Boundaries and political agency of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon

Zeinab Amiri
Iowa State University

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Boundaries and political agency of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon

by

Zeinab Amiri

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
Major: Architecture

Program of Study Committee:

Marwan Ghandour, Major Professor
Ross Exo Adams
Nell Gabiam

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

2016
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Marwan Ghandour, for the patient guidance, encouragement and advice he has provided throughout my time as his student. I have been extremely lucky to have a supervisor who cared so much about my work, and who responded to my questions and queries so promptly. Also, I would like to thank my committee members Nell Gabiam and Ross Exo Adams for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research.

In addition, I would also like to thank my parents for providing me opportunities to peruse my own goals. All the support they have provided me over the years was the greatest gift anyone has ever given me.
ABSTRACT

New technologies of power are taking control of body and life. Historically, refugee camps were produced as a result of the sociopolitical effects of new technologies of power. In some instances, refugee camps have been conceptualized as “total institutions” where bodies are disciplined and where control is an integral and defining component of the structure of the institution and its daily routine. In many ways, the space of Palestinian camps in Lebanon has signified a mechanism of control for multiple political powers. These camps have had fixed boundaries since their establishment. The configuration of the boundary reflects the power of Lebanese state over the camp residents and its means of surveillance and control over the spaces of the camps. The refugees are expected to remain within their boundary where Lebanese army checkpoints can control what goes into the camp. It is an environment under continuous potential siege. Manifestation of living under potential siege is displayed differently among the three camps that I chose to discuss in this thesis; namely Shatila, Nahr Al-Bared and ‘Ain al-Hilweh. These three camps show different conditions of integration with the spaces outside their respective boundaries. The spatial characteristics of these boundaries defined different degrees of spatial assimilation of the camps within the surrounding space the Lebanese state. Navigating through Giorgio Agamben’s “state of exception” and Michel Agier’s “extraterritoriality” as theoretical frameworks of the space of the camp, this thesis maps the political agency of Palestinians in relationship to the process of urbanization of camp border in order to assert the spatial exclusivity of these two frameworks within the conditions of the Palestinian refugee in Lebanon.
INTRODUCTION

"UNHCR's annual Global Trends” reports that the worldwide displacement in 2014 was at the highest level ever recorded. This report shows the number of people forcibly displaced at the end of 2014 had risen to a staggering 59.5 million compared to 51.2 million a year earlier and 37.5 million a decade ago. Globally, one in every 122 humans is now either a refugee, internally displaced, or seeking asylum. If this was the population of a country, it would be the world's 24th biggest. Around 25% of the whole refugee population worldwide live in camps. As a result of the Syrian civil war that started in 2011, more than 4.8 million Syrians are refugees and 6.6 million are displaced within Syria. Only 500,000 of these refugees live in camps, while others are considered urban refugees who live in towns and cities and (UNHCR, 2016). Some of the camps that were established after the beginning of the Syrian war have transformed extensively, such as the Zaatari camp in Jordan, which was established in 2012. This camp started as a series of tents to shelter 15,000 refugees but by March 2016 around 80,000 Syrian refugees live there. The camp is gradually turning to a permanent settlement with all components of a city. With growing refugee crisis, these sudden human settlements signal the future of urbanization, where places, which were created in emergency situations become permanent settlements.

Even though this phenomenon is not quiet new, it is barely recognized as a form of urbanization. Palestinian refugee camps are the future of all camps that are “born each day in the world” (Agier 2012). With more than 65 years of existence, Palestinian refugee camps in the Middle East are the best places to study this phenomenon. One third of the five million Palestinian refugees in the World, more than 1.5 million, live in 58 registered camps across the Middle East (UNRWA). These camps were initially erected as temporary spaces to settle
Palestinians who were forced to leave their homeland in 1948. Formation of these camps materialized under complicated socio-political circumstances. The space of the Palestinian refugee camp have been studied across multiple disciplines where in some cases they are considered as informal settlements embodying conditions that are usually associated with informality. But there is lack of enough research in architecture and urban design, which specifically studies the urbanization of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon in conjunction with the physical and political space of Lebanon. The spaces of the camps are registered through multiple physical and social boundaries, which have been transforming during the Palestinians prolonged presence in Lebanon. In this research, I will discuss the production of the Palestinian refugee camps in association with the socio-political conditions in Lebanon with a focus on the relationship of the camps’ boundaries to the changing political agency of the refugees.

Giorgio Agamben considers that modern states retain the camps under the “state of exception” status to continue their existence, as a form of biopolitics, as a materialization of control of the body by the state or power. In fact, camps are considered spaces to put refugees in a state of bare life or a human without political life (Agamben 1998). Furthermore, Michel Agier, who conducted extensive research on long-lasting camps as city-camps over the Middle East and Africa, sees camps as “the most advanced form of a global treatment of stigmatized identities and undesirable groups.” for Agier, camps are “laboratories which still unconceived forms of urbanism are germinating” (Agier 2008: 61).

Since the 1990s, the State of Lebanon (hereafter refer to as the State) has been adopting strategies and policies to control the political and social activities of Palestinians in Lebanon. Being the physical barrier that marks the spaces of the camp and controls its
relationship to its context, camp borders also represent the ongoing battle over the formation
of the Palestinian political agency and the attempt of the State to control it. While most
studies on Palestinian camps associate conditions of extraterritoriality, as articulated by
Agier, with a state of exceptions, as articulated by Agamben, (Hanafi 2008, Hanafi and Long
2010, Walby, and Hanafi 2013, Ramadan 2009), my argument is that the extraterritoriality
of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon provides spaces for political agency for
Palestinian refugees within the “state of exception” space of the Lebanese state that denies
the refugees basic civic rights. The history of Palestinian refugee presence in Lebanon shows
a continuous struggle to assert the refugees as political subjects through occupational,
military, social and spatial means. The camp borders are central to this struggle, albeit with
different manifestations, in order to protect the presence of the Palestinian space of the camp
by designating it as extraterritorial within the space of the Lebanese state.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Foucault’s book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* represented the historical shift of carceral institutions and punishment practices from mid eighteenth to mid nineteenth century, especially with regards to the French penal system. He showed how from that period display of power of the sovereigns, and in the system of surveillance, constraint, control, examination and education of prisoners changed. The book, although specifically focused on prisons, have hints at the other disciplinary institutions, such as schools, asylums, hospitals, barracks and factories, where the same technologies of behavior were applied (Foucault 1997). Later in the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault stated “For a long time, one of the characteristic privileges of sovereign power was the right to decide life and death.” (Foucault 19878: 119, Agamben 1998: 55). He described the process that politics turn into biopolitics when natural life began to be included in the mechanism and calculation of State power (Agamben 1998: 10). However, Foucault had not mentioned the exemplary places of modern biopolitics: the concentration camp and the structure of the great totalitarian states of the twentieth century (Ibid). Foucault notion of “disciplinary spaces and practices” should take into account, not in terms of order of the spaces but in terms of sociopolitical effects that different kinds of spatial regime might be expected to produce” (Peteet 2005:29). Spaces of the refugee camps have been creating under these circumstances.

Agamben built his argument based on Foucault notion of biopolitics that is “inclusion of man’s natural life in the mechanisms and calculation of power” in modern age. He sees the biopolitics as missing element in Arendt’s studies that pertained to the structure of totalitarian states and defined camps as “the supreme goal” of all of them while she saw the camps as locations for testing total domination (Agamben 1998:10). Inspired by these two
scholars, Agamben introduced concept of “state of exception” to explain formation of camps in modern political system of twentieth century. He considers camp as “hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity” as “pure, absolute, impassible biopolitical space” (Agamben 1998:72). In classical time biological life (zoe) and political life (bios) kept separately but through politico-juridical order of the modern era “body” entered into the realm of politics and it was the beginning of new political order of the West. He explains how the French Declaration of 1789 was collapse of ancient regime and it gave birth to national sovereignty and connected the birthplace to the nation-state. Zoe was politicized by declaration of rights and natural life included in polis. Refugees are crisis for modern sovereignty because they question this relation of “man and citizen, nativity and nationality” (Agamben 1998: 131). The refugees show “bare life” in a political domain because in condition of refugees, the rights of citizen are set apart from the citizenship. While condition of refugees has had political origins, various international committee and organizations have been failing to find a resolution for this worldwide crisis because they have “solely humanitarian and social” mission rather than political. Agamben questions the space of camps and “its juridical-political structure” and he depicts camps as places that “are born not out of ordinary law but out of a state of exception and material law” (Agamben 1998: 167).

Although Agamben has focused on Nazi concentration camps, his notion of the “state of exception” portrayed the loss of political being as a state of bare life. Since World War I, some governments had created laws that have given them the permission of “denaturalization and denationalization” of native people (Agamben 1998: 132). The mass statelessness that happened with these laws indicate a key turning point when the native nations of people and citizen take away from the new nation-state way of political order. An example of this is the
Palestinians refugee crisis. With the establishment of state of Israel, this power excluded Arab Palestinians from its population, making them stateless. Israel created a situation which those people prefer exile in hope of survival rather than staying in their homeland in fear of death. Thus, consequences of being statelessness, is stateless population with no right on citizenship and civil rights.

In condition of being stateless, these people need a place out of that nation-state which excluded them. In fact, lacking autonomous space within the political order of the nation-state for a person in the state of bare life is evident. The status of refugee is considered a temporary condition that should lead either to naturalization or to repatriation. After one of these solution, they will be eligible to obtain nationality to get basic civil rights. None of these have happened to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon yet. In the law of the nation-state, humans do not have permanent status as just being human. It means without belonging to a particular nation-state they will not have basic civil rights. That is how Arendt explained the problem of the refugee "the decline of the nation-state and the end of the rights of man" (Arendt 1961:267). There are a lot of examples of internment camps, concentration camps, and extermination camps which were created at the end of the 19th century and during World War I and II. Those concentration camps were spaces to keep denationalized and denaturalized people, under control of the sovereigns (Agamben 1994). Thus, based on Agamben’s notion of “state of exception”, this happens when humans are obstructed from being a political citizen with civil rights.

While accepting the state of exception status of camps, Michel Agier defines the spatiality of the camps based on his anthropological studies in camps across South America, Middle East and Africa. Through multiple case studies, Agier had explored everyday life in
the refugee camps and described how a state of long-lasting instability and ongoing suffering characterized the life in camps (Agier 86). He defines camps as temporary spaces for displaced population and as “policing measure” rather than a product of a rescue effort. To him, the camp is the nation-state control response to the entry of a displaced population following civil war or violent conflicts. These nation-states are trying to restrict refugee population from their political and official domain. There is no “outside or separate physical space” for them when they do not belong to that nation-state thus camps are “outside-sites” which confine refugees. Confrontation of refugee flows and rejecting their citizen right at the same time create “artificial and never totally empty spaces” that are “extraterritorial and exceptional spaces” (Agier, 2008:170).

