalities are rising and although groups seem to be increasingly separated socially in the city; this separation is not *neatly* translated in space. "The new spatial order in Managua has been established not so much through an *insular* withdrawal from the city but, rather, through the constitution of a *fortified network* that extends across the face of the metropolis" (Rodgers, 2004: 123, emphasis added). On the other hand, Balbo et al argue that that although space in third world cities is increasingly "fragmented", it is questionable whether this fragmentation is related to social and economic fragmentation. "In their survival strategies, the population often bypass spatial fragmentation, as in Rio with the favelados or the squatters of Lagos trying to sell a bunch of bananas or a pair of stolen trousers in the city centre... some cities show largely homogeneous spatial features and yet a strong social fragmentation in terms of accessibility to services, consumption and communication" (Balbo et al, 1995: 573)

#### 5.4. **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have reviewed the literature on spatial segregation. I have unbundled the concept of spatial segregation, linked it to the phenomenon of social exclusion and to the concept of gated communities. The discussion of the definitions of categories of the public and the private has highlighted the fact that the type of segregation that this research is concerned with upsets these categories as individuals practicing segregation seek concealment in the spaces of exposure and exposure in the spaces of concealment. In addition, I have looked at some of the main factors promoting spatial segregation and organized the relevant literature that deals with it. I conclude with the following notes pertaining to the type of spatial segregation that this research is concerned with.

First, this segregation is practiced in the context of a city in which the predominant logic of division is that by religious association, despite post-war governments efforts to facilitate and

promote divisions by status. This type of segregation involves an element of power. The individuals who practice it voluntarily withdraw from the *spaces* of the rest of society within their immediate vicinity. As such, this type of segregation is a form of social exclusion, in which these individuals *disengage* from their immediate context and fasten their connection to a dispersed network of individuals. It is a type of spatial segregation that does not concentrate people geographically, but nevertheless *concentrates the encounters* of people with a selective profile of people. It ensures homogeneity of encounters. Investigating the concentration induced advantages of such encounters will unlock the logic of this type of segregation.

Second, this type of segregation yields what can be conceived of as an *expanded* form of a gated community, one that occupies the totality of the city rather than being confined to a particular totalizing enclave or citadel (Marcuse, 2002). If GC's are the embodiment of supply-driven residential segregation, the embodiment of gates in search of a community, this type of segregation reflects a community's search for the gate at the scale of the entire city.

Third, this segregation upsets the definition of private space as a space of concealment and the definition of public space as a space of exposure, as exposure is sought in spaces of concealment and concealment is sought in the spaces of exposure.

Fourth, this type of segregation is dynamic and not always fixed in space. Hence, this perspective on spatial segregation distinguishes itself from other perspectives of segregation that stress the fragmented (Balbo et al, 1995), carceral (Davis, 1990), walled (Caldeira, 2000) or quartered (Marcuse, 2002) tendencies of contemporary segregation patterns. The type of segregation that this research is concerned with proves that the spatial does not immediately translate into the social nor vice versa, we have to look at the practices of people to uncover the full dimension of segregation. Although this perspective on segregation does not divorce the spatial from the social, it argues similarly to the third perspective that the spatial and social do not always reflect each other *at first glance*. This idea of needing a second and *different* glance is an important addition which this research contributes to the literature.

In the next chapter I elaborate the theoretical framework of the concept that describes the type of segregation that this research is concerned with, namely, the concept of the layer.



## **Chapter 6. Conceptualizing the segregated spatiality of everyday life of young affluent heads of households in Beirut: The layer**

This research conceives of the current pattern of spatial segregation as practiced by affluent individuals *within the city* as taking the shape of a *layer*. In this chapter I first explain the concept of the layer. Second, I illustrate the novelty of this concept as I am proposing it and the way my concept diverges from Marcuse's (2002) concept of the "layered city" and Rodgers' (2004) concept of the "dis-embedded layer". Third, I operationalize the concept of the layer, by breaking it into its components. In order to do so, I borrow Atkinson and Flint's (2004: 887) "territories", "objectives" and "corridors" as elements that compose the building blocks of the layer. Fourth, I look at what makes territories, objectives and corridors segregated spaces. In doing so I look at the characteristics and variables of boundaries, namely, membranes and masks that gauge the relationship between affluent individuals and others.

### **6.1. *The problematics of measuring segregation and the approach adopted by this research***

Considerable attention exists in the literature, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon context, on the measurement of spatial residential segregation of social groups particularly racial and occupational groups. The most commonly used of these measures developed by Duncan and Duncan (1955) is the index of dissimilarity (D), which represents the proportion of minority members that would have to change their area of residence to achieve an even distribution. However, the dissimilarity index has been criticized for its serious shortcomings mainly that the results of this measure are inconsistent when the data are collected at different scales or when the study region from which data is compiled is partitioned by different spatial configuration schemes. The debate on suitability of the Dissimilarity index sparked by Cortese, Falk and Cohen (1976) induced different researchers to advocate different definitions and different measures of segregation. Denton and Massey identify 20 potential measures of residential segregation in a survey of the research literature (Denton and Massey, 1988). As

such, there continues to be little agreement about which measure is best to use and under what circumstances.

Massey and Denton (1988) argue that segregation is a multidimensional phenomenon that should be measured by a battery of indices rather than one single index. They point out that the understanding of residential segregation as the degree to which two or more groups live separately from one another, masks considerable underlying complexity. This complexity pertains to the fact that groups may live apart from one another and be segregated in a variety of ways. They identify five spatial variations of segregation, namely, *evenness*, *exposure*, *concentration*, *centralization* and *clustering*. Each of these distributional characteristics represents a different facet of what researchers call segregation (Ibid: 283).<sup>98</sup>

The dimension of *exposure* stands out from the other dimensions of segregation as it seems to address what White (1987) calls “sociological segregation” rather than “geographic segregation”. In other words, the dimension of exposure seems to focus on the absence of interaction among groups rather than the way they are distributed across physical space.<sup>99</sup> In the context of this research I am interested in this dimension of segregation, namely, exposure, as I argue that in the context of Beirut “*sociological segregation*” (White, 1987) of affluent individuals does not match the lack of their “*geographical segregation*”. In other words, I argue that in the context of Beirut despite the fact that there is *evenness* in the geographic distribution of affluent individuals, there simultaneously exists a lack of *exposure* of affluent individuals from individuals with which they share the same geography.

Unfortunately, despite *exposure* being a promising concept, the index that Denton and Massey (1988) use for its measurement is useless for the context of this research. This is so, because similar to almost all other indices of spatial segregation, the index of exposure is measured based on the relative proportions of social groups *residing* within selected geographic parcels,

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<sup>98</sup> “Minority members may be distributed so that they are over-represented in some areas and underrepresented in others, varying on the characteristic of *evenness*. They may be distributed so that their *exposure* to majority members is limited by virtue of rarely sharing a neighbourhood with them. They may be spatially *concentrated* within a very small area, occupying less physical space than majority members. They may be spatially *centralized*, congregating around the urban core, and occupying a more central location than the majority. Finally, areas of minority settlement may be tightly *clustered* to form one large enclave or be scattered widely around the urban area. (Massey and Denton 1988: 283)

<sup>99</sup> White (1987) highlights that “it is necessary to treat the substantive issue of what is meant by “segregation”. In one sense- the sociological – segregation may mean the absence of interaction among social groups. In another sense- the geographic- segregation may mean unevenness in the distribution of social groups across physical space. The presence of one type of segregation does not necessitate the other. In a caste society, the sociological segregation may be near absolute, even while members of different castes are proximate in physical space. Nonetheless, geographic and sociological segregation are probably correlated.” (White, 1987: 1009)

extracting from this proportion the degree of likelihood that minority groups are going to come in contact with majority groups<sup>100</sup>. As such the measurement of this index is based on the assumption that geographic exposure necessarily leads to social and physical/spatial exposure, an assumption that this research strongly refutes.

The problem of the index of geographic exposure is that it says nothing about the protective membranes that affluent individuals gauge to shield themselves from social and physical/spatial exposure to other groups with whom they share geographic proximity. This sheds light on the fact that the study of spatial segregation must include identifying the tactics and mechanisms used by affluent individuals to achieve segregation. *It is the use of these tactics and mechanisms that enables affluent individuals to achieve isolation (lack of social and physical/spatial exposure) despite their geographic exposure to other groups.*

## **6.2. *The concept of the layer- The networking of geographically scattered nodes to produce a continuous spatiality of segregation***

Let me start by explaining the notion of the layer. By adopting lifestyles that orbit within specific spaces in the city, affluent individuals residing within the city detach themselves from the rest of the city dwellers and segregate the city socially and spatially. However, the spatial practice of this type of segregation does not conform to the formation of *fixed* exclusionary enclaves. This spatial practice does not fragment or partition the city, nor does it have a tendency to *permanently* or *consistently* incarcerate or wall in. Rather this research insists that current spatial segregation practices of affluent individuals *within* the city of Beirut are more complex and nuanced than this “ordered” duality. This complexity can be captured through my concept of the layer which is capable of expressing the seemingly contradictory yet simultaneous spatial conditions of affluent individuals, namely, their geographic dispersal, their spatial and social detachment from their immediate locality and their spatial and social connectivity to dispersed groups.

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<sup>100</sup> “Residential exposure refers to the degree of potential contact or the possibility of interaction, between minority and majority group members within the geographic areas of a city. Indices of exposure measure the extent to which minority and majority members physically confront one another by virtue of sharing a common residential area. For any city, the degree of minority exposure to the majority may be conceptualised as the likelihood of their sharing the same neighbourhood” (Massey, 1988: 287).

Care must be taken here to distinguish between the *space of the layer* and the *places in the layer*. The latter refers to the individual places that make up the layer. The *places in the layer* are those delimited segregated nodes and corridors that we could pinpoint on a map. They are the places where affluent individuals socialize, circulate, consume, work, study and inhabit. While the former term, the *space of the layer* is an overarching construct which captures the complex groupings and regroupings of the *places in the layer*. These groupings may vary according to occasion, season, day of the week, time of day etc... The *space of the layer* is *not* a compilation of the totality of the places where affluent individuals socialize, circulate, consume, work and inhabit. Rather the *space of the layer* is the space formed out of a networking of these places at a singular point in time. The *space of the layer* is the space in which affluent individuals *live*. It is the “*living space*” of affluent individuals. The *space of the layer/ the living space of affluent individuals* is essentially a space in flux, continuously changing.

As such, I utilize the concept of the layer to provide a *reading* of the city that takes into account the mobility of affluent individuals and their capacity to use various mechanisms that maintain local social distance and extended/non-geographic social connectivity. This reading is hypothetical, but it is not theoretical. In fact I insist that this reading is a very realistic account of the way affluent individuals appropriate the city of Beirut spatially. In other words, I hypothesize that affluent individuals live in the city in a way that can be conceived of as a layer, however, the layer is not only a conceptual tool, but it is also an actual spatial entity that exists in the city.

### 6.3. ***The novelty of this concept of the layer***

The notion of the layer as I am using it in this research depicts several new characteristics of spatial segregation as it is practiced in the context of Beirut. These new characteristics can be summarized as follows. Geographically, the nodes and corridors constituting *the places in the layer* are part of the totality of the city. There are instances of concentrations, but these instances seek to connect and expand to other protected spaces and hence they contribute to the manner in which *the space of the layer* weaves into the city fabric. The type of segregation that this research is concerned with is not one that “fragments” (Balbo et al, 1995) or partitions the city into “quarters” (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2002). Rather, it is a type of segregation where segregated spaces *seep* through the city in search of connectivity to other similar spaces or new territories to appropriate. However, this seeping geographically interwoven character of the *space of the layer* stands in sharp contrast with its simultaneous

“dis-embedded”<sup>101</sup> (Rodgers, 2004: 123) nature. The social, economic and physical status of the *space of the layer* is detached from its immediate locality and does not relate to its immediate context despite proximity. This dialectic of simultaneous geographic “interwovenness” and spatial “dis-embeddeness” is one of the core characteristics of the *space of the layer*.

On another level, the concept of the layer depicts a temporal dimension that is often ignored or scaled down in other perspectives of socio-spatial segregation patterns, particularly those perspectives that highlight the “duality” (Sassen, 2001), “walled” (Caldeira, 2000) or “fragmented” (Glasze, 2003) nature of segregation. These perspectives somehow imply that people are confined to their separate spaces all of the time. Rather, the concept of the layer captures the notion that time is another dimension of segregation and that these segregated spaces are not impermeable “citadels” (Marcuse, 1997). The *places of the layer* are impermeable in the sense that the consumption of their exclusivity is exclusive to those who can afford it, hence, their exclusionary nature. However the servicing and maintenance of the *places of the layer* is done by the non-affluent who move in and out of these spaces to perform these tasks. Hence, the *places of the layer* cater for affluent individuals but they are intersected temporarily by non-affluent individuals as well. As such, the concept of the layer is useful in the sense that it is capable of capturing groupings and regroupings of spaces along the tidal movement of its users and service providers. For example, a luxury shopping mall is one of the *places of the layer*. It is frequented by affluent individuals in the afternoons and evenings but less so in the early morning hours when the cleaners and delivery persons service and maintain this mall. As such, for an affluent individual the luxury shopping mall is grouped with other *proper* spaces, for example, certain café’s, pubs, streets etc... to make up the *space of the layer/“living space”* in the afternoons and evenings. The same shopping mall, however, would not be part of their living space in the early morning hours and such would not be included in the *space of the layer* during those hours.

As mentioned earlier, my concept of the layer diverges from Marcuse’s concept of the layered city. Marcuse (2002) uses the layer to refer to the movement of people *between* residential and economic *quarters*, thus resulting in “spaces being occupied by different persons at different times for different purposes... Each layer shows the entire space of the city, but none shows the complete city. Each one reflects the quartering and the walls, but most in different spatial configuration from the others” (Marcuse, 2002: 106). As such, Marcuse’s layered city emanates from the “quartered city” onto which the time dimension has been added. It is a concept that captures the movement of people through already segregated residential and

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<sup>101</sup> Rodgers utilizes Anthony Giddens concept of “disembedding”. Giddens argues that the process of modernisation disembeds people from their traditional social relations, their traditional systems of belief and produces disorientation.

business quarters. *Unlike Marcuse (2002), the concept of the layer that I am proposing is one that is superimposed onto the totality of the city rather than onto certain quarters of it only.*

My concept of the layer also develops Rodgers notions of the “fortified network” and “disembedding” (Rodgers, 2004). Rodgers uses the concept of the layer to refer to a network of places in the city that are fortified and detached from their context. “Managua has undergone a process whereby a whole layer of the metropolis has been “disembedded” from the general fabric of the city through the constitution of an exclusive “fortified network” for the urban elites, based on the privatization of security and the constitution of high speed roads and roundabouts” .(Rodgers, 2004: 113) *Unlike Rodgers, the concept of the layer that I am proposing does not capture a space that is solely composed of physically and permanently networked places.* Rather, I use the concept of the layer to refer to the space formed through the sum of those static and dynamic bubbles which eclipse the experience of the city for affluent individuals. These bubbles are wobbly, their membranes are continuously in flux, expanding and contracting as the situation demands. The concept of the layer is capable of expressing the sum of these static and dynamic wobbly bubbles as a *Space* to which the experience of the city for affluent individuals is restricted.

#### **6.4. *Operationalizing the concept of the layer into territories and objectives linked through corridors***

As mentioned previously, the concept of the layer emerged from the search for an alternative reading of socio-economic spatial segregation, a reading that takes into consideration the reality of how socio-economic spatial segregation is actually enacted in the city. This reality is such that people are not confined to their segregated places all of the time but rather move from one place to the other, enforcing other mechanisms of segregation along the way, thus, enlarging and eclipsing the socio-economic homogeneity bubble as the situation allows. This movement entails that the lines of socio-economic spatial segregation are quite fluid, they change according to the time of the day, day of the week as well as seasonally. In addition people spend a varying amount of time in different places.

The concept of the layer extends the conception of segregation beyond the modes of segregation in, first, residential locations and, second, other static locations of work/study/play , to include dynamic modes of segregation as well. Graham and Marvin provide useful tools for us to comprehend the components of this layer. They propose that the “unbundling” of networked infrastructure has resulted in the “splintering of urbanism” and the

disintegration of the urban fabric into isolated “nodes” connected through “tunnel effects” (Graham and Marvin, 2001: 201). Atkinson and Flint (2004) develop this into a conception of a “time-space trajectory of segregation”, a trajectory that is formed through territories, objectives and corridors- where “territories” are shielded residential neighbourhoods, “objectives” non-residential locations to which people travel on a daily or repeated basis- the places of work/study/play- and “corridors” the mode of shielded or immunized travel between territories and objectives (Atkinson and Flint, 2004: 887).

I use Atkinson and Flint’s (2004: 887) “territories, objectives and corridors” as building blocks that become the constituent elements of the layer. Refer to Figure 9. However, unlike Atkinson and Flint (2004) who use the term, ‘territories’ to refer to shielded residential neighbourhoods, composed of *numerous* households, such as GCs, this research uses the term, ‘territories’ to refer to the *insular* territory around a *singular* household.

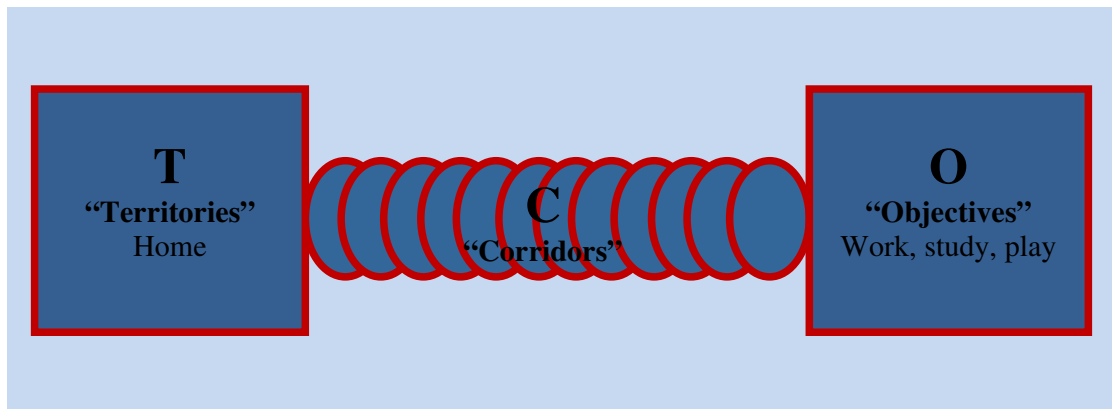


Figure 9 The constituent elements of the layer

The concept of the layer thus suggests that young affluent heads of households construct a *continuum of segregation* (territories- corridors- objectives referred to as *T-C-O* for short) In this continuum of segregation T-C-O, the state of “gatedness” or “being gated” - shown diagrammatically in Figure 10 by the thick red line encasing the constituent elements of the layer -is transformed from hard enclosure by actual physical walls to protection by private security personnel, concierges, CCTV, to dynamic protection modes such as the use of SUV’s, headphones, cellular phones or the outsourcing of encounters to hired mediators such as chauffeurs, maids etc.... I organize my research around an investigation of segregation practices in these constituent elements of the layer.

## 6.5. ***The boundaries adjusting concealment and exposure: The membrane and the mask***

*“The act of boundary setting is as significant as what is concealed behind the boundaries. It seems that this ability to present and to hide or in Nigel’s words to conceal and to expose, is what we strive for. Through it, we can feel in control of our lives, Even though public may be full of private and the private may be immersed in public, we constantly need to draw boundaries as a part of our need for wellbeing... we constantly create boundaries and categories to feel in control. This control is a form of power” (Madanipour, 2003: 105).*

*“...the separate identities of the public and private realms mainly result from the construction of the boundary between them; if the boundary is removed, how can a distinction be made? The character of each side depends, to a large extent on the way this boundary is articulated, as much as the configuration of what lies behind the boundary. To study these boundaries, it is essential to know how they are constructed, what they are made of, what they are meant to signify, and how they relate to the spheres that lie on either side” (Madanipour 2003: 60).*

Underlying the study of spatial segregation of affluent individuals is the investigation of the degree and the way in which these individuals *engage* with co-urban dwellers whom they do not know in functionally different settings. A recurring feature of the everyday routines of young affluent heads of households is their journeys from the “spaces of concealment” (Madanipour, 2003) to the “spaces of exposure” (Ibid) and how they behave according to where they are set. This distinction between exposure and concealment is an organizing principle of the social life of young affluent heads of households. In this section I look at boundaries that encase affluent individuals and mediate their relationship with others; I argue that it is through the gauging of these boundaries that the *rules* and *degrees* of engagement are set. In other words, I look at how affluent individuals gauge different types of boundaries, namely what I term membranes and masks, to make of territories, objectives and corridors segregated spaces, and hence, sanctuaries.

As mentioned in the literature review chapter, in the context of this research the conception of the public and private is concerned with the idea of public *space/ place* and private *space/ place*. However, to overcome the limitations posed by the vagueness in the definitions of



public and private I focus my concern with public and private space in these research not around who owns, manages and provides and is *entitled* to access space, but rather around the capacity of space to *expose* or *conceal* individuals (Nigel in Madanipour, 2003: 105). As such, I utilize Madanipour's distinction between the spaces of concealment and the spaces of exposure rather than a distinction based on private/ public. In addition I restrict the definition of public and private space to accessibility entitlement; public space is space to which everybody has entitlement to access, private space is space to which only a few have entitlement to access. As such, the definition of public and private space pertains to the very extremes of what is considered public or private. It is, however, the spaces in between the most private and the most public that I am interested in, that is the spaces in which interaction occurs between private selves and public others. I term these spaces interpersonal spaces. Interpersonal spaces can be public, private or club spaces. Interpersonal spaces can have the capacity of both to conceal or to expose individuals.

The concealment/ exposure line of hierarchy is a useful conceptual tool to understand the rules and degrees of engagement between affluent individuals and others. After all, what we are looking at is really to understand in which settings and to what degree affluent individuals engage with others, that is, when, how and to what degree the boundary that protects/encases affluent individuals is penetratable. However, unlike Madanipour (2003) this research does not draw a sharp line between the spaces of concealment and the spaces of exposure<sup>102</sup> but rather argues for a line of hierarchy.

What spaces constitute this concealment/ exposure line of hierarchy? In a concealment/ exposure line of hierarchy, the most concealed space is the "interior space of the body" (Madanipour, 2003), that is, the *space of the mind*; this space is followed by *personal space*, then *interpersonal space* – Hall (1966) calls it social space- and finally *public space* is the most exposed space. The *space of the mind* is the most intimate space of individuals. It is a space which individuals are unlikely to share with others whom they do not know. This space is followed by *the personal space*<sup>103</sup> around the body, a mobile space whose boundaries are most of the times non-physical but equally delineated. Around personal space is the space in

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<sup>102</sup> The spaces of concealment include the internal world of the mind, the personal space of the body, the exclusive space of property and the intimate space of the home (Madanipour, 2003). The spaces of exposure include the communal space of the neighbourhood, the material and institutional spaces of the common world, the impersonal space of the city (Ibid).

<sup>103</sup> Madanipour (2003) defines personal space as a small but invisible protective sphere or bubble that individuals maintain around them (Madanipour, 2003:22) Personal space is a subjective space around individuals, most of the times it is not visible or real, it is a piece of private space that individuals carry with them wherever they go. Its span is impacted by cultural norms and traditions. Sommer calls it a 'portable territory' (Sommer, 1969: 27).

which individuals interact with other individuals, it is termed *interpersonal space*. Finally *public space* is the uncontrolled space to which all individuals have access.

With the exception of public space, each of these spaces is protected by a boundary that gauges the penetration of other individuals into these spaces and hence paces and regulates engagement with others. The space of the mind is protected by the *body* (Madanipour, 2003) which safeguards the thoughts, feelings and conceptions of individuals. Personal space is protected by a *mask* that individuals put on to indicate “personal distance”<sup>104</sup> (Hall, 1966: 112) and hence the outreach of personal space. Finally, the boundary of interpersonal space is delineated by a *membrane*. Refer to

**Figure 10.**

In this research I am concerned with *interpersonal space and personal space as the spaces in which the intimate selves of affluent individuals come in contact with other selves*. Hence, I am concerned with *membranes* and *masks*, as different types of boundaries that affluent individuals operate directly or indirectly in order to adjust their rules and degrees of engagement/contact with others. I focus mainly on membranes for reasons stated later in this section.

The *mask* delineates the span of *personal space* of affluent individuals. It is a tool that affluent individuals operate directly. Most dominantly, affluent individuals use *signs* as tools to create masks<sup>105</sup>. These signs send out signals of how and the degree to which young affluent heads of households, as *singular* entities, want to engage/ come in contact with others. This explains the fondness that young affluent heads of households have for the exhibited companionship of commodities with high sign value. The mask operates on the scale of the individual. However, the mask can have a collective dimension, in the sense that affluent individuals identify/ spot masks similar to theirs and mask similarity can draw different carriers together.

The *membrane* (physical or symbolic) envelops the *interpersonal space* of affluent individuals. The function of the membrane is to protect the confines of interpersonal spaces of exposure from penetratability by non-desirable individuals. In other words, the purpose of the

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<sup>104</sup> According to Madanipour (2003), for Hall (1966), personal distance was a small protective sphere or bubble that an organism maintains between self and others. Hall (1966) in his book “The Hidden Dimension” went even as far as allocating distances for each of the bubbles radii. The radius of the bubble of intimate space was 1.5 feet, that of personal space 4 feet and that of social space 12 feet.

<sup>105</sup> Although other non-sign tools are used as well, for example, bodyguards. The work of bodyguards is to patrol the limit of their employer’s personal space, sometimes intervening physically, in order to ensure that the *body* which they *guard* is safe from contact or engagement with others. Thus, the work of bodyguards presents an example of how masks can become material form and not just sign.

membrane is to make the place in which affluent individuals are present a “sanctuary”<sup>106</sup> (Peach, 1996: 387) in which co-presence and exposure are controlled. In Beirut, this sanctuary is a “safe haven” (Ibid) against, first, fear from security threats- e.g. robbery, mobbing etc...- and second, against the exposure and contact with alien socio-cultural practices. In this sense, segregation that results from the operation of the membrane fulfills a protective role, “like that of a herd of buffalo, holding off wolves” (Peach, 1996: 387). In other words, by enabling segregation, the membrane enables the *formation* of a homogeneous group; it enables the formation of the herd. As such, the membrane has as much a segregative role as it has an aggregative role, that is, enabling the formation of the herd, irrespective of the presence or absence of wolves.

Hence, it is through the operation of membranes that spatial segregation and aggregation is enforced; the role of masks can only be supportive in such an endeavour. This explains my focus on membranes in this research.

In the context of home the membrane is institutionalized and takes the legal form of property. That is, at home the membrane becomes a boundary that goes beyond excluding the public to creating a fixed and legal private territoriality whose penetration is determined by the owner of this boundary, that is, the affluent individual. Hence, the mask loses importance at home, particularly when the membrane variables are adjusted in such a way that penetration and exposure to context is minimized.

