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BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VILLAGE ORIGIN IN A PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP

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23 MAY 2000

Dissertation submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts to the Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham, 1999.

This dissertation is the result of my own work. Material from the published or unpublished work of others, which is referred to in the dissertation, is credited to the author in the text. The dissertation is approximately 40,000 words in length.

R. Long

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**BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VILLAGE ORIGIN
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Rebecca Roberts

BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VILLAGE ORIGIN IN A PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP.

ABSTRACT

Using information derived from interviews with Palestinians from Bourj al-Barajneh refugee camp, Beirut, this thesis examines the importance of village origin in the camp and whether any role played by village origin is the result of deliberate actions by the Palestinians or purely accidental.

The pattern of settlement within the camp is established to determine whether village origin in Palestine has influenced the camp structure. Factors that may initially have influenced the camp structure are evaluated such as, the route taken by the Palestinians between their villages and Bourj al-Barajneh, and their reasons for settling in the camp and choosing where to pitch their tents. Throughout its history the camp structure has evolved, different areas being more extensively developed at different times. Reasons for the camps changing structure are also examined.

The importance of village origin to the social and political life of the camp is considered and its significance compared with other factors that play a role in camp life.

To put in context information collected from Bourj inhabitants, this thesis begins by discussing the Palestinian refugee problem and presenting a brief history of the camp based on inhabitants' recollections. For comparison, Rashidieh and Ein al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camps also in Lebanon were visited and a brief description of their structures and village origins of their inhabitants included.

This thesis concludes that to a certain extent the camp structure has been influenced by village origin although other factors have played an important role. Initially village origin had some influence socially which has now decreased. Politically village origin has never had any influence. Above all, there does not appear to have been a deliberate attempt to promote the importance of village origin in the camp.

1. INTRODUCTION

Two years ago I visited Bourj al-Barajneh refugee camp in Beirut. While I was there, inhabitants described the camp as resembling part of Palestine because people who originated from the same village in Palestine had settled together in one area of the camp. This meant that the camp was composed of village quarters, different areas being occupied by different villages and referred to by the name of that particular village.

The claim that the physical structure of the camp had been dictated by the village origins of the refugees was fascinating, and apparently supported by academic research.

This is how Bassem Sirhan described the Palestinian Refugee camps in Lebanon (1975: 101),

"[T]he inhabitants of the camps are grouped around the Palestinian villages from which they originated and the extended family units are still the basis of social life. In this way many villages which the Israelis occupied by force, evacuated and demolished in Palestine are still, socially speaking, alive and coherent units"

In 1991 Julie Peteet said that,

"The bulk of refugees from al-Zib.....later settled at the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon in Lebanon. They named their quarter of the camp, located near the railroad tracks, al-Zib." (Quoted in Swedenburg, 1995: 69).

It seems that the formation of village quarters on camps was, at least in some instances, deliberate. In her book, *Too many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, Rosemary Sayigh discusses the origins of Shatila refugee camp. She explains how,

"Village-based ties were reconstructed in the camps in Lebanon through social processes of 'in-gathering' such as those used by Abu Kamal to recruit the Majd al-Kroom majority in Shatila". (1994: 61)

Apparently Abu Kamal had travelled around Lebanon looking for people from his village, Majd al-Kroom, encouraging them to settle together in Shatila. (1994: 36)

1.i. AIMS

I was curious about the significance of village origins in Bourj al-Barajneh camp and this inspired a three-month visit in the summer of 1998 to conduct research. The aims of my fieldwork were, with the help of inhabitants, to produce a map of the camp to establish whether there were village quarters and, if there were, whether they were the result of



deliberate 'social in-gathering' or purely accidental. I also wanted to look at factors and events that had affected the structure of the camp and the size of the population.

Through free-flowing structured interviews and informal conversations I planned to gather a variety of information to enable me to:

- produce a brief social history of the camp focusing on the events that most concerned the respondents;
- assess the influence of village origin on the daily social and political life of the camp;
- examine other factors, such as political movements and Lebanese Government policies, affecting the camp community;
- compare the structure of Bourj al-Barajneh and the origins of its inhabitants with other camps in Lebanon to assess whether the significance of village origin in Bourj is replicated elsewhere.

As far as I am aware, although other academics have noted that village origin appears to be significant to the physical and social structure of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, there has been no detailed research conducted to establish the nature and extent of this significance.