Emergency circumstances and its unusual character explains the existence of the camps but over the long term these factors reproduce themselves. Camps are “extra territorial” spaces that are established in a place other than their residents’ nation-state. “They are constitutive of a reality that goes beyond the existence of each particular one, and that is developing a global reality” (Ibid: 65, 71). To clarify his definition, Agier explains how he had to get permission of entry to a camp in Kenya or Zambia from international organizations in Paris, Brussels or Geneva (Ibid: 65). So all the gateways, checkpoints, entry, etc. indicate the transition into a different state and rights. Refugees do not have citizenship of the country that they left or the country they are relocating into. They usually do not have work permission or sometimes permission of moving freely in the host country out of the camps’ borders. Refugees live inside the camps in a situation of exception (ibid: 71-.81).

However, this situation does not apply to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, even though camps are in a state of exception within Lebanese territory. These extraterritoriality
spaces, especially with the Cairo accord conditions, create a space of different citizenship for
them as a political body with its representation and administrative structure, even military
forces. Despite their exclusion Palestinians were able to produce the space of the camps by
appropriating them based on their daily life. These spaces in most of the cases are like high
density vibrant urban areas which are not town or city. Agier uses the term “camp-city” to
describe the living environment of refugees (Agier 2002:322). When refugee conditions
become more permanent because of the continuation of war or unresolved conflicts, camps
turn into space more than temporary camps. Agier suggests “city-camp” in two senses. First
because of possibilities of creating new identity through daily life and second a space in
terms of urban sociability or even a political space or polis. (Based on Arendt, social
relationship is the place politics would happen and lack of politics will disconnect all humans
like being in a “desert”). He highlights when “a camp that has existed for five years is no
longer a row of tent. It can resemble a shantytown, and it can also remind us of an
ethnographic museum where people try, with the material they find in the camp, to
reconstruct their native habitat, for better or worse (ibid: 172). He sees camps comparable
places to the cities however they are not cities. The potential of a nourishing economy as well
as social relation and effort for creating identity especially for prolonged camps, could turn a
camp to an urban area (a space like city but still not city). Palestinian refugee camps in
Lebanon are “city-camps” with a strong unifying identity and a political space. Depending on
their location to other urban areas, camps in Lebanon had different impact on the production
of Lebanese space.
To understand how refugees appropriate their living environment, notion of “the production of space” is helpful. Lefebvre discusses three aspects of space: perceived, conceived, and lived space:

1. Perceived space: "The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it." (Lefebvre 1991:38). This is physical place that spatial practice occurs.

2. Conceived space: "Conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent; all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived." (Ibid: 38) That is the realm of architects, planners and other professions that produce the space.

3. Lived space "Space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols." (Ibid: 39). In other words social place and the space which dwellers justify it based on daily life.

These three pillars relate to each other and every space consists of these while one might be more observable and the other less. Likewise, space of the camps comprises these three aspects. In reality during their presence in Lebanon, while refugees build their living space (lived space), many external forces (conceived and perceived space) enforce themselves over the formation of space.

Refugee camps are one of the outcomes of new form of sovereigns when mechanism of power include man’s natural life. In this new form, there is no space for stateless people outside the nation-state thus camps as extra territorial spaces settle these people. Host community usually consider refugees as temporary and keep them in the state of bare life, without political rights or in state of exception. However, long duration of living in the
camps, give refugees the opportunity of creating agency through daily practices. Indeed, agency or political agency is embodiment of endeavor over civil rights to not being in the state of bare life. The confrontation of the State and refugees regarding state of bare life in case of Palestinian refugees spatially manifested in condition of the camps’ borders. Build on this theories, in this thesis I will discuss the relationship between borders of three Palestinians camps in Lebanon with political agency of refugees.

Political agency is represented through political and social activities that could be a part of the daily life of Palestinians in the camps. Political agency would happen in forms of collective actions such as strong presence of political parties, protests, strikes, battles, and informal commercial activities. I will explain how the presence of the PLO created an opportunity for forming an agency of Palestinians which was later legitimized by the Cairo accord. With this agreement, the camps became extraterritorial spaces that were internationally recognized as spaces that that belonged to the Palestinians, even though they were located in the state of Lebanon. When the PLO had to leave Lebanon, the condition of agency changed for Palestinians. Using the data from three different case studies of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, I will discuss the situation of the camps’ boundaries in relation to the political agency of Palestinians regarding the state of exception and extraterritoriality of the camps.
HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

A series of events resulted in Palestinian refugee crisis that have more profound incentive than the mere events. The first event that contributed to the Palestinian refugee crisis was the creation of the state of Israel. This caused the Palestinians to lose their land, country, and nationality as they were displaced. Palestinians were denationalized and those who fled to other countries became refugees. Palestinians remember this day as nakbah (in Arabic means disaster) when approximately 80 percent of Arab habitants left the country as a consequence of Arab-Israel War in 1948. Since nakbah, Palestinian refugees were distributed between Jordan, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria. Some of refugees lived inside the registered camps while others lived outside of them. Socio-economic conditions of the camps are widely different depending on the host country and urban or rural setting.

For the sake of tracing the changing meaning of the camp borders, the history of camps in Lebanon can be divided into four phases. The first phase spanned from 1948 to 1968, which took place during the early years of exile. From 1968 to 1982, the presence of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and forming the resistance movement had started a new era for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. With the fall of the PLO in 1982 to the end of the civil war in 1990 another chapter closed for them. Since 1991, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are living under the socio-political and financial hardship. Here I will use these phases to narrate the history of their presence in Lebanon in relation to political agency of Palestinian refugees.
First phase: 1948-1968, years of adaptation and restriction

During 1948 almost 750,000 Palestinians were being uprooted from their land and became refugees. They fled to neighboring countries where around 100,000 of them settled in Lebanon (UNRWA, 2016; Hanafi et al., 2012). During the time that Palestinians arrived in Lebanon, the country had its own dilemmas. In 1943, Lebanon became independent from France. Although they gained independence, Lebanon as a nation struggled over their national identity. The struggle over national identity was among three main groups, which were the Maronite Christians, Sunni and Shi’a. Because Palestinians were mostly Sunni, the Lebanese government considered them a threat to the nation’s stability especially with the fragile relation between the Muslims and Maronites. Hence, the Lebanese government did not grant citizenship to Palestinians and they remained refugees.

The first decade, Palestinians were traumatized by nakbah, and they were waiting for the opportunity to go back to their homes in Palestine. The first ten years, the Lebanese government and population welcomed Palestinians. Because of this, refugees had freedom of expression, which allowed Palestinians to be involved in social and political activities. But from 1958 with the presidency of Camille Chamoun and the rise of Arab nationalistic movement in the region, the situation had changed (Suleiman 1999: 67). In the fear of forming any political organization, all aspects of Palestinian life were monitored and controlled. Deuxième Bureau as the Lebanese intelligence, monitored any movement within the camps. Refugees lost their freedom of expression and all the political and social activities were controlled (Ibid).

Jaber Suleiman divided this phase to two phases of 1948-58 and 1958-69. He called the first ten years the “adaptation and hope” phase as the Lebanese welcomed Palestinians.
The second phase was defined as “first crackdown and covert activity” which started with Arab nationalist rebellion against Chamounin in 1958 and presidency of General Fouad Chehab. It was during this decade that marked the rise of the Palestinian resistance movement (Suleiman 1999:67). During the second phase, in 1951 the Central Committee for Refugee Affairs was set up by the State to control the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Later in 1959 the committee was replaced with the Department of Palestinian Affair under the Ministry of Interior. The tasks of department were as follow:

“Liaising with international relief agencies in Lebanon to ensure relief, shelter, education and health and social services for the refugees; receiving applications for passports for departure from Lebanon, scrutinizing these applications, and submitting comments to the relevant departments of the Surete Generale (security police); registering personal documents relating to birth, marriage, divorce, annulment, change of residency, and change of sect or religion, following confirmation of their validity; approving applications for the reunion of dispersed families in accordance with the texts and directives of the Arab League and after consultation with the Armistice Commission; and approving exemption from customs duties on the personal or household belongings of persons entering Palestine for purposes of family reunion under the previous item” (Souheil Al Natour 1997: 362). Moreover, decree of 3909 of 1960 created the Higher Authority for Palestinians Affairs which was responsible for overseeing political and economic concerns relating to Palestinians and Arab-Israel conflict (Ibid, 361-363).

The wave of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East and lack of enough humanitarian aid from the host countries had created a human disaster. Thus, United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugee in the Near East (UNRWA) was established by United
Nations General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 to provide relief and employment in the region for Palestinian refugees (Ghandour 2013; Peteet 2005; UNRWA 2015). Prior to UNRWA, relief works was conducted by organizations like the International Committee for the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies and the American Friends Service Committee. UNRWA became fully operational in 1950 with a mandate to: “carry out, in collaboration with local governments, the direct relief and works programs as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission and to consult with interested Near Eastern governments concerning measures to be taken in preparation for the cessation of international assistance for relief and works projects” (Besson 1997: 231).

However, UNRWA’s program with the aim of social and economic reintegration of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon were dismantled soon by the Lebanese state in an effort to marginalize Palestinians and to prevent integration into the Lebanese society. Furthermore, early in 1950s UNRWA associated with only humanitarian aids and became an apolitical agency in a highly politicized context (Besson 1997, Bocco 2009). Since then, UNRWA has provided little more than essential services such as primary health care, social services and education. Initially, the lack of integration programs was supported by Palestinian refugees as they believed their situation would be temporary (Al Husseini 2000: 52). However, in subsequent years, local and international organizations have filled that vacuum and begun establishing programs to integrate refugees into the surrounding community (Besson 1997).

During this time, the State controlled the camps and kept them as temporary spaces. For example, entering of any building material to the camps was forbidden (Sayigh 1994). Because any solid building within the area of the camps was sign of permanent settlement and trigger of integration of them into the Lebanese society. Tight control over the camp and
aggressive policy of Chehab’s regime toward Palestinians led to 1969 uprising of the camps’ residents against the Lebanese security forces. The PLO and the Lebanese State signed Cairo accords\(^1\) in the 3 November 1969 and Palestinian guerrilla activities across the Lebanon ended and limited to the boundary of the camps (Suleiman 1999: 67).