In the objectives, the membrane is supplied by others and collectively consumed. In this context, affluent individuals do not have direct control over the operation of this membrane. Hence, the mask plays an important role here for two reasons. First, the mask is a key that grants its carrier accessibility of the objectives. The mask allows its carrier to be identified as “belonging to the herd”. Second, the mask is the line of second defence that individuals operate in a context that is already filtered by the membrane but one in which, legally, privacy cannot be guaranteed.

In mobile space, and other public spaces, non-spaces, legally it is not allowed to operate a membrane that creates privacy. Hence in these spaces the mask has an accentuated importance as it has to make up for the absence of a “legal” membrane. In mobile space, the body of the car and the mobility that the car enables produce a membrane.

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<sup>106</sup> Peach (1996) notes that the medieval concept of “sanctuary” becomes alive in many British cities as segregation and concentration create “safe havens” that take on a protective and defensive role by reversing the power structure of outside authority.

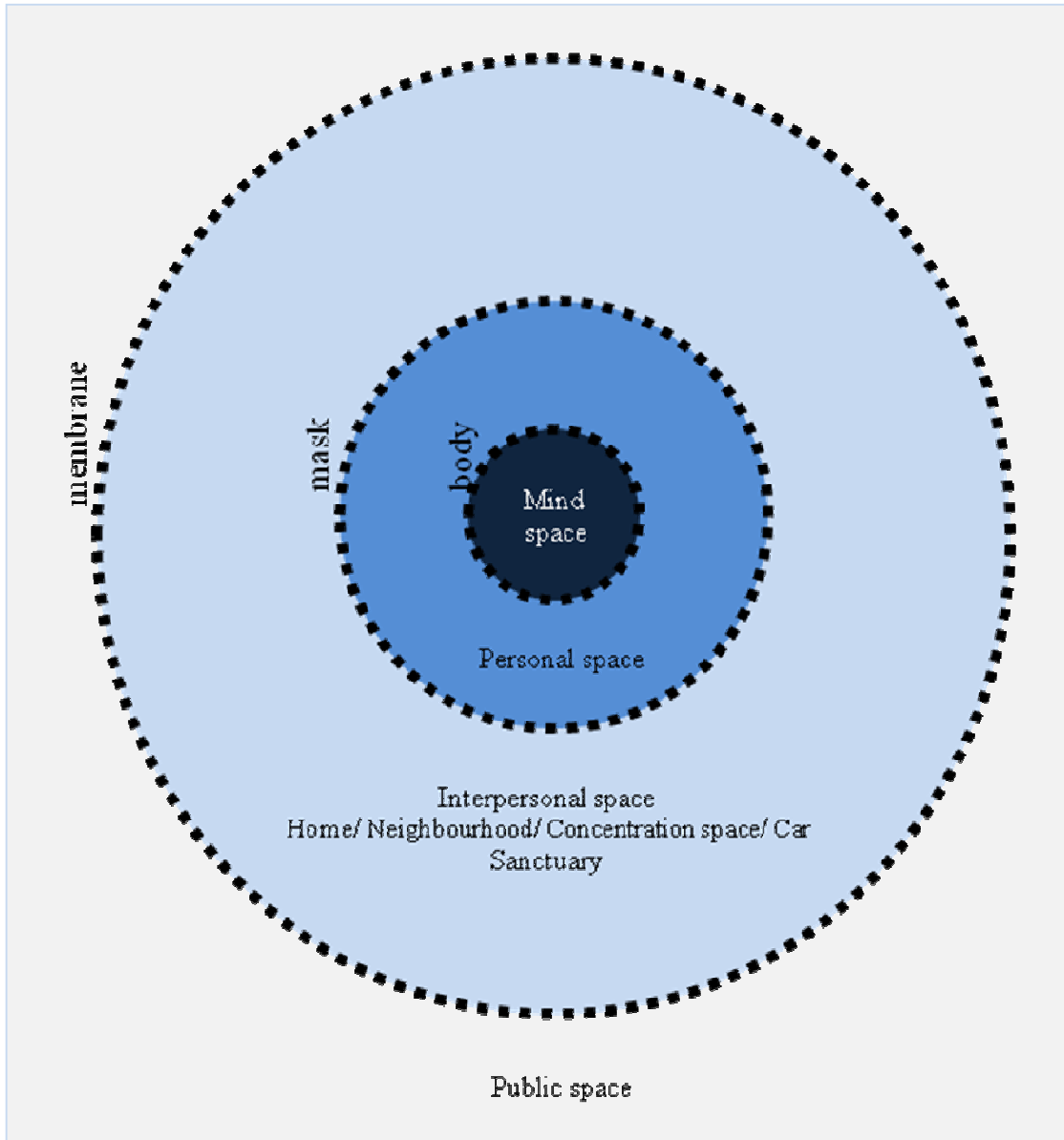


Figure 10 Spatial hierarchy of interaction

Hence, it is the characteristics of membranes and masks that determine the nature of engagement/ contact between social entities and their context. As a result of the adjustment of membranes and masks, exposure of affluent individuals to other individuals is gauged and controlled. Atkinson (2006: 226) perceives this gauging to be consistent of a hierarchy ranging from insulation, to incubation, to outright incarceration. This research has not investigated the complexity of the degrees of the gauging of membranes and masks. However, an important conclusion of this research is that young affluent heads of households prefer to remain in *spaces that are membraned*. As such, affluent individuals continuously seek to remain in sanctuary, even when they visit the interpersonal space of exposure. In other words,

they seek concealment in the spaces of exposure and , paradoxically, exposure in the spaces of concealment.

Therefore, the study of spatial segregation must be concerned with the following questions: How thick is the membrane that separates affluent individuals from the immediate context of their residential/work//study/leisure/mobile space? How capable is this membrane of stretching to conquer adjacent areas and territorialize them? How tight and controlled are the valves/filters that release these social entities from the confines of the sanctuary provided by this membrane into the insecurity of the “wild”? How visible is this membrane? As such, four variables modify the characteristics of this membrane, first, *thickness*, second, *elasticity*, third, *impermeability* and fourth, *visibility*. According to the degree of segregation necessitated by various circumstances such as security conditions, the state of these variables is gauged from high to low in order to adjust the scale and nature of mediation desired. Like the skin of a camellion this membrane adapts to its context. For example, under a condition of real security threat, the membrane becomes highly visible, impermeable and thick; as real danger subsides some measures are relaxed making the membrane porous and less visible. Hence, the gauging of the membrane variables determines the nature of “sanctuary” (Ibid) and results in conditions of spatial segregation that could range from the mere shielding of social entities to their outright incarceration.

It also important to note, that while the characteristics of the membrane are shaped by the desire of social entities for segregation these characteristics are also impacted by the built urban form and the social fabric of the city. The high density of the built environment in Beirut alongside the socio-economic heterogeneity of its fabric constrain particularly the membrane’s elasticity and to a lesser degree also its thickness; as such, the membrane’s impermeability and visibility are boosted. It is this constraint that induces the emergence of the particular spatiality of segregation described in this research; a spatiality created by a membrane that weaves selected scattered places of the city into connectivity while rejecting the rest of the city. Finally, we must be aware that the characteristics of the membrane are also fashioned by dominant tastes, values and trends. As such, the membrane is as much a device for actual segregation as it is a status good whose possession (operational or else wise) is a symbol that relays the message of segregation in order to advertise affluence.

## 6.6. *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have argued that the indices used to measure segregation are not useful for measuring the type of segregation this research is concerned with. Most of these indices use the relative proportions of social groups *residing* within selected geographic parcels, extracting from this proportion the degree of likelihood that minority groups are going to come in contact with majority groups. As such the measurements of these indices are based on the assumption that geographic exposure necessarily leads to social and physical/spatial exposure, an assumption that this research strongly refutes.

The limitations of these indices highlight the importance of taking into consideration the tactics used by affluent individuals to achieve segregation. It is the use of these tactics that enables affluent individuals to achieve isolation/concealment (lack of social and physical/spatial exposure) despite their geographic exposure to other groups.

I use the concept of the layer to provide a *reading* of this spatiality of the city that takes into account the mobility of affluent individuals and their capacity to use various mechanisms that maintain local social distance and extended/non-geographic social connectivity. I structure this investigation by looking at *how* segregation is practised in *different settings*. These settings are organized as territories, objectives and corridors following Atkinson and Flint's (2004: 890) building blocks of the "time-space trajectory of segregation", that produces a continuum that can be referred to as T-C-O. These settings are used in the following three chapters as the locus of my investigation.

In order to understand how segregation is practiced I use the concealment/ exposure line of hierarchy as a conceptual tool to understand the rules and degrees of engagement between affluent individuals and others. After all, what I am looking at is really to understand to what degree affluent individuals engage with others in different settings; the interplay between concealment and exposure is the essence of segregation. In a concealment/ exposure line of hierarchy, the most concealed space is the *space of the mind*, followed by *personal space*, then *interpersonal space* and finally *public space* is the most exposed space. In this research I am concerned with *interpersonal space and personal space as the spaces in which the intimate selves of affluent individuals come in contact with other selves*. Hence, I am concerned with *membranes* and *masks*, as different types of boundaries that affluent individuals operate directly or indirectly in order to adjust their rules and degrees of engagement/contact with others. The *mask* delineates the span of *personal space* of affluent individuals. The *membrane* (physical or symbolic) envelops the *interpersonal space* of

affluent individuals. Hence, it is the characteristics of membranes and masks that determine the nature of engagement/ contact between affluent individuals and their context. As a result of the adjustment of membranes and masks, exposure and concealment of affluent individuals to other individuals is gauged and controlled.

In the following three chapters I illustrate how affluent individuals gauge membranes and masks to gauge their degrees of exposure and concealment in the different settings of territories, objectives and corridors.

## Chapter 7. Affluence and the home in Beirut:

### Fluctuating between embeddedness and dis-embeddedness

Having monitored the everyday life routines of eleven young affluent heads of households a defining feature of these routines is how these individuals consistently aspire to impose a boundary- mask or membrane- that conceals their private *selves* from selective public *others*. As they pass through different spaces in the city and become located- even if only temporarily- in different environments, from the intimate and *personal* spaces of their homes to the *impersonal* public spaces of the city to the *interpersonal* spaces of concentration and exposure, young affluent heads of households remain membraned/ masked in controlled environments.

In this chapter I focus on the space of the home and the local context in which it is placed, in other words at the “T” in the T-C-O continuum. This chapter is based on the extended questionnaires conducted with eleven young affluent heads of households and the participant observation of the everyday life routines of these heads of households. This chapter is also based on the findings of the questionnaires collected at the nurseries.

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part discusses the dual function of the home as the physical container of privacy that negotiates the external world of strangers and semi-strangers and as the container of what can be termed a congregational interpersonal space, that is, a space in which a group selected by the residents periodically gathers.

The second part of this chapter discusses the changing function and value perception of young affluent heads of households of the local context of the home, that is, the neighbourhood –*El-jireh, El-hay, El-mantika*. This part argues that this change is linked to changing notions of privacy and changing socio-spatial rules impacted by the phenomena of formalizing socio-spatial relationships and stretching the spatiality of kinship ties. It looks at the closing off of balconies and the outsourcing local contact to helpers- eg. concierges, maids and delivery boys- as indicative of this change. The consequences of this change have been the shrinkage of locally-based social interactions.



The third part looks at the role of security in changing the function of neighbourhood. It argues that despite the fact that young affluent heads of households reject a role of neighbourhood in their everyday lives; the neighbourhood continues to function as sanctuary if needed be. Indeed, a major finding of this research is that despite the fact that young affluent heads of households seek an everyday socio-economic dis-embeddedness from their residential enclaves these individuals remain socially embedded in their respective sectarian enclaves. Paradoxically, they fort up their homes at times of security and open up to the neighbourhood at times of insecurity!

The fourth part concludes that this condition of fluctuating embeddedness and dis-embeddedness of young affluent heads of households in the city of Beirut points perhaps to a moment of change in the history of the evolution of the city of Beirut, a moment in which a particular profile of city residents begins to build non-territorially based ties and solidarities but is yet insecure to break away completely from its territorially based sectarian back-up solidarities and securities. This points to the particularity of the city of Beirut, the social make-up of the city and the sensitivities pertaining to the history of social unrest in Beirut. This raises important questions as to the role of the state in such a context in de-territorializing solidarities and enabling new non-territorial solidarities to emerge.

### **7.1. *The dual function of home as a enabler of privacy and container of a congregational space***

The “time-space trajectory of segregation” (Atkinson and Flint, 2004: 890) begins and ends at home. The home is a private place, among its functions is to deliver intimate space to the social entity- the household- residing in it. Indeed, there is a right stipulated by law in which a resident can deter the entry of intruders to the property in which he/she legally resides. However, understanding the home as the enabler of intimate space should not dismiss the importance of understanding the home also as a container of a space to which a very selective public is admitted entry. In this section we look at how the home plays these dual functions as a physical container/enabler of intimate space and as a container of what can be termed a congregational space, namely, the *salon*, to which members of the owner’s club congregate periodically.

As mentioned earlier, homogeneity in Beirut is largely drawn around the sectarian element. Members of the same sectarian sect tend to concentrate residentially in their respective parts of Beirut. The area of the bigger sects are more widespread while the smaller sects have

smaller designated areas. The Druze sect, for example, does not seem to have a clearly delimited part of town. In addition, Hamra of Ras Beirut remains relatively the most mixed and the residential area of the Solidere project is still not fully developed yet and as such it is too early to speak of a sectarian or non-sectarian homogeneity. This residential homogeneity in Beirut though predating the war as Davie (1991) shows, was accentuated during the civil war as each of the respective area of Beirut was drained from its minority residents. After the end of the war, the “geography of fear” (Khalaf, 1997) persisted and inhibited people from residing in areas where they felt they did not belong to. These specificities of the context of Beirut, that is, the existence of a housing market that is highly segmented around sectarian association , alongside the persistence of the rent ceiling, the prevalence of a Mediterranean land use pattern and the relative small size of the affluent group result in a residential fabric that is quite mixed socio-economically. This means that there are no upscale residential neighbourhoods per say in Beirut, indeed there are no predominantly *residential* neighbourhoods to start with. In addition Beirut is quite a dense city as far is its population is concerned. Municipal Beirut has a density of 21,938 persons/km<sup>2</sup> (MOSA, 2006: 26) while Greater Beirut has a density ranging between 5,500 to 3,862 persons/km<sup>2</sup>. (CAS Study, No. 9/1998 and Schema Directeur, 1986)

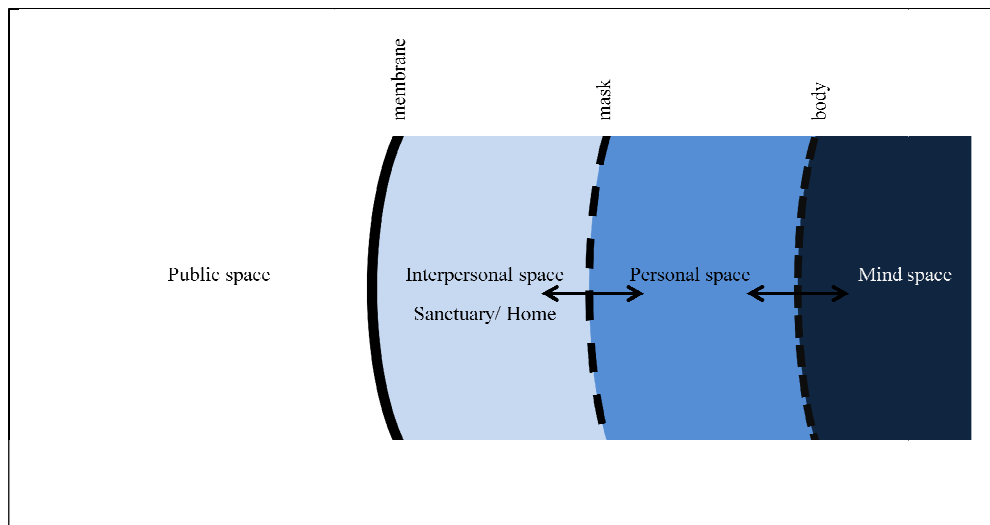


Figure 11 Spatial hierarchy of interaction at times of security in the context of home

So the question that I am trying to answer in this section is the following: How do young affluent heads of households minimize exposure in a context of high *proximity* to people with which they do not wish to interact?

In Chapter 6 I have brought forward the concept of the membrane as a boundary that guards interpersonal space and adjusts the rules and degrees of engagement. In the context of home the membrane is institutionalized and takes the legal form of property. As such, at home the membrane becomes a boundary that goes beyond excluding the public to creating a fixed and legal private territoriality whose penetration is determined by the owner of this boundary, that is, the affluent individual.

The specificities of the Beirut context entail that the membrane separating young affluent heads of households from their context to legalize their privacy is both thin and there are serious limitations to the attempt of stretching its area of operation. In the face of these limitations, tactics to enforce “legal” segregation at home work on bolstering the third and fourth variable of the membrane, namely its impermeability and its visibility. These fortifying tactics vary from tactics, such as, barb-wiring, gating, monitoring access through CCTV, closing off balconies, double glazing windows and heavily draping them, to more muscle showing tactics which include hiring armed private security personnel and body guards. Sami and Nahla added a gate on the stair flights in front of the door to their flat located on the last floor of the building. In addition their elevator door can be locked at night. This way they have expanded the membrane to secure the stairway landing to their flat.

Closing off, glazing, climate- and sound-proofing balconies are also indications of boosting the impermeability of the membrane by turning the space of the balconies into sealed rooms. Balconies are an intermediate space to which the personal space of the home can expand without spilling over to the street. Sitting on the balcony is sitting on a detached observation platform in the neighbourhood, from which one can observe street life unfold. As balconies become sealed rooms they stop to function as an intermediate space from which residents look outwards. Instead, they become additional rooms of the flat that turn mostly inwards. Interestingly in the early mornings and summer afternoons, balconies re-play the role they used to play as maids break the seal of segregation, open the windows and weave their social network from the platforms of the balconies.

It is wrong to believe though that the homes of young affluent households in Beirut are sealed-off towers of solitude. This is related to the fact that the home plays an important role in confirming status. In Beirut, flats located in high-rise buildings (5 -11 floors) are the

predominant housing typology. This means that it is rather difficult for the individual flat itself to become a status object that exhibits affluence to the general public. Moreover, even though there exists in Beirut a few upscale streets- such as Bliss street in Manara, Ramlet El-Baidah boulevard, Soursouck street in Achrafiyye', Verdun street – an address in Beirut, as mentioned earlier, points foremost to sectarian association and only to a lesser degree to status. As such, the role that the home plays in supporting status confirmation becomes allocating a space that provides a proper setting for communal social occasions-an event that is termed in this thesis as “periodic congregation upon direct or indirect invitation”. These functions entail among others bringing in a very selective public into the exhibitionist part of the home that showcases treasuries, namely, the *salon*- the equivalent of the outmoded German “die gute Stube”.

A reception area at the entrance of the flat buffers between two clearly delineated zones, that is, the intimate family zone and the exhibitionist visitor's zone, the *salon*. The family zone is composed of the bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen and a family living room. The family zone is the zone in which the household members spend most of their time when at home. This zone is clearly an intimate space. Adult non-family members (sometimes even extended family members) are not to enter this zone.

*When a friend of Rim came over with her two children (aged 2 and 5) the children were accompanied by their nanny to the room of Rim's children where they all played for about two hours. Not once did Rim's friend go inside the family zone, instead, the nanny was called upon several times by Rim's friend who inquired about whether the kids were doing fine.*

The *salon* on the other hand is reserved for visitors. It is the line of last/ first defence for “staying in character” (Goffman, 1959). As such, the *salon* is really a “front-stage” (Ibid); it is the zone of maximum display to an audience that is carefully selected and therefore has maximum effectiveness in terms of word of mouth transmission of evidence on wealth possession. Indeed, the *salon* itself is “gated”. The *salon* is referred to as an outside, *barra*. By contrast the family room/TV room/ sitting room referred to as an inside, *Joua*, is a small room, a balcony that is glazed or a poorly lit in-between space turned into a room to host the family and other insiders. In many instances, the *salon* is locked up in the absence of visitors, but always kept clean, tidy and ready to be showcased. The *salon* frequently occupies around 30-40 % of the total area of the flat (Interview with architect) ideally it is cut-off from the residence proper. It should not be crossed by internal domestic traffic. Kids are usually not allowed to enter the *salon*; if they are they are reminded that they should not misbehave

here.<sup>107</sup> The interior design of the *salon* is quite formal; in many instances couches are not comfortable to sit on for longer periods of time. In most instances the *salon* links directly with a formal dining room. All interviewees stated that they do not use the dining room for family eating events and hence the dining room is also part of the exhibitionist part of the flat.

*Layla and Majed's flat is located in the Shiite area of Jnah area. They are both Shiite. Majed comes from Beirut, while Layla comes from a Shiite village in south Lebanon. Their flat size is around 300m<sup>2</sup>. The flat includes three bedrooms, a maid's room, two salons and a dining room. The salons are located at the front side of the building overlooking the street and the view to the sea. The kitchen overlooks the side of the neighbouring building and is poorly lit. The kitchen is hidden from the entrance of the flat. The bedrooms and the living room (bedroom turned living room) are all located to the backside of the building. They have reasonable sun exposure but no view except to surrounding buildings. All windows have heavy drapery. The view to the sea is only enjoyed in the presence of visitors, they seldom sit at the balcony or in the salon, it is obvious that the house is used to the benefit of visitors rather than the family. Layla conceives of the flat to be a bit too small because they turned one of the bedrooms into a living room. They are thinking of moving but are not sure yet. When the kids were young the maid would sleep in the kid's room so that she takes care of them if they woke up at night. There is a clear separation between the salon (the reception area of guests) and the more intimate area where the family room, bedrooms and kitchen is located. The family area is referred to as Joua, meaning inside in Arabic, while the visitors' area is referred to as Barra, meaning outside in Arabic. At the entrance you either exit left to the intimate area or right to the visitors' area, the salon is the area where guests are received. Very few friends enter the family room, "especially now after the boys have been born and the family room is becoming less and less presentable." The salon is quite lavishly decorated and there is a stark contrast between the furnishing style of the outside salon and the inside family area. Inside the furnishing is more modern with parquet on the floor while outside it is more expensive and ostentatious with marble flooring and heavy drapery. The furniture of the salon is described by Layla as "classique", that is, of more formal styles. The boys are not allowed to play or bring in any toys into the salon. The salon is cleaned on a daily basis "so that it is always ready if someone comes unexpectedly" When I asked when was the last time someone came unexpectedly Layla laughed saying she cannot recall anyone having come to visit her*

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<sup>107</sup> Investigating the architectural plans of flats with the intention of uncovering patterns through which the salon relates to the inside/out could yield interesting findings as to the function of this space.

*unexpectedly! But she then added that she would feel insecure if she left the house with the salon untidy.*

*Nahla and Sami live in Badaro, which is located on the Greenline. They are both Druze and come from Druze villages in the Shouf area. Their flat size is 450m<sup>2</sup>. The flat includes four bedrooms, an office room, a living room, a maid's room, 2 salons, a formal office/reception room and a dining room. The salons are located at the front side of the building overlooking the street; the kitchen overlooks the side of the neighbouring building and is poorly lit. The kitchen is hidden from the main entrance of the flat and has a separate service entrance. All windows have heavy drapery. The family seldom sits at the balcony or in the salon. The flat was fully furnished when they moved in, except for the kid's bedroom which they furnished when their first boy was born. The whole flat was fully refurbished and they hired an interior designer to assist them in the decoration of the flat. Nahla mentioned how much Sami complained about the interior designer fees and the amount they spent in the refurbishment of the house; they could have bought a new flat for the amount they spent on refurbishment. There is a clear separation between the salon (the reception area of guests) and the more intimate family area inside where the family room, bedrooms and kitchen are located. Again the reference is made to inside and outside, inside the family area and outside the visitors' area. At the entrance you either exit right to the inside intimate area or go through the reception area to the outside visitors' area the salon is the area where guests are received. Only few close friends enter the family room. Adjoining the salon is a formal office with a classical French style desk and chairs.... This office is only a reception area and is not a working office. Sami's working office (his computer and files) is located in the family area of the flat. The salon is quite lavishly decorated and there is a stark contrast between the furnishing style of the outside salon and the inside private areas. Like in the case of Layla and Majed's flat, inside the furnishing is more modern with parquet on the floor while outside it is more ostentatious and expensive with marble flooring and heavy drapery and a style of furnishing described by Nahla as "classique". Nahla explained that the style of the salon has to be classique, foremost because it is the formal part of the house where they receive visitors and as such the salon has to be presentable. In addition the salon furniture is expensive as such it is a wise investment to have the style of a classique character that would not go out of fashion quickly. Nahla explains at great length to me this schism in furniture and interior decoration style between the inside and the outside area of their flat. At the end she used an allegory to make her point*

*stating that their salon furniture is like the classic suite that you wear to office or to a formal event.*

*Interestingly Sami and Nahla's interior designer chose for them a style of living room that reflects an attempt to resemble what is conceived of as a traditional Lebanese living room. The couches are built in; their base is clad with Lebanese yellow stone. The colour of the couch fabric alludes to folklore costumes. The TV closet is made of yellow stone spacers with glass shelves. The centre piece table has also a yellow stone element where the centre piece is an ornamentally cut stone onto which a thick glass panel rests. The walls are dotted with numerous aquarelle paintings of village life. Sami and Nahla like the look of their living room a lot although they feel that the furniture sacrifices a little bit physical comfort for the sake of style. When I asked them why they did not opt for such a style in their salon they laughed and answered that the salon is not the right place for reference to their village. They explained that the village ambiance of their living room is more fit to their personal space and it would be awkward to be in such a setting with some of the people that they invite to their salon. The choice of their living room style is consistent with their way of keeping apart the different social circles that they are part of, as epitomized by their explanation of why they needed to hold two separate weddings, one for their village folks and the other for their friends<sup>108</sup>. Nahla's and Sami's kids are also not allowed to play or bring in any toys into the salon. The salon is also kept clean and tidy and ready for visitors at any time.*

The *salon* is almost entirely a women's space in the mornings. Women (mainly non-employed women) invite female members of their social circle for formal brunches and other gatherings in the mornings.

*"You invite those people who have invited you and you expect them to invite you in return. When the circle becomes so big, it becomes difficult to invite them home and you invite them out to a restaurant or you invite them home in stages" (Layla)*

*"I remember when I was a kid my mom used to visit our neighbours over a cup of coffee, things have become more complicated now. You have to call ahead of time to*

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<sup>108</sup> Towards the end of section 8.3, I argue that the fact that Sami and Nahla's held two marriage celebrations, one in their village of origin and one in Beirut, reflects the fact that their social circles are tangential and that they make an effort to keep them this way.