My choice of Bourj al-Barajneh as the focus of my research was influenced entirely by the fact that because of my voluntary work there two years earlier I am known and trusted by the inhabitants. Palestinian camps in Lebanon are excluded from Lebanese society and consequently are insular. To conduct research in a camp without first establishing contacts and trust would not only be unproductive, but regarded by the camp inhabitants as an invasion. Strangers are regarded with suspicion. Reasons for this are discussed in chapter 2.

Rashidieh and Ein al-Hilweh camps were used as comparisons in my research because I already had contacts there. I do not believe that the conclusions of my research are necessarily representative of other Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. All the camps differ because of location, some are rural, others are urban, history, size and population structure as many non-Palestinians live in the camps. Although my research in Bourj al-Barajneh may not be representative of other camps in Lebanon – research based in any one of the camps in Lebanon would not be representative – it provides a starting point and a comparison for further research into the significance of village origin in other camps.

In this thesis I shall present the conclusions drawn from my fieldwork that aim to assess the significance of village origin. Chapter 2 provides background information about the origins of

the Palestinian refugee problem and the status of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and chapter 3 explains in greater detail how the fieldwork for this thesis was conducted. Chapter 4 is a history of the camp based mainly on information gathered from inhabitants. In chapter 5 I shall describe the physical structure of the camp. There is also a map showing the names of areas and prominent features in the camp based on maps produced by inhabitants. Chapter 6 examines how the refugees came to Bourj al-Barajneh from Palestine and how they chose where to settle on the camp. Events and factors affecting the camp structure after the 1950s are described in chapter 7. Chapter 8 attempts to evaluate some of the inhabitants' attitudes towards other villages and what effects these have on the social life of the camp. In chapter 9 I shall conclude by discussing the importance of village origin to the physical, social and political structure of the camp in relation to other potentially influential factors.

2.ii. BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH REFUGEE CAMP

Bourj al-Barajneh camp is one of the twelve UNRWA camps in Lebanon. UNRWA estimates that there are 16,506¹ registered refugees living on the camp while its Palestinian inhabitants quote population figures that vary from 10,000 to 20,000².

The camp is located in the sprawling southern suburbs of the capital, Beirut, next to the main road connecting the country's international airport to the city. According to UNRWA, the camp occupies an area of 104, 200m² but it is unclear whether this figure represents only the area of land within the camp boundaries, or if it also includes the areas of unofficial housing adjacent to the camp where Palestinian refugees also live.

Access to the camp from the airport road is guarded by a Syrian checkpoint although the soldiers posted there never seem to stop anyone from entering the camp. Other roads leading to the camp are unguarded.

There is little space on the camp and few areas are accessible by car. The pathways in the official areas of the camp are asphalt. Houses are crammed together in narrow streets some of which are barely wide enough for one person to walk along. Exterior walls are decorated with religious slogans and brightly painted pictures of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. Many of these are painted to welcome the pilgrims back from the Hajj. There are also political statements and posters displayed around the camp, especially near the Resistance offices.

¹ UNRWA statistics June 1997.

² Fieldwork summer 1998

Many of the houses are three or four stories high. The space provided by the flat roofs is often used for growing small fruits and vegetables such as grapes, figs, beans and herbs or keeping hens and goats.

As well as houses there are numerous shops on the camp selling groceries, clothing, household products and traditional fast food. There are also small workshops, some privately funded others run by NGOs, producing items such as clothes or furniture, or offering various maintenance services.

The camp also has a hospital, called Haifa Hospital and run by the Palestinian Red Crescent (PRCS), a mosque, several community centres and nurseries so that parents fortunate enough to have jobs can continue to work while their children are young. Children of school age are either educated in the UNRWA school near the camp or private Lebanese schools. There are no schools within the boundaries of the camp although some organisations run additional educational programmes after school or during the school holidays.

There are two telephone exchanges operating a handful of lines between the camp and the outside world.

The electricity supply to the camp was originally obtained by tapping illegally into the mains. When the Lebanese Government realized that it was impossible to stop this practice it decided to charge each household a flat rate for electricity. Although the electricity going into the camp is now regulated, within the camp there is no official body monitoring the manner in which the supply is made available to and used by the individuals. Inhabitants seem to be free to alter the wiring in their homes and run extra lines from the camp supply. Consequently the wiring is chaotic. Electricity lines loop dangerously low into the streets, and junction boxes overflow with tangled wires.