To sum up this period, it was apparent that with the presence of the Lebanese intelligence, Palestinians had a hard time shaping political movements. While Arab nationalist movements were active across the Middle East, the Lebanese legislation was against freedom of Palestinians in Lebanon\(^2\). However, Palestinians used UNRWA schools inside the camps as well as regional support to prepare the ground for the following years of revolution and resistance movements. In these years, camps were in the state of exception where refugees had no social and political rights and were controlled by the State. So, there was a lack of strong political agency of Palestinians inside the camps.

**Second phase: 1968-1982, years of revolution**

This phase is marked by strong presence of the PLO in Lebanon. The PLO establishment was announced at the first Palestinian Conference in Jerusalem on 28 May 1964 \(^3\)(Al-Natour 1997: 363). The PLO actively operated in Lebanon during the late 1960s. However, after they were expelled from Jordan in 1970 they had more active and effective


\(^2\) The time of *nakbah* met with the nationalist movement in Arab countries. While other Arab nations were building their national identity, Palestinians in exile and especially those in the camps were trying to form it. Most of the registered Palestinian in camps had rural origin and they clustered in the camps based on village of origin, which helped them to facilitate the process of creating national identity in exile (Bocco 2009: 239). Although UNRWA, which was more a humanitarian agency during those years, helped them through its services like schools. Because, most of teachers in UNRWA schools were Palestinians, they educate new generation of pro-Palestinians (Bocco 2009: 239, Peteet 2005, Sayigh 1994).

\(^3\) Later in 1974 this organization officially recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by Arab Summit Conference in Riyadh.
role in Lebanon. During the 1960s Palestinian resistance movement, with the aim of unifying Palestinians to fight against Israel occupation, operated across the Lebanon which involved many political and guerilla organizations. In 1971, Arafat and his supporters defeated the local Fatah organization in Beirut and established themselves as the new leader of movement, hence the PLO dominated the Palestinian resistance movement (Shiblak 1997: 267). Until the departure of the PLO from Lebanon in 1982, main headquarters of the PLO and all the political groups under its support were located there (Ibid: 268).

In the early years of displacement in Lebanon, Palestinians were depleted, depressed, and incapable of forming a political leadership. However, presence of the PLO along with the 1969 Cairo Accord had changed these conditions for them. In November 1969, the Cairo Accord with the backing of Egyptian President Gemal Abdel Nasser was signed between Yassir Arafat and Emile Bustani⁴. Based on the agreement, the Lebanese government accepted an open, armed Palestine presence inside the camps and south of Lebanon. Also, control of the sixteen official refugee camps was passed from the Lebanese army to the Palestinian Armed Struggle Command (Al-Natour 363, Shiblak 1997: 267). The Cairo Accord gave the PLO permission to establish social, economic, legal and political institutions for the Palestinian refugees (Ibid).

However, in reality this agreement led to the presence of a heavily armed and well-funded PLO. From 1969 to 1982, the camps militarized and permitted the resistance movement to launch attacks against Israel from Lebanon (Ghandour 2013; Hanafi and Long 2010; Peteet 2005). Palestinians remember those years as the “golden age” and the “days of revolution” (Peteet 2005:5). The Cairo Accord formalized relationship between the Lebanese state and Palestinian refugees, which recognized them as a group in need of collective

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⁴ Emile Bustani was the Lebanese Army Commander-in-Chief.
regulation, rights, and some measure of autonomy in Lebanon. The agreement also
legitimized what was known as the Arafat Trail, a weapons supply route that extended to the
bases in the south from north Lebanon and Syria. All lead to a level of liberty of Palestinians
and military control and autonomy over substantial parts of Lebanon. Hence, some argued
Palestinians created “a state within a state” (Dorai 2010; Peteet 2005, Hanafi and Long
2012). Such accusations provoked resentment from certain sectors among the Lebanese,
mainly the Christian Maronite, which largely were represented by the Phalange party (Peteet
2005: 5-6).

Furthermore, following the Cairo Accord Palestinians found the opportunity of
creating a safe base in Lebanon and their own infrastructure. For example, majority of
Palestinian offices were located in Fakhani region west of Beirut to provide services in the
field of welfare, health and education (Shiblak 1997:268). Moreover, at least 20,000 jobs
were created for refugees by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the
Palestinian Martyrs Work Society (SAMED), along with other rehabilitation institutions, as
well as a chain of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Shiblak 1997: 268). Many
projects were implemented by the PLO in camps to improve living conditions. The PLO
forced the Lebanese authorities to accept the building of second and third stories on camp
dwellings, something which had previously been forbidden. In the absence of basic social
and economic rights for Palestinian community within the Lebanese legislation, the PLO
created a new sense of security and a strong political agency. It increased the sense of power
and confidence for them (Ibid).
However, with the all gained power, interests of three groups were threatened: Israeli, Syrians and the ruling elite of Lebanon⁵. Consequently, these groups had united to weaken the PLO’s position in Lebanon during the middle of 1970s. In 1974, Israel attacked camps in the southern Lebanon where they completely destroyed Nabatyeh camp with heavily air strike⁶. There was military confrontation between the Lebanese Falangist Party and the Palestinian militias triggered in 1975. During this period Pro-Syrian Palestinian accelerate the tension perhaps to prepare the ground for direct intervention of Syrians (Shiblak 1997:266). 1975 marked the beginning of civil war in Lebanon which was aggravated by the direct interventions of Syrians and Israelis. In 1976 Christian militia destroyed 3 refugee camps in East Beirut including Tal al-Za’tar, Jisr-El-Basha and Dbayeh. All those camps except Dbayeh were completely destroyed (Khalidi, 2001: 4).

To summarize this phase, establishment of the PLO as the representative of Palestinians and later the leader of resistance movement, marked a new era for political agency of Palestinians in Lebanon. After the first twenty years of difficulty in expressing their basic rights, the Palestinians officially took control of the camps after the Cairo Accord. This agreement led to a strong political agency of Palestinians even beyond spaces of the camps. With the level of freedom, they obtained in these years, Palestinians in Lebanon were creating a state within the State. However, their strong political and military activities were not favorable for the Lebanese and later they were blamed for initiating the destructive civil war. Overall, camps were not in the state of exception anymore and the Cairo Accord turned them to extraterritorial spaces with the control of Palestinians. This period ended with the departure of the PLO from Lebanon.

⁵ At the time many Lebanese especially Sunni Muslims and Druze supported Palestinians.
⁶ Most of the refugees of this camp were relocated to the ’Ain al-Hilweh camp.
Third phase: 1982-1990, Years of Wars

The PLO was expelled from Lebanon following the Israel invasion and just before the Sabra and Shatila massacre in 1982. Palestinian refugees lost their support against Islamic groups and Christians Maronite in Lebanon. In lack of the PLO, camps became exposed and vulnerable (Peteet 2005: 151). Thus, the Christian right-wing militiamen, coordinated and supported by Israel, entered into the Sabra and Shatila camp. In three days, they killed 800 to 3,000 Palestinians and Lebanese civilians. Two years later, the war of the camps made life more difficult for refugees.

During the presence of the PLO in Lebanon, Amal was provoked by the PLO military and political actions. This group initiated a war known as the war of the camps between 1985-1987 to eradicate all guerrilla movements inside the camps. Amal was a pro-Syrian Shi’a group that attacked camps in Beirut, Saida and Sour in collaboration with the Lebanese Army’s largely Shi’a Sixth Brigade (Peteet 2005: 151). During the war of the camps, many refugees and Lebanese civilians were killed or displaced and camps were heavily damaged. The purpose of siege was to ensure destruction of the camps and dispersal of refugees so that they may never regain political power or autonomy in Lebanon (Peteet 2005: 9; Brynen 1990: 188). As a result of the war, Palestinian military power declined and the pre-PLO marginalization was reestablished. The war of the camps reinstated Palestinians from a major political actor in Lebanon into their refugee and helpless statues. Three years of siege of the camps exhausted them and food and medical sources were scarce. Finally, they disappeared from the Lebanese political scene when they were most vulnerable to abuse and the camps reverted from being spaces of active nationalism and resilient agency to spaces of defeat.

Following the War, in 1987 the Cairo Accord was unilaterally repealed by the Lebanese
Chamber of Deputies (Are Knudsen and Hanafi 2009:56). Consequently, Palestinians were again subjected to the labor laws that considered them regular foreigners; work permits were revoked and the law of reciprocity was again imposed. Also, building regulations were reinstated in 1982 and adding extra floors on top of houses were again forbidden.

After the Amal’s sieges, a conflict between Palestinian groups in Shatila camp ended with the removal of loyalist forces from Beirut and their redeployment in the camps of southern Lebanon. “At the end of this period, the camps of southern Lebanon (Rashidiyya, al-Bass, BurJal -Shamali, 'Ayn al-Hilwa, and MiehM ieh) were controlled by Fatah and loyalist contingents of the PLO, while the camps of Beirut (Burja l-barajneh, Shatila, and Mar Elias) and northern Lebanon (Baddawi and Nahr al-Bared) came under the control of the National Security Forces (NSF)-though both groups maintained a presence in all camps. Meanwhile, the War of the camps resulted in the withdrawal of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) from the NSF and its alliance with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)” (Suleiman 1999: 68).

In 1989, Ta’if agreement ended the fifteen years of the civil war with the support of Syria. The agreement systematized the division of power between different Lebanese confessions. Because of the power division, Ta’if agreement also clearly stated that there shall be no tawteen (naturalization) and Palestinians would remain refugees. Among the

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7 In the Lebanese legislative system, Labor law is guided by principle of reciprocity which means “the Lebanese will grant foreign workers their rights in Lebanon in accordance to what right would be granted to Lebanese workers in their respective countries”. As Palestinians do not have a state this law keep them away from working in Lebanon. The Lebanese labor law defines three work options for foreign workers, “these are either work by membership in a syndicate, or work by attaining a work permit, or work where no permit is required.” Every year Minister of Labor revise the job which are allowed or prohibited to foreign workers. In June 2005 Labor minister issued a new decree which exempts Lebanese born Palestinians who are registered refugees from approximately 40 to 45 jobs which were previously restricted under Ministerial decision to the 1964 law Lebanon in accordance to the 1964 foreign labor law (Baraka 2008).
Lebanese citizens and politicians *tawteen* would endanger the sectarian balance and cause another civil war (Klait 2010: 26).

In this phase, Palestinian opponents used the power vacuum created after the expulsion of the PLO and weakened the position of Palestinians in Lebanon. As a result, they became helpless refugees in ruined camps left after the civil war. Thus the agency of Palestinians declined and state of siege reinforced itself. First Israeli and right-wing Christian Maronite and later Amal forces entered into the spaces of the camps and violated the Cairo Accord and disputed extraterritoriality of the camps as well. The state of siege imprisoned the camps residents to their borders and controlled them hence state of exception emerged again.