*arrange the visit. You dress up and of course you expect to be offered a cake (that you do not eat because you are on a diet)” (Mayada).*

Other social occasions that the *salon* hosts are *tahani* and *ta’azi* (congratulations and condolences) which are considered *wajbat*. (Refer to page 93 for a discussion of *wajbat*) During these special days the door of the flat remains open from morning to evening. Guests enter the *salon* without ringing the bell of the flat. Depending on the occasion, visitors are sometimes received in the inside of the flat rather than at the doorstep.

*Nahla recalls that when her father-in-law passed away, they received condolences for three days at her flat. “During those days the door of our flat was closed at around 12 o’clock in the evening and opened again at 8 in the morning. It is considered bad manners for mourners to be received with a closed door as they come to offer their condolences. ... We received a lot of visitors; we moved the dining table in order to have more space. We rented extra chairs from an agency that rents chairs for such occasions... Many of the visitors I did not know personally. A number of visitors were people I was on bad terms with and they would have been unwelcome to enter my house for other occasions.”*

*The salon of Iman and Faysal has been the host to three occasions of tahani. The first was the occasion of their marriage and the second and third when Iman gave birth. Iman and Faysal state that not assigning special days for receiving tahani visitors made the process lengthy and difficult to organize. “A year after we got married we were still receiving people who wanted to congratulate us, on each occasion I had to tidy up the flat for it to be ready to be showcased!” After delivering her first child, Iman decided to allocate specific days for tahani visits. She let the word spread in their social circle that they are receiving visitors on these days.”We had a chocolate stand and a gifts stand at the entrance of our flat purposefully made for this occasion. When our son was born the colour scheme was blue and when our daughter was born the colour scheme was pink... During these three days we had visitors during the late mornings and during the afternoons and evenings... You have to keep track of who came so that you return the wajeb on other occasions... we do not hold a grudge against those people who have not congratulated us but we are not obliged to visit them in return now... some of the visitors we wished did not congratulate us – such as our neighbours from the first floor- because now we feel obliged to reciprocate the wajeb even though we are not really fond of them”*



As such the *salon* is a space in which a selected social group of the host congregates occasionally, mostly by invitation but sometimes also without invitation on occasions of *wajbat*<sup>109</sup>. The *salon* is not the place for everyday socialization rather a place for formal periodic invitations. It is a controlled “front-stage” (Goffman, 1959) which its owners use to foster the presentation of themselves.

*“We invite people who had invited us earlier, if we do not invite them, they will not invite us in return next time.... It is important to stay in touch with people .... Dinners are a good occasion to know what is happening and they present an opportunity to expand our social network.”*

Hence, although the primary function of the home is to deliver intimate space, a “back-stage” (Goffman, 1959) to which its owners can retreat, another major function of the home is to allocate a space for congregation. This space for congregation, the *salon*, is vital in sustaining social relationships that are not locally based. In addition, this space functions as a controlled “forntstage” (Ibid). This means that for young affluent heads of households in Beirut the home is a private place that predominantly is a space for intimacy, but that also provides for an occasional interpersonal space for congregation and exposure.

## **7.2. *The end of everyday life neighbourliness- “El-jireh”?***

In the previous section I have elaborated on the dual role of the home and its internal dynamics –who is allowed in and who isn’t and the role of the *salon* as a congregational interpersonal space. In this section I am mainly concerned with the way the home relates to its immediate localized context- who comes out and who doesn’t! In other words, in investigating spatial segregation at the residential level I am concerned in this section not with the common-sensical<sup>110</sup> segregation practiced at the door step of the home but rather with segregation practiced beyond the doorstep of the home. Explaining the segregatory relationship of individuals- in their function as residents- to the immediate social and spatial context of their home is the focus of this section.

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<sup>109</sup> Sometimes a *wajeb* is used as an excuse to pay a visit to someone to whom access is sought.

<sup>110</sup> “What Gramsci calls ‘common sense’ (defined as sense held in common) typically grounds consent. Common sense is constructed out of long standing practices of cultural socialization often rooted deep in regional or national traditions. (Harvey, 2005: 39)

Respondents conceived of three scales at which neighbourliness, *El-jireh*, (or the loss of neighbourliness) can be experienced (1) the locality, *el-mantika*, (2) the street, *el-hay*, and (3) the building, *el-binayeh*. These three scales are perceptions of the limits of the social and spatial contexts of home.

*El-mantika* refers to the area around the home conceived of as a homogeneous social totality. The homogeneity revolves mainly around the sectarian element. *El-mantika* usually carries the name of the administrative area in which the respondent lives, but the boundaries of *el-mantika* are not synonymous with the actual administrative boundaries. When asked to list the boundaries of the *el-mantika* in which she lives Layla responded by referring to the boundaries that engulf an area that is predominantly inhabited by her people who belong to her sectarian group. The boundaries of Lina's *el-mantika* are drawn around homogeneous building attributes and streets that draw an entity.

*El-hay* refers generally to the street that one lives in but the boundaries of *el-hay* are lucid. *El-hay* extends sometimes beyond the street that one lives on to include neighbouring streets with similar characteristics, sometimes *el-hay* is contracted to include only a part of the street. Generally *el-hay* is the area within - conceivable not exercised- walking distance around the home. Respondents who used the term *el-hay* live in narrow densely populated streets with some enclaves such as small grocery store a pharmacy. Iman and Faysal, Jana and Kamil, Camille and Pierre, Rim and Zein, and Nahed and Ahmad, conceived of *el-hay* in 'Achrafiyye', Syoufe, Tallet el-Khayat and El-Zareef, while Layla stated that there is clearly no *el-hay* characteristic in the area she lives in while Sourayya and Hanan who live in a condominium and gated community respectively, feel completely cut off from the street or urban neighbourhood from which their residences are dis-located.

While *el-binayeh* is also a social entity at which neighbourliness can be conceived of, none of the case studies that have been interviewed conceived of the building as a social entity and indeed only 36% of the questionnaire respondents indicated that there is a community spirit in their building of residence. Nahla and Sami's home is literally their castle. Located on the last floor of the building that Sami owns their lavishly decorated flat is well protected through locks, gates, video phone and the concierge that guards the entry of the building. They are able to afford a life style of comfort and luxury through their collection of rent from the people residing at the base of their building – A neat Marxist illustration of the exploitation of the bottom to enable surplus capital for the top.

The rejection by young affluent heads of households of local social contact in their residential neighbourhoods at either of the scales mentioned above can be linked to three main reasons, first, the desire to expand their social network beyond the local, second, the rejection of the practice of neighbouring as a gendered cultural practice that is outmoded and third the urge to break away from the social restrictions and control that neighbourhood imposes.

First, the end of the civil war in 1990 and the opening of the city meant that the confinement of people to “their” part of town was physically lifted and people became free in their movement throughout the city. Davie (1992) mentions that this liberation was only physical and the Beirut population was yet to be freed from the *psychological* barriers of mobility. The findings of this research suggest that our profile of Beirut residents are not apprehensive to mobility throughout the city, even though they remain residentially fixated in *their* part of town. This may relate to two factors, first, that the interviews were conducted and questionnaires were distributed in 2006/7 meaning that my findings are more than a decade away from Davie’s study. Throughout these predominantly peaceful years a substantial amount of psychological healing could have occurred. Second, my study deals only with young affluent heads of households who were in their twenties or in their teenage years when the war ended. This means they were not responsible adults throughout the war years and as a result the war might not have inflicted deep psychological scars of distrust. Hence, beside affluence, age has also a role to play in countering psychological barriers.

As newly formed affluent households moved into their respective sectarian place of town, and the relative calm of the period these households felt a need and a possibility to form new solidarities that are not territorially based. It became possible for them to reinforce networks forged in schools, universities, workplace in other areas of sociability and to expand their social network beyond the confines of the social networks attributed to their sectarian association. This search to expand the social network and interact with members of their economic class beyond the confines of the sectarian community signals a weakening barrier of association across sectarian lines and an awakening of a pan-sectarian class consciousness, in other words, an outweighing of non-place related class interests over sectarian interests that are place related and anchored. This helps explain why neighbourliness and the practice of neighbouring grew out of fashion in the post-war era.

*“During the war our daily life was confined to the few blocks around our home. Even during periods of calm, our parents did not let us go to places that were far because they always feared that something unexpected could happen and we would be trapped somewhere. As teenagers we seldom went out at night and most of our social outings*

were at the private homes of our friends or family. Our social circle was small and there were few avenues to meet new people... we did not even see new people, because we were so spatially confined” (Rami).

“Of course we are known in our Shiite community. We inherited our social networks within our community from our parents and we keep on expanding the network, but there comes a point when you know almost everyone that is worth knowing in your community. And for some issues you might need help from people that are connected to other social circles. It is important in Lebanon to have acquaintances from various confessional backgrounds in case you need them” (Layla).

Second, it is important to take on a gender-sensitive perspective to this rejection of the practice of neighbouring. Without exception, all women interviewed in this thesis associated the practice of neighbouring with the stereotypical image of the housewife that stays home during the day and waits for her children and husband to come back home. To these young affluent women, the practice of neighbouring is perceived as a gendered cultural practice of wives and mothers confined to the domestic sphere and “sentenced to everyday life” (Johnson and Llyod, 2004). Hence, the emancipation of these young affluent women and their perception of the adoption of modernity becomes linked to the rejection of the practice of neighbouring and the symbolism of domesticity, maternity and dependence that it is associated with. “As Rita Felski argues, *‘The vocabulary of modernity is a vocabulary of anti-home’*.” (Ibid: 15, emphasis added)

While Nahla laments the loss of neighbourhood community support and its feeling of belonging, she feels that neighbourliness is the practice attributed to the generation of her mother, where “women would meet, mainly to gossip, in the morning *subhieh*<sup>111</sup> over coffee. This generation of women were stuck at home, because they did not go to work or did not drive cars. Hence, the neighbourhood was somehow a space in-between for them. A space where they could interact with other women, exchange information and spend some time” (Nahla).<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *Subhieh* is a term used to refer to a morning get-together.

<sup>112</sup> Marouli (1995) makes a similar claim in her discussion of neighbourliness in Athens. Interestingly even the vocabulary that Nahla uses to describe neighbourliness is similar to that of Marouli “A neighbourhood used to be an *intermediate* space where women interacted and shared experiences, resources and support. It used to be women’s immediate public space but it lacked the distant and efficiency- oriented relations of the public world of politics and the market With increasingly sharper boundaries between public and private areas, the neighbourhood is increasingly reduced to a physical area surrounding the house but lacking the social dimensions it used to have” (Marouli, 1995: 544, emphasis added).

Third, the social restrictions and control that neighbourhood imposes are at odds with the changed notion of privacy of young affluent heads of households and their lifestyle that does not revolve around the domestic sphere. This explains why May was offended by a note left at the windshield of her car by a female neighbour who inquired whether she was interested in carpooling the children's drive to school.

*“As a teenager, I was bored of seeing the same people day in day out. You hear the same stories over and over again and at some point there is nothing new to tell and hear... people start to gossip because they get so bored with the stories they know about each other, their imagination starts to add salt and pepper to the stories they know. The neighbourhood I grew up in Beirut was suffocating. When the miniskirts were in vogue in the late 80's my dad- who was quite liberal by Lebanese standards- did not allow me to wear a miniskirt in our neighbourhood because he was worried that people would gossip. He would also not allow male friends to visit me at home. Talk of neighbourhood can be very restricting” (Nahla).*

In addition out of the eleven interviewees, only Layla and Rim have direct family members residing in their neighbourhoods. All the other respondents mentioned that their extended families are rather spread throughout Beirut. This could be taken to suggest that the spatiality of kinship ties is also stretched. In other words, even though interaction with extended family members occurs on a daily basis either by phone or face-to face, this interaction is not necessarily placed in the localized context of the home. The extended family is part of the everyday life of young affluent heads of households, frequently playing a supportive role in the management and maintenance of everyday life chores- such as taking care of the children, cooking etc...- but this supportive role is not dependent on residential proximity.

Even, the two case studies that reside in gated communities exhibit such rejection of the social contexts of their residences. Souraya and Hanan believe that they reside in contexts that are quite homogeneous taking into consideration both variables sectarian association and income groups. Even though the streets in the immediate vicinity of their residences are gated, their eldest children, aged 9 years, do not venture out of the residence unattended by the maid. Their gated community fellow residents are greeted but there is no sense of a functioning community of neighbours. Both households answered that they have never utilized the support of neighbours. The choice of residing in gated residential complexes is related to the amenities that such complexes offer. Gating is a way to ensure maintenance and upkeep of communally consumed public goods such as streets, the swimming pool and the gym. The

two couples interviewed, who both live in two different gated communities, did not indicate that gating has increased their likelihood of practicing neighbouring.

This urge to expand the social network beyond the confines of a neighbourhood homogenous by sectarian association and to break away from the symbolism of the practice of neighbouring and from the social restrictions of neighbourhood is achieved by ensuring that young affluent heads of household need not leave the inside of the home to engage with the immediate localized context. As such, young affluent heads of households utilize tactics for the function and maintenance of their households that enable them to stay within the confines of their membranes even when their contexts have to be negotiated. An example of these tactics is the hiring of maids and concierges to which the business of engaging with the immediate context is outsourced. Indeed, the responsibilities of maids<sup>113</sup> extend beyond the confines of the household; maids mediate negotiations of disputes regarding issues such as dripping laundry. They walk the kids and pets in the neighbourhood; they also monitor older kids who play in parking lots and other common areas. They buy the (forgotten/ recurring) goods from (too) local non-car reachable grocery stores. Maids are assisted by concierges who receive maintenance personnel and buffer undesired entrants. Concierges also carry messages to other neighbours and mediate in disputes over parking space, cleanliness of common areas and other. Maids and concierges each often establish their own social networks in the neighbourhood, while other residents refrain from interacting with who lives within their immediate confines. These networks are negatively valued even conceived as threatening by residents; indeed maids are frequently dismissed after too many years of service have enabled them to weave a quite elaborate local social network.

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<sup>113</sup> “Foreign labour in Lebanon constitutes a significant proportion of the workforce. There are over 140,000 migrant domestic workers alone in Lebanon, including 80,000 Sri Lankans. Not only do women coming mainly from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, India, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan provide household services, but they also provide cleaning services in business establishments. Prior to the civil war, Lebanese households employed young Lebanese women, mainly from poor rural area families as domestic workers. Palestinians, Syrians and Egyptians were also engaged in household services. They often entered the household anywhere from the age of 10 onwards and left mainly when it was time to marry. Both during and since the war, however, such positions have come to be viewed as degrading and unacceptable to be undertaken by Arab women. Since the influx of foreign women migrants from Africa and Asia, the position of the domestic worker has become one that carries with it a particularly low status. This is not only because of the servile nature of the tasks, conditions of work and relatively low wages, but also because there is now a racial connotation to domestic employment. At the same time, for middle and upper class urban Lebanese households, employing migrant domestic workers has become a status symbol. It is important to note that women migrant domestic workers in Lebanon are not covered under the labour law but rather under the *Kafala* or sponsorship system since the 1950s, which states that women migrant domestic workers must attain a legal local sponsor for the duration of their contracts, forcing migrants to be highly dependent on local employers and making them increasingly vulnerable to abuse” (ILO, 2005).

The consequences of such tactics have been the shrinkage of locally-based social interactions between young affluent heads of households and people residing in their proximity. As the local context stops to be part of the living space of everyday life of young affluent head as of households, the areas around residential buildings become areas of quick movement and not one in which to meet people or nod greetings. As avenues and excuses for interaction disappear, affluent households separate themselves from their social context and as such “solidarity [among households within neighborhoods] becomes more evasive.” (Marouli, 1995: 545)

### 7.3. ***The role of security in forging a role for occasional neighbourliness***

The previous section has illustrated how territorial solidarities and territorial communities grew out of fashion for young affluent heads of households in the 90's. However, we must be cautious here. The fact that affluent heads of households reject residential neighbourliness, must not be taken to mean that these individuals do not know who lives around them or with whom they are surrounded. The questionnaire findings are indicative here. Not one respondent indicated that he/she visits or has guests over from neighbours on a regular basis. Nevertheless, 59% feel that they live in a homogeneous neighbourhood. 44% even feel that they are members of the community of people that resides at a walking distance of their home and 36% believe that there is a community spirit in their building.

*Layla listed the names of a number of families that live in her building and in other neighbouring buildings in her street. She does the basic wajbat visits to a number of her neighbours that live in the same building but she does not socialize with these neighbours on a regular basis. “With my sister in the same building and my mom only a phone call away, I do not need my neighbours in cases of emergency and in any case all this wajbat business with neighbours is completely a waste of time and energy, we are already loaded with wajbat with the people we know. Why should we burden ourselves with extra wajbat with people that will not make a difference?”*

This means that even though there is not a direct interaction, the interviewees regard themselves as embedded in their residential settings. They know who lives around them even though they do not and do not wish to interact with them. They may reject contact with the local context of their homes, but this context is not anonymous to them. This was also confirmed by the interviews conducted, where interviewees were able to list the family names

of a number of households that reside in their vicinity although they do not interact with these households. The existence of these households in their vicinity is a source of feelings of security for the interviewees. The rejection of the neighbourhood social life is not a rejection of a hostile context or insecure environment. On the contrary, they feel that the local contexts of their residences are secure. However, as mentioned in the previous section, as the local context stops to be part of the living space of everyday life of young affluent heads of households, these contexts do not cease to be “spaces of belonging and collectivity” ((Marouli, 995).

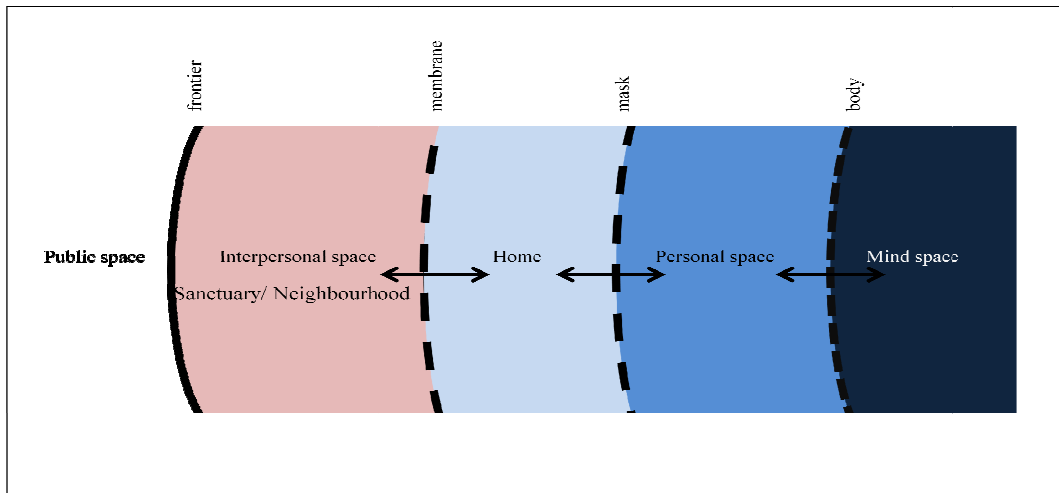


Figure 12 Spatial hierarchy of interaction at times of *insecurity* in the context of home

During periods of insecurity and civic unrest, neighbourhoods of any of the scales mentioned above re-assumed their role as “a space of belonging and collectivity” (Ibid). Sanctuary is particularly sought during periods of insecurity. Two major prolonged security threats occurred during the time span of this research, namely the Israeli war on Lebanon in the summer of 2006 and the May 2008 incidents of civil unrest. As mentioned earlier these two events are significant because the first presents an attack on Lebanon from outside while the second event was an attack on Lebanon triggered by the malfunctioning of the Lebanese system, that is, an attack from within. Each of these incidents initiated a different set of insecurities and solidarities. I gauged the reaction of my interviewees to these two threats.

*Nahed tells how during the Israeli war on Lebanon in summer 2006 she and residents of her building “became neighbours”. “We sat for hours during the first few days of*



*the war in the stairway landing<sup>114</sup>. We exchanged information on latest developments. During this long month we bought all of our groceries from the local grocery shops. During the May 08 incidents we also huddled together. We were particularly worried about attack on our building. The concierge closed off the gate to the building and he was given orders not to open to anyone” (Nahed).*

*Nahla and Sami were happy they were spared the ordeal of other people who were forced to stay at home in Beirut during the Israeli war. They escaped to Faqra<sup>115</sup>. During the May 08 they left to Nahla’s village where they stayed for a couple of day.*

*Iman and Faysal were away during the Israeli war. During the May 08 incidents they evacuated to Iman’s family mansion in the mountains.*

*Jana and Karim left to Faqra during the Israeli war and stayed home during May 08 Sourayya stayed home during both incidents as did Hanan/Rami, Camille/Pierre and Malek.*

*Rim. and Zein left to the summer house in the mountain village near Aley. They stayed at home during the May 08 incidents.*

*Layla evacuated with her family to Faqra where they own a vacation flat. “Most of our friends were there during the Israeli war. We watched the war on TV and were quite detached from all that had happened in Beirut. At some point it felt as if we were in another country, we were so detached from it all. But of course there was the worry always lurking in the back of our minds that things might escalate. The most annoying thing about the war for us was that the fact that all the Phillipino maids were evacuated. As French citizens we had the choice of evacuating as well but we decided to stay. We did not want to go through the ordeal of evacuating by boat, and Faqra was quite safe.” The story was different though during the periods of civil unrest such as May incidents of 2008. I called Layla soon after these incidents to inquire about her safe being. Layla told me that that during these incidents they stayed home. “We*

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<sup>114</sup> It is common in Lebanon to conceive of the stairwell as a place to seek shelter from mortars shells, as usually these stairwells are located to the back of buildings or in-between concrete walls.

<sup>115</sup> Faqra is a village located at 1,720 m above sea level and around 55 km north of Beirut. In the 70’s, a private ski club was developed in this village over an area of some 2 million m<sup>2</sup>. Faqra club owns the land over which ski lifts were constructed. Gradually the club became a gated community in which affluent Lebanese own secondary residences which they use mainly over weekends and vacations (for more information refer to <http://www.faqraclub.com>).

*were concerned that the unrest will spread outside Beirut and felt it was more appropriate to stay in our mantika”*

*Vahe resided in Saifi Village in Soldiere at the time he was interviewed, he just recently moved to Wadi Abu Jamil. At times of insecurity, such as during the demonstrations of the 14<sup>th</sup> of March and the frequent other demonstrations that occurred just a few hundred meters away from his residence, he withdrew to his family home in Rabbieh. During the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006 he stayed at his home in Saifi Village.*

The incidents of May 2008 were perhaps too short spanned to induce long term or full-scale evacuation. However, it has been evident from the conversations conducted with the interviewees that the incidents of May 2008 were conceived as alarming and threatening. All interviewees felt that during the 2008 incidents they had to stay in the places in which they felt sheltered against civil unrest and as such they felt they need to stay put in “their” parts of town.

Interestingly the interviews show that it is only the two Druze couples, Sami/Nahla and Faysal/Iman, who feel a need to remain (even if only partially) anchored in the village community for security reasons. They keep a parallel existence in their villages of origin. Faysal and Iman frequently visit the family mansion of Iman in her mountain village. Iman and her sisters have inherited the mansion from her father and have decided to keep it as a vacation retreat for the family. Each of her sisters has a room in the house. Sami/Nahla do not have a second house in their village of origin, but they visit family members and other notables of their community on a regular basis. The social network that connects them to their sectarian community is valuable in ensuring access to gatekeepers if needed be. However, interestingly it is only the Druze couples that exhibited this strong spatial tie to the village of origin, i.e. going on regular visits to the village, keeping a second home there and so on. Faysal links the importance of maintaining the social connection to the village to the fact that there is no clearly delimited Druze part of town in Beirut. It is evident that this lack is a source of insecurity for these Druze couples as they feel that they need to keep a second parallel existence in the village to which they withdraw in cases of insecurity in Beirut. As such, to these Druze couples it is the village that is their sanctuary. They are like a buffalo pair that has left its buffalo herd and has become member of a heterogeneous herd. They keep their ties with their old herd in order to retrieve to its sanctuary when they feel their herd-by-choice cannot deliver the security they desire.

*Have these incidents glued neighbours together?* These were exceptional times. They were proof that there are still enough reasons for “a geography of fear” (Khalaf, 1997) to persist. As a result there exists a constant sway of everyday concerns with the concerns of interest communities that are territorially defined (Webber, 1964: 111). In exceptional circumstances as the stability of civil peace is threatened the concerns of territorially defined interest communities outweighs the concerns of class-based communities.

Hence, the choice of young affluent heads of households of residences that are located in their respective sectarian enclaves means that these individuals seek to remain embedded in their respective sectarian enclaves even if they are dis-embedded socio-economically. This finding points to the fact that these individuals have shifting identities and are at any point in time part of many communities and cultures and not only one. Fluctuating interests shift belonging from one community and its associated culture to the other. Security plays a major role in changing the function of neighbourhood for young affluent heads of households. A major finding of this research is that despite the fact that young affluent heads of households seek an everyday socio-economic dis-embeddedness from their localized contexts of their residences these individuals remain by large socially embedded in their respective sectarian enclaves. This is so because despite the fact that young affluent heads of households reject a role of neighbourhood in their everyday lives; the neighbourhood continues to function as sanctuary if needed be. Paradoxically, they fort up their homes at times of security and open up to the neighbourhood at times of insecurity!

#### **7.4. *Conclusion: Fluctuating embeddedness and dis-embeddedness in the residential context***

In the discussion above we have seen how for the profile of people that I have researched residential proximity does not automatically yield exposure and that as such residential propinquity is not a necessary push factor for engaging these people with the communities that they reside amidst. My first hypothesis, namely that affluent individuals in the city of Beirut *detach* themselves socially and spatially from the immediate localized contexts of their residences (and other functions), therefore is proven as valid in times of security. However, this hypothesis is not valid as the security condition changes. A surprising finding of this research has been that, it is the *lack* of security and the resultant exceptional circumstances that prompts young affluent heads of households to engage back with the sectarian communities residing in the localized contexts of their homes.

This finding is an uneasy one for social scientists and urban planners. The academic literature is abundant in calling for the encouragement of territorially based ties and solidarities and the resurgence of neighbourhoods, however, within the sectarian homogeneous context of Beirut these solidarities proved many times to be a threat to civic peace and stability. This links to the particularity of the city of Beirut, the social make-up of the city and the sensitivities pertaining to the history of social unrest in Beirut. The uneasy question for social scientists and urban planners then becomes weighing down which is of lesser evil, non-territorial class-interest based ties and solidarities or territorial sectarian-interest based ties and solidarities. This raises important questions as to the role of the state in such a context in encouraging a healthy balance in the de-territorialization of solidarities and in enabling new kinds of solidarities to emerge. The premise for the development of downtown Beirut as a *neutral* place for all sectarian communities of Lebanon has been a step towards that aim of enabling the exposure of various sectarian communities to each other. Although the supply of residential areas of Solidere has been targeted only at people with higher incomes, but the residential area of Solidere has been nevertheless attracting a healthy mixture of sectarian groups. The discussion in the next chapter shows though that inter-sectarian exposure among the ranks of affluent individuals is existent despite the fact that affluent individuals do not reside in proximity. This research has not investigated inter-sectarian exposure among middle- and lower income groups, but social unrest in Beirut, particularly in the years following the assassination of PM Hariri provides enough evidence to suggest that it is the encouragement of the mixing the middle and lower-income groups of the various sectarian groups in that is missing in Beirut.