Like much of the infrastructure in Lebanon, the electricity supply was severely damaged during the civil war. Much has been done since to improve the system and the provision of electricity is more reliable. However, the camp still suffers from frequent power cuts and is one of the first places to be cut off when the city's power supplies are low. This often happens when the floodlights are used during the football matches at the main stadium.

The tap water is only for washing and most seems to be transported around the camp in a series of pipes, above ground level, running along the pavements. In some areas of the camp inhabitants complain that the water quality is too poor even for washing as it is extremely

salty so should not be used on the skin. Water for drinking and cooking has to be bought separately from privately supplied tanks. However, this is sometimes contaminated and bottled water is the only safe water, for both inhabitants and visitors, available on the camp.

The Lebanese Government, unlike other governments of countries hosting Palestinian refugee camps, has refused to collect refuse from the camps. Consequently, large piles of waste, attracting rats and flies, often build up outside the camp. On an irregular basis UNRWA removes this rubbish. Within the camp UNRWA employees organize refuse collection. Bags of rubbish are left on the streets to be collected and taken outside the camp for disposal.

The Lebanese Government also refused to help with sewage disposal. However, in 1995, UNRWA secured a grant from the European Union to install a sewage system in Bourj al-Barajneh and connect it to the municipal sewers. The Government agreed only because half of the grant was used to upgrade the sewerage system surrounding Bourj before connecting the camp to the system.³ Unfortunately, the sewerage system seems unable to cope with all the waste and needs constant attention to prevent it from becoming completely blocked and overflowing onto the streets.

Apart from Palestinians, there are also Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians and Sri Lankans living on the camp. They are not allowed to own property but are able to rent houses or rooms from Palestinians who work abroad or have a spare room. Some Palestinian families are forced to accept lodgers to help pay their bills.

1.iii. METHODOLOGY

I was aware, because of a previous visit to the camp and travel in other Middle Eastern countries, that adopting a formal role as participant or non-participant observer and using conventional methods to obtain information would be inappropriate. First, I was known in the camp and to exclude myself from daily life would have been considered rude and made gathering reliable information difficult. Secondly, the Arabs are a friendly people and would have disliked the formality imposed by a questionnaire and structured interviews. Thirdly, life in the Middle East moves at a slower pace and is less regulated than in the West and it is difficult to make firm arrangements. Few events take place on time and without unforeseen complications.

³ Interview with Lionel Brisson, Director of UNRWA, Lebanon, September 1996.

With the above knowledge, I decided to adopt approaches advocated by those who use Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) to obtain information. Robert Chambers discusses the advantages of flexible, adaptable and informal approaches using a variety of innovative techniques in *Rural Development: putting the last first* (1983).

RPA and RRA approaches aim to facilitate the gathering of information from respondents rather than eliciting it. Techniques are used, such as asking respondents to draw simple diagrams (see below and chapter 3 for a description of the maps of the camp produced by Bourj al-Barajneh inhabitants and appendices 4a and 4b for examples of respondents' maps), that encourage respondents to volunteer information so that the starting point of the research comes from the respondents rather than the researcher. Respondents can also be encouraged to volunteer information by allowing any interviews centred around certain topics to be as free flowing as possible and based on open ended questions that provoke detailed answers and discussions where groups of respondents are involved. PRA and RRA methods also encourage the researcher to participate in daily life to gather information through unobtrusive measures. In this way friendships develop and again respondents take the initiative and begin providing information that they consider important and not just the information requested by the researcher. By participating in daily life the researcher also sees areas that need to be explored that may have been overlooked when planning the research.

The advantage of facilitating over eliciting information is that the direction of the research is dictated by the respondents and not the researcher whose preconceived ideas may distort the research process and lead to inaccurate conclusions. Chambers states, "Relaxed discussions reveal the questions outsiders do not know to be asked, and open up the unexpected" (1983: 202). The methods of information gathering are varied and many informal occasions can be used for research. This reduces the amount of time needed to gather information. It also helps improve accuracy, because it increases opportunities for cross checking as information is collected from different sources under different circumstances. The speed of the research process is also increased because of the emphasis on using small samples and gathering qualitative rather than quantitative information.