**Fourth phase: 1990-Present, years after the civil war**

Tai'f agreement (1989), Madrid peace conference (1991), and the Israeli-PLO Oslo accords (1993) were some of the main events which influenced the presence of the refugees in Lebanon after the civil war. 2006 Hezbollah-Israel War and 2007 Nahr al-Bared camp shelling were more contemporary major events in Lebanon related to the issue of refugees. Beside these, every change in the political scene of Lebanon have been affecting the refugee status as well. After the long civil war, Lebanese blamed Palestinians as cause of the war. For many Lebanese, camps especially in south like ‘Ain al-Hilweh have been places "beyond the reach of law" (Suleiman 1999: 71). For example, in 1990s a series of assassinations and counter assassinations happened. The suspects hid in the camps out of the hand of Lebanese officials. Thus, the Lebanese Media and some politicians called this situation "security islands" that recall camps as places outside the authority of the state (Suleiman 1999: 71-72).
There have been many legal restrictions for Palestinians after the civil war. "The first example of post-war legal discrimination against Palestinian refugees was their exemption from the General Amnesty Law. As part of Lebanon’s post-war settlement, in 1991 the parliament passed the General Amnesty Law (Law 94/91), which ensured immunity against war crimes for militia leaders-turned-politicians. The law granted amnesty for all crimes committed by militias and armed groups before March 28, 1991. The law provided immunity to the Lebanese citizens, but excluded non-citizens such as Palestinian refugees. Consequently, Palestinians fearing prosecution were forced into hiding. A few were singled out for political reasons and sentenced to death in absentia. This meant that for refugees, the war was not over and unlike Lebanese citizens, they lacked legal protection against prosecution for wartime crimes and atrocities (Are Knudsen and Hanafi 2009: 57).

In this period, a conflict between Hezbollah and Israel began on July 12, 2006 and lasted for 34 days which affected mostly Palestinian refugees in the South of Lebanon. The war took place in southern Lebanon in Tyre and villages around it and near the Israeli border as well as in the three refugee camps of the south: El Buss (1.5km from Tyre), Rashidiyeh (5km from Tyre) and Burj Shemali (3km from Tyre). As a result of this war, the camps in South became more isolated while their inhabitants were unable to access supplies as leaving the camps became dangerous. Many camp residents left the three camps and moved to the Sidon camps. On August 9, 2006, the Israeli Defense Force air strikes hit ’Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in Sidon, killing 2 and injuring 10 people. It is estimated that 75% of the inhabitants of Wavel Camp in Baalbeck left the camp (UNRWA 2006). About 47% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon lived outside the camps, thus were in the same situation as the Lebanese people. Some Palestinian refugees fled to Syria. UNRWA estimates that 16,000
Palestinian refugees were displaced as a result of the hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center 2006).

To sum up, after the civil war, discrimination legislation not only has changed but increased. For example, in 1993 and 1995 the number of professions forbidden to Palestinians increased. In 2005, the Minister of Labor and Agriculture signed a bill that lifted the ban on manual and clerical jobs, but did not amend laws relating to high level professions. The prohibitive effects of these laws can be seen in the low number of work permits issued. For instance, in 2006, 225 permits were renewed but none were issued. In 2007 only 28 new permits were issued and only 113 were renewed. In 2008 only one new permit was issued and in 2009 only 32 were issued and 67 renewed. Furthermore, although the reciprocity law was amended to exclude Palestinians from the general labor reciprocity law, they are still barred from more than thirty syndicated professional fields that have their own regulations, including the Lebanese nationality and the reciprocity clause. These professions include, but are not limited to, doctors, pharmacists, travel agents, news editors, engineers and architects (Hanafi et all 2011:43, 45).

In addition to labor restrictions, in 2001, Palestinian refugees were forbidden from acquiring property in Lebanon and Presidential Decree 296 of March 2011 added the restriction that they cannot bequeath property already owned. In this amendment, it was clearly stated that individuals for whom acquiring land would facilitate *tawteen* are forbidden from owning or bequeathing property. This is considered a direct attack on refugees and as yet another measure designed to entrench their marginalization. In 2005, the Lebanese government, under pressure from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, created the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee to serve as a platform for cooperation
between Lebanese and Palestinian parties and to work with UNRWA to improve the situation of refugees. While Lebanese law continues to marginalize refugees, the spread of civil society and the improved perception of Palestinians among many Lebanese have re-politicized refugees. Hence, refugee communities are presently more vocal about their national identities and about demanding better rights in Lebanon. After the civil war, state of exception has intensified while the refugees are more in need for jobs and aids for reconstruction of their houses and infrastructures inside the camps. The discriminative laws, like labor law and prohibition of entering building materials to the camps along with many other forms of discriminations have tightened the condition for refugees.
THREE CAMPS: THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICAL BORDERS

In order to being able to support argument of this research, case study research methods is used. This method with the cases that is chosen, fit the model of this research. Three camps among twelve registered refugee camps are studied to discuss the argument of this thesis. In this regard, information related to these camps are gained with the extensive published research in this area and related to Palestinian refugees. Books, articles, newspapers, interviews and documentaries are used for gathering information. In this section, I will explain three refugee camps in Lebanon and production of their spaces in Lebanon.

As mentioned before, during the Israel-Arab conflict in 1948 many Palestinians fled to neighborhood countries and around 100,000 of them settled in Lebanon. During the last sixty-five years, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have played various roles in the complex political and social history of the region. Today Palestinian refugees in Lebanon constitute around ten percent of population of the country (UNRWA 2014; Hanafi et al. 2012).

Of the sixteen camps that were created in aftermath of the war, today, there are twelve registered refugee camps in Lebanon. When Palestinians arrived in Lebanon they divided based on a particular social status: urban and rural origin. Those urban Palestinians with movable capital and social, kinship or business relation in Lebanon they settled in urban areas. They could afford rent a house and started businesses. Most of Palestinians which ended in camps they were peasant with few resources and little education (Peteet 2005 106).

Peteet defines the condition of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon through the notion of “production of space” and explains the materiality of the political forces in spaces of the camps. At first glance, camps were places to provide temporary shelter, livelihood, and protection for a displaced population in the host community. Refugees have made their own
mark on camps and created meaningful places while they have lived in exile and planned for the future. In Lebanon, Palestinian refugee camps were not always sites of control in a disciplinary regime; quite contrary, for a lengthy period, they were controlled and administered by the PLO. Spatially they were organized to reproduce the space Palestine left behind and to which they were organizing to return. Each of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon experienced significant level of control and management; however, uneasily with an international relief regime. Peteet explained refugees created meaningful places in the camp that is their identity and subjectivity, which she called “landscape of hope for the future”.

The Palestinian resistance movements, the Lebanese State, and the international institutions as external forces obligated some physical barriers on camps. In each camps refugees shaped political agency from the early age of exile to post civil war in Lebanon (Peteet 2005: 30-31).

The Lebanese, from beginning declared the temporariness of Palestinians in Lebanon and rejected any citizenship to them. For them not only naturalization jeopardized confessional structure by adding a large number of mostly Sunni Muslims also it contradicted with the right to return. Lebanon refused to give civil, social and economic rights to the Palestinians and regarded them in law as foreigners. Lebanon refused to apply the League of Arab States Protocol of 1965 which called for host Arab states to afford Palestinian refugees the same rights as their own citizens (Shiblak 1997). However, during 1950 and 1960, around 50,000 Palestinians, mostly Christians, were naturalized to increase the population of Christians (Haddad 2000: 4). President Camille Chamoun (1952 - 1958), a Maronite Christian, favored naturalizing Christian Palestinians and Muslims who were connected to his political allies. In other words, even all Palestinians did not treated the same way. They discriminated between urban Palestinians, Christians and wealthy ones who settled in cities

The location of the camps was related to the logic of Lebanese sectarianism, economic factors, and political strategies (Sayigh 1994: 25). Palestinians spread all over the Lebanon and the United Nations founded camps in places that was more concentration of refugees’ population or in the areas with available land for leasing. Usually, Palestinians left their villages with family and relatives and they stayed together. When a group settled in a camp they sent messages to other relatives and people in their village to join them. Moreover, the camps in east Beirut, like Tel al-Za’tar, ḏhabīah and Jisr al-Basha, stablished in largely Muslim regions. Other camps formed in areas with considerable agricultural activity such as B’albak, Tripoli, Saida, Sour, and Nabatiyyeh. Later borders declared as military zone and refugees were forced to move to other camps from areas close to the borders. “Subsequent movement were closely tied to availability of work, possibilities of reuniting with kin and villagers, and access to the camps offering education, medical care, and an efficient and routinized rations distribution” (Peteet 2005:107).
In this thesis, I will focus on three main camps: Shatila, ’Ain al-Hilweh and Nahr al-Bared. Between all the twelve refugee camps in Lebanon, these three camps have been playing important role in case of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. These three camp were established after nakbah in 1948, Shatila in Beirut, ’Ain al-Hilweh in south of Lebanon close to the Israel and Nahr al-Bared in north along the main highway to the Syria. These camps had relatively same conditions until the Cairo Accord8. I will study Shatila camp because of its location in Beirut and its role from the beginning to the end of civil war with strong political agency. ’Ain al-Hilweh in South constantly have been presenting active

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8 The camps grew really fast as a result of population growth, new wave of Palestinian refugees after the 1967 Israel war and new comers from other camps.
position in issue of Palestine in the political landscape of Lebanon. Nahr al-Bared will represent as an integrated camp to the adjacent area until 2007. In this section, first history of each camp will be discussed. Then within a brief description of today’s condition of each camp based on UNRWA’s statistic the boundary of the camp will explain.

**Shatila Camp**

Shatila, closest refugee camp to Beirut right outside the municipal borders of the city and close to the predominantly Sunni Muslim quarters of Beirut, was built in South of Beirut in 1984. The founder named Abed Bashir was a mujahdeen leader who was in Beirut at the time Israel closed the border. He erected a tent to settle with twenty members of his family because they couldn’t afford to pay rent for rooms in the city of Beirut. He got the permission from someone called al-Basha, without help of Red Cross or UNRWA. After receiving twenty tents from UNRWA he gathered people from his village on the same piece of land (Sayigh 1994: 35-38).