I conclude that this condition of fluctuating residential embeddedness and dis-embeddedness of young affluent heads of households in the city of Beirut points to a moment of change in the history of the evolution of the city of Beirut, a moment in which a particular profile of city residents begins to build non-territorially based ties and solidarities but is yet insecure to break away completely from its territorially based sectarian back-up solidarities and securities.

To affluent individuals the neighbourhood is a space with which they avoid getting in contact with *unless* the general security condition of the city forces them to. In the next section we will see how simultaneously and paradoxically to young affluent heads of households the city is a small neighbourly space where everyone knows everyone else!

## **Chapter 8. Affluence and the places of play and non-places in Beirut- Searching for selective concentration**

As young affluent heads of households detach themselves spatially and socially from the localized contexts of their residences they also opt for working, studying and spending their leisure time in places that are segregated. Indeed, the type of spatial segregation demanded in non-residential places, termed as “objectives”, is a more accentuated one. This non-residential segregation might be boosted by its suppliers who compete for selling a “better” segregated space, but it is also affected by demand for a certain level of visibility that these places are expected to bestow upon their users. In addition, these objectives are rather dispersed geographically in Beirut and are not restricted to a certain area only.

In this chapter I focus on objectives, the “O” in the T-C-O continuum. These objectives that are purposefully visited either for leisure purposes i.e. the places of play, or for everyday type of purposes related for example to running non-subcontractable errands, I term these places as non-places. Although the research inquired about the places of work and study in the case study interviews, it was not possible to engage in participant observation at these places. Hence, it was decided to limit my analysis to the places of play and to non-places.

In this chapter I present first a description of a typical day in the life of one of the case studies with a focus on describing the outings of the case study. This description is based on participant observation.

Second, based on the description above I explain the phenomenon of the “outing”. I identify two different types of outings. Each of these outings has a specific purpose related to acquiring information or maintenance of status. I also present a description of the narrative trajectory of these outings. In addition I explain how the site of the outing is selected.

Third, I describe the behaviour of young affluent heads of households at segregated sites of outings, i.e. the places of play with the aim of revealing what segregation and the visiting of geographically dispersed objectives accomplish. These observations are based both on the participant observation of my case studies and on ethnographic field notes taken in these places intermittently during various phases of the research.

Fourth, I describe the behaviour of young affluent heads of households at non-segregated, public places, what I term as non-places. The aim is to reveal by comparison why non-spaces are avoided by affluent heads of households. These observations are based mainly on ethnographic field notes.

Fifth, I explain the motivations of young affluent heads of households in visiting segregated places of play and rejecting non-places. Why do young affluent heads of households reject exposure to the public in public space? What threat does the public pose? This section concludes by explaining the role of the places of play as inter-personal places of socialization and concentration. The selection of young affluent heads of households of (1) *segregated* places of play ensures the presence of a socio-economically homogeneous group of people and (2) the selection of *geographically dispersed* places of play ensures the presence of a sectarian heterogeneous group. Hence, I conclude that the choice of segregated places of play that are dispersed geographically is geared towards ensuring *aggregation* with a socio-economically homogeneous and sectarian heterogeneous group.

### 8.1. ***A typical day in the life of Layla***

I was introduced to Layla through one of the nurseries at which I ran the questionnaire. Layla agreed to meet with me at her home. She took me into her circle and introduced me to her friends over coffee and cake at café's. We would frequently meet to go out together, mostly in malls in town or standalone café's. I am a member of Layla's network now and I am expected to make regular visits and telephone calls.

Layla dresses casually but is always dressed up and presentable, she buys new clothes seasonally. Old clothes are given away to a charity that her mother is involved in. State of the art cell telephone, jewellery, handbag, sunglasses and hairdo all work together to present Layla in a carefully controlled image that Layla is well aware of. Layla seldom goes places where she does not meet anyone that she knows. During the 5 times I was with Layla outside her home, Layla always bumped into people she knew suggesting that the places that she visits are places concentrated with people that are part of the social circle of Layla.

I arranged to spend a full day on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2007 with Layla. The following is a description of this day alongside my observations. It is based mainly on notes that I took during the day and the day after. I arrived at 9 o'clock in the morning at the building where Layla lives.

Through video entrance phone I told the maid that “Madame” was expecting me. A few seconds later a buzz opened the building entrance door (made of glass and iron bars, enabling see-through but disabling violent entry or burglary) I arrived the floor of the flat, I rang again at the entrance door and the maid (clearly prepared now for me) opened the entrance door for me and showed me to the *salon*. A few minutes later Layla arrived at the *salon* to greet me. Layla was dressed in casual clothes, she did not have any make-up on. She inquired about how I was doing and the ritual coming and going of questions lasted a few minutes after which she invited me for a coffee which she ordered the maid to bring. We drank coffee together in the *salon* while we chatted about my research progress. I then asked Layla to disregard my presence as much as possible during the day, specifically not to alter any plans because of me and to go about her daily activities as normal as possible. Layla had an appointment at 11 o’clock with a group of female friends at the Moevenpick coffee shop (around 10 minutes away by car from Layla’s house), the rest of her day was unplanned yet.

At 9:30 Layla called her mother and told her of her schedule for the day. The kids were already off for summer camp. The bus had already picked them up before I arrived. The maid was busy arranging the house and preparing for the lunch meal. After calling her mom Layla undressed into more formal clothes, she put on her jewellery and put on a somehow heavy make-up.

At around 10 o’clock Layla and me left the house to her hairdresser located in the Verdun area. We picked up her SUV parked in the building garage. Layla put on her sunglasses and stowed her cell phone in its designated place in the car. She opened the garage gate with her remote controlled key. The windows of the car were shut, the air-condition was turned on. Layla locked the doors of her car from the inside, afraid that at the intersections beggars open the doors and intrude into the space of the car, as she later told me. The concierge stood at the side of the street to stop any incoming traffic. Layla took a major route to get there. The traffic was heavy and we stopped frequently as the pace of travel slowed down. When we arrived at the hairdresser Layla left her car at the valet parking service. The hairdresser is located on the first floor of a residential building in Verdun. The valet parker greeted Layla. Layla knew the parker by first name. The parker told Layla jokingly “you are early today” Layla smiled back and told him she is busy today. [Indicating that she is quite a frequent customer] As we entered the hairdressing shop, Layla was greeted by an employee who directly showed Layla her place and asked her whether she wanted any coffee. Layla declined telling her that she was a bit in a hurry and that she is invited for a *subhieh*.<sup>116</sup> Layla waited for about 5-10 minutes before she was attended to. The owner of the hairdressing shop came a

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<sup>116</sup> A *subhieh* is a morning socializing event usually for women.

few minutes later to greet Layla. Layla introduced me as one of her friends. After finishing her hairdo Layla paid and tipped the employees. We exited the hairdressing shop and Layla called on to the valet parker. We waited for her car to be delivered at the entrance of the building in which the hairdresser is located. When the car arrived we rushed to the car, Layla tipped the driver and we drove off. Again the car was locked from the inside, the air-condition turned on and the windows closed.

We drove around 15 minutes to the Moevenpick hotel located in the Raouche area. At the entrance of the Moevenpick estate the contrast to the “outside” city is felt, the pavement, the sidewalk, the street furniture, the low density of cars. We were greeted by the valet parking driver. Layla looked at herself in the mirror just before departing the car. We left the car with the valet parking driver. We entered the building in which the café is located, again greeted by the hotel personnel all smiling and opening doors for us. Layla walked through the hotel lobby fully conscious of her surroundings. She looked around to see if there is anyone she knows. We arrived at the restaurant and Layla’s group was already anticipating her. As she entered, the gaze of the audience scanned over her dress-up, accessories, hairdo and make-up. Eight women were sitting at the table. The host greeted Layla first, and then Layla went over the other women. With the exception of one of the ladies Layla knew all the others. She introduced me as a *friend* and jokingly adds doing research on us, in reference to the group of the *subhieh*). We arrived at the *subhieh* at 11:00 and stayed till 12:30. All the women gathered do not work and are “housewives”, as Layla described them mockingly. Layla told me about the background of each of them on our way back in the car. They are all university educated at private universities in Lebanon such as LAU and AUB. They do not work, hence the term *sittat buyout* (Arabic for housewives) to describe what they do. The host is a wife of a friend of Layla’s husband.

The host had invited Layla, because Layla had already invited her for a *subhieh*. “It is a round, a circle... you invite those who invited you, so that they invite you back” Layla explains this round of “reciprocal hospitality” (Beal, 200: 67). Layla arranges approximately one *subhieh* every season. Sometimes she has done more than one. “As the group gets larger the circle that you have to invite becomes larger, so keeping it small is a way to save money” Layla explained. Sometimes Layla has invited women home and sometimes to restaurants and café’s. The more formal and bigger invitations are outside the home. The morning invitations are always for women and men never accompany their spouses to such events. It is seen as a women’s activity.



The conversations of the *subhieh* revolved around exchanging information on social events, who got married, engaged, passed away, who got promoted, who is passing through financial difficulties. They exchanged information pertaining to kids' activities, recommendations about the summer camps. They talked about which restaurants they have visited lately, who from the social circle that they have in common is visiting Lebanon during the summer. They told each other about their summer plans. A few of them arranged a get-together in the coming week. Some of them had kids at home waiting for them with the nanny. [It is not custom to accompany kids to such outings, because the purpose of the outing is seen to exchange information with the group rather than a leisure activity with the kids, although one of them was accompanied by a 2 year old and her nanny. The nanny took the kid for a walk in the hotel. She would frequently drop by.] The women who were gathered frequently used their cell-phones, mostly to call home to inquire about the whereabouts of kids, giving instructions to the maids about the preparation of a meal and so on.

At around 12:30 Layla signalled to me that it is time to leave, she stood up, thanked the host for the invitation, said farewell to each of the ladies and we left to the valet parking. As the car arrived Layla tipped the driver and we drove off back to Layla's house. We arrived there after a ten minutes drive. The traffic was still heavy, the heat and humidity a stark contrast to the cool climate of the hotel and the car. We arrived home again opening the gate to the parking via the remote control. The concierge greeted Layla and stood waiting as she exited the car to inquire whether she has any groceries to be carried or whether she had any other requests. Layla reminded him to pick up the kids at 2 o'clock as the bus of the summer camp school would drop them off at the entrance of the building. Layla parked the car in her designated space and we took the elevator to the floor of her flat. She unlocked the door and we entered the flat. The maid was preparing the lunch meal in the kitchen. I waited in the *salon* as Layla undressed into more casual clothes, she removed her jewellery. She busied herself in the kitchen supervising the last touches on the lunch meal.

At around 2 o'clock the door bell rang. The nanny rushed to open the door. The concierge dropped the kids off at the doorstep of the flat and left. The nanny carried the boy's bags and the boys entered the flat to greet Layla. They washed and undressed and sat for lunch in the kitchen. The nanny served the boys lunch. The afternoon passed by with kids playing, nagging, watching TV, Layla socializing over the phone with friends and family. The kids complained they were bored several times. At around 4:30 Layla decided to take the kids out, clearly they were too bored to stay home and "they needed to get some space". Layla dressed up again, this time more casual than her morning outfit but more formal than her home clothes. She put on less jewellery than in the morning outing. The kids were also dressed up.

We left the house at around 5, this time accompanied by the nanny who carried all the stuff related to the kids. Again we used the elevator and left the building by car, the concierge waiting at the street stopping the traffic.

The mall was in the eastern part of town about 30 minutes drive. The traffic was slow. The kids sat on the backseat, frequently jumping on their seats, Layla reminding them to sit still (but no car seat or seatbelts on). She turned on the music for the kids, but they were disinterested. When the traffic reached a standstill and the boys were getting very loud. Layla asked the nanny to intervene and to give them their Nintendos. They played for a while quarrelling a bit until we finally reached the parking of the mall, again the same ritual, the security checking the car. We entered the parking structure and searched for a parking space. The mall was packed as we had to look for a parking space for quite a while. Layla stated “next time I will take the driver with me”.

We entered the mall through the parking entrance, again the climate of the mall in contrast with the humidity and heat of surrounding. The mall was busy. The kids knew the place quite well. They were heading the way with the nanny. We arrived at a kid’s playing area, a closed off space with some slides and ball games, an area with computer games and coin slot machines. Layla paid an entrance fee for each of the kids and for the nanny. Then the kids and the nanny went to the kid’s playing area. Layla told the nanny she will be back in one hour and reminded her to keep an eye on the kids and not to socialize with other nannies. The kid’s area was packed with kids and nannies. I observed only very few Lebanese adults other than the staff. The nannies were doing their own bit of socializing as they were watching the kids. Layla and me headed off to a café at the other end of the mall. To get there Layla strolled around doing some window shopping. She was clearly looking around for familiar faces and less interested in the merchandise exhibited in the shop fronts. On our 15 minutes walk to the café we stopped five times to greet people that she knows. With two of the people she met she arranged a get-together. We arrived at the café. Layla entered the café proper apparently looking for a table but her gaze scanning to see if there is anyone she knew. As she couldn’t discover anyone she knew, she chose a table where we sat. Without looking at the menu, Layla ordered two cups of coffee. The coffee order was more of an excuse to sit down - a payment for renting the place to sit- Layla sipped less than half of it. Even though there are a few benches in the mall, these are not conceived of as proper places to sit down. I asked Layla and she said she would feel uncomfortable and improper sitting down on benches, “where anybody can sit next to us”.

Layla's phone rang twice while we were sitting and she socialized some more. While we were sitting she greeted two passerby's whom she knew. We sat for around half an hour. Layla looked at her watch then waved for the waiter. We paid and then we left, heading back to the kid's area. Again the way back was similar to when we came in, the scanning. We arrived at the kid's area and spent around 5 minutes collecting the kids and a clearly exhausted but happy nanny. We left to the car parking entered the car and left the mall, heading back home. The traffic was almost a standstill now. It was rush-hour in Beirut. The Nintendo's kept the boys busy. We arrived home at around 7 o'clock, again the same ritual with the concierge greeting us. We went inside the house and the kids were rushed with their nanny to their room to undress and wash. Layla put on her casual jeans and removed her jewellery. Shortly afterwards Layla's husband Majed arrived. The next hour was a hectic one of arranging dinner and getting the kids ready for bed. Layla's responsibilities during this hour were that of supervision, she intruded occasionally with an authoritative voice as the boys misbehaved. As the kids retreated to the family room, Majed had dinner interrupted by yet another round of telephone calls from family and friends. A friend of Majed called and there was a short debate whether to meet with him at the mall. Layla told Majed that she had already been at the mall today and that she wanted a change of scenery. They decided to meet him at a restaurant in downtown. Layla undressed again into a casual evening outfit and put on her jewellery. Majed put on casual jeans and polo shirt. We left the house at around 9, the kids were watching TV with the maid. Layla commanded the maid to put the boys in bed in half an hour. We left on the familiar route to the garage. This time we took Majed's car, a regular new car (not SUV). We used almost the same route that we had already used during the day. Again the AC on, the windows closed, but this time the doors unlocked. We arrived at the downtown area. The parking seemed packed. Layla showed Majed the location of the valet parking service. We left the car with the valet parker and "entered" the pedestrian part of downtown. We walked a few minutes and arrived at the restaurant, where their friend and his wife were already waiting. The restaurant was packed. The people all more or less the same age group as Layla and Majed. Their friends dressed in the same style as Layla and Majed with the proper amount of jewellery and make-up. I was introduced as a friend doing research in Lebanon. Her female friends inquired about me, again a placement occurred with Layla helping. Layla and Majed noted that they just had dinner and they ordered only salads which they picked on disinterestedly occasionally. Layla called the maid during dinner to check on the kids. The men engaged in their own separate conversation. I overheard them talking about stocks, about Majed's work. The women's conversation revolved first around me what I was doing, who I was and whom I know. Later they talked about their maids, about common friends and about their plans for the summer. During dinner the group at my table met people they knew several times as people approached their table to greet them. The restaurant had the

atmosphere of a club, every group arranged around its own table in a semi-private bubble engaging in its own conversation, but there was a feeling of familiarity and even interaction, in the form of greetings small talks with other nearby tables/ semi-private bubbles. At eleven Majed and Layla decided it was time to go back home. The bill was ordered, their friend insisted on paying as “Layla and Majed did not order anything”. They thanked them and we all left together to the valet parking service. Our car arrived first, we said farewell. Majed tipped the valet parking and we headed back home. We arrived at the garage of their house where I thanked them exchanged a few words with Layla and left to my car parked at the side of the road. Crossing the road to my car, it occurred to me that it was the first time since I began my day with Layla that I was in a public space! <sup>117</sup>

## 8.2. *The concept of the outing*

Going out, the *Dahra*, is an important activity that all the case studies valued highly, for leisure and recreational purposes but more importantly in the context of this research for social and psychological purposes related to confirming one’s status in the community and for purposes related to perceptions of personal worth. For young affluent heads of households, going out is synonymous with participating in public life, even if this participation is merely reduced to seeing and being seen by people. Refraining from going out, that is, living a private life, denotes a negative meaning of deprivation and withdrawal from participation, a conception that evokes Arendt’s (1958) negative valuation of the private life<sup>118</sup>.

As such going out is synonymous with going *outside home*, that is, leaving the place of concealment. However, going out does not necessarily mean accessing the public but rather accessing the spaces of exposure. Going out is going “front stage” (Goffman). The function of the outing is not only recreational and related to leisure purposes, but rather related to

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<sup>117</sup> Indeed, I stood at the sidewalk leaning back on the side of my car contemplating my context for about 10 minutes before I drove back home. It was a warm evening. It was late at night, but the street was quite brightly lit and felt safe. A few cars passed by as I was standing. There were no pedestrians on the road. I asked myself why this public context is rejected by Layla and Majed. Having been protected by membranes and masks all day long, my moment of freedom was liberating and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I frequently looked back to this moment as I asked myself many times during this research about the logic of segregation. In addition, I made sure to reflect on this moment at the end of other full days that I spent with other case studies.

<sup>118</sup> Arendt (1958) saw private life from a negative perspective, to an extent that to her the private person ‘does not exist’ with actions that remain without significance or consequence to others (Arendt, 1958: 58). A life lived mainly in the restricted sphere of the household, as historically it was for women, therefore was not worth living. To live an entirely private life means above all to be deprived of things essential to a truly human life: to be deprived the reality that comes from being seen and heard by others, to be deprived of an objective relationship with them that comes from being related to and separated from them through an intermediary of a common world of things (Ibid).

exposure to a particular audience. “I go out [to restaurants, coffee shops and mall] to see people” (Camille). While this exposure can be a recreational activity, it is mainly linked to the maintenance of status, in some cases even to the confirmation of existence. During one of the rounds of socialization I observed gossip about a lady that never exercises any *wajbat* visits and is never seen in the places of concentration. The gossiping group tagged this lady as weird and even went as far as assuming that the fact that this lady is not seen by this group in the places of concentration could indicate that she could have a mental break-down. “She is really weird, nobody ever sees her” commented one lady in the gossiping group.

The frequency of outings also works to affirm one’s presence in the community and confirm one’s standing and status. “The more you are seen [in certain areas of socialization] the more successful you are perceived” (Iman). The sites of the outings are carefully selected to achieve this purpose. The kind and amount of preparatory work done at home before my subject goes to the site of the outing and the last finishing preparatory touches just moments before s/he enters the front stage – e.g. looking at him/herself in the mirror in the car just before leaving the car, tiding up his/her clothes etc...- indicate that great care is taken to control the image that will be portrayed to the audience of the outing. This means that going out means being seen by what is regarded a special set of others and being immersed in a context in which one’s image and the symbolism it connotes, that is, social status is vulnerable to scrutiny.

Going out is a process that can be divided into intervals. First preparing for the outing, second, travelling to the site of the outing, third arriving at the site of the outing, fourth, engaging in the outing’s main activity (e.g. dining, watching a movie, walking, engaging in a sports activity, drinking coffee etc..), fifth leaving the site of the outing and sixth, returning home. Participant observation allowed me to engage in the overall process of the outing while ethnographic observation at the sites of the outings allowed me only to observe and document the behaviour of people as they arrive at the site of the outing, engage in the activity and then leave. As I engaged in participant observation I found out that the first two intervals, that is, the act of preparing for the outing and the act of travelling to the site of the outing are equally important in understanding the purpose of the outing, particularly the act of preparing for the outing.

All outings that I was engaged in conformed to the structure of the routine that Layla follows and which I had already mentioned in my recount of the typical day. This routine is as follows: Valet parking or garage parking inside the parking specified for the site of the outing’s main activity, a very short walk from the car to the site of the outing. A period of

arrival and scanning for familiar faces, a one-to one and a half hour of socializing at the site of the outing's activity with the immediate people met in addition to periodic socializing with acquaintances and friends that happen to pass by, finally the walking trip back to the car and by car back home.

I have observed two main types of outings. The first type of outing I term "Informational outing". In this type of outing a person meets people at the site of the outing. The meeting is pre-arranged. A person goes to and leaves the site of the outing alone or with someone with whom s/he shares a close social relationship. The preparatory interval of the informational outing is more elaborate than that of the other types of outings. The time spent at the site of the informational outing is longer than the second type of outing. The purpose of the informational outing is to socialize with the people present at the meeting and to exchange information. The site of the outing is carefully selected. The most preferred site of this type of outing is the restaurant. The main activity of the informational outing allows engagement of the participants in dialogue. The talks seldom personalize though, for example, personal money matters of the people engaged in the are not discussed even among men. Men's talk revolved around business transactions and people who changed jobs. Politics is discussed only superficially, in the sense of exchange of information rather than a debate of ideas or policies. Among men and women there was also extensive exchange of information over the latest craze in town, for example leisure activities, new restaurants and cafe's new resorts. Among women there was recurring exchange of information regarding hairdressers, nail artists, restaurants, and events. Exchange about social information, who got married, divorced who passed away, where *wajbat's* have to be done. There is an unmasked honest curiosity. One is eyed about what one is wearing. If someone is wearing a novel piece of jewellery or accessory, it is confirmed by the group with an extended gaze and sometimes with a phrase.. "Nice bag"... sometimes exaggerated "wow this is so nice... where did you get it?"

The second type of outing I term "Maintenance outing". In this type of outing a person goes to, is at and returns from the site of the outing alone or with people with whom he/she has a prior social relationship. What is significant in this type of outing is that there is no prearranged meeting at the site of the outing. The type and nature of the main activity of the outing is of secondary importance. For example the outing activity may be dining, but the food is disregarded. The purpose of this outing is to maintain social standing and the activity itself is an excuse and hence of secondary importance. The main purpose of this type of outing is to be immersed in a setting in which one can see and be seen by a specific audience.

The sites of the outings are selected based on novelty and based on recommendations. “You get to know the “in” places in town, because everybody talks about them. In Beirut, word of mouth is very powerful in circulating information” (Camille). Marketing of restaurants, cafe’s, pubs and nightclubs is increasingly turning towards getting “trendsetters” on board as investors. Malek owns a 10% stake in a pub that just opened recently in Gemayzeh. As young affluent heads of households frequent their places of play, their group of friends follows, attracting other groups as well (Malek).<sup>119</sup>

The case studies observed drove a minimum of 20 minutes to their destination. Sometimes heavy traffic delayed the trip. In addition, these objectives were recurrently travelled to, in many instances more than once during the day. Camille explains that every now and then there is a “new craze in town” where everybody goes to. “Soon we get bored of this place and when a new place opens up we move to this new place and so on” (Camille).

Interestingly, both types of outings that I have identified seem to be less related to the pursuit of happiness, contentment or leisure and more related to the pursuit of some kind of goals linked to standing in community and perceptions of success<sup>120</sup>. This means that even leisure is instrumentalized.

### **8.3. *The outing site as a segregated place of play and concentration***

In this section the behaviour of young affluent heads of households at the site of the outing is presented. These observations are based both on the participant observation of my case studies and on ethnographic field notes taken in these places intermittently during various phases of the research. They are also supported by the questionnaire findings.

My participant observation and questionnaire findings reveal that young affluent heads of households preferred recurring travel to selective places that are segregated spatially as well as socially. 96% of all questionnaire respondents mentioned that they feel more comfortable to spend their leisure time in places that are controlled by private security with 85% of these

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<sup>119</sup> The Executive Magazine reported about this in its August 2009 issue. “You have a group of five to ten friends who were ambitious and party animals, and thought ‘let’s each put USD 10,000 and open our own bar, and if each one of us brings in just five people every day we will fill up and make money” (Executive Magazine, 2009).

<sup>120</sup> Halpern (1995) notes that “people often seek activities that are not optimum for their mental (and physical ) health: contentment is not the only aim in people’s lives” (Halpern , 1995: 209) .

mentioning that the reason is for ensuring exclusivity and upkeep of higher standards. 80% stated the mall as the most frequently visited place over the weekends (with the the ABC mall ranking among the top three places visited on a weekly basis). The mall, restaurant coffee shop/ pub are ranked as the number one place to meet and socialize with friends by 85% of respondents, while private spaces (e.g. the home) were ranked as the number one place to meet and socialize with family by 95% of respondents .

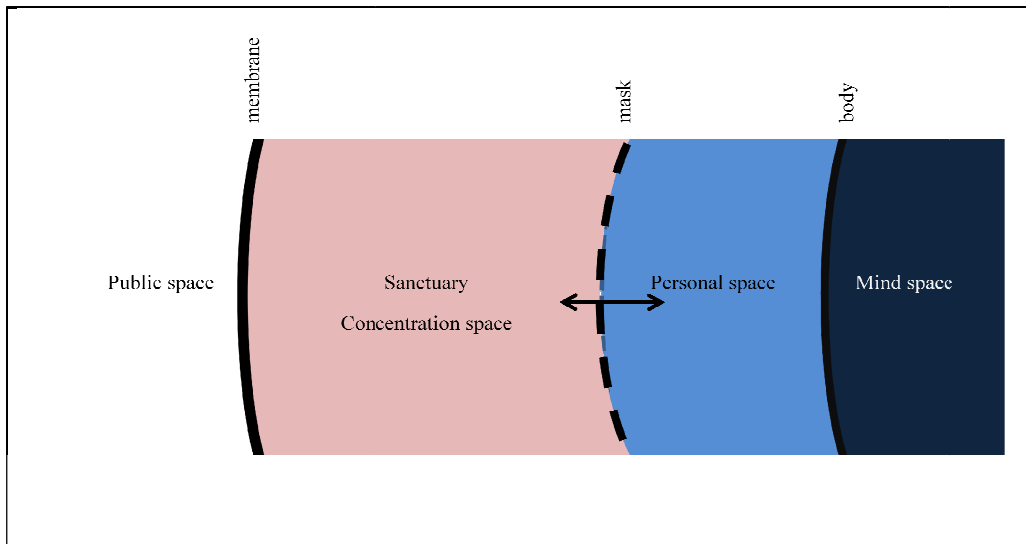


Figure 13 Spatial hierarchy of interaction at spaces of concentration

This means that the preferred site of the outing is a gated site in which segregation is practiced to filter visitors. Gated commercial and entertainment complexes, resorts, enclosed department stores, guarded downtown and other hotspots in town are examples of such sites. These “objectives” are detached from their surroundings. A membrane ensuring the filtering of visitors is supplied for collective use. What distinguishes the membrane in the “objectives” from the membrane of the “territories” is the following. In the “objectives” , first, the membrane is supplied as a service, second, the membrane is collectively consumed, and third, the membrane’s span is more widespread than its residential or dynamic version. As such, “objectives” become the places where young affluent heads of household experience a sense of freedom; they are interpersonal places where it is permissible to walk and talk to semi-strangers, where body guards take a break, where it might be even considered bad taste to outsource to the maid or driver. In the objectives, affluent individuals do not have direct control over the membrane as the membrane is supplied by others and collectively consumed.