As PRR and PRA methods allow the researcher to participate and do not rely on structured questioning and formal interviews which can inhibit responses, they are also less intimidating for respondents and consequently should produce richer, more accurate information. The informality should help reduce any feelings of inferiority that a respondent might have when talking to a researcher. It is unfortunate that respondents seem to feel in awe of Westerners and their education and lifestyle. Simple measures can be taken to demonstrate respect to

respondents and to try to eliminate some of the barriers. For example, if the respondents usually sit on the floor then the researcher should conduct the interview sitting on the floor with the respondents.

PRA and RRA methods recognize that a researcher can not remain completely detached and that merely by being present will influence respondents and the research environment. These factors need to be addressed during the research and analysis to limit their influence on the conclusions. It should also be recognized that a researcher interprets and analyses data according to experiences, culture and values giving a certain bias to the final conclusions that may differ from that of another researcher. Research into any sort of human behaviour is not an exact science and these discrepancies, regardless of the efforts made, can not be avoided.

1.iv. ANALYSIS

Eight mapping interviews and 43 prearranged interviews with a total of 22 respondents were conducted and information was collected informally through unobtrusive measures. Visits were also made to Ein al-Hilweh and Rashidieh Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon. See appendix 1 and 2 for a list of respondents and chapter 3 for a description of the fieldwork process.

Information I gathered in 1996 during interviews with Non Governmental Organization (NGO) workers from such organizations such as, Save the Children and the Norwegian People's Association, and UNRWA employees about aid given to the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has been used on two occasions in this thesis. A selective list of participants in 1996 can be found in appendix 3.

Of the eight mapping interviews I conducted, three were with individuals from the villages of Tarshiha, Ghabsiyyeh and Fara, one was with a couple from Shaykh Daoud and four were with family groups from Kuwaykat, Kabri, Shaykh Daoud and Sa'sa'. The individual from Ghabsiyyeh, and the couple and family from Shaykh Daoud, refused to draw a map of the camp. One of the individuals from Tarshiha made me draw a map according to his instructions, which were not very explicit, and the other individual respondent did not produce a coherent map. Consequently, I compiled a map of the camp based on the maps drawn by three of the family groups. As these were group interviews and the drawing of the map took time and involved discussion, I feel that they are more accurate than maps produced by individuals.

Taped information from the mapping sessions was transcribed.

I interviewed all respondents a second time except the family from Sa'sa' and the couple from Shaykh Daoud because I was unable to contact them.

Again, information from the interviews was transcribed and read thoroughly several times to determine how it should be coded to aid analysis of the data. Information from the various respondents concerning the same topic was compared. Personal judgement has been used to determine what information should be presented. I have concentrated on elements that most concerned respondents and selected the data that seemed most accurate. Where respondents agree, information has been presented and analysed. Points of disagreement and possible reasons for disagreement, such as personal circumstances of the respondent, are discussed. Where I feel that information was incorrect because it conflicted with all other information, or respondents seemed poorly informed, it has been excluded unless it demonstrates a point, such as an inhabitant's insular life style.

During interviews, notes were taken about the environment, such as noise, heat and distractions from children and visitors. Their effect on respondents has been taken into account during analysis of the interviews.

2. THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

2.i. THE ORIGINS OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

'Palestine as a modern geographic and political unit was the creation of World War One and its peace settlements' (Hurewitz quoted in Divine, 1994: 199). Before then, its borders had 'always been vague and uncertain' (Kimmerling and Migal, 1993: 3). From 1517, Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire and not identified as a separate political entity but as the Holy Land or Southern Syria, part of Greater Syria – a vast area which includes modern day Syria, Jordan Lebanon and Israel. For administrative purposes the Ottomans divided Palestine into various districts which came under the control of different provinces. For example, in 1864, the region was divided into three districts: Jerusalem, Acre and Nablus. The central district of Nablus belonged to the province of Damascus, while the district of Acre in the north was part of the province of Beirut. The district of Jerusalem became an independent administrative unit in 1887 and was directly responsible to Istanbul (see appendix 5 for map of Palestine under the Ottomans)

In the mid-nineteenth century the population of Palestine was about half a million; most of the inhabitants were Muslim, 10% were Christian and 5-7% were Jewish (Stein quoted in Muslih, 1988: 13). The majority lived in village communities scattered throughout the countryside. Each village comprised two or three clans and was headed by a mukhtar. 'The villages tended to be socially and politically self-centred and contained' and the villagers largely unaware of events beyond the village boundary (Morris, 1987: 9). There was little or no contact between the rural and urban community and no strong nationalistic feelings.