Even though refugees considered their settlement in Shatila as temporary, waiting for partition or going back to their lands in Palestine, the severe climate conditions such as wind and rain made the tents insufficient protection. So they gradually stabilized the tent and later replaced it with more permanent material like wooden boards, corrugated iron and flattened-out petrol cans to make ad-hoc houses. Building with durable/regular building material such as cement ceilings were forbidden by the state as they may suggest more permanent status for the settlement. The camp was not connected to the city sewage system and any digging for private cesspits was forbidden until 1969 (Sayigh 1994: 39-41).

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9 This camp in 2007 completely was destroyed by the Lebanese Army.
10 Guerrilla fighters in Islamic countries, especially those who are fighting against non-Muslim forces.
11 First Bashir thought he was the land owner. Later they found out the owner was out of the country.
Temporary status of refugees was a reason that the Lebanese state had not provided water and housing for Palestinians. UNRWA provided water with trucks which wasn’t enough. Water was limited and there were just four public water tanks. Every resident was allowed to draw one petrol can of water per day. To manage the distribution a guardian was assigned for each tank. There was a lot of difficulties and quarrels over water and this system remained until 1969. One of the residents extended company water from Hayy Farhat to his hoe “this was a source that continued to supply water to Shatila during Amal sieges”. (Sayigh 1995:40) Later this person, Abu Turki brought electricity to the camp because poor residents weren’t able to afford it from Sabra. The both ways people have provided water and electricity from surrounding neighborhood show one of the key attachment of the camp to the other areas was for infrastructure that government haven’t given to them ( Ibid). Meanwhile, in this period UNRWA built a clinic, a school and two public latrines. There were few public buildings in Shatila, one a very simple mosque and the two cemeteries. One the cemeteries was in Bir Hassan that later became Akka hospital and the other near the pine forest (or Horsh) that later partly turned into Martyrs’ Cemetery.

In the early years (1950s), financial concern was main problem for the refugees. They mostly worked as laborers in Beirut in many low-paying jobs. Even they received ration from UNRWA it wasn’t adequate for them. Later some of them started to sell some everyday items like fruit and vegetables, using the opportunity of closeness to Beirut for providing initial materials. First they used a part of their tents for that and later the ground floor of their houses as small shops. It was the core of turning Shatila to a commerce area for low income urban dwellers. Furthermore, refugees who had some level of education they were employed by UNRWA. But getting a job in UNRWA wasn’t that easy and sometimes it was in the hand
of camp’s director. Everyone who had a family tie or connection with director had more chance to get one of the local jobs of UNRWA. This connection to director created a sense of exclusion for others who were looking for jobs. Although most of the refugees in Shatila were farmers back in Palestine, after exile they mostly became urban wage laborers (Sayigh 1994: 41-45).

Although it may have looked like a desert to the early settling Palestinians, the area surrounding Shatila camp soon developed as city of Beirut was growing. Close to the main entrance of Shatila Camp to the South, there was a small sand-hill suitable for spending summer evenings outside Beirut to enjoy the cool breeze. City planners saw this area as the lung of the city suitable for sport and recreation facilities. Later a sport complex (Shamoun’s Sport City) and a horse riding and golf club were built nearby. Furthermore, after moving Beirut international airport to the area between Khaldeh and Burj al-Barajnah nine kilometers south of Beirut, “a number of politicians and merchants saw the possibilities of the land speculation” in the vacated area to the west of the camp (Sayigh, 1994:38). Later, war in south of Lebanon in 1976 brought more families escaping the war to settle in the vicinity of South of this area. All these factors populated this area and urged growth of it as a commerce hub and service distributor intrusions. Also camp’s surrounding settled low-income Lebanese, and foreign migrants in low-cost urban housing” (Sayigh1994: 35-38).

Today, based on UNRWA statistic More than 9,842 registered refugees live in the Shatila camp. Most of men work as labors or run grocery stores, and women work as cleaners. The camp has two schools and one health center. Environmental health conditions in Shatila are extremely bad. Shelters are damp and overcrowded, and many have open drains. The sewerage system needs considerable expansion. An infrastructure project is
currently being implemented in the camp to upgrade the sewage, the storm water system and
the water network. Although, unofficial statistics claims up to 22,000 live in the camp and its
vicinity (UNRWA, 2014). Although, unofficial statistics claims up to 22,000 live in the camp
and its vicinity (Ibid). After the Syria crisis from 2009 many Syrian refugees have added to
this numbers. The population had reached about 18,000 before 2011 but since then about 5-
6,000 refugees from Syria have moved into the camp and the surrounding areas (Mackenzie
2016). These statistic shows how this camp lost its entity as a Palestinian refugee camps
along with losing its borders and assimilation to the informal urbanization of Beirut.

Four phases which was defined before had its own mark on Shatila as well. In first
decade people in this camp were adapting to life in the camp. Later, during the role of the
Lebanese intelligence all the movement was controlling within the border and entrances of
the camp. At that time, the camp was in the state of exception while its residents did not have
any civil rights. During the years of the PLO dominance and specifically with the Cairo
Accord, 1969-1982, the camp became a significant center in the Palestinian political history
with a strong agency which jeopardized integrity of the State. With the Cairo accord as an
international protocol, the camp became an extraterritorial space where Palestinians inside it
had political and military power. However, the scope of their activities moved beyond the
camp and the camp’s border virtually expanded. With the departure of the PLO and invasion
to the camp, state of siege was initiated which shrank the border of the camp to its actual
border. Today, Shatila has integrated to the city fabric with no visible border while the
refugees living inside the camp have no agency.
Nahr Al-Bared Camp

Nahr al-Bared is the second largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon after ‘Ain al-Hilweh. This camp was completely destroyed in 2007 during three month bombing by the Lebanese Army following a conflicts with an extremist Islamic group Fateh al-Islam. Nahr Al-Bared is located 16 kilometers north of Tripoli next to the highway from Beirut to the Syrian border. It is a 20,000 square meters camp home of over 27,000 Palestinian refugees. The League of Red Cross Societies stablished the camp in December 1949. The camp is in
Akkar region that most of the populations of its villages are Sunni Muslims and Maronite Christians (Smith, 2009). The initial camp was in north Beqaa away from Palestinian-Lebanon border later it relocated to current location. More Palestinians moved to camp during 1976 Arab-Israel war and from other destroyed camps in Lebanon during the Lebanon Civil War (1975-1990) (CSI 2011: 9). Because camp was built outside of the major population center it was more isolated from the Lebanese society compare to the other camps. But gradually it turned to a major commercial hub in the Akkar region benefiting from the main road to Syria that was passing through the camp and its closeness to Syria border (Government of Lebanon 2008). Nahr Al-Bared were created accidentally at the end of 1950. Based on Peteet interview with Samir:

“People who settled there were on their way to Syria. When the Syrian government decided not to accept any more refugees, the border was closed and they were obliged to stay there. Later, UNRWA transformed the site into a camp” (Peteet, 108). “In 1950s, 90 percent of the people in the camp were from Saffuriyya. The camp is bisected by a road that divided it into upper and lower levels. The upper level was occupied by the Saffuriyyis and the lower level was a mixture of numerous small villages. They were hesitant to come into our areas. Our men would sit in the alleys and anyone who passed through who was not from Saffuriyya was asked, “Where are you going?” or “Who do you want to see?” They were treated like strangers. This was village behavior. Now the camp are more mixed.” (Peteet 2005: 113).

Later, residents named the main setting of the camp as “historic” camp or “old” camp. The old camp was a high-density urban fabric. During 1948-2007, Nahr Al-Bared grew from temporary tents to a dense urban fabric house to 20,000 refugees within its limited boundary. The adjacent “new camp” started to grow in the late 1970s. Overflow of population settled near the camp in areas that people called it new camp. Expansion of the camp housed one third population, over 7000, of the Nahr Al-Bared at the time of battle. The adjacent area officially and largely were controlled by the jurisdiction of the Muhammara municipality.
Still UNRWA provided social and educational services for the adjunct area as well (Sheikh Hassan and Hanafi 2010: 31). Later during the reconstruction planning, authorities replaced name of this vicinity, new camp, to adjacent area (Hassan 2009). Both the camp and the area adjacent to it are located on the land of two Lebanese villages, namely Muhammara and Bhanine. Before destruction of the camp, it had an organic pattern of growth, low-rises buildings along very narrow streets. The camp had one main central access road and several primary streets (Government of Lebanon 2008). The really narrow streets of the camp and inaccessibility of it could be one reason for mass shelling of it since Lebanese army could not go through the camp to reach militants.

There wasn’t adequate open community space and infrastructure in the camp. Despite of ban on illegal construction and adding stories to the buildings, in lack of enough land for expansion people added over two stories to their buildings. In some cases there were buildings with six stories. Because the original buildings were built as temporary houses with shallow and weak foundations adding more stores to them created vulnerable urban fabric. Also, most of the buildings did not have enough natural light and ventilation leading to many health problem in the camp. All of these together formed a degraded urban fabric that poor economic conditions of dwellers were intensified it in the lack of maintenance (UNRWA 2008: 17).

Regardless of poor condition of the camp, Nahr Al-Bared had a major role in informal economy compare to other camps. It provided cheaper goods and services not only for the residents of the camp, but for Lebanese villages in the region. In addition to being a major commercial hub in north of Lebanon, it was a source of cheap labor for the Lebanese
agricultural communities close to the camp. Also because it was on the main road to Syria, it provided services like repair and maintenance for transportation sector (UNRWA 2008: 17).

As earlier was mentioned the camp completely destroyed in 2007 during three month bombing by Lebanese Army following a conflicts with an extremist Islamic group Fateh al-Islam. Fateh al-Islam was an organization that announced its formation on November 2006 in Nahr al-Bared camp. Although they had not officially approved to be part of Al-Qaeda they were ideologically close. Apparently “they were sent to Lebanon in summer 2006 to form a Sunni Jihadist front against Israel to rival of that Shi`ite Hezbollah” (Ramadan 2009: 154). Because Nah al-Bared did not have organized security committee like other camps it was a safe place for them to shape their organization.

Nahr al-Bared was one of the camps without army checkpoints for many years. Therefore, over six month of Fath al-Islam presence in the camp their position strengthened in spite of Palestinian opposition. After arrival of this group, Lebanese army responded to their presence with erecting strict checkpoints around the camp. The war began on 19 May 2007 and after three months of heavily shelling the camp, in September the Lebanese army could finally defeat the militant of Fateh al-Islam. In the first few days of battle, the majority of camp’s citizen were evacuated and moved to other camps like Beddawi or settled in schools, garages and some public buildings. During the battle camp was completely destroyed in a manner that Ramadan recalls that as “beyond any possible military necessity and deliberate and systematic erasure of the camp” or “urbicide”. He believes this happened because the camp is a state of exception which “Lebanese sovereignty and law are not fully enforced and a whole range of non-Lebanese actors exercise political power outside the control of Lebanese state. Palestinian homes and lives had become sacred in a sense that they
could be destroyed without sanction, without resource to legal redress, because there was no
law” (Ramadan 2009: 154-155). After the conflicts the camp and its adjacent area were
announced as militarized zone. For residents and visitors of the camp access needed
permission that were issuing by the Lebanese Army (Hassan 2009: 17). As a result, the
Lebanese nationals were unable to enter it. The permit system was eventually lifted in
October 2009 (Ibid).