Hence, the mask plays a significant role as it becomes the line of second defence that individuals operate in a context that is already filtered by the membrane but one in which, legally, privacy cannot be guaranteed. As such the role of the mask in the “objectives” is symbolic such that it advertises social status; it also plays a protective role that guards personal space. Refer to Figure 13.

It is wrong though to assume that this segregation is geared towards enacting voluntary social exclusion, that is, that this segregation is a *spatial* detachment from the localized context of which individuals seek to *socially* disengage from. These places are detached from their surroundings but the logic is one such that by being detached locally they are able to attract people from across the city. As such, segregation is rather part of a strategy exercised to attain linkage to a “largely invisible [social and spatial] network” (Caldeira, 2000)? In other words, detachment is not a self-serving phenomenon but rather it is part of a process that serves to link affluent individuals to other selected individuals that are dispersed throughout the spatial fabric of the city of Beirut. 85% of the questionnaire respondents perceived that in the area at walking distance from where they live most people belong to the same sectarian group but to different socio-economic group. 95% perceived that in the area where they *spend their leisure time* most other people that visit belong to diverse sectarian groups, but to the same socio-economic group. This confirms to the findings of the participant observation namely that young affluent heads of households prefer to go out to segregated places which concentrate people of different sectarian associations but who nevertheless belong to the same socio-economic group. This explains why these places are dispersed geographically in Beirut and not concentrated exclusively in one part of the city.

The restaurant, the mall, the hairdressing shop, the doctor’s clinic, the supermarket, the gym and other everyday life spaces are all places that are carefully selected and continuously revised to match the criteria of segregation and aggregation. The most preferred “objectives” are restaurants, coffee shops, pubs and malls, as these outing sites are the most accommodating to become sites of concentration. The restaurant is the most suitable site for the informational outing. The restaurant provides a setting in which ample time can be spent with other people in a semi-private bubble around a table, but also interacting with other semi-private bubbles. Maintenance outings in which the main objective is seeing and being seen, occur more in coffee shops, pubs and malls.

*The pub that Malek frequents is, to use his words, “leftish”. The interior design is minimalistic, faking low cost and low maintenance. Visitors wore casual jeans; the women had low-maintenance looking hair-do’s. There is an aura of forced attempts of pretending not*

*to be ostentatious. The pub was packed with visitors at 11:30 pm. Visitors dropped their ostentatious cars, ranging from SUV's to sleeker smaller but brand new cars at the valet parking and entered the pub in small groups. The pub is located on a narrow side street in Gemayzeh. The cars are not exhibited in front of the pub as is customary in other pubs in which the more you tip a valet driver the closer to the entrance door he would park your car. Malek sat right next to the entrance of the pub, a friend mocked Malek of being the bouncer. Malek didn't seem to mind. It was difficult to distinguish the bartenders and waiters from the visitors. Visitors sat in small groups and portrayed an image of being disengaged from the crowd. When I asked Malek what was "leftish" about this pub, he answered smiling "you are not going to accuse me of being Champagne socialist<sup>121</sup>, are you?" It was clear that Malek was quite conscious of this schism between the presence of an affluent crowd engaging in leisure consumption that contradict the values associated with a leftist ideology and his description of the place as "leftish". Malek, however, perceived that this consciousness gave him an added claim over the place. "This is a place where you can take a break from the work of networking, a place simply to have a drink and to enjoy the music. It is a place where other things do not matter."<sup>122</sup> While Malek is insinuating that this is a place where he is neither an audience nor on stage, it is evident though that this is not true.*

The case studies mentioned Faqra club as a preferred site for outings during holidays and weekends. Faqra is a village located at 1,720 m above sea level and around 55 km north of Beirut. In the 70's, a private ski club was developed in this village over an area of some 2 million m<sup>2</sup>. Faqra club owns the land over which ski lifts were constructed. Gradually the club became a gated community in which affluent Lebanese own secondary residences which they use mainly over weekends and vacations (for more information see <http://www.faqraclub.com> ). Faqra.club has been particularly successful as it supplies a "totalizing" (Marcuse, 1997) exclusive leisure experience. Visitors of Faqra can socialize, entertain, engage in sports activities, entertain their children in a neighbourhood-like

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<sup>121</sup> A champagne socialist is a label, with a belittling undertone, for a person who vocally and ideologically expresses support for democratic or radical socialist beliefs, but lives a lifestyle that contradicts these values. "Limousine Liberal", "Chardonnay Socialist", "Gauche Caviar", "salon Bolshevik" are alternative and equally derogative terms used.

<sup>122</sup> Interestingly a pub called "Gauche Caviar" exists within the vicinity of this "leftish" pub in Gemayzeh, Beirut. This is how a website listing pubs and restaurants in Beirut describe Gauche Caviar. "Gauche Caviar is one of the more tastefully designed new spots in Beirut, Gauche Caviar (that's Champagne Socialist for the English speakers) is a spacious, open bar – massive by Gemayzeh standards – opened at the wrong end of the street (the one that's still quiet). Which makes more 'in' than anywhere else in the hood really. A grand wood bar, huge glass windows and standing tables with no seating in the central space give Gauche Caviar a wonderfully friendly feel. And the bar stools are so comfortable with high backs you won't want to leave" (Source: [http://www.timeoutbeirut.com/beirut/Nightlife/Nightlife\\_barspubs.html](http://www.timeoutbeirut.com/beirut/Nightlife/Nightlife_barspubs.html) accessed February 2009, the pub has also its own website: <http://www.gauchecaviar.com/> )

atmosphere. This totalizing experience is temporal though, again providing proof that the Faqra residence is an extended instance of temporal concentration! This year Layla and Majed have rented an flat in Faqra, because “all our friends have done so, we are neighbours with our closest friends up there”. When asked about the sectarian make-up of these friends and where they live in Beirut, Layla answered that these friends are all scattered in Beirut and they come from different sectarian backgrounds. As such what is scattered in Beirut becomes concentrated in Faqra even if it is only for a limited period of time.

The gym is another site of concentration that attracts people from all over the city and not just from the immediate locality. Interestingly, from my conversations with gym users it seems that a gym has to attract people from various parts of town in order to be conceived of as a successful gym. Hanan visits a gym that is around 40 minutes away by car from where she resides, but “the faces are all familiar”. Even though there is a gym in the gated community where she lives, she does not use it because she feels uncomfortable “sweating in front of the neighbours” She also does not use the swimming pool because she feels embarrassed that her neighbours might see her in the swimsuit. “These facilities are used predominantly by the kids. There is an unspoken consensus about this.” When I asked her whether she would feel equally embarrassed if she met her neighbours at the beach or at the gym that she goes to, she paused explaining that the beach was a different context, and that at the beach she would not feel embarrassed to be dressed in a way that the context demanded. This means that the context has to be purposefully addressing the activity practiced and not a complimentary service. In the words of a luxury flat buildings developer interviewed in 1996 by the author, “the swimming pool, the gym are just gimmicks; they are marketing strategies to attract clientele. They are not facilities which the people who buy these flats actually want to use.”

Also service areas such as children’s activity or educational centres, are areas of concentration and, hence, sociability for the parents. Particularly for non-working young affluent mothers these places are part of the everyday living space. All interviewees and questionnaire respondents visited private schools and universities; their children also all visit private educational establishments. Educational facilities for children are not chosen based on proximity. It is common for children to be driven for as long as one hour to and from school/kindergarten. Children are usually driven to and from school by a bus that is managed and owned by the school. Younger children are driven usually by their parents. This means there is a lot of toing and froing in the mornings and afternoons. The strategy of educational

choice indicates the way in which young affluent heads of households choose to network their children with “appropriate” friends early on in their lives.<sup>123</sup>

*Sami and Nahla’s two kids (age 5 and 9) attend the International College<sup>124</sup> school (IC), prior to that they went to the Dent de Lait nursery. Securing a place for their children at the IC required a series of wasta’s<sup>125</sup> as neither Sami nor Nahla is a graduate of this school. Nahla is a graduate of the College de Protestant. As such Nahla could have secured a place for her children at her former school, because the children of graduates are guaranteed a place at the school. But they did not want their son to go the College de Protestant, because as Sami explains “we wanted our son to be raised at a school that would develop and support the development of a strong personality, in addition the excellent social networking that the IC school enables our son and us as parents is also an advantage.”*

As a result children do not acquire friends that reside within proximity and children only mix with other children sharing similar social status and the parents’ social and leisure activities exclusively involve people like themselves (See Butler, 2003 on gentrification in North London). This strategy of educational choice is also applied to the choice of sports and leisure activities for the children.

*The ballet school of Nahla’s daughter is located in Hamra, “so many IC students go to this school, the faces are all familiar” she explains. Nahla drove some thirty minutes to get there. However, Nahla clearly believes that the drive is worth the trouble and she is really pleased with the school. It is clear though that it is not really the Ballet lessons that she is content with but rather the ambiance of the school.*

*The swimming school that Nahed’s daughter visits is located in the Moevenpick hotel, some twenty minutes away by car. Nahed sits for one hour watching her daughter take swimming lessons. While doing so she sips her coffee or tea with other mothers. Most of the mothers she knows from school or through friends. Sometimes, the mothers don’t come and it is the nannies who get to socialize. The nannies usually stand at an inconspicuous corner.*

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<sup>123</sup> Nabeel Haidar takes on a perspective linked to the role that private schools play in fostering a sectarian based identity for Lebanese youth. Haidar discusses the role-or lack thereof-of Lebanon's school system in promoting a sense of national identity. He notes that private schools have been criticized for "building the good Christian or Muslim citizen rather than the good Lebanese citizen" (Haidar in Bowman, 2005).

<sup>124</sup> International College (IC) is a prominent private school in Beirut. IC boasts to have many of its former students as MPs and ministers in government in Lebanon.

<sup>125</sup> Refer to footnote 88 for an explanation of *wasta*.

*Sometimes, the mothers are accompanied by the nannies who take care of the kids and help them undress and take a shower.*

Celebrations such as weddings and children's birthday parties are also events that are carefully staged and provide an occasion in which status confirmation can be exercised.

*The boy's birthdays are celebrated at fun parks, celebration centres, restaurants. "The birthday celebration cost around 1,500USD. You need to rent out a space, pay for the food catering, decoration and animators. When the boys were younger the mothers would stay at the birthday and you need the celebration to be extra presentable. Now as the boys are older the moms leave the kids with the nannies, things are a little bit more relaxed now. You cannot celebrate birthdays at home; there is simply not enough space. You have to invite everyone who has invited you" (Nahla).*

Particularly, weddings are instances in which the social circles of bride and groom merge for an evening or day of celebration and wealth display. Caline states "you favour inviting those that matter over people that are really close to you and that you really care about...for example, my wedding included around 400 invitees but due to limitations in space I was not able to invite all my old friends from school, because we had to invite influential friends of my father." The list of invitees is reviewed over and over again "so that nobody important is left out" (Nabiha).

*Sami and Nahla's wedding was a typical Druze wedding. The traditional daytime part included the trip made by the groom from his village of origin accompanied by his family to the bride's village. At the entrance of the bride's house a small celebration occurs. A hired group of men dressed in folklore clothes danced and sang to the sound of drums and a show of a sword fight. The groom then picked his bride up and took her to his village. The day was spent then in the groom's village accepting congratulatory greetings (tahani). "In the evening the formal celebration dinner with dancing was held in Beirut." Sami and Nahla recalled the first "traditional" part of their marriage ceremony with smiles and a bit of a mock. This part was specifically held for their village community. They would have had to put up with a lot of talk from this community if they had not held such a kind of celebration. They frequently used the term "endure" to describe their state of being during this part of the ceremony; they said that they had no choice but "to go with the flow" and accept the "traditional" part of the ceremony for their families sake. Only the closest of their friends (4 or 5 and all of the Druze sect) attended this part of the ceremony. The major part of their friends and acquaintance were invited only to the formal ceremony held in at the prestigious Al-Bustan the evening, it*

*was a cocktail party with around 500 guests. Very few of the village people were invited to this formal ceremony. The invitation strategy reflects a clear wish to keep both worlds apart, it also reflects a clear acknowledgement that there is a need to sustain the social network of the village despite the fact that the attitudes, dress code, manners of the village people is a source of annoyance and sometimes shame. The fact that they need to have two separate weddings reflects the fact that their social circles are tangential and that they make an effort to keep them this way.*

As Beal (2000) reports from Amman, in Beirut too “the purported costs of such affairs are a subject of open speculation among both invitees and non-participants” (Beal, 2000: 67). As such, the wedding party is carefully organized and all the details carefully chosen to portray taste (and waste) from the invitation cards to the flower arrangements, table decorations, ceremony display, photography, lights, fireworks, video filming, catering, wedding theme, *dabke* or dance sketches and of course bride’s dress, hairdo and make-up. The Hayyat newspaper reported that the wedding costs of the rich in Lebanon amounts to hundreds of thousands per wedding (Hayyat, February 10<sup>th</sup> 2008). Hiring wedding planners to organize this intricate affair has become increasingly customary. In 2003, Promofair<sup>126</sup>, a Lebanese exhibition organizer, launched its first “Wedding Follies Exhibition” in Beirut. Wedding Follies Exhibition is the “largest bridal exhibition in the Middle East, a 4 days extravaganza offering all kinds of wedding apparels for today’s brides & grooms celebrations displaying more than 190 exhibitors”. (Source: [http://www.promofair.com.lb/Promofair\\_II/about\\_us.asp](http://www.promofair.com.lb/Promofair_II/about_us.asp) accessed May 2007)

#### 8.4. ***Non-places***

Augé (1995) coined the phrase "non-place" to refer to places of transience, for example, the motorway, an airport, the supermarket. These non-places are not significant enough to be regarded as "places", they are a negation of place, thus, the term, “non-place”. I use the term non-place in a different nuance, in this research. The unworthiness of placeness derives not from transience (although transience becomes a tactic to avoid these non-places) but rather from the concentration of unworthy audiences. Examples pertain to public facilities and include airport waiting halls, voting centres and post offices among others. These non-places defy excludability and continue to be accessible to all. Viewed from the perspective of the

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<sup>126</sup> “Promofair is Lebanon’s leading exhibition and event organizer and is affiliated to Choueiri Group, one of the largest advertising groups in the Middle East. Established in 1993, Promofair has set the pace for the trade exhibitions in Lebanon, having organized more than 60 events, covering all sectors of activities” (Source: [http://www.promofair.com.lb/Promofair\\_II/about\\_us.asp](http://www.promofair.com.lb/Promofair_II/about_us.asp) accessed May 2007)

layer, these are the places where members of the public “leak” into the layer. Experiences of these places invoke feelings of dis-comfort to young affluent heads of households as they are confronted with the diverging subcultures of the other. In addition, in order to “stay in character” (Goffman, 1959) they try to reinforce their difference from the crowd and they accentuate the fact that they are performing to an undeserving audience. They try to relieve their annoyance by talking over the phone and (re)-connect to the world they know.

Malek told me of an incident where he was picking up his brother from the airport at the time that coincided with the return of pilgrims from the *Haj*. Although himself a Shiite Muslim, Malek clearly does not associate with the cultural and religious practices of lower-income members of his sect.

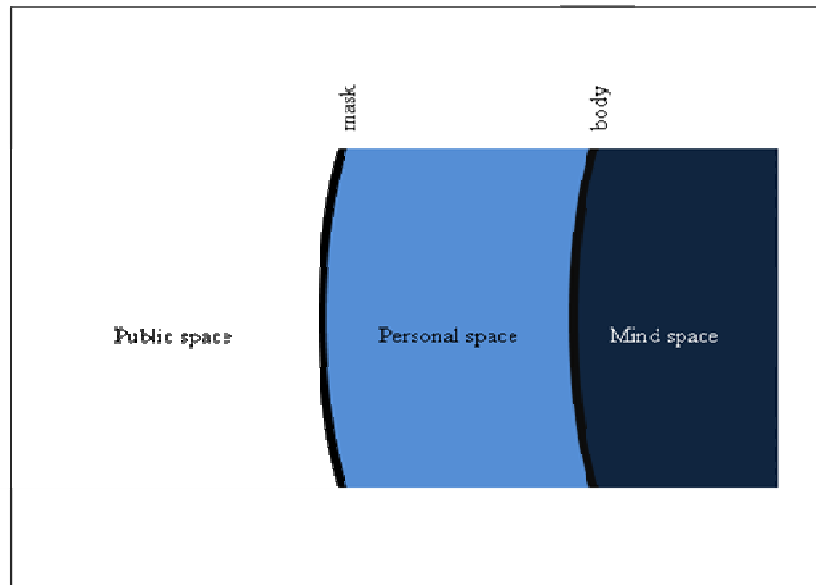


Figure 14 Spatial hierarchy of interaction at non-spaces

Ethnographic field notes taken at the airport waiting hall revealed clear signs of annoyance, anxiety and discomfort on the faces of affluent individuals as they entered the airport waiting hall to wait for relatives or friends arriving. While waiting, many resorted to the use of cell phones, as an activity to pass time but also as an activity to link back to a world they are comfortable with, to re-link their mind space to a space that it is familiar with. The use of the cell phone can thus be explained as a *corrective* measure to realign exposure, even though the correction is only virtual. Lower-income groups were more relaxed and clearly owned the space as their accompanying children ran around and played. The time spent at the airport can be understood as a moment of truth, in which young affluent heads of households are

confronted with the question of where their loyalty and sense of belonging is greater, with members of their sect or with members of their income group. By detaching from the context of their homes that are concentrated with members of their sect, it is this question that they are evading. The answer for Majed was easy, definitely his income group. He did not associate with the dress code that clearly distinguished members of his sect in the airport waiting hall (mainly women in black veils, men in outmodish trousers and shirts), nor their language (heavy Shiite accent). He particularly detested the fact that members of his sect had the practice of assembling in large groups of extended family members to greet its pilgrims.

The airport waiting hall is an example in which a mixture of different income groups gets in close contact. The market continues to be resilient in searching for innovative solutions to commodify the needs of individuals demanding to avoid or minimize contact. This is done by rendering elements of these areas/services excludable. Examples include a business class lounge in the airport, coffee shops in waiting areas. As affluent individuals sat down in the airports cafeteria that overlooks the waiting area, there were clear signs of relief as they detached from the crowd. The privatised Lebanese post company offers the services of LIPOS. Portrayed in the image of a muscular supermanish character in yellow suit (the postal equivalent of the Hum-Vee?), LIPOS enables obtaining official records (such as renewing passport etc...) without the hassle of standing in line. As such, LIPOS commodifies this place in the line, by rendering it excludable. This is done by offering a service that enables a comfortable distance from the crowd and from decayed government services and offices. Similarly, *Khadamat*, which translates into services, a telephone based service company launched in the late 90's offered a wide range of delivery services accessible by telephone demand. By giving an order through the call centre of *Khadamat*, hamburgers were delivered, official transcripts were received, and errands were run. *Khadamat*'s pool of drivers commodified niches of mobile space to the lazy but more importantly to those seeking to outsource certain encounters<sup>127</sup>. One can also speculate about the impact of internet on increasing the capacity for withdrawal. In the context of low internet and computer penetrability, the digital divide is likely to accentuate spatial divisions. It is likely that in the future those who are excluded will be standing in a long chaotic line at government facilities while the affluent will be only a click away.

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<sup>127</sup> “*Khadamat* SAL was established in 1998 to provide the Lebanese market a reliable and fast delivery service. It introduced the concept of “non-scheduled” or Instant Delivery Service to individuals and companies. *Khadamat* innovated by delivering basically any product that one could think of. Since then, many new services have been added in order to constantly adapt to market needs and even create new market niches. *Khadamat* delivers everyday of the week from 8:00 am till midnight through its fleet of scooters, cars and vans.” ([www.Khadamat.com.lb](http://www.Khadamat.com.lb))



As such, “public spaces are not places for people to meet and exchange ideas or experiences anymore; they have become areas through which quick movement from one private area to another is achieved” (Marouli, 1995: 544). Interestingly though, despite the fact that young affluent heads of households avoid and reject public space, all interviewees complained about the lack of public parks in Beirut. Indeed, there is a “dearth of public parks in Beirut. Figures reveal that Beirut has 1 tree for every 33 inhabitants, compared to Berlin, with 4 trees per inhabitant, and Abu Dhabi, with 34 trees for every inhabitant” (Sarkis in ESCWA 2005). However, despite of this complaint, only 5% of the questionnaire respondents have indicated that they have ever visited a public park in Beirut.

*A public garden is located just behind Sami and Nahla’s building. By Lebanese standards the garden is really well maintained. A guard hired by the municipality watches who is coming in and out so that no beggars “abuse” the space. The garden is an asset to Sami and Nahla as they feel that their flats might be more desired due to the presence of this garden, yet they have never used the garden themselves. If the children want to ride their bikes or play ball they would take them to downtown or to their village in the mountain where there is a bit more space in the front yard of their family house, but they don’t feel appropriate to send their kids to the garden. “It is just not appropriate... I will not take them there myself. If the maid took them she would start getting to know people in the neighbourhood [perceived as negative], second, the kids could get exposed to all kinds of people there [also negative]”. The garden is perceived as reasonably safe, but Nahla does not feel any added value in sitting at her kitchen’s window and watch her kids play accompanied by the nanny. She feels that she compensates her children’s lack of outdoor space when she takes them to their activities in the afternoons. “At least there they can run about and socialize with proper people”.*

Similarly two of the other case studies live right across or two walking minutes away from prominent public parks in Beirut but neither they nor their children visit these parks more than once or twice a year. Ethnographic field notes taken in public parks in Beirut reveal that these places are not used by affluent individuals, even if these places are well maintained. Clearly public parks are not a place that young affluent heads of households visit.

The city’s promenade, namely, the Beirut Corniche is often described as the only real public space in Beirut. Another promenade was implemented in the 1990s on the northern exit of Beirut in Antelias/Dbayeh, it does not perform its basic task, given that a high parapet has been erected that obstructs the view of the sea. Young affluent heads of households use the

Beirut Corniche mainly as a walking track. Women and men in groups of two or three, some men alone park their cars alongside the road and walk or jog alongside the promenade. The younger generation wears sunglasses and I-pods. Great care is taken to keep moving. Even as young affluent heads of households meet people they know, the greeting seldomly extends into a long conversation. The public benches available are not used for sitting down by affluent individuals. The Corniche is a public space experienced in mobility. Staying mobile is key. In the next chapter I further elaborate on this notion of mobility as a tactic to avoid exposure to the public in public space.

### 8.5. ***Conclusion: Segregation for aggregation***

Mothers in Lebanon tend to be the first family member in charge of managing (not executing) domestic responsibilities including the child caretaking task. Hence, the desire for an extended spatiality of everyday life which as I argue is stipulated by affluence could potentially be at odds with the local anchoring and the confined daily territory that the caretaking task of young children encourages. This responsibility means that out of the total pool of affluent individuals, the public and private activities of this particular profile of affluent individuals, i.e. mothers with young children, should tend to be the most integrated on a daily basis (Karsten (2003: 2575) makes a similar point). However, the findings of my research confirm that as the household is run by nannies, concierges and drivers, the role of mothers has become to coordinate all these subcontractors to undertake domestic chores. As such the role of mothers as housewives directly managing the household has become quite redundant<sup>128</sup>, particularly as this coordination task can be managed remotely by telephone. It was a common practice among the case studies researched to make frequent inspectoral telephone calls home to supervise the work of their subcontractors. This possibility of remotely managing the household means that the daily territory of even the supposedly most anchored profile of young affluent heads of households, i.e. affluent mothers with young children, is not confined to the localized context of the home. As argued in the previous chapter, for affluent young mothers the adoption of modernity becomes adopting a lifestyle

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<sup>128</sup> Johnson and Lloyd present a similar case while discussing lifestyle managers and consultants in London “reports that represent a zeitgeist that give accounts of how all aspects of one’s personal life, for men and women alike, can now be managed with the assistance of professional agencies... it is now possible to have a nanny look after your children, a person to clean your house or do your garden, as well as an agency to arrange your social life, your holidays, someone to let the washing-machine repair person to come into your house when you are at work, buy presents for your children and your spouse and so on. Indeed, lifestyle managers and consultants from companies such as London-based TimeEnergyNetwrok will run your household, co-ordinating all these subcontractors to undertake your domestic chores” (Johnson and Lloyd, 2004: 2).

that revolves *outside* home. “Rita Felski argues “The vocabulary of modernity is a vocabulary of anti-home” (Felski in Johnson and Lloyd, 2004: 15).

However, escaping domesticity and embracing the “anti-home” through the practice of “going out” is not geared towards being immersed in the public but rather towards positioning themselves as a member of a social circle. Similarly for young affluent male heads of households the practice of going out to segregated places is geared towards sending a message, the site of the outing is a stage set, a runway from which to send/launch this message.; exhibiting oneself is an activity geared at sending out a message about the state one is in. In some instances going out with a person is a way in which to declare to the public a relationship which by the fact of declaring it becomes more intimate. In other instances going out and exhibiting oneself in public is a way to counter gossip for example about economic grievances. As such, what is important about the outing is not so much the activity itself, but rather the audience that the site of the outing is capable of attracting. The objective of the outing is to access the audience. Successful sites of outings therefore enable the “correct” audience to form and enable visitors to be exposed to such an audience. In essence, what is supplied at the site of outing is the “correct” audience, the nature and quality of service that the site of the outing supplies is secondary. At the site of the outing the visitors alternate between being on stage and being part of the audience. The purpose of some outings is to be part of this audience.