It was in 1920 that the 'limits of ...[Palestine] were laid down on the map in a definitive form for the first time' (Biger, 1979: 9). The Supreme Council of the League of Nations, sitting in San Remo, divided the former Ottoman Arab territories into mandated territories and, in 1922, officially gave the mandate of Palestine to Great Britain, whose army had been occupying the area since 1917. (See appendix 6 for map of Mandate Palestine).

The Mandate for Palestine differed from those of the other mandated territories because, instead of being limited to the provision of 'administrative assistance and advice' which would lead to the creation of an independent state, its 'primary aim was the implementation of the Balfour Declaration' (UN, 1978: 1). The Balfour Declaration, issued by the British Government in 1917, promised to 'support the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'

(see appendix 7 for copy of the Balfour Declaration). Although there was only a small indigenous population of Jews in Palestine, it was considered by all Jews to be of great historic and religious importance.

Immigration into Palestine had already begun before the British Mandate for several reasons: disillusionment caused by the failure of the Jews in western Europe to assimilate, despite the spread of liberal views; the emergence of nationalism in Europe which influenced the Jews' desire for a land of their own; the need in Eastern Europe to escape from the Pogroms and the new Communist regimes. In 1880 the European Jewish population in Palestine was around 25,000. By 1914 it had increased to 85,000 (McDowall, 1998: 4). During the British Mandate the number of Jewish immigrants increased dramatically, largely because of the Nazi Holocaust. From 1917 to 1947 the Jewish population of Palestine, composed principally of immigrants, increased from 10% to 30% (UN, 1978: 1).

Despite the British government's public support for the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, it was anxious to limit the number of immigrants as the Palestinians resented the influx of Jewish settlers. The violent clashes that broke out between the Palestinians and the Jews, and the escalating terrorist activities on both sides threatened British control. Consequently, there were attempts to curb Jewish immigration and reach a compromise between the Palestinians and the Jews. However, the Palestinians were reluctant to co-operate and lacked, as far as the British were concerned, an official representative body to voice popular Palestinian opinion. The British and other official delegations seeking a solution to the problems in Palestine found it easier to deal with the Jewish community because it was willing to co-operate and had developed political institutions to represent its views. The responsive attitude of the Jews, in sharp contrast with that of the Palestinians, gained them greater support from the international community which, in turn, meant that their ambitions were given greater consideration than those of the Palestinians.

The Arab Revolt (1936-1939) did nothing to promote the Palestinian cause. The British, anticipating the outbreak of a second world war did not want to be distracted by unrest in overseas territories and adopted harsh military measures to put down the Revolt. By the time the British army had re-established control, the Palestinians had suffered heavy losses, had most of their weaponry confiscated, and were without strong leadership as many prominent leaders had fled abroad. Conversely, the Jews used the revolt to establish better relations with the British by helping to quash the revolt. In return, the British trained and armed the Jewish forces.

The MacDonald White Paper of 1939, was an attempt to appease the Palestinians and prevent a possible Arab-Nazi alliance. It proposed a limit to Jewish immigration of 15,000 a year for the next ten years and, after that, to allow immigration only with Palestinian agreement. There would be a restriction on land transfer to Jews who had increased their land ownership from 0.5% at the end of the nineteenth century to 5.6% by 1939 (Arab Women's Information Committee, n.d. 3,12). The White Paper also included a promise to create an independent Palestine. However, the proposals were rejected by the Jews as a betrayal of the Balfour Declaration and, although the Palestinians recognized that the acceptance of the proposals may have lead to the creation of an independent state, they distrusted the British and felt that they were being offered only that to which they were already entitled according to the terms of the Mandate.

The onset of the Second World War meant that the White Paper was never implemented. The British tried to regulate the influx of Jewish refugees but because of the Holocaust it proved impossible. The plight of the Jews stirred international public sympathy which viewed any attempts by the British to turn away the Jews from Palestine as inhumane. The sheer number of Jewish refugees, not eased by the United States closing its borders to them, overwhelmed the British authorities already overstretched and preoccupied with the Nazi threat in Europe.