This war caused more tension between Lebanese citizens and Palestinian refugees as
both group suffered from human casualties and economic lost. While all 27000 residents of
the camp were relocated, Lebanese residents were armed by guns to defend their houses and
“prevent militants from seeking refuge and melting into the local population” (Dakroub
2007). During the war at least 168 soldiers and 226 militants were killed. 54 civilians were
killed in the fighting at the camp and in Tripoli, 47 of them Palestinians. Severity of control
of the camp has been changing after the end of war. In fact Nahr Al-Bared have turned into a
test plot for a new approach in Lebanon’s security policy toward Palestinian refugee camps
(Sheikh Hassan and Hanafi 2010, Smith 2009).

Although presence of Fateh al-Islam was the recognizable reason for invading the
camp, other profound political and social events ease the process. Palestinian refugees were
blamed by Lebanese as cause of fifteen years civil war. With some events like Rafiq Hariri
assassination in 2005 and withdraw of Syrian troops from Lebanon was experiencing
political development. But less than a year before Nahr Al-Bared battle, in 2006 Hezbollah
had a war with Israel. That war was a measure to show weakness of Lebanese state and army
over the control of their territory (Sheikh Hassan and Hanafi 2010: 29).
The project of bringing camps under control of Lebanese sovereignty have been starting from the end of civil war in late 1980s. After the 9/11 and in the rise of extremist Islamic group around the region this project revived. The confessional structure of Lebanon state and the possibility of disputing balance by adding a considerable Sunni population to the country, left the process vague. Nahr Al-Bared battle and its reconstruction had created a break to test a new security paradigm.

Although Lebanese were skeptical about presence of Palestinian refugees generally, the relation between Nahr Al-Bared and surrounding areas was opposite to that mindset. In fact, this camp as previously mentioned was a main commercial hub in north Lebanon. This commercial relationship along with between village marriages built social ties with the people in the Akkar region.

After the war the positive attitudes of both sides have been changed. Palestinians consider themselves as victim of the war because they were against presence of Fateh Al-Islam militants in the camp. Although, both sides had casualties and economic loss, the burden on Palestinian side was more extensive as they lost their homes. In the eyes of Palestinians the war was a conspiracy against them (CSI 2011). Even Ramadan considered that as an opportunity for Lebanese state to eradicate Palestinians by describing the long delay on beginning reconstruction of the camp (Ramadan 2009). Based on CSI report, until 2010, there was an opposition not against Lebanese neighbors of the camp but against the state and politicians because Palestinians believe they want to humiliate and isolate them (CSI 2011, Ramadan 2009, Hassan and Hanafi 2010).

The Lebanese army have been organized security actions to control the camp and adjacent area directly after the end of the conflict. A social permit to enter the camp was
necessitated for both Palestinians and Lebanese. There were security offices that people had to walk on to show their documents. Army forces stopped the cars or people to search them. These security measures would take a long time for people to go into the camp. It was opposite way of easy commuting between the camp and its neighbor prior the war and lead to further isolation of the camp. Also it intensify the conflict between Palestinians and Lebanese authorities (CSI 2011).

Nah al-Bared, was an example of a camp that gained its agency through financial activities even in the absence of the PLO. From 1970, the camp grew and overflow of its population housed in the vicinity of the camp. In fact, with the prosperity of the refugees they afforded the land and housing in the adjacent area so the border of the camp practically expanded. While, the border of the camp was enlarged beyond its actual border, the 2007 war reinforced the actual border. Since then, the camp has been controlling via its border and the checkpoints. If the capital of the refugees helped them to form agency, now with reassertion of the border they regain their political agency where the extraterritoriality of the camp assure them the right to have political agency.

‘Ain al-Hilweh

‘Ain al-Hilweh with the population of more than 60,000 is the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon. The camp was established in 1949 by the International Committee of the Red Cross in southern part of the city of Saida. The camp at the beginning settled people from villages and towns in northern Palestine like from Saffourieh, al-Sofsaf, Tarshiha, Hittin. The camp is in proximity of Mieh Mieh and Darb el-Seem villages in southeast of old city of Saida. Due to its important socio-political role the camp consider as capital of Palestinians in exile.
‘Ain al-Hilweh includes eight neighborhoods, each of them was formed through a different process of “encroachment, appropriation, and/or negotiation with the surrounding areas that include both squatting (illegal land occupation) and informal land subdivisions” (Ghandour 2013). Also the buildings of a public housing know as Ta’meer which was built around 1958 by Lebanese government is located the camp. The camp and its adjacent areas settled a vast group of Palestinian refugees, poor Lebanese family and recently Syrian refugees (Ibid).

Basically the camp is managed by UNRWA since 1950 but because of its population and also its critical geopolitical location in south of Lebanon close to Israel has been playing a key role in Life of Palestinians in exile. The camp has frustrated history in seventies when camp was center of power for the PLO so it being targeted for demolition in 1980s. In 1982 Israel invaded the camps and war of the camps by Amal movement happened in 1985. From mid 1990s after civil war in Lebanon camps same as city of Saida witnessed a lot of extremist movements (UNRWA 2014; Ghandour 2013)

There is a daily movement between camp dweller and citizens. People go outside for school, work, shopping and so on, or the other way round. The mobility is not limited to small scale and it happen in a larger scale like migration out of the camp to other cities and countries and into the camp for new migrant communities (like low income Lebanese, foreign work forces and currently Syrian refugees). All the years of exile led to special relation with host community and simultaneously because of the socio-political and legal conflicts there is a sense of segregation.

‘Ain al-Hilweh is located in a strong security zone that was created more than twenty years ago. The creation of boundaries of this zone is ambiguous and it gradually have been
established by checkpoints, barbed wire fences, walls and watchtowers. ‘Ain al-Hilweh is surrounded by twelve neighborhoods that could be regarded as its expansion. Ten of these neighborhood are inside security zone (that is how the adjacent area suffer from proximity to the camps). Urbanization of neighborhoods happened informally in same spatial condition of the camp. Most of the population of neighborhood as well as camp are Palestinians with a minority of other nationalities.

Because the camp has fixed boundary the population growth lead into adding more stories in top of the existing buildings and densifying camp and outside the boundary of the camp vacant areas became neighborhood with mostly Palestinian dwellers. One of the famous neighborhood next to ‘Ain al-Hilweh is Ta’meer. At first Ta’meer was a public housing project to settle affected people from 1956 earthquake both Palestinian from Sh’him and Lebanese who lived in center of Saida. As increase in population of the camp and Ta’meer people add more stories to the mid-century building blocks. Now this neighborhood is a mix of Lebanese- Palestinians who have close relationship to each other rather other neighborhood in city of Saida. This neighborhood is one of the places for those who want to hide from the state especially for extremists (Ghandour 2013).

‘Ain al-Hilweh as a close camp through its urbanization process created a complex condition. In one hand it supposed to limit within its boundary from outside (city of Saida, Lebanese) but it expanded to the fabric of city. The condition around the camp is similar to the camp in a level that security zone enlarged. Apparently “state of exception” and “bare life” spread to the adjacent area even though adjacent area is not camp anymore.

The Lebanese army controlled entry to the camps and in the check point cars can be searched. From 1990s until 2005 entering any building materials to the camps without a
previous authorization was forbidden. Toward the end of July 2005, the Lebanese army erected roadblocks at most of the entrances to the camp, taking the names of anyone entering or exiting and causing long traffic delays. The pretext for the checkpoints was a search for the would-be assassins of newly reappointed Defense Minister Elias Murr, who had survived an attempt on his life on July 12. Murr claimed to know that the perpetrators were "hiding inside Palestinian refugee camps." No one in Ain al-Hilweh or elsewhere has been arrested in the case. (Khalili 2005).

Restriction on entry of building materials to the camp is the main reasons for degradation of houses in camps because it limited renovation and maintenance of houses. Also young couple cannot build new houses and settle down in the camps. So overflow of population had to leave the camps and settled in adjacent area (Dorai, 2010). The security zone, presence of military soldiers and physical border around camp are not for controlling the camps but they intensify “state of exception”. These checkpoints mark the place of stateless where refugees do not have Lebanese citizen’s rights. Also the Lebanese army permanently are present on the outskirts of the majority of the refugee camps. When attempting to enter refugee camps throughout southern Lebanon, such as ‘Ain al-Hilweh, you encounter a series of Lebanese military check-points which control each entry and exit point of the camp. These check-points prohibit freedom of movement for Palestinian refugees living in the camps (Christoff 2004: 2).

In Ain al-Hilweh, the current condition is marking up with a strong political agency. There are many active fractions in the camp and each neighborhood is controlling by a fraction. The struggle between political parties and armed militia is a part of daily life of the refugees inside the camp. From the outside, the camp has a strong security boundary which is
beyond the actual border of the camp. So the camp is located in the state of exception force by the Lebanese State in one hand and its extraterritoriality on the other hand.

Shatila and ’Ain al-Hilweh became important during the rise of PLO and forming resistant organization in the camps. The location of Shatila in Beirut increased its role after PLO had to leave Jordan. The security measures and boundary of the camps were changing during all the years depend on various factors: state of Lebanon, political condition, relations between Lebanon and Israel and relation between Palestinians and Israelis. For example during the presence of Deuxieme Bureau in 1950s and 60s control of the camps was more intense.

All the camps had some level of control by Lebanese. Cairo accord create a revolutionary ground for the camps. During Palestinian Resistance Movement (PRM) camps were less under the surveillance of state of Lebanon in 1969-1982. The strong presence of Palestinians in Lebanon declined with Israel invasion in 1982 and limited PRM and PLO to the camps. The battle of the camps had begun on 19 May 1985 and continued until 1987 mostly were concentrated in center and south of Beirut. Shatila was one of the camps that heavily destroyed during Amal sieges.