This need to be in touch with a selective audience must be linked to the particular context of Lebanon where reputation is symbolic capital and where securing access to information is key. Access to information is in turn linked to one’s network with significant gatekeepers. As such going out is geared towards confirming status through aggregation and social networking is geared towards maintaining class belonging. 53% of the questionnaire respondents strongly agreed that “socializing is a mean to get access to information regarding business opportunities, job opportunities etc...), less than 5% disagreed to this statement. It is within this context that segregation is significant. Segregation enables filtering visitors so that the make-up of the audience is controlled.

From our discussion in the previous section I conclude that the underlying logic for the type of segregation described is part of a strategy exercised to attain linkage to a “largely invisible [social and spatial] network” (Caldeira, 2000). In other words, detachment in the places of concentration is not a self-serving phenomenon but rather part of a process that serves to link affluent individuals to other selected individuals that are dispersed throughout the spatial fabric of the city of Beirut. Indeed, 76% of the questionnaire respondents fully agreed that

Lebanon is a small country you are likely to meet the same people wherever you go". Majed conceives of his circle of friends as quite large but feels this network is not expanding. "You meet the same people everywhere you go". This is so because young affluent heads of households go to the same places over and over again to the point at which the faces in these places become quite familiar and the places become neighbourly. We have seen in the previous chapter how the neighbourhood ceases to be part of the everyday life living space of young affluent heads of households. In this chapter I have argued that for young affluent heads of households the whole city paradoxically has become a small neighbourly place where everyone knows everyone else.

In the next chapter we will see how the *networking* of these sites of concentration via private mobile spaces creates a segregated and networked spatiality of affluence that spans over the totality of the city. It is this weaving of dispersed segregated spaces that can be read as a layer.

## Chapter 9. **Affluence and the places of passage in Beirut, privatizing mobile space achieve a continuum of segregation**

Segregation remains sporadic, if it is merely experienced in the “territories” and “objectives”. Thus, to achieve consistency in the experience of segregation young affluent heads of households seek to *sustain* social distance. This is done by extending the condition of segregation beyond both the static “territories” and “objectives” to include the space of passage in between. This space is experienced in mobility; I term it “mobile space”.

In this chapter, I focus on the space of passage, the “C” in the T-C-O continuum. Of main concern here is the tactics used by young affluent heads of households to enclose and privatise mobile space. The following findings are based mainly on my participant observation of my case studies as they manoeuvred throughout the city and on observation of the behaviour of affluent people as they move in the city.

In the first section I explain the use by young affluent heads of households of the private car as the predominant mode of travel in Beirut as a conscious tactic to privatize mobile space and to censure their exposure to public space.

Second, I discuss the tactics that young affluent heads of households use to foster this privatization of mobile space. These tactics include among others the recurring use of familiar routes, the use of valet parking services and an increasing tendency to hire drivers.

Third, I identify what I term “hinge spaces”. Hinge spaces are the transition spaces that connect the *privatized* domain of the car to the *private* domain of the “territories” or the *concealed* domain of “objectives”.

Fourth, I conclude that privatized mobile space enables (1) the networking of geographically dispersed space into a consistent and continuous spatiality of segregation and (2) the weaving of dispersed places to become part of the everyday life worlds of young affluent heads of households. This consistent and continuous spatiality of segregation that weaves together dispersed places can be conceived of as a layer. As a result of this particular spatiality young

affluent heads of households are able to engage in practices of sociability despite non-proximity.

### 9.1. ***The primacy in the use of the private car as a mode of transport***

The space in between private “territories” and concealed “objectives” is a space of passage experienced in mobility; I term it “mobile space”. When being immersed in “mobile space” the purpose is to reach the sanctuary of either the “territories” or the “objectives”. In the context of Beirut, “mobile space” travels in a road network that remains by large inexcludable and hence open to the public. Indeed, even though it is common practice for political elites to have roads temporarily privatised to enable their un-eased and secure flow through the city<sup>129</sup>, this assault on the road network is not sustainable over longer periods of time and remains at best an intermittent activity. So the question that we need to address is the following, how do young affluent heads of households *immunize* mobile space in order to shield themselves against undesired encounters particularly in the absence of the capacity to control the context of this mobile space? In other words what tactic do young affluent heads of households use to enclose mobile space in order to censure their exposure to public space? How is mobile space privatized?

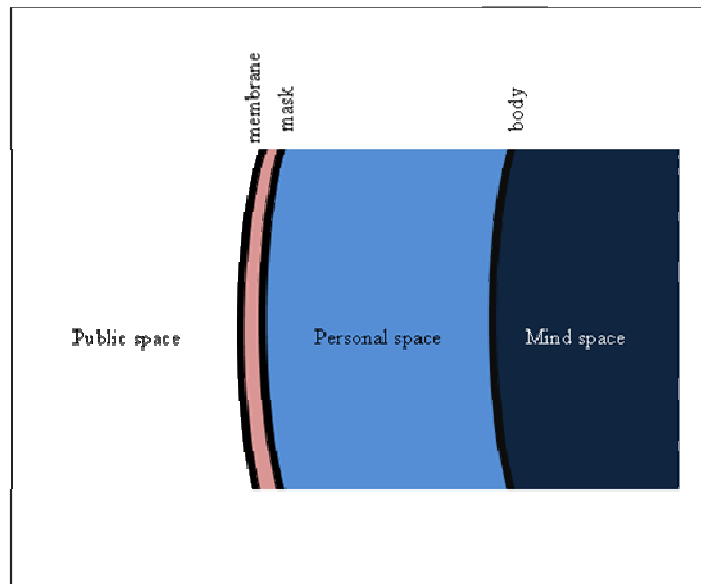


Figure 15 Spatial hierarchy of interaction on the road

<sup>129</sup> This is done by either closing off certain streets temporarily for public use or through travelling with a convoy of security personnel that dangle from the moving vehicles and shout the streets into obedience- “Gehorsam”.

The main tactic that young affluent heads of households use to privatize mobile space is the dependence on the use of the private car as the predominant mode of travel to reach even the shortest distances. 90% of questionnaire respondents indicated that they use the car to reach even the shortest of distances.

The sidewalk of the street is a place to be avoided; indeed walking on the sidewalk of the street is an activity that young affluent heads of household seek to minimize. The only place that Layla is willing to walk in is Faqra or Solidere. “It’s a shame what *they* did to Solidere” (Layla). “We lost this precious place because of this stupid sit-in, couldn’t they have chosen a more remote place to do the sit-in<sup>130</sup>?” (Nahla) Participant observation point to the same findings as the observations of the behaviour of affluent people at the airport waiting hall and other non-places, clearly young affluent heads of household felt misplaced on the sidewalk.

*We walked from the car to the coffee shop slaloming in-between parked cars that obstructed the pedestrian area of the sidewalk; we managed to manoeuvre our way through litter and garbage. Nahla’s high heels looked odd on the dusty and broken surface of the pavement tiles, her manicured and propped up look in stark contrast to the rugged terrain. As we were walking in the street we were followed by the gaze of people passing by in their cars. A number of serveece<sup>131</sup> drivers honked asking whether we requested a ride in their car, Nahla ignored these questions and just walked straight through. Nahla and me did not talk while we were walking she just signalled to me with a hand sign where the coffee shop is located. The street was loud, the sound of horns the sound of construction site nearby. We passed by a number of other pedestrians that were walking on our side of the sidewalk, the contrast between us and them was like the contrast between Nahla’s high heels and the sidewalk*

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<sup>130</sup> In 2006, the opposition movement performed a sit-in on one of the main parking lots of the Solidere area. The sit-in lasted months and crippled the restaurant industry of the Solidere area. Its unpopularity among affluent individuals interviewed in this research was less related to political reasons and more to the fact that it occupied “our” space. Viewed as such, the sit-in can be also explained as a counteract on the “revanchist urbanism” (Smith, 1996) of the previous period.

<sup>131</sup> The *serveece* (with an accentuated “ee” sound as it is termed in local Lebanese) is a low-cost share taxi service available in Lebanon. Known in the transportation literature as the jitney, this mode of transport is in-between private transport and conventional bus transport. The service taxi has usually a fixed or semi-fixed route. It can stop anywhere to pick or drop passengers. It does not have a fixed time schedule. It does not operate a meter, and the price of the ride is almost always fixed. The service taxis are owned privately, usually by the drivers who have a special license to operate them, denoted by the red-color of the license plate. ... They an anarchic operating style, lacking central control or organization. The vehicles range from 4 seater cars to minibuses. In many countries they create problems that are due to the ways in which they are driven and the conditions of their almost always old, polluting and often dangerous vehicles For more info see AIDour (2005).

*surface. A sweaty construction worker a middle aged lady carrying grocery bags are scenes that contrast to the imagery of space that Nahla usually frequents. It was only when we arrived at the coffee shop after our 2 minutes walk that Nahla spoke again. We bought our coffee at the counter selected a table and sat down to drink our coffee. The sign of relief in Nahlas' face was quite obvious.*

*The walk to the school was a hurried walk. Nahla carried her daughter part of the walk in order to minimize the time spent on the Hamra sidewalk. Nahla's facial expressions, her gaze along the passersby's was clearly different than her gaze and expressions when she entered the mall. Her walk to the ballet school was purposeful, she did not look left or right and was not searching for a familiar face to greet, and indeed it seemed she wanted to avoid seeing any passersby. When we arrived at the first floor of the office building in which the ballet school is located there was clear sign of relief at Nahla's face. She complained to me (a bit apologetically) that it is so loud on the street you cannot really talk. We left the school back to the car. It was only when we arrived at the car that Nahla started talking again.*

Madanipour conceives of the car as “the ultimate portable territory” (Madanipour, 2003: 33). “As we sit inside a box moving across the urban space, we carry around with us a personal space. The inside of this box is visible to others, but it is not often *accessible* to them. The car is the private domain of its passengers.” (Ibid, emphasis added) Sheller and Urry suggest that the car is “Weber’s ‘iron cage’ of modernity, motorized, moving and privatized. (Sheller and Urry, 2000: 744) “The car is privacy, a place to be alone, as a mobile flat, a place where your children can misbehave without embarrassing you and themselves in public, you can pick and choose your companions; the car waits for you; waiting at the bus stop is far less comfortable than sitting in traffic jams ” (Hamilton and Hoyle in Allen, Massey and Pryke ed. , 1999: 76).

Although the private car is a privately owned commodity, the space inside the car is not legally private in the context of Lebanon. For example intimacy or sexual activity between married couples is legally banned inside the space of cars. As such Thrift’s description of the car as “a rolling private-in-public space”, “a moving private capsule” (Thrift, 2004: 46) is not entirely correct in the context of Lebanon. It is private by practice rather than by definition. Hence, it is rather a *privatized* moving capsule which enables its user to be escorted by a mobile membrane that protects against encounter; however there are restrictions to the operation of this membrane. For example, beggar kids forcefully opening the door of a private car are considered rude but they are not breaking the law and they are not considered as



breaking in as they would if they would forcefully open the entrance door of a flat. In addition, the law does not permit a complete visual seal of the space of the car. Hence, in the face of these limitations on the capacity of the membrane to conceal, the mask fosters the role of the membrane, many times becoming one with it. As such, dressing up, putting on the sun glasses, having an appropriate hairdo are all tactics used to induce what is deemed appropriate behaviour from guards, security personnel, parking lot managers, traffic police and so on.

Particularly the use of large cars, Sports Utility Vehicles (SUV's) boosts the sense of concealment for passengers and drivers from the publicness of the roads. SUV's not only function as an image of expensive and upscale status symbols, but also as a show of muscle power that intimidates other drivers or passerbys. This helps explain the coming in fashion of bright yellow military vehicles (Hum-Vee)<sup>132</sup> on the streets of post-war Beirut.<sup>133</sup>

*Camille bought her SUV shortly after she delivered her first child. "We needed more space and our frequency and time spent in the car increased. Sometimes I think of it as our living room. The kids have their TV screens in the back. It is important to have an overview of the traffic. I don't like to be looked down to by other drivers. My bigger car gives me an advantage over other cars and allows me to overlook other cars."*

*Jana and Kareems's GM is a "dabebe", a military tank, in the words of Jana. "I can only recommend it. It facilitates our journeys along the winding and snowy roads to Faqra...In Beirut I can maneuver around traffic much better, sometimes when the traffic gets to a standstill I can climb on top of the sidewalk to evade the traffic or make a turn. It is a robust car and gives me flexibility while driving in Beirut.... Parking is not an issue, there is valet parking everywhere."*

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<sup>132</sup> In 1991, AM General began selling a civilian version of the M998 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV or Hum-Vee) to the public under the brand name Hummer. California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was the first private citizen to own a Hummer and continues to own several. Source (<http://www.answers.com> accessed on April, 2006)

<sup>133</sup> "Buyers in Lebanon are continuing to buy General Motors (GM) vehicles in increasing numbers, according to figures released today...The GMC brand registered a triple digit growth in Lebanon, with 168% more vehicles sold than in the same period last year. This huge increase was mainly driven by the continuing popularity of the new Acadia luxury Crossover SUV, which recorded growth in sales of 261%. ... General Motors Premium Brands - Cadillac, HUMMER and Saab – more than doubled sales with growth registered at 112%." (source [http://news.infibeam.com/blog/news/2008/07/21/outstanding\\_154\\_increase\\_in\\_gms\\_sales\\_in\\_lebanon\\_during\\_first\\_half\\_of\\_2008.html](http://news.infibeam.com/blog/news/2008/07/21/outstanding_154_increase_in_gms_sales_in_lebanon_during_first_half_of_2008.html) accessed in March, 2008)

*Rim and Zein noted that although their other car is equally respectable looking, the advantage of their SUV is that it looks more intimidating and as a result it can impose more respect from other drivers and particuallry the traffic police.*

While the added space that SUV's provide was mentioned as a determinant in the choice of the SUV as the family car, the popularity of the SUV as the family car which the mother drives seems to stem mostly from the "masculine appeal of the SUV" (Jain, 2002) and not from this added space. Adopting this masculine appeal is a symbol of emancipation for these women as it denotes their capacity to manage and maneuver the roads and traffic of Beirut. Jain (2002) makes a similar observation in the context of the US.

"The 'masculine' appeal of the SUV has attracted especially professional mothers, as they cultivate a high-achieving public persona in the workplace, while the more familial aspects of the SUV (room for the shopping, the children's friends and equipment, the cup-holders and the video consoles) enable them to maintain a more caring 'feminine' side, both roles being overdetermined by prevalent gender inequalities ... the SUV has been marketed as a vehicle that can uniquely fuse the hitherto 'uncool' aspects of family life with the hipness of the outdoor adventure. . . . But this nexus of marketing and consumption also has a history in women's responsibility for the family's safety and men's idealization of the car as a means of escape and a tool for identity. . . . The privatization of this [typical] family project as one reproduced through consumption is also seen in an understanding of 'safety' that relies on chauffeuring children as much as 'winning' in potential car accidents. (Jain, 2002: 398)

## **9.2. *The tactics: Recurring routes, drivers and domesticizing the car***

The case studies that I observed during their everyday travel in this research utilized a number of tactics to ensure that they move around in the city in a way that keeps their degree of exposure to the public consistent. These 'tactics' of everyday life [mobility]" (Certeau, 1984) include the recurring use of particular routes, the increasing dependence on drivers and the practice of domestsizing the space inside the car.

The recurring streets used are mainly wide streets. Side streets were avoided even if these streets were short cuts. The case studies that were observed in this research used different

streets, depending on where they lived and the destinations they were traveling to, however, a common practice among these case studies is the use of major roads, particularly as they moved further away from their territories. Even though they travelled to certain parts of town recurringly they do not venture out of the main road and they do not know the local side streets even if these streets are in proximity to the objectives that they travel to on a daily basis.

*Nahed lives in the Zareef area. She buys her groceries from the Monoprix supermarket in Jnah and she drives there every other day, sometimes even daily. She always uses the same route to get there. She does not know the side streets around the Monoprix. She got lost there once as she was driving her daughter to visit a friend from school.*

*Jana lives in Achrafiyye'. She frequently goes out to dine in the Verdun area. During one of the get-togethers she met Zeina whom she did not know previous to this get-together. Zeina lives in Tallet El-Khayyat which is just a few hundred meters away from the Verdun area. As the mutual placement of Jana and Zeina was taking place, neither Jana could exactly locate Zeina's residence in Tallet EL-Khayyat nor was Zeina able to locate Jana's residence. It is clear that neither Jana nor Zeina venture into the side streets of the Verdun or the Achrafiyye' area, respectively, even though these areas are spaces that they visit for leisure purposes on a regular basis.*

The style of driving is particularly shrewd and there seems to be always a way of negotiating and violating the traffic code. For example, a one-way street is not necessarily exclusively one-way, a red light is not necessarily respected particularly in the absence of a traffic policeman who might fine violations. It must be noted though that the violation of the traffic code is not peculiar to affluent drivers but rather a general condition on the streets of Beirut. Chaotic traffic conditions provides an added incentive for the purchase of an SUV, as this type of vehicle imposes respect on other shrewd drivers that might be intimidated by the size of the SUV and the affluent symbolism that it is associated with.

“Few Lebanese normally bother with seat belts or crash helmets. Speeding with a mobile phone glued to your ear or an infant in your lap comes naturally. Double or triple parking is the norm, lane discipline an alien concept and right of way determined by who gets there first or who drives a bigger vehicle. Scooters fizz everywhere, a law unto themselves... one-way signs are just part of the urban décor (source

<http://blogs.reuters.com/global/2008/12/01/no-mercy-for-beirut-traffic-offender/> accessed February, 2009)

In the context of increased traffic volume, dominated by a fleet of lower income service taxi drivers, the use of private drivers/ chauffeurs also fosters the sense of privatization of mobile space for young affluent heads of households. “Passengering” (Thrift, 2004: 46) is a tactic used to evade the experience of embodying the car. “The sensual vehicle of the driver’s action is fundamentally different from that of the passenger’s, because the driver, as part of the praxis of driving, dwells in the car, feeling the bumps on the road as contacts with his or her body not as assaults on the tires, swaying around curves as if the shifting of his or her weight will make a difference in the car’s trajectory, loosening and tightening the grip on the steering wheel as a way of interacting with other cars” (Katz, 2000: 32). “Drivers experience cars as extensions of their bodies. Hence their outrage on becoming the subject of adverse driving manoeuvres by other drivers: their tacit automobilized embodiment is cut away from them and they are left ‘without any persona with which one can relate respectably to others’” (Ibid: 46). As such, embodying the car and the resultant engagement in traffic dialogue with other drivers is outsourced to the chauffeur. The chauffeurs of all case studies are male and of Lebanese nationality. This is so, because in the words of one my case studies, “he needs to be experienced in the way things are handled in Lebanon, for example knowing where and how to park the car. He needs to be able to handle emergency situations such as a road accident or a breakdown of the car. In such situations one is entirely dependent on the chauffeur and the chauffeur must have the know-how and capacity to act properly” (Nahed). The chauffeur must also induce respect to the public. He is the broker between the public and his employer. The fact that he must be Lebanese points to the fact that he must be knowledgeable of local culture. The duties of the chauffeur also include ensuring if not a seamless, but nevertheless a smooth continuity of segregation by dropping off and picking-up his employers at the closest point to the gate. Chauffeurs usually carry cellular phones and wait at a comfortably close distance for their employers’ call, or, rather missed call to save on wasted expenditure.

*Spending a substantial amount of time while looking for an empty parking space in the parking of the mall, Layla noted that she is considering to hire her own driver, so far she has used the driver of her mother to outsource driving on certain occasions. Crowding and competition in the consumption of parking space is leading Layla to such a decision.*

The case studies observed, spent on average around 2.5 hours<sup>134</sup> per day in the car on a regular day. Souraya mentioned that she spends more time in the car than at home. The amount of time spent in the car is mainly due to the fact that the streets in Beirut are frequently blocked by heavy traffic. This means that the car is frequently in slow motion or stationary. Hooks (1991) claims that for richer households of the 'west', 'home is no longer one place. It is locations' (Hooks in Urry, 2002: 258). I argue that for young affluent heads of households in the context of Beirut, these locations include the car.

Domesticizing the space inside the car to foster the "feeling of being as if at home in the living room in the car" (Camille) is a practice that is more accentuated by women than men. This is so because the space of the car is frequently used by children accompanying women. These practices include the increasing tendency for the car to become a place for being entertained, of communicating, of eating and for the kids to take a nap.

*Layla's kids play Nintendo in the car, they watch DVD's. The nanny rides in the back of the car and takes care of the kids. Snacks are always available for the kids to eat while on the road. The cell phone is always there and Layla frequently communicates with family and friends while on the road. It seemed that the car is a mobile family room.*

*Sami keeps his perfume and antibacterial wetwipes inside the car. When he returns to the car after a visit to the objectives, he frequently wipes his hands. He communicates with friends and family via his hands free mobile phone. In the background the radio is always tuned in for the latest news.*

### 9.3. **Hinge space**

"The car enables *seamless* journeys from home-away-home. ... the *seamlessness* of car journey makes other modes of travel inflexible and fragmented... the gaps... walking from one's house to the bus stop, waiting at the bus stop.... Walking through a strange street to the office... These structural holes' in semi-public space are sources of inconvenience, danger and uncertainty" (Sheller and Urry, 2000: 745 emphasis added).

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<sup>134</sup>During 7 full days spent with the case studies, I kept track of the amount of time we spent in the car. The average is calculated based on the observation of these 7 full days. Unfortunately I did not keep track of the number of kilometres travelled.

Hinge-space is the seam that connects the privatised domain of the car to the private domain of the “territories” or the concealed domain of “objectives”. The identification of hinge space is a further fine-graining of the constituent elements of the layer. Thus the continuum which I have hitherto referred to as T-C-O, becomes T-h-C-h-O (where “h” refers to hinge space). Refer to

Figure 16.

Hinge space is a sensitive transitory point. Hinge-space that ensures smooth transitions provides recessed drop-off points and shielded car parking directly connected to the facility in question. This explains why there is an increasing tendency for businesses that are frequented by young affluent heads of households to supply valet parking services. As the streets of Beirut are crowded and on street car parking space is scarce, valet parking enables young affluent heads of households to leave the privatised domain of the car as close as possible to the concealed domain of the facility they are visiting. This means that valet parking enables to minimize hinge space.

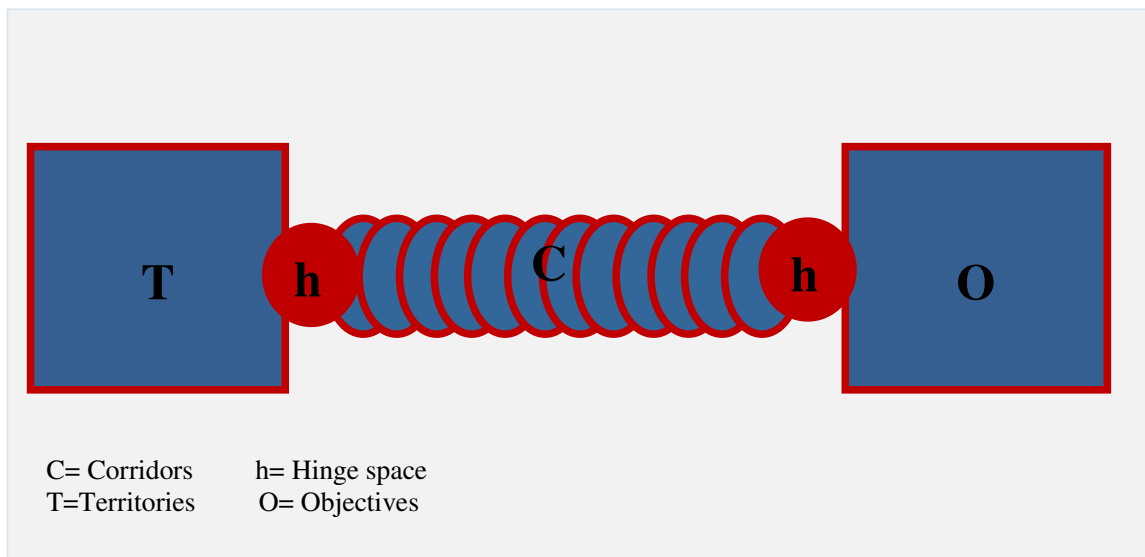


Figure 16 Hinge space

Restaurants located in the Beirut downtown pedestrian area offer valet parking services at the entrance to the pedestrian area of the downtown area. At these various entrances, men wearing T-shirts or caps onto which the name of the restaurant at which they work is printed wait for cars to stop and their drivers to signal that they want to use their parking service.

Although parking space is available outside this pedestrian area. The walk from the door of the car to the entrance of the pedestrian area is a “structural hole” (Sheller and Urry, 2000: 745) that tears into the consistency of the experience of concealment. Valet parking service mends this “hole” by minimizing hinge space.

*Gilbert stopped the car right at Riad El-Solh street one of the entrances to the pedestrian area of Solidere, Several young men approached our car. Gilbert pressed the button to open the window of the car and called out the name of the restaurant that we were going to. The men shouted the name of the restaurant to a guy a few meters away from our car. A few seconds passed before this guy wearing a T-shirt on which the name of our restaurant is printed hurried to our car. Behind our car traffic was building up. Gilbert and Sourayya were disinterested and clearly they did not feel any sense of urgency to free the traffic until the valet parker arrived to take the car. It was only then that Gilbert signalled to Sourayya and me that we can leave the car. The valet parking guy greeted Gilbert and gave him a number. Our car was now clearly blocking the traffic and the sound of horns building up to a chorus behind us was getting louder and angrier. Particularly the taxi driver whose car was just behind our car was not pleased. We exited the car and the valet parker exchanged a few rough comments with the unnerved taxi driver waiting just behind our car and then swiftly drove away with the car. Although the taxi driver’s comments were directed at us, Gilbert and Souraya did not feel concerned or alarmed. And we simply walked off to the pedestrian area of Soldiere where the second interval of our outing began.*

In the absence of ample space for parking at an acceptable distance from one of Mc Donald’s branches in Beirut, namely the Bliss branch, Mc Donald’s offers valet parking to its consumers, interestingly one of the few if not only McDonald’s restaurants in the world at the time to offer this service.

However, if the dip into the public realm cannot be avoided, the task becomes how to mask or eclipse its experience. While waiting for pick-up at drop-off points, young affluent heads of households hurry to use their cell-phones to portray an image of being busy and dis-engaged. In some instances sunglasses are used to filter the incoming scenery, in other instances headphones connected to I-pods cut off the incoming noise of the public.

#### 9.4. ***Conclusion: Mobility as detachment and as connectivity***

The car as an object mediates between privatized space of the inside of the car and public space outside through the physical barrier that its metal casing provides and through the speed barrier, which its mobility enables. “The speed at which the car must be driven constrains the driver to always keep moving. Dwelling at speed, drivers lose the ability to perceive local detail, to talk to strangers, to learn of local ways of life, to stop and sense the particularity of place.... The sights, sounds, tastes, temperatures and smells of public spaces are reduced to the two-dimensional view through the car windscreen. The public world beyond the windscreen is an alien other, to be kept at bay through the diverse privatizing technologies incorporated within the contemporary car. Thus people remain inside their cars, while the ‘coming together of private citizens in public space’ is lost to a privatization of the mechanized self moving through the emptied non-places of public roads” (Augé, 1995). “The public road is then sometimes carpeted by private boxes... the personal space of the pedestrian was a small space around the body, which was now enlarged to the moving glass and metal box of the car. The possibility of communication and sharing of personal space, as it can happen in a face-to-face meeting, is thus reduced to communication from across the boxes can mainly be visual” (Madanipour, 2003: 34).