After the civil war, Shatila has been integrating to the city fabric. Shatila in spite of its location now assimilate to the city fabric and its borders are not physically intense. ‘Ain al-Hilweh keep its significance in south and due to its location even today has security control, checkpoints, and border. Nahr Al-Bared in north as a physically isolated camp, in the lack of security measures under some regional circumstances became a safe place for an extremist Islamic group. The Lebanese army shelled the camp in 2007. Reconstruction project of the camp was a test plot for a new model of control over the camp. Nahr Al-Bared was a
successful camp in terms of shaping an environment for Palestinian refugees to have a normal daily life. 2007 massacre completely demolished the camp. For the reconstruction program The Lebanese state were more concern with security and they tried to implement some elements in the reconstruction plan. Successful or not this part could reveal the attitude of Lebanese and the state toward Palestinians in more recent years. In the next part, I will discuss the relationship between political agency of Palestinian refugees and the changing boundary conditions of the three camps.
STATE OF SIEGE

New technologies of power are taking control of body and life or in Foucault terminology politics turn into biopolitics (Foucault 1997). Refugee camps were produced as result of the sociopolitical effects of these forms of power. In some instances, refugee camps have been conceptualized as “total institutions” where bodies are disciplined and control is an integral and defining component of the structure of the institution and its daily routine (Peteet 2005:29). In many ways, the space of the Palestinian camps has signified a mechanism of control for multiple political power. The refugees are expected to remain within their boundary where Lebanese army checkpoints can control what goes into the camp. The army controls the construction activity by allowing or not allowing building materials to enter the camp at any time. It is an environment under continuous potential siege. For example, when the Amal forces in conjunction with the Syrian regime started a war against Palestinians in 1985, they actually closed access to the camps using the same checkpoints that the army and the PLO used to control the security of the camps. The border and the checkpoints were already in place, Amal only activated the state of siege by closing access of goods through these checkpoints. Living under potential siege is manifested differently among the three camps. While Shatila camp is mostly integrated with neighboring areas like Sabra neighborhood in Beirut, ‘Ain al-Hilweh had a major impact on urbanization in Saida where the old city and the camp are now connected through a series of neighborhoods and institutional buildings. Nahr al-Bared on the other hand, which is situated in the countryside in northern Lebanon, became the urban hub for the region, which is seen within its original boundaries and the fabric that developed around it. These three camps show very different condition of integration. In the following section, I will discuss the
political agency of Palestinians in relation to the dynamics of borders, which defined the
spatial assimilation of the camps within the surrounding spatial fabric of the Lebanese state.

**Expansion and Consolidation of the Boundaries**

Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon have had fixed boundaries since their
establishment. The camps usually occupy limited space, which was designated areas by the
Lebanese state, situated on available public land or on private land leased from local
landowners by the state or UNRWA. Although the camps have had fixed geographic limits,
the visibility of their boundaries differed from one camp to another and from one period to
another. The definition of visible boundary in this research is any form of human-made
barrier, which marks and highlights the political boundary of the camp. In other words, any
fences, barbed wire, walls, check points, and solid barriers that mark the space of the camp
and makes its boundary visible. The configuration of the boundary reflects the power of
Lebanese state over the camp residents and their means of surveillance and control over the
spaces of the camps. These borders mark extraterritorial spaces since, from the perspective of
the Lebanese state, the camps are considered outside-sites where different legal and political
regulations apply. Hence, the visible boundary of the camps, such as the gateways,
checkpoints, and entries, define the transition into a different form of citizenship and its
respective rights.

In the first ten years of exile (1948-1958), Palestinian were adapting their life into the
spaces of the camps. The cultural similarities between the Palestinians and the Lebanese
helped refugees to build social relationships with their host community soon after the camp’s
establishment\textsuperscript{12}. During this period, the Lebanese did not see the presence of the refugees as a threat; hence they were more hospitable towards them. This period was a transformation phase for Palestinians as they adjusted to the spaces of the camps based on their needs and the resources they received from humanitarian agencies. Also, re-socialization happened through cultural and social relationship with other refugees and Lebanese neighbors through daily life and intermarriages (Agier 2008:71-81). This condition was common between the camps all over Lebanon as they were reestablishing their cultural identity after the traumatic event of exile. Gradually, the camps moved forward from temporary settlement to “city-camps” with formation of political agency and urban sociability with extensive financial activities. Toward the end of 1960s with the formation of Palestinian resistance movement, spaces of the camps were centers for the political and military organizations to attract Palestinians.

The first stage of monitoring the camps’ border took place at the end of President Camille Chamoun era and with the new government headed by General Fuad Chehab in 1958. During this period, the Palestinian resistance movement and Arab nationalist movement in the region were active, which concerned the pro-western government of Lebanon about the rising political activities inside the camps. Thus, the Lebanese intelligence, Deuxieme Bureau, monitored every movement within the camps, which limited the refugees’ freedom of expression and their political and social activities (Sayigh 1994, Suleiman 1999). During this period, and for the first time, the boundary of camps were controlled through checkpoints, which constrained the refugees’ political agency. At the time (1960s), control over Palestinians went beyond the border of the camps. They did not have

\textsuperscript{12}. For example, Shatila people developed a social relationship with adjacent Lebanese neighborhoods while extending infrastructural services, such as electricity and water, from these neighborhoods like Hayy Farhat and Sabra.
the right to work in many professions, their movement between the camps and to the other
countries was controlled, and entering building materials into the camps and adding new
stories was prohibited. With monitoring the border of the camps, production of political
agency and its scope of effects took a new form. For Palestinians, during this “dark age”,
“the Lebanese authorities were cast as enemies whose task was to prevent political
organizing, monitoring signs of permanency in the camps, and to keep the refugee politically
and spatially constrained” (Peteet 2005: 129). Political condition after 1958 resulted in
transforming the dynamics of the camps. Between the years of 1958 through 1969, the State
was successful in controlling the camps via their borders. However, this changed with the
increasing presence of the PLO in Lebanon overtime.

In the 1960s, the PLO was operating in both Lebanon and Jordan; however, they
established their headquarters in Lebanon in 1970 when they were expelled from Jordan.
Establishing their headquarters in Lebanon and as the result of the Cairo Accord agreement
the PLO increased their political and military activities in Lebanon during the 1970s. The
PLO provided infrastructure for the camps with financial support of Arab Gulf countries. The
presence of the PLO in Lebanon with its military, political and financial resources changed
the political agency of Palestinians in Lebanon centered within the camps. By the end of
1960s, refugees that were under surveillance of the Deuxieme Bureau before, found the
opportunity to claim their basic rights. Many Palestinians joined political and military
organizations that were operating freely during this time in the camps. With the political and
military power that Palestinians obtained, they were able to expand the camps and have more
influence on the Lebanese territory. Moreover, with the flow of the capital, which the PLO
brought to the camps, Palestinian started investing in buildings in the areas adjacent to the
camps. The camp became the provider of urban infrastructure not only within its boundary but for the surrounding neighborhoods. In this period, the boundary practically vanished and the camps became the center. The Cairo accord in 1969, not only let refugees to have military activities inside the camps, it lifted the other sanctions against Palestinians (Peteet 2005). The main goal of the Cairo accord for the Lebanese side was limiting Palestinian political and military activities to the camps’ border. However, the results of the Cairo accord actually contributed to the expansion of the camps. This allowed an increase in Palestinian political agency with the support of the PLO, which empowered Palestinians to transform spaces of the camps. This transformation extended radius of their influence beyond the camp’s limit.

During this period of transformation, Shatila was one of the camps that had its boundary integrated into the neighborhoods in South of Beirut. Sabra, a neighborhood north of Shatila, housed the overflowing Palestinian population of the camp as well as low income non-Palestinians. Shatila extended its border with the strong political agency that was created during the PLO control period. The camp played an important role at the time due to its proximity to the PLO administration district in neighboring Fakhani where the organization west Beirut headquarters were.

The disappearance of the boundary was also manifested in Nahr Al-Bared through informal commercial activity. This camp was built outside of the major population center because it was geographically more isolated from major Lebanese cities compared to the other camps. Situated in one of the poorest regions of Lebanon, the camp gradually turned to a major commercial hub in Akkar region benefiting from the main road to Syria that was

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13 Officially, Sabra was not part of Shatila camp, but because of its social and spatial integration with the camp, it was targeted together with Shatila camp during the massacre and the war of the camps in 1982 and 1984 respectively.
passing through the camp and its closeness to Syria border (Government of Lebanon 2008). It was one of the camps without army checkpoints for many years; even after Palestinian organizations lost their military presence after the departure of the PLO.

Unlike the other camps that lost their political agency in the absence of the PLO, this camp, through commercial dominance, acquired similar conditions. Accordingly, the camp expanded through Palestinian capital but also within its context. Because of the power of capital in a region which is completely deprived this camp became the hub of the consumption within the region. Therefore, whenever Palestinians had political agency or capital, the boundary vanished while they became dominant over Lebanese communities.

However, it has not been always favorable for Palestinians when boundaries disappear. Borders vanish when the state actually entered into the camps to take control of the space of the camps. One example is the case of Sabra and Shatila Massacre and the war of the camps. The massacre and war of the camps left Shatila camp with enormous

14 The adjacent “new camp” started to grow in the late 1970s. Regardless of its poor condition, Nahr Al-Bared camp played a major role in the informal economy of its region compared to other camps. It provided cheaper goods and services not only for its residents, but for Lebanese villages in the region. In addition to being a major commercial hub in north of Lebanon, it was a source of cheap labor for the Lebanese agricultural communities close to the camp. Also, because it was on the main road to Syria, it provided services like repair and maintenance for the transportation sector as well (UNRWA 2008: 17).

15 It started with the end of an era which Palestinian refugees remember as “golden years” and “years of revolution” which took place between 1969-1982. In 1975, the Lebanese civil war began and they became suspicious of refugee’s presence in Lebanon. Years of openness toward the camps was encroached in 1976 with invasion of Israel and right-wing Christian Maronite. Even four camps, namely Tal al-Za’tar, Jisr-El-Basha and Dbayeh in East Beirut and Nabatiyeh in southern Lebanon, were destroyed during different armed battles and the refugees were forced to move to the other camps. In 1982 the tension had mounted between Palestinians military organizations and political parties with the Lebanese counterparts. Israel attacked south of Lebanon in June and soon the PLO were expelled from Lebanon. Palestinians refugees lost their support against both Lebanese Islamic groups and Christians Maronite. (Peteet 2005: 151). Christian right-wing militiamen, who coordinated with and supported by Israel, entered into Shatila. During the three day massacre, they killed 800 to 3,000 Palestinians and Lebanese civilians. For the camp’s expansion, the proximity was not beneficial anymore and in fact it was detrimental. For example, Sabra which was an informal settlement north of Shatila, was bombarded during the massacre and later during the war of the camps because of its proximity. With Sabra and Shatila massacre, the State took the control and entered to the spaces of the camp. War of the camps in 1985-1987, interrupted political agency of Palestinians more and border of the camps forced to shrink and vanish. Inside the Shatila camp, some Shi’a families were living next to their Sunni neighbors. There wasn’t any religious conflict between these two groups until war of the camps. This war was
damages. Shatila camp never recovered its boundary after the massacre and war of the camps. Palestinians in Shatila lost all political agency until nowadays where a significant part of the camp is inhabited by non-Palestinian. Shatila is an example of a camp that had invisible border during its rise and then decline. The political agency of its inhabitants peaked during the period of strong military presence of the PLO, and drastically diminished when this military presence disappeared. The lack of physical borders, made Shatila camp more vulnerable than others in losing its integrity as a space for Palestinian citizenship and agency. When the military dominance of Palestinians diminished, the space of the Lebanese state with its corresponding juridical-political structure took over the space of the camp and consumed the political agency of its Palestinian inhabitants.