Hence, by enabling the privatization of mobile space, the car replaces the encounter with public space with the exposure to short glimpses of it experienced in mobility; an inverse voyeurism in which the voyeur sheltered in his “moving private capsule” (Thrift, 2004) watches the practices of people as they are set in public spaces. “[The car] allows its passengers a safe distance from others while going through a cinematic experience: a visual contact with passing scenes. Where the viewer can remain detached from the unfolding story” (Madanipour, 2003: 34). “[T]he driver is concerned only with steering himself to his destination, and in looking about sees only what he needs to see for that purpose, he thus perceives only his route, which has been materialized, mechanized, and technicised and he sees it only from one angle- that of its functionality: speed, readability, facility” (Lefebvre, 1991: 312-13).

However while “driving a car is ‘a way to *feel* social without having to be social’ (Kuipers, in Madanipour 2003, emphasis added) and while mobility in the private car induces and fosters detachment, this type of mobility is also a corporeal type of travel that induces occasional corporal encounter. The resultant “intermittent moments of *physical proximity* to particular



peoples, places or events” (Urry, 2002: 258) fosters a sociability between people that reside geographically distant from each other.

In addition, “the ‘structure of auto space’ (Freund, 1993) forces people to orchestrate in complex and heterogeneous ways their mobilities and socialities across very significant distances. The urban environment built for the convenience of the car has ‘unbanded’ those territorialities of home, work, business and leisure that have historically been closely integrated (Sassen, 1996)” (Sheller and Urry, 2000: 744).

Privatised mobile space thus creates “corridors” (Atkinson and Flint, 2004) for young affluent heads of households to connect private and concealed places that are dispersed in the city through “tunnel effects” (Graham and Marvin, 2001). This networking constantly groups and regroups dispersed places together, geographically interweaving spaces together by docking mobile membranes at static spaces of concealment or privacy and fusing the experience of concealment. It is the space formed out of this geographic “interwoven-ness” and connectivity that this research conceives of as a layer.

This dialectic of simultaneous geographic “interwoven-ness” and spatial “detachment” can be captured through my concept of the layer which is capable of expressing the seemingly contradictory yet simultaneous spatial conditions of affluent individuals, namely, their geographic dispersal, their spatial and social detachment from their immediate locality and their spatial and social connectivity to dispersed groups.

Privatising mobile space is a tactic to create “tunnel effects” (Graham and Marvin, 2001) or “corridors” (Atkinson and Flint, 2004) through which private territories and concealed objectives are connected. As such, an ensemble of territories, objectives and corridors works together to produce an infrastructure of segregation that seeps through the totality of the city rather than being restricted to a certain locality only. Privatizing mobile space sustains consistency and continuity in the experience of the spaces of concealment. This infrastructure of segregation is superimposed onto the city in the form of a layer, a spatial variant of Engels’ (1845) Manchester. If the walker that Engels described, avoided the squalor and decay of the city “as long as he confine[d] himself to his business or to pleasure walks”<sup>135</sup> (Engels, 1845), our affluent walker is capable of strolling through the totality of the city and even residing in the midst of squalor without ever coming in contact with it.

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<sup>135</sup> “The town itself is peculiarly built so that a person may live in it for years and go in and out daily without coming in contact with a working-people’s quarter or even with workers; that is as long as he confines himself to his business or to pleasure walks” (Engels, 1845).



## Chapter 10. Conclusion

By showing how spatial segregation is not always a neat static physical condition, but often rather a messy dynamic process encompassing numerous and various practices and having context-specific logics, this research has made important contributions to the study of spatial segregation in general and to the investigation of spatial segregation in the particular context of Beirut.

In this final chapter I present the conclusions of this research. In the first section I show how the concept of the layer as developed in this research is a contribution to the study of spatial segregation. In the second section, I discuss the specificity of the concept of the layer as applied onto the specific context of the post-war city of Beirut, namely, the persistence of residential socioeconomic heterogeneity related to the continuing function of the local context of the home as *sectarian* sanctuary if needed be. It is perhaps this specificity that accentuates the search for segregation by young affluent heads of households in Beirut. Indeed, in the third section, I explain the logic of this segregation as a search for conditional proximity and concentration-induced advantages. In the fourth section I present the conclusion that during the post-war period Beirut was transformed from a city divided by religious association into a city in which segregation by status is superimposed on top of the divided city. The result is the layered city. The conception of Beirut as a layered city raises questions related to the residualized role of neighbourhoods in Beirut and the changing nature of its urban condition. In the fifth section I discuss the policy relevance of this research. Finally in the sixth section I suggest where future research might go from where this work leaves off.

### 10.1. ***The concept of the layer as a contribution to the study of spatial segregation***

As mentioned at the very beginning in the introduction of this thesis, the findings of this research do not provide a general formula that describes how *the* affluent appropriates *the* city. Yet by developing the layer as a concept that captures a continuum of segregation that I have referred to as T-C-O, I believe that I have developed a concept that can be utilized in contexts

other than Beirut as well. Hence, this research has made important contributions to the study of spatial segregation.

The concept of the layer untangles *exposure* from *proximity* and insists that there is no necessary causal relationship between what White (1987) calls “geographical segregation” and “sociological segregation”. This has important consequences on methodology.

First, it makes a case for extending the investigation of spatial segregation beyond its residential manifestations. In other words *spatial* segregation is not only *residential* segregation, but rather also segregation in the places of play, study and work and the places of passage.

Second, such a perspective makes a case against the study of spatial segregation based on the relative proportions of social groups *residing* within selected geographic parcels, extracting from this proportion the degree of likelihood or unlikelihood that minority groups are going to come in contact with majority groups. Rather the study of spatial segregation must include identifying the tactics used by affluent individuals to achieve segregation. It is these tactics that enable affluent individuals to achieve isolation (lack of social and physical/spatial exposure) despite their geographic proximity to other groups. The concept of the layer that this research has utilized captures this dynamic process of spatial segregation and organizes the messy elements that contribute to it and the different practices involved.

Third, such a perspective highlights the importance of including the space of passage in the study of spatial segregation in cities, the “C” in the T-C-O continuum. The strength of the concept of the layer is that it argues that by viewing different spaces in the city as a totality woven by a privatized space of passage it is possible to conceive of segregation practiced in different parts of the city as a continuum of segregation and as such as a spatiality distinguished from the city proper...as a layer in which the rest of the city and the rest of its inhabitants are dimmed out of existence. The city becomes reduced to T-C-O.

*Therefore, the concept of the layer is useful as a perspective and methodology for the study of spatial segregation wherever it could be found and irrespective of the affluence of the individuals practicing it. Particularly, in the context of third world cities Sao Paulo, Managua, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg, but also the emerging cities of the Arabian Gulf, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha to mention but a few, cities with chaotic urbanisms and an “international capitalists class” (Sklair, 2002) that needs to remain in the city but does not want to accommodate its comfort. In many emerging cities we witness an attempt to compress*

this T-C-O continuum and its commodify it in the form of “totalizing” (Marcuse, 1997) gated communities.

## 10.2. ***The context specificity of the layer as applied onto Beirut: the residential element***

The specificity of the concept of the layer as it is applied on the case of young affluent heads of households in Beirut is that these individuals remain anchored *residentially* in their respective sectarian enclaves. The “T” in the T-C-O continuum is slippery at times of insecurity. This is so because *sectarian*-based loyalties and insecurities persist in Beirut. At times of insecurity, young affluent heads of households open up to the local contexts of their residences.

In Chapter 7 I have shown that the rejection by young affluent heads of households of local social contact in their residential neighbourhoods at times of security can be linked to three main reasons, first, the desire to expand their social network beyond the local, second, the rejection of the practice of neighbouring as a gendered cultural practice that is outmoded and third the urge to break away from the social restrictions and control that neighbourhood imposes. I have shown that for young affluent heads of households residential proximity does not automatically yield exposure and that as such residential propinquity is not a necessary push factor for engaging these people with the communities that they reside amidst. On the contrary residential proximity yields a desire for social exclusion. These social exclusion practices are synonymous with the rejection of cultural practices of lower income groups. This is so because these sectarian enclaves are *heterogeneous socioeconomically*. Social exclusion is practiced in the form of *spatial* detachment from the localized context of which affluent individuals seek to *socially* disengage from.

My first hypothesis, namely that affluent individuals in the city of Beirut *detach* themselves socially and spatially from the immediate localized contexts of their residences (and other functions), therefore is proven as valid in times of security. However, this hypothesis is not valid as the security condition changes. A surprising finding of this research has been that, it is the *lack* of security and the resultant exceptional circumstances that prompts young affluent heads of households to engage back with the sectarian communities residing in the localized contexts of their homes. In other words, young affluent heads of households desire social *exclusion* from members of lower income groups residing in proximity at times of security

and social *inclusion* to members of the same sectarian group residing in proximity at times of insecurity.

Defined as a place of safety “where animals *live* and are protected [by their sheer presence within the herd]”, sanctuary in Beirut at times of insecurity continues to be anchored and sought in sectarian- based interest communities. At times of security, the notion of safety changes and takes on a class-interest based definition. As the notion of safety changes, the enemy changes and the nature of the herd that is capable of providing safety changes. Hence, young affluent heads of households seek a variety of sanctuaries. At times of security residential sanctuary and everyday life sanctuary are very different.

Within this context, the neighbourhood ceases to be the locus of everyday life worlds for affluent individuals and becomes *residualized* to lesser income groups. As newly formed affluent households moved into their respective sectarian place of town, and the relative calm of the period these households felt a need and a possibility to form new solidarities that are not territorially based. It became possible for them to reinforce networks forged in schools, universities, workplace in other areas of sociability and to expand their social network beyond the confines of the social networks attributed to their sectarian association. This search to expand the social network and interact with members of their class beyond the confines of the sectarian community signals a weakening barrier of association across sectarian lines and a the awakening of a pan-sectarian class consciousness, in other words, an outweighing of non-place related class interest over sectarian interest that are place related and anchored. This helps explain why neighbourliness and the practice of neighbouring grew out of fashion in the post-war era. As affluent individuals seek social and spatial detachment from the localized contexts of their home “locally based social [and spatial] interaction” (Forrest and Kennett, 2006: 715) decreases and the neighborhood is no longer “living space”. For young affluent heads of households the neighborhood is transformed from a condition of “*dwelling* in nearness” (Casey, 1997) to a condition of *residing* in nearness. Simultaneously nearness is sought in places that are distinct from the localized context of the home.

*I conclude, therefore, that this condition of fluctuating residential embeddedness and dis-embeddedness of young affluent heads of households in the city of Beirut points to a moment of change in the history of the evolution of the city of Beirut, a moment in which a particular profile of city residents begins to build non-territorially based ties and solidarities but is yet insecure to break away completely from its territorially based sectarian back-up solidarities and securities. The city of Beirut today features a condition in which a persistent sectarian*

*residential clustering is sustained in parallel to the quest of young affluent heads of households to connect socially and spatially to their class-based interest community.*

### 10.3. ***The logic of the spatiality of segregation in Beirut: the search for conditional proximity and concentration-induced advantages***

In Chapter 8, I have shown that for young affluent heads of households escaping domesticity and embracing the “anti-home” through the practice of “going out” is geared towards positioning themselves as a member of a social circle rather than being geared towards being immersed in the public.

I have shown in this research that although spatial segregation practices enable affluent individuals to exclude themselves socially from the immediate localized contexts of their activities, what is perhaps of particular significance though is that these practices simultaneously work to fasten the connection of affluent individuals to their dispersed social network. Detachment in the places of concentration is not a self-serving phenomenon but rather part of a process that serves to link affluent individuals to other selected individuals that are dispersed throughout the spatial fabric of the city of Beirut. Indeed, 76% of the questionnaire respondents fully agreed that Lebanon is a small country you are likely to meet the same people wherever you go”. Majed conceives of his circle of friends as quite large but feels this network is not expanding. “You meet the same people everywhere you go”. This is so because young affluent heads of households go to the same places over and over again to the point at which the faces in these places become quite familiar and the places become neighbourly. I have concluded, therefore, that while the apparent logic of the layer is that of detachment, a parallel and more powerful logic of concentration exists. Indeed, the process might not be so much that of segregation but rather of aggregation.

As such the practice of going out to segregated places is geared towards sending a message, the site of the outing is a “front-stage” (Goffman, 1959), a runway from which to send/launch this message; exhibiting oneself is an activity geared at sending out a message about the state one is in. The objective of the outing is to access the audience. Successful sites of outings therefore enable the *correct* audience to form and enable visitors to be exposed to such an audience. In essence, what is supplied at the site of outing is the *correct* audience, the nature

and quality of service that the site of the outing supplies is secondary. At the site of the outing the visitors alternate between being on stage and being part of the audience.

The type of spatial segregation that affluent individuals practice yields two kinds of concentrations that can be experienced simultaneously, first, non-geographic concentration and second temporal concentration. While seemingly paradoxical, the term non-geographic concentration refers to a condition – aided by new technologies such as mobile phones and the internet – of a concentration induced by tightly knitting various homogenous spaces that are geographically scattered, a situation in which spaces belonging to different geographies are networked to create a space concentrated with a homogenous group. The term temporal concentration refers to concentration induced by a temporal geographic locality. This locality is usually, but not solely, restricted to the objectives. It is due to these types of concentrations that the social network that affluent individuals belong to can be conceived of as invisible, even though the individuals themselves and their spaces are quite visible

Concentration minimizes exposure to non-members and maximizes exposure to members. Massey argues that the geographic concentration of poverty and wealth results in diverging subcultures, heightened social tension and spatially induced advantages and disadvantages (Massey, 1996, emphasis added). Likewise, I argue that both non-geographic and temporal concentrations of affluent individuals also yield diverging subcultures and heightened social tension, however, the advantages and disadvantages are concentration- induced rather than spatially induced. Indeed, I am concerned here with the advantages that are concentration-induced. Understanding these advantages would enable us to understand why affluent individuals demand spatial segregation.

As such, the demand for spatial segregation is a demand for concentration-induced advantages. Spatial segregation is a strategy exercised to attain non-geographic and temporal concentrations, a strategy that aims to link to this ‘largely *invisible* network’ (Caldeira, 2000, p. 258, emphasis added). What are these advantages of concentration? There does not seem to be any economic efficiency or security advantages to this non-geographic and temporal concentration. On the contrary, the continued dispersal of affluent individuals limits their ability to join efforts, pool their needs and benefit from the economies of proximity. So if it is neither security nor economic efficiency that guides this demand for concentration, why do affluent individuals seek spatial segregation?

Veblen argues that status-seekers expose their ‘conspicuous consumption’ and leisure activities in order to affirm their status. By consuming wastefully, status seekers relay the



message that they can afford waste. Bourdieu (1979) argues that it is taste rather than waste. Whether waste or taste, for our purposes, what is important is that people engage in an act that aims to send messages about who they are. These messages, if delivered to the right audience, affirm the status of the messengers. I argue that concentration enables affluent individuals to target and deliver their messages, whether of waste or taste. In other words, concentration creates the desired audience.

As such, the continuum of segregation, which I have illustrated, functions as a medium for message delivery. The hotspots of this network are the ‘objectives’, the restaurants, cafe’s, malls, gyms, spas and boutiques in which the possession of status symbols is exhibited to a temporally concentrated audience. Seen as such, objectives are exhibition walkways. Status symbols are continuously revised as they filter down to lower-status groups. Objectives are also revised as, with time, concentration seems to reach a ceiling that tapers off. This helps explain why these places need to innovate periodically. The high turnover of restaurants and cafe’s in Beirut attests to this coming in and out of fashion.

The logic of this need to affirm status must be linked to the particular context of Lebanon. In Chapter 4, I have discussed how confessionalism, clientilism and the lack of the power of class transform citizenship rights into “relational rights (Joseph, 1994). Relational rights are conditional on the relationships one has with people who can secure access to resources and privileges.

Citizenship in Lebanon has entailed investing in relationships giving access. Citizens have practised and experienced their rights as a matter of knowing people upon whom they can make claims and who are located in critical places of access or who can link each other to critical places of access. This relational notion of rights is very different from that assumed in the classical liberal construct where rights inhere in the individualized person as parts of her or his membership - citizenship - in the political community” (Joseph, 1997: 86).

Therefore, to understand affluence in Beirut it is important to understand two things. First, in the particular context of Beirut clientilism, individualism and confessionalism curtail the political power of class and transform citizenship rights into “relational rights” (Joseph, 1994). Second, in such a context affluence- as command over surplus income, desire to spend it and desire to exhibit this expenditure.- is not an outcome or bi-product of the desire to disperse the surplus income generated by the production capacity of a class. Rather affluence in Beirut is an instrument utilized with the purpose of confirming status in order to access relationships that can mobilize power.

In other words, affluence is not practiced by an affluent *class* only with the purpose of distinguishing themselves from the honourable poor (Khuri, 1969), but rather affluence is a competitive exercise practiced in-between the affluent and serves the purpose of securing access to relationships. As such the practice of affluence is a mean to maintain the position among the affluent.

*I conclude therefore, the logic of this spatiality of segregation described in this research must be linked to the specificity of the condition affluence in the context of post-war Beirut, namely that in the context of post war Beirut affluence is divorced from the surplus production capacity of class and linked to status-confirmation and power production capacity of consumption and the notion of relational rights.*

#### 10.4. ***The development of Beirut from divided city to layered city***

This research has arrived at the following important findings. First, I have shown that in the particular context of post-war Beirut the security induced condition of fluctuating embeddedness and dis-embeddeness at the residential level reflects a desire of young affluent heads of households for (1) social *exclusion* from members of *lower income* groups at times of *security* and (2) social *inclusion* to members of their respective *sectarian* group at times of *insecurity*. It is the quest of sanctuary that guides the logic of the layer as a spatiality of segregation. At times of security sanctuary from alien *socio-cultural practices* is provided within the confines of the *affluent* herd, at times of insecurity sanctuary against real *security* threats are provided by the *sectarian* herd. Understanding the logic of the layer therefore entails understanding where threat is coming from and to which herd the seeker of the herd wants to belong and seek protection within its confines. This research has also shown that young affluent heads of households open up to their sectarian sanctuary at times of insecurity, it is perhaps this perception of a constant threat of insecurity that keeps affluent individuals residentially anchored in their sectarian part of town.

Second, I have shown that the demand for segregation at the places of play derives from the quest of young affluent heads of households for connectivity to their class-based interest community that remains residentially dispersed. Therefore segregation is practiced with the objective of obtaining concentration-induced advantages through a state of temporal and conditional proximity. I have linked this search for connectivity to the confessional and

clientlist political context of Lebanon in which “connective” (Joseph, 1993), “interdependent” (Madanipour, 2003) selfs seek access to gatekeepers who can secure their “relational rights” (Joseph, 1993).

The logic guiding the spatiality of segregation that I have described in this research and conceptualised as a layer is firmly grounded in the socio-spatial specificity of Beirut, first the persistence of the residential clustering of sectarian-based interest communities and second, the political specificity of Lebanon, namely, the persistence of a confessional and clientlist political system in which rights are “relational” (Joseph, 1994).

The civil war divided Beirut into east and west along the logic of religious association. The post-war period re-united the city, in the sense that it was possible again to move about freely in the city east and west. During the post-war period, government played a push factor in encouraging supply-led socio-economic segregation. The phenomenon of transforming downtown Beirut into the “*city of advanced services*” (Marcuse, 2002), “recognizable at a glance” (Ibid) is one of such push-factors. The objective has been to organize Beirut neatly into a Marcusian city of quarters, one in which “they will work in Soildere and live in Linord.”. Post-war reconstruction efforts can be understood therefore as imported post-modernization. The idea has been to replace war-time sectarian divisions by divisions in status, to deterritorialize the sectarian based solidarities of affluent groups and replace them with class-based solidarities and territorialities.

Contrary to the aspiration of the Hariri era planners the project of transforming Beirut from a sectarian divided city into a city of business and residential quarters has not yet succeeded. Sectarian insecurities continued during the post-war era and slowed down the pace of this projects, perhaps even disabled it. These insecurities even accentuated after the assassination of Hariri. Hence, the project of the quartered city is hindered by the fact that affluent individuals continue to reside in their sectarian part of town.

As such, while, the *demand* for spatial segregation can also be explained as government-driven, the *pattern* of spatial segregation described in this research can be conceived as being resultant of the existence of sectarian-based insecurities alongside class-based necessities - a reality in which young affluent heads of households still have to go through the trouble of organizing their spaces and where government supports every effort to “lure [them] to come to town” (Harvey, 1989), but nevertheless fails to realize a fixed, continuous and “totalizing” (Marcuse, 2002) “enclave of well being” (Glasze, 2006). Hence, in Beirut the spatiality of segregation for young affluent heads of households is the result of negotiating the spatial

needs of territorially based sectarian loyalties with the spatial needs of non-territorial class-based interests.

*I conclude, therefore, that during the post-war period Beirut transformed from a city divided by religious association into a city in which segregation by status is superimposed on top of the divided city. The result is the layered city.*

### 10.5. **Policy relevance**

Beirut emerged from the civil war as a divided and “wounded city” (Schneider and Susser, 2003). As mentioned in the previous section, I have argued in this research that despite efforts by post-war government to heal the wounds of the city by transforming it into a quartered city, Beirut was transformed for its affluent residents into a layered city, one in which affluent individuals live in a spatiality that is superimposed on top of the city and that dims out the parts that are redundant to it. What is the policy relevance of such a finding?

Bearing in mind that “policy relevance is just one form of politics”<sup>136</sup> (Katz, 2004: 281), the policy recommendation that I give here is based on what seems to be an old-fashioned and outmoded insistence on *the value of exposure* that is resultant of spatial proximity.

Having said so, the lack of exposure in Beirut is resultant of two types of segregation, namely, sectarian residential segregation and class-based non-residential segregation. The first type of segregation is voluntary and is actively pursued by most people residing in Beirut. In the second type of segregation an element of power is involved. The type of segregation that I have been concerned with in this research is the second type of segregation. It is likely to be intensified by the growing national detachment of identities of affluent individuals and their agendas and their substitution by systems and sub cultures that are alien to the local cultural context. Accentuated by their “postmodern fear” (Ellin, 2001) affluent individuals who

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<sup>136</sup> As Katz (2004) reminds us, “A debate over whether researches should be “policy relevant” has a false tone, in part because policy relevance is just one form of politics. It is hard for students of the collaborative construction of social facts to resist asking the following: relevant to which policy makers, in what ways, and the most difficult question of all, when? “Policy relevance” is an indirect way of demanding that political priority be given here and now to those with at least a foothold in institutions of power. A debate over whether research can expect to find timeless laws can also be misleading, at least when the subject is ethnography. Railings against “positivism” tend to forget the pragmatic logic of methods. People who search for timeless laws do not necessarily believe they will ever find them. This appears absurd only if we forget that in the quest for perfect, certain, or universal knowledge (Turner 1953), one does different things than when ambitions are more limited. The quest for timelessly applicable forms of theory, like the quests for love, peace, equality, or god, leads one to do different things, and while arriving at a settled end maybe fantasy, the challenges structured and overcome on the way are not necessarily quixotic” (Katz, 2004: 281).

exhibit the practices and values of a “transnational capitalist class” (Sklair, 2002: 98), have spatial needs and aspirations that are increasingly at odds with a local context of chaotic urbanism and inadequate supply of urban services. A statement such as “The political context was boiling, but we did not feel the heat” is not surprising within such a context. Affluent individuals will increasingly demand that their “touching down places” (Marcuse, 1997) are detached from their immediate localised contexts. Marcuse asserts that while “divisions by function and culture are in general voluntary, divisions by status are not. No group desires low status; it is imposed on them. While those of higher status maintain their status voluntarily, they need the means to impose it on those of lower status against their wills” (Marcuse et al, 2002: 15). As such, the implicit or explicit use of force is necessary in achieving divisions by status. Hence, the role of the state is also of concern in the study of this category of divisions since in civilized society the state holds the monopoly over the use of force. Questions over the development of the democratic process are raised as the role of the state transcends that of being a regulator acting on the behalf of the majority of its constituents, to that of facilitator enforcing involuntary divisions on behalf of those who hold the power.

This finding is an uneasy one for social scientists and urban planners. The academic literature is abundant in calling for the encouragement of territorially based ties and solidarities and the resurgence of neighbourhoods, however, within the sectarian homogeneous context of Beirut these solidarities proved many times to be a threat to civic peace and stability. This links to the particularity of the city of Beirut, the social make-up of the city and the sensitivities pertaining to the history of social unrest in Beirut. The uneasy question for social scientists and urban planners then becomes weighing down which is of lesser evil, non-territorial class-interest based ties and solidarities or territorial sectarian-interest based ties and solidarities. This raises important questions as to the role of the state in such a context in encouraging a healthy balance in the de-territorialization of solidarities and in enabling new kinds of solidarities to emerge. The premise for the development of downtown Beirut as a *neutral* place for all sectarian communities of Lebanon has been a step towards that aim of enabling the exposure of various sectarian communities to each other. Although the supply of residential areas of Solidere has been targeted only at people with higher incomes, but the residential area of Solidere has been nevertheless attracting a healthy mixture of sectarian groups. I have shown in Chapter 8 that inter-sectarian exposure among the ranks of affluent individuals is existent despite the fact that affluent individuals do not reside in proximity. This research has not investigated inter-sectarian exposure among middle- and lower income groups, but social unrest in Beirut, particularly in the years following the assassination of PM Hariri provides enough evidence to suggest that it is the encouragement of the mixing the middle and lower-income groups of the various sectarian groups in that is missing in Beirut.

*I conclude, therefore, that because class-based segregation should not be acceptable to planners, encouraging mixed sectarian areas without creating class-based enclaves, and encouraging mixed class areas without sustaining sectarian enclaves continues to be the challenge in Beirut.*

## 10.6. **Future Research**

Future research could test the applicability of the concept of the layer to the everyday life spatiality of other groups in Beirut, holding such variables as income, gender, age, religious association or occupation as constant and then carrying out the investigation. In other words, future research could investigate whether women, men, the elderly or children for example live each in their own layer. More interestingly perhaps in the context of Beirut specifically, would be the investigation whether there are accentuated tendencies for a layered spatiality of segregation for specific sectarian groups. In other words, do Sunni Beirut residents, for example, have more- or less-layered segregation tendencies than say Druze or Maronite Beirut residents?

Future research could utilize the theoretical potential of this research. Is it possible to develop the concept of the layer into a theory that is applicable to the contexts of cities other than Beirut as well? In other words, future research could prove that this T-C-O continuum described in this research can exist in other contexts while having a different logic.