Such a process can also be traced in the aftermath of the battle of the Lebanese Army with Fateh al Islam in Nahr Al-Bared in 2007. Upon entering the camp to chase the mostly non-Palestinian fundamentalist group, the Lebanese army systematically destroyed all the buildings within the official boundary of the camp (Ramadan 2010). The camp space was considered devoid of any “right to exist.” The right to space is annihilated to a condition that resembles the conditions of bare life that Agamben articulates. During three months of siege, shelling the camp and its adjacent areas resulted in reassertion of the border of the camp. The camp residents that were displaced outside the camp lost any voice to assert their right to their space. This condition gradually changed during the reconstruction phase with the presence of international agencies that were backing the reconstruction efforts of the camp.

actually between Shi’a Amal group with back of Syria against Sunni Palestinians. Amal wanted to remove remaining of PLO’s patron and their allies from the camps. As war began, most of the Shi’as inside the camps left their houses either to help their Shi’a fellows or to not participate in the war against their former Sunni neighbors (Sayigh 1994).

16 Like low-income Lebanese, immigrants and more recently Syrian refugees and Palestinians refugees fled from Syria.
During this process the displaced families were moving back into the camp borders, which are now highly secured and militarized. During its siege, Nahr al-Bared camp went into the state of exception where the Lebanese army allowed the annihilation of all forms of life within the camp disregarding any judicial or legal framework (Ramadan 2009: 154-155). Similar to Shatila camp, Nahr al-Bared Palestinian inhabitants lost their political agency when the Lebanese army presence in the camp expanded the space of the Lebanese state and disregarded the extraterritoriality of the camp. Since the boundaries were physically reestablished and militarized, Palestinians that returned to the camp are regaining their political agency and representation within these new hard boundaries.

‘Ain al-Hilweh camp has retained physically controlled and militarized boundaries similar to the current conditions of Nahr al-Bared camp, soon after the PLO left Lebanon. The creation of boundaries of the security zone is ambiguous and it gradually have been established by checkpoints, barbed wire fences, walls and watchtowers that enclosed the official camp with several adjacent areas\(^{17}\). Having strong physical and militarized boundaries for an extended period of time, ‘Ain al-Hilweh is also the stronghold of Palestinian political presence in Lebanon. The presence of strong political agency in this camp is spatially apparent where every neighborhood is controlled by a specific party or private militia (Ghandour 2013). Through its expansion, the camp has expanded its extraterritorial space by pushing the security boundary to include the expanded adjacent areas. With the expansion of the extraterritorial space, the space of political agency and

\(^{17}\) ‘Ain al-Hilwah is surrounded by twelve neighborhoods that could be regarded as its expansion. Ten of these neighborhood are inside the security zone. Urbanization of most of these neighborhoods happened informally similar to the spatial condition of the camp. The majority of the population of these neighborhoods as well as the camp are Palestinians with several Lebanese and non-Lebanese minorities (Ghandour 2013).
citizenship of the Palestinians has expanded as they control more land outside the camp official boundary in which they can exercise their politics.

For the Palestinians living in Lebanon, the space outside the camp boundaries is state of exception where they have practically no political agency or civic rights. Accordingly, the strong physical boundaries, such as the boundary of the security zone in ‘Ain al-Hilweh, has retained a space of citizenship and political agency with the larger space of the Lebanese state. The Lebanese army controlled entry to the camp and in the checkpoint cars can be searched, however the Lebanese army stays outside the boundary of the camp security zone. For many Lebanese, Palestinian refugee camps especially in south like ‘Ain al-Hilweh have been places "beyond the reach of law" (Suleiman 1999: 71). Lebanese Media and some politicians called this situation "security islands" that recall camps as places outside the authority of the state (Suleiman 1999: 71-72). Based on this analysis these extraterritorial “security islands” may also be considered spaces of citizenship and political agency in a landscape of the “state-of-exception” of the Lebanese state. Palestinians in ‘Ain al-Hilweh have been obtaining compelling political agency inside the camp as well as Palestinian in Nahr al-Bared following the establishment of its boundaries. This extraterritorial space of citizenship is threatened or destroyed when the physical boundaries of the camp are not present, such as the post-1984 Shatila camp and pre-2007 Nahr al-Bared camp. For Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the extraterritorial space of the camp is the locus of their political agency and their protection from shifting into the state of exception of the official space of the Lebanese state.

Based on these three case studies, the political agency of Palestinians in Lebanon has been strongly manifested when the camp has visible and highly secured boundary or when
they had military and/or commercial power. Within the established boundaries, the political agency of Palestinians is secured through international legislation that gives them self-representation. These “extraterritorial and exceptional spaces” that are out of the Lebanese state law, grant them political rights in accordance with formal international protocols. Even though, Palestinians have been able to gain authority and political agency through military power (pre 1982 PLO presence in Lebanon) or commercial power (pre-2007 Nahr al-Bared), their presence as political subjects have been secured through the strong physical and militarized boundaries that preserves extraterritorial spaces, of their camps, within the state of Lebanon.
CONCLUSION

Borders of the camps represent the shifting power scale between the camps and host spaces. While the Lebanese authorities have been trying to confine spaces of the camps, the camps’ borders have indicated everlasting efforts of the refugees over forming political agency and claiming civil rights. In fact, these boundaries define the inclusion and exclusion of Palestinians in relation to their context. The juxtaposition of spaces of the camps to their surroundings, regarding the daily activity and political and social landscape of the camps have generated obscured condition within the borders. When Palestinians were dominant, whether with political, finical or military power, the borders moved beyond actual border of the camps. In contrary, when the State took the control, the visible boundary shrink and the refugees lose their agency.

However, camps are spaces out of the state law, Palestinian refugee camps are an example of perpetual claim over right to exist. These three cases, subject of this thesis, show how conditions vary due to complicated sociopolitical circumstances which create spaces of the camps. The Lebanese State wanted to keep Palestinians in the state of exception while Cairo Accord as an international protocol created an extraterritorial spaces in contrast. The refugees inside these extraterritorial spaces like case of ‘Ain al-Hilweh have found the opportunity of forming political agency which is against desire of the host state. So as earlier was discussed not all of the camps are necessarily in the state of exception, but quiet contrary their extraterritorial spaces let them to have political agency inside the camps.
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APPENDIX: THE CAIRO ACCORD (1969)

On Monday, 3rd November 1969, the Lebanese delegation headed by Army Commander General Emile al-Bustani, and the Palestine Liberation Organization delegation, headed by Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the organization, met in Cairo in the presence of the United Arab Republic Minister of Foreign Affairs Mahmud Riyad, and the War Minister, General Muhammad Fawzi.

In consonance with the bonds of brotherhood and common destiny, relations between Lebanon and the Palestinian revolution must always be conducted on the bases of confidence, frankness, and positive cooperation for the benefit of Lebanon and the Palestinian revolution and within the framework of Lebanon's sovereignty and security. The two delegations agreed on the following principles and measures:

The Palestinian Presence

It was agreed to reorganize the Palestinian presence in Lebanon on the following bases:

1. The right to work, residence, and movement for Palestinians currently residing in Lebanon;

2. The formation of local committees composed of Palestinians in the camps to care for the interests of Palestinians residing in these camps in cooperation with the local Lebanese authorities within the framework of Lebanese sovereignty;

3. The establishment of posts of the Palestinian Armed Struggle [PASC] inside the camps for the purpose of cooperation with the local committees to ensure good relations with the
Lebanese authorities. These posts shall undertake the task of regulating and determining the presence of arms in the camps within the framework of Lebanese security and the interests of the Palestinian revolution;

4. Palestinians resident in Lebanon are to be permitted to participate in the Palestinian revolution through the Armed Struggle and in accordance with the principles of the sovereignty and security of Lebanon.

**Commando Activity**

It was agreed to facilitate commando activity by means of:

1. Facilitating the passage of commandos and specifying points of passage and reconnaissance in the border areas;

2. Safeguarding the road to the 'Arqub region;

3. The Armed Struggle shall undertake to control the conduct of all the members of its organizations and [to ensure] their non-interference in Lebanese affairs;

4. Establishing a joint command control of the Armed Struggle and the Lebanese Army;

5. Ending the propaganda campaigns by both sides;

6. Conducting a census of Armed Struggle personnel in Lebanon by their command.

7. Appointing Armed Struggle representatives at Lebanese Army headquarters to participate in the resolution of all emergency matters;
8. Studying the distribution of all suitable points of concentration in border areas which will be agreed with the Lebanese Army command;

9. Regulating the entry, exit, and circulation of Armed Struggle personnel;


11. The Lebanese Army shall facilitate the operation of medical, evacuation, and supply centers for commando activity;

12. Releasing detained personnel and confiscated arms;

13. It is understood that the Lebanese authorities, both civil and military, shall continue to exercise all their prerogatives and responsibilities in all areas of Lebanon in all circumstances;

14. The two delegations affirm that the Palestinian armed struggle is in the interest of Lebanon as well as in that of the Palestinian revolution and all Arabs;

15. This agreement shall remain Top Secret and for the eyes of the commands only.

Head of Lebanese delegation

Emile Bustani

Head of Palestinian delegation

Yasir 'Arafat

*Resolution adopted by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, 21 May 1987*

2. The agreement signed on 3 November 1969 between the head of the Lebanese delegation General Emile Bustani and the Chairman of the PLO and which is known as the "Cairo Agreement" is hereby null and void as if it had never existed. Further, all annexes and measures related to the Cairo Agreement are hereby null and void as if they had never existed.

3. This law will become effective upon its publication in the Official Gazette.