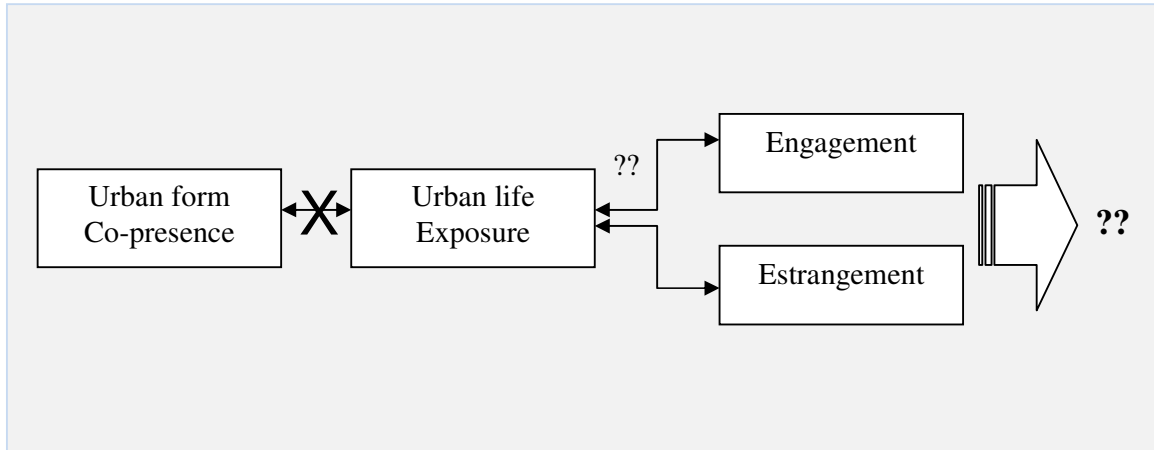
I have shown in this research how the “space-lubricating effects” (Webber, 1964) of mobility and other media capable of supplying exposure extend the “urban mode of living” (Wirth, 1938: 5) beyond the confines of urban form. This means that bodily co-presence is not a necessary precondition for exposure. The possibilities granted by “occasional, imagined, virtual co-presence” (Urry, 2002: 256) mean that exposure can be sustained without bodily co-presence. As exposure is divorced from physical proximity, urban life becomes divorced from urban space and the urban realm is expanded beyond the confines of city. In other words, a situation arises in which there can be urban life without urban form. Albeit one important difference is that exposure that is resultant of occasional, imagined and virtual co-presence is selective, occasional and controlled. As such, the debate on the impact of exposure on the formation of communities must include the question of the impact non-co-presence based exposure, that is, the impact of the condition of occasional, virtual and imagined co-presence. Future research could investigate the consequences of an urban life, which is not based on

urban form, on the formation of communities. Are the two possibilities, engagement or estrangement equally valid or is one tipped against the other?<sup>137</sup> Refer to Figure 17. What happens to synoecism- defined as “interdependence arising from dense proximity” (Soja, 2000)- if the urban is deprived of its “spatial specificity”? (Ibid) How urban does a city such as Beirut remain if its affluent residents reject a core feature of urbanity, namely, exposure? Are we in a situation in which we need to sensitize the definition of the urban - or even redefine it- or should we seek a new term to define this “urban-like” condition?

In addition, future research could investigate the role that the space of passage can play in “re”entangling exposure and proximity. I have shown in this research that the space of passage is a crucial link in the manufacture of this continuum of segregation, T-C-O. As a result, the space of passage can be the structural hole that pinches/disturbs the consistency and consciousness of the experience of this continuum. The space of passage is in essence the last public space left, its survival as a space experienced on an everydaylife basis is what makes the urban experience (as an experience of exposure) in some cities- for example many European cities- different from other ones. Current research on spatial segregation continues to be fixated on its residential manifestations. However, it is in the space of passage that the city could be experienced.

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<sup>137</sup> Urry (2002) develops this idea. “Sociology has tended to focus upon those ongoing and direct social interactions between peoples and social groups that constitute a proximate social structure.... the analysis of those processes by which such co-presence is only on occasions and contingently brought about, and the forms of socialities involved when one is *not* involved in ongoing daily interaction, but with which a sense of connection or belonging with various ‘others’ is sensed and sustained. One should investigate not only physical and immediate presence, but also the socialities involved in occasional co-presence, imagined co-presence and virtual co-presence. Indeed all forms of social life involve striking combinations of proximity and distance, combinations that necessitate examination of the intersecting forms of physical, object, imaginative and virtual mobility that contingently and complexly link people in patterns of obligation, desire and commitment, increasingly over geographical distances of great length” (Urry, 2002: 256). Boden and Molotch (1994) maintain that since ‘co-present interaction’ is fundamental to social intercourse, virtual travel will not significantly replace physical travel. The modern world produces no reduction in the degree to which co-present interaction is preferred and necessary across a wide range of tasks. They analyse how such ‘thick’ co-presence involves rich, multi-layered and dense conversations. These involve not just words, but indexical expressions, facial gestures, body language, status, voice intonation, pregnant silences, past histories, anticipated conversations and actions, turn-taking practices and so on. In particular, co-presence affords access to the eyes. Eye contact enables the establishment of intimacy and trust, as well as insincerity and fear, power and control. Simmel considers that the eye is a unique ‘sociological achievement’ since looking at one another is what effects the connections and interactions of individuals (Frisby and Featherstone, 1997: 111). Simmel terms this the most direct and ‘purest’ interaction. It is the look between people which produces moments of intimacy since: ‘[o]ne cannot take through the eye without at the same time giving’; this produces the ‘most complete reciprocity’ of person to person, face to face (Frisby and Featherstone, 1997: 112). The look is returned and trust can get established and reproduced (as well as perceiving insincerity and power; see Urry, 2000: Ch. 4 on visuality). Boden and Molotch also demonstrate how (Urry, 2002: 259) Such nets also facilitate the ‘inadvertent’ meetings that happen because like-minded people from similar social networks are informally encountered – in certain parts of towns or cities, on golf courses, campuses, cafes, bars, conferences and so on. Where people live geographically distant from each other, then sites of ‘informal co-presence’ will be regularly travelled to, although most of the specific encounters are unplanned.” (Urry, 2002: 260)



**Figure 17 What are the consequences of urban life that is divorced from urban form?**

Finally, in “Tenacious Cities”, Webber insists on the existence of a “persisting power and value of propinquity” because face-to-face interaction calls for physical movement, for getting the two faces to the same place and because there still does not exist magic wand that can get these two faces together in a flash (Webber, undated). Anybody who has ever departed any loved one and had to make do with a phone call or an e-mail surely understands the power and value of spatial proximity<sup>138</sup>. Park (1925) reminds us that “... in order that there may be permanence and progress in society the individuals who compose it must be located; they must be located, for one thing, in order to maintain communication, for it is only through communication that the moving equilibrium which we call society can be maintained. All forms of association among human beings rest finally upon locality and local association” (Park, 1925: 159).

Bearing in mind that “it is the people of the city- their individual aspirations and collective struggles, their day-to-day lives and their *moments of heightened awareness*- that constitute the core subjects of urban studies and the final purpose of city planning.” (Le Gates, 1996: 89, emphasis added) and bearing in mind that the final purpose of urban planning should and must be enhancing the quality of life of people, I argue that in order to do so the backdrops should be provided that encourage the full range of positive human interactions and perhaps also access to the intimate spaces of the minds. Is that not what engaging people means?

<sup>138</sup> Webber argues in “Tenacious Cities” that the information received in one's physical presence is more valuable and credible than either printed or electronically transmitted data “The informality of the conversational situation is likely to encourage exchange of more content than one might gain from a programmed transmission. Conversation after an hour in the bar or exchanged over a pillow is likely to be far richer than any exchanged over a fax line” (Webber, undated).



Hence, I conclude that it is these backdrops of simultaneous spatial and social proximity that make “cities tick differently” (Loew, 2008). What is referred to as the character, personality, “habitus”, “Eigenlogik” or “lokale Gefühlsstruktur” (Loew, 2008) of cities is determined by these excuses to access. Cities in which people *reside* next to each other, each in their own layer rather than live/dwell together are not likely to be cities which inspire. *For cities to have a positive effect on the quality of life of people they must structurally empower the agencies of people to encounter one another.*

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# **Appendix 1**

The Questionnaire

(Coverpage of Questionnaire)

Beirut, Date

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am a PhD student at the University College of London. As part of my research for my PhD I am collecting information pertaining to the changing role of neighbourhoods in Beirut.

I would like to solicit your input to my research by asking you to fill in the questionnaire attached. It should take around fifteen minutes of your time and I ask you to complete it thoroughly and honestly.

The data I receive from this questionnaire will be used collectively. The questionnaire does not take any record of the identity of interviewee and as such your responses will not be linked to your identity in any way.

Your participation is greatly appreciated and I thank you in advance for your time and energy.

Sincerely,

NadiaAlaily-Mattar,

MPhil UCL, MSc LSE

# PART 1

# SURVEY #

1) Gender:  <sub>1.</sub> Male  <sub>2.</sub> Female

2) Age:  20-25  25-30  30-40  40-50  
 50-60  > 60

3) Are there children living with you?  <sub>1.</sub> Yes  <sub>2.</sub> No

4) Are you:  
 <sub>1.</sub> Single  <sub>2.</sub> Married  <sub>3.</sub> Separated  <sub>4.</sub> Divorced  <sub>5.</sub> Widowed

5) What is your highest level of education?

<sub>5.</sub> Primary School  <sub>6.</sub> High school  <sub>7.</sub> Undergraduate School  Graduate  Post-Graduate School

6) Please list the names (and locations if outside Beirut) of the university and school that you attended.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7) Are your family origins from Beirut?

<sub>1.</sub> Yes  <sub>2.</sub> No

8) Do you usually spend the summer outside Beirut?

<sub>1.</sub> Yes  <sub>2.</sub> No

9) Do you usually spend your long vacations outside Beirut?

<sub>1.</sub> Yes  <sub>2.</sub> No

10) Where do you usually spend your weekends?

<sub>1.</sub> Beirut  <sub>2.</sub> Other (Please Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

11) Are you a national of a country other than Lebanon?

<sub>1.</sub> Yes  <sub>2.</sub> No

12) Have you taken up any measures to acquire a citizenship other than the Lebanese?

<sub>1.</sub> Yes  <sub>2.</sub> No

13) Please indicate how much time you spend at each of the following annually.

	Less Than 4 Months	5-4 months	9-6 months	More than 10 months
a. At your Beirut residence	—	—	—	—
b. In parts of Lebanon, outside Beirut	—	—	—	—
c. In foreign countries	—	—	—	—

14) Which best describes the length of your typical international visits?

<sub>1.</sub> Continuous blocks  <sub>2.</sub> Short, intermittent trips  <sub>3.</sub> Rarely/Never travel

IF "Yes":  
 3a) How many children live with you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 3b) How old are these children?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ years

IF "No":  
 7a) Please list your family's city of origin.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 7b) How many years have you lived in Beirut?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ years

IF "Yes":  
 8a) How often do you commute to Beirut at this time?  
 <sub>1.</sub> Daily  <sub>2.</sub> Weekly  <sub>3.</sub> Monthly  <sub>4.</sub> Rarely/Never

IF "Yes",  
 12 a) Indicate 3 main reasons?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

15) Are you currently employed?

**Yes**  **No**

1. 2.

IF "Yes":

16a) What is your current occupation?

b) In which neighborhood area do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

16) Is the level of your household income affected by local political or security conditions?  **Yes**  **No**  **Slightly**

1. 2. 3.

17) The poverty line in Lebanon is roughly \$2,400 dollars a year per household. Considering assets, income and remittance, which income bracket would you consider yourself?

**Higher**  **Higher Middle**  **Middle**  **Middle Lower**  **Lower**

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

18) Has your level of expenditure on leisure activities dropped after the assassination of PM Hariri?

**Yes**  **No**  **Slightly**  **Not sure**

19) What is your source(s) of income?

**Monthly wage**  **Interest on capital**  **Real Estate Rent**  **Stocks**  **Business enterprise**  **Industry**

**Agriculture produce/ farming**  **Other**

## PART 2

20) For each of the activities below, please indicate the frequency of your participation.

**Daily** **more than once a week** **Weekly** **Monthly** **Rarely/Never**

a. **Have guests over to your home that are:**

i.	Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii.	Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii.	Building Resident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv.	Neighborhood Resident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. **Visit the home of:**

i.	Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii.	Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii.	Building Resident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv.	Neighborhood Resident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

c. **Have a dinner, party or other type of social function at your home**

d. **Attend a movie, concert, dinner party, etc**

e. **Eat at a restaurant/café with others**

21) **Are there at a walking distance from your residence?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Public space (e.g. a square)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bakery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playground for kids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Butcher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hairdresser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fitness center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beauty shop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22) Please list the local amenities which you regularly use in your area of residence? (i.e at least once a week)

23) Do you do your grocery shopping on a daily/bi-daily basis?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

24) Are there any grocery stores at a walking distance from your home?

**Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

IF "Yes":

24 a) Do you shop there regularly?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

b) How do you usually get the groceries from the local grocery shop?

- I get the groceries myself
- I sent my driver/ maid/ concierge
- I order by phone and the grocery shop send someone
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

25) Do you prefer shopping in:

**Big supermarkets**  
1.  
 **Local grocery stores**  
2.

26) Do you ever visit public gardens?

**Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

IF "Yes":

26a) How frequent do you visit?

Once a week  Once a month  On holidays  Once a year

b) Which gardens do you visit?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

27) Did your usage of local amenities change during and after the 2006 war?

**Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

28) What percentage of your daily time outside home do you spend in the area at a walking distance from your home:

**100%**  **75%**  **50%**  **25%**  **0%**  
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

29) What percentage of their leisure time does each of your children (starting from the eldest) spend on average at home?

Child 1 \_\_\_\_\_% Child 2 \_\_\_\_\_% Child 3 \_\_\_\_\_%

30) During the summer 2006 War in Lebanon did you stay at home?  **Yes**  **No**

30 a) IF "Yes": Why did you stay?

- No other place to go
- Felt safer at home
- Wanted to protect my residence
- Wanted to be close to extended family
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

30 b) If "No", Why did you leave?

- Lack of security
- Lack of amenities (electricity, water)
- Shortage of groceries
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

31) Are your children engaged in any activities in the area at a walking distance from your home?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

32) Do your children visit any friends in the area at a walking distance from their home?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

33) Do your children go to school/nursery?

	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3
<b>By school bus</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Communal transport</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>By car</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>On foot</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	_____	_____	_____

34) Please indicate your position towards this statement:

"I feel that I am a member of the community of people who reside in the area at a walking distance from my home."

**Strongly Agree**  **Agree**  **Somewhat Agree**  **Neutral**  **Somewhat Disagree**  **Disagree**  **Strongly Disagree**  
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

## PART 3

35) For each of the activities below, please indicate the frequency of your participation.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Rarely/Never
a. <b>Attend place of worship</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. <b>Participate in religious meeting, or activity</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. <b>Donate to a religious institution</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

36) Are you a member of a religiously affiliated organization?

**Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

IF "Yes":  
 36a) Are you on the board of trustees or council?  
 **Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

37) Religious Affiliation (Sect):

**Maronite**                       **Catholic (Greek, Latin, Armenian)**  
1.                                      2.

**Armenian Apostolic**     **Shiite**     **Greek Orthodox**     **Other (Please Specify):** \_\_\_\_\_  
6.                                      7.                                      8.                                      9.

38) Do you consider yourself a religious person?     **Yes**     **No**  
1.                                      2.

## PART 4

39) Do you consider yourself politically informed?     **Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

40) Are you registered to vote in Beirut?     **Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

41) If you can, please list the names of :  
 The members of parliament who represent you: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your local mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

IF "No":  
 40a) In which town/village are you registered?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

42) Do you usually vote in parliamentary (national) elections?     **Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

43) Do you usually vote in municipal (local) elections?     **Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

44) What aspects of voting, if any, deter you from voting?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

45) Did you participate in any of the protests of February/March 20?     **Yes**                       **No**  
1.                                      2.

IF "No":  
 45a) Why did you not participate?  
 **Out of country**     **Did not feel represented**  
1.                                      2.  
 **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_  
3.

46) For each of the activities below, please indicate the frequency of your participation.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Several Times a Year	Rarely/Ne
a. <b>Read the newspaper:</b>					
i. <i>Local</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. <i>International</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. <b>Watch televised news:</b>					
i. <i>Local</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. <i>International</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. <b>Volunteer for a political organization or party</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. <b>Discuss politics with family/friend/neighbor</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. <b>Attend a public meeting, campaign or rally</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Several Times a Year	Rarely/Never
f. <b>Wear clothing or place a sign or sticker indicating political affiliation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. <b>Sign a political petition</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. <b>Fund a political party or political organization</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

47) Please indicate your position towards this statement: "I feel I have adequate means of being politically active."

**Strongly Agree**     **Agree**     **Somewhat Agree**     **Neutral**     **Somewhat Disagree**     **Disagree**     **Strongly Disagree**  
1.                                      2.                                      3.                                      4.                                      5.                                      6.                                      7.

48) Do you know the approximate amount of the last annual municipal tax that you paid?  Yes  No  
1. 2.

49) Did you go the tax collection office yourself to pay your last annual municipal tax?  Yes  No IF "No":  
49a) Who paid it in your behalf? \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 5

50) Please indicate your position towards the statements below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Generally, people <u>cannot</u> be trusted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The local police force is dependable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The area within walking distance from my home is a safe place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Given its resources, the Lebanese government is efficient and reliable in providing local public services (such as electricity, sewage infrastructure, tel.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Private companies are more efficient and reliable than public authorities in the provision of public services. (e.g. garbage collection)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I feel uncomfortable in quarters of Beirut dominated by people from certain sects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. I feel uncomfortable in quarters of Beirut dominated by people from certain income groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. I prefer residences that provide private policing and security services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Intra-sect dating is acceptable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. I prefer volunteering in organizations that have a majority of members from my sect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. When possible, it is better to take security into one's own hands rather than leave it to the authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. My building is safer than those surrounding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Crime is a growing problem in Beirut	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

51) Have you taken up any measures to increase the security of your residence in the past 2 years?  Yes  No

52) I have friends from different religious sects.  Yes  No  
1. 2.

53) I do not have much contact with members of certain sects.  Yes  No  
1. 2.

54) I have friends from other income levels.  Yes  No  
1. 2.

55) I personally know someone who has been attacked or robbed in the past six months.  Yes  No  
1. 2.

56) What social issues most concern you personally?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

57) What social issues do you think are most pressing for the area at a walking distance from your home?

\_\_\_\_\_



58) What issues do you think are most pressing for the Beirut community as a whole?

## PART 6

59) Where do you live in Beirut? (Name of neighborhood)

60) How many meters squared is your apartment? \_\_\_\_\_ m<sup>2</sup>

61) Are you renting this residence?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

62) Please provide an estimate of the value of your residence in US dollars. \_\_\_\_\_ \$/m<sup>2</sup>

63) How long have you lived at your current residence? \_\_\_\_\_ years

64) Is there a residence association in your building?

**Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

65) Where (name of neighbourhood) did your household live before this residence?  
\_\_\_\_\_

IF "Yes":

64a) Are all building residents members? \_\_\_\_\_

b) Have you ever been involved in running this association?

**Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

66) Did another member of your family own your residence before you?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

67) What features most attracted you to your current residence? (In the spaces below, rank your first 3 choices e.g. 1, 2, 3)

**Closeness to Work**  **Price**  **Appearance**  **Security Features**  **Apartment Quality**  
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

**View**  **Cleanliness**  **Closeness to Family/Friends**  **Dependable Water and Electricity**  
6. 7. 8. 9.

**Less Noise/Traffic**  **Investment**  **Apartment Size**  **Distance from Pollution**  
10. 11. 12. 13.

**Amenities (Please Specify):** \_\_\_\_\_  **Other (Please Specify):** \_\_\_\_\_  
14. 15.

68) How did you finance purchasing this residence?

**Personal savings**  **Loan from family/friends**  **Loan from bank**  **Inheritance money**  
1. 2. 3. 4.

**Inherited the property**  **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_  
5. 6.

69) How often do you see other residents of your building that are not members of your extended family?

**Every day**  **A few times a week**  **A few times a month**  **Rarely/Never**  
1. 2. 3. 4.

70) Do you know the names of all or most of the people in your building?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

71) Do members of your family live in other apartments in your building?  **Yes**  **No**  
1. 2.

72) When you see one of the residents (who are not family members) in your building, it is usually ...

**When we visit one another**  **A chance encounter (in an elevator, parking lot, etc)**  
1. 2.

**Because our children play together**  **Other (Please Specify):** \_\_\_\_\_  
3. 4.

73) Please indicate your position towards this statement:

"There is a community spirit in the building in which I live."

**Strongly Agree**  **Agree**  **Somewhat Agree**  **Neutral**  **Somewhat Disagree**  **Disagree**  **Strongly Disagree**  
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

## PART 7

74) Does a live-in maid work in your household?

   Yes                         No  
1.                              2.

IF "Yes":

74 a) How many maids do you have? \_\_\_\_\_  
b) How long has she been working with you? \_\_\_\_\_ years  
c) What is/are your maid's nationality?

   Filipina       Sri Lanka       Ethiopian       Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
1.                      2.                      3.                      4.

75) Is there a concierge in your building?

   Yes                         No  
1.                              2.

IF "Yes":

75a) What is/are your concierge's nationality? \_\_\_\_\_  
b) How long have he been working with you? \_\_\_\_\_ years  
c) What are his main duties?  
\_\_\_\_\_

76) Does your household have/share a driver?

   Yes                         No  
1.                              2.

IF "Yes":

76 a) What is/are your driver's nationality? \_\_\_\_\_  
b) How long have he been working with you? \_\_\_\_\_ years  
c) What are his main duties?  
\_\_\_\_\_

77) How many cars does your household have?

\_\_\_\_\_ cars

78) Please list the brands of these cars?

Car 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Car 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Car 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Car 4: \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 8

79) Please indicate whether your residence has the following:

a. Security Personnel	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No	f. Community Pool	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No
	1.	2.		1.	2.
b. Cameras	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No	g. Community Gym	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No
	1.	2.		1.	2.
c. Passcode Access	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No	h. Parking	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No
	1.	2.		1.	2.
d. Security Dogs	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No	i. Drop-off Area	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No
	1.	2.		1.	2.
e. Gates	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No	j. Reception Desk	<u>  </u> Yes	<u>  </u> No
	1.	2.		1.	2.

## PART 9

Please indicate your position towards the statements below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure
80) In the area at a walking distance from my <u>home</u> , most of the people belong to the same:					
Religious group	—	—	—	—	—
Socio-economic group	—	—	—	—	—
81) In the building where I live, most of the people belong to the same:					
Religious group	—	—	—	—	—
Socio-economic group	—	—	—	—	—
82) The area at a walking distance from where I <u>work</u> , most of the people belong to the same:					
Religious group	—	—	—	—	—
Socio-economic group	—	—	—	—	—
83) In the areas where I spend my <u>leisure time</u> , most other people that visit belong to the same:					
Religious group	—	—	—	—	—
Socio-economic group	—	—	—	—	—
84) In my social network :					

most people belong to the same:

Religious group	—	—	—	—	—
Socio-economic group	—	—	—	—	—

85) List the 3 places that you most frequently visit over the weekends?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_

86) Do you feel more comfortable to spend your leisure time in places that are controlled by private security (e.g. malls)?

1 Yes      2 No

IF "Yes":  
 85a) Why? (Please select one answer)

1 To filter undesirable people (beggars, lower income groups)      2 To increase the security of the area

3 To ensure exclusivity and upkeep of higher standards (e.g. noise level, cleanliness....)

4 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

87) Please indicate the frequency at which you use the following modes of transportation:

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	On Holidays	Rarely/Never
a. Drive my own car	—	—	—	—	—
b. Driven by my driver	—	—	—	—	—
c. Taxi	—	—	—	—	—
d. Communal transport (bus/service)	—	—	—	—	—
e. On foot	—	—	—	—	—
f. Other (Please indicate) _____	—	—	—	—	—

88) What activity are you most likely to do in your leisure time?

\_\_\_\_\_

89) For each of the activities below, please indicate the frequency of your participation.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Rarely/Never
a. Socialize with family/friends in:					
i. Restaurants/cafés/pubs	—	—	—	—	—
ii. Private homes	—	—	—	—	—
b. Visit the gym/health club	—	—	—	—	—
c. Pursue hobbies at home	—	—	—	—	—
d. Shopping	—	—	—	—	—
e. Visit malls	—	—	—	—	—
f. Visit public parks	—	—	—	—	—
g. Visit private clubs and resorts	—	—	—	—	—
h. Social obligations (e.g. attend marriage ceremonies etc...)	—	—	—	—	—
i. Visit new places/ sightseeing	—	—	—	—	—

90) Please number by order of likelihood, where you are most likely to meet and socialize with your:

Friends	Family	
—	—	Restaurant/ coffee shop/pub
—	—	Mall
—	—	Cinema
—	—	Club/resort/health club
—	—	Public space/park

Private spaces (your or your friend's/relative's home)

91) Please indicate your position towards this statement:

"Lebanon is a small country, you are likely to meet the same people wherever you go."

Strongly Agree    Agree    Somewhat Agree    Neutral    Somewhat Disagree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

92) Please indicate your position towards this statement:

"Socializing is a mean for me to get access over information pertaining job opportunities, business opportunities etc... "

Strongly Agree    Agree    Somewhat Agree    Neutral    Somewhat Disagree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

93) If you need to get to a location that is less than 15 minutes away on foot, is it more likely that you use a car or walk?

Use a car    Walk

1.

2.

75a) What are the main reasons, why you would rather not go on foot for short distanced locations?

(Please number by order of priority)

- The level of noise is unpleasant
- I feel uncomfortable walking on the street among strangers
- I am afraid of being robbed /attacked
- The condition of sidewalk is poor
- I am afraid of being hit by passing cars
- Other (please indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

94) Please list the places and neighbourhood names (e.g. home/achrafieh- work/hamra etc....) that you go to on a typical day, also indicate the mode of transportation that you use to get there:

<b>Time of day</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Purpose of trip</b>	<b>Mode of Travel</b>
Am				
6:00-7:00				
7:00-8:00				
8:00- 9:00				
9:00-10:00				
10:00-11:00				
11:00-12:00				
Pm				
12:00-1:00				
1:00-2:00				
2:00- 3:00				
3:00-4:00				
4:00-5:00				
5:00- 6:00				
6:00-7:00				
7:00-8:00				
8:00- 9:00				
9:00-10:00				
10:00-11:00				
11:00- 12:00				

Would you be willing to participate in an interview with the researcher?  Yes  No

If yes could you please write down your phone number and/or your e-mail address at which you can be reached.

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**Once again, thank you for your cooperation. Your time and patience are greatly appreciated.**