After the Second World War, tensions increased between the Palestinians and the now significantly larger Jewish population. The British Government recognized that it could not find either a solution for the future status of Palestine which would satisfy both the Palestinians and the Jews, or afford to finance the escalating costs of the Mandate which were a heavy burden on resources already depleted by war. Consequently, in February 1947, the question of Palestine was handed over to the United Nations (UN).

On 2 April 1947, during a special session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was created. Its task was to investigate the possible solutions to the problem of Palestine and present them to the General Assembly.

After the war, the problem of Palestine and the plight of the Jewish refugees in Europe were linked. One UN delegate involved in discussions to establish UNSCOP argued that the two problems were not 'necessarily interdependent' and that by combining the two issues, 'the difficulty of finding a just and satisfactory solution to the Palestinian question [was] increased' (UN, 1978: 6). Despite this fear, 'UNSCOP was authorized to conduct investigations anywhere it considered necessary, thus assuring an indirect linkage of the

Jewish refugees issue to the future of Palestine' (UN, 1978: 8). As a result, members of UNSCOP visited Jewish refugee camps in Europe which must have influenced their attitudes in favour of creating a homeland for the Jews where they would be protected from such persecution in the future.

The willingness of the Jewish community to co-operate, compared with the Palestinians' refusal to participate in the investigations, again strengthened their case against that of the Palestinians. Furthermore, UNSCOP was impressed by the rapid development of the Jewish community in Palestine and in its final report quoted the Palestine Royal Commission of 1937:

Twelve years ago the National Home was an experiment, today it is a going concern...The Yishuv (Jewish community in Palestine) is...a highly organized and closely knit society which, partly on the basis of communal effort, has created a national life distinctive enough to merit the Royal Commission's title of a state within a state...' (UN, 1978: 19)

Unable to reach a unanimous decision, UNSCOP presented two proposals to the UNGA in September 1947. The proposal supported by the minority of UNSCOP members suggested a federal state of Palestine but it was the majority proposal, with some alterations, that was finally accepted by UNGA.

The majority proposal was to divide the area of British Mandate Palestine into two states: one for the Palestinians and another for the Jews. Jerusalem and Bethlehem would remain an international zone. The proposal meant that the Jewish state would include a Palestinian minority of 42% (Masalah, 1992: 175). Eight regions would be created altogether: three for the Arabs and three for the Jews; the seventh region of Jaffa would provide a Palestinian enclave within a Jewish zone; the eighth region, containing Jerusalem and Bethlehem, would remain under the control of the UN for the next ten years, after which its status would be re-examined (UN, 1978: 36). (see appendix 8 for a map of the UN Partition Plan).

After discussions, the UN voted on the majority proposal, known as resolution 181. It was passed, on 29 November 1947, by thirty-three votes to thirteen with seventeen abstentions (UN, 1978: 35). It was agreed that Britain should withdraw its troops by 1 August 1948 and that the two states should achieve independence by 1 October 1948 at the latest. However, during the time it had taken the UN to reach a decision, violence had escalated between the Palestinians and the Jews. The situation was not eased with the passing of Resolution 181 because it was unacceptable to both the Jews and Palestinians. The Jews realized that any

state containing a large hostile minority would be unstable and wanted a solution that would offer them greater security. The Arabs felt that historically they had a right to the land and that because of this, the future of the Palestinians should not be dictated by an external authority. In the first three months after the partition plan was passed, the violence claimed 869 lives and a further 1909 people were injured (UN, 1978: 39).

The situation in Palestine was chaotic. The British could not establish order and their military bases were being attacked so it was decided to terminate the Mandate earlier than originally planned. On 15 May 1948, Britain withdrew its forces. Later the same day, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the independent state of Israel.

The Civil unrest developed into the first Arab-Israeli war. It was dominated by the Jewish forces who were united, well-armed and following comprehensive military plans intended to:

'gain control of the area allotted to the Jewish state and defend its borders, and those of the blocs of Jewish settlements and such Jewish population as were outside those borders, against a regular or pararegular enemy operating from bases outside or inside the area of the Jewish state' (UN, 1978: 40)

The ultimate aim of the Jewish military leadership is a controversial issue to this day, but the results of the military actions are all that concern us here.

The Palestinians were under-prepared for such military might and unable to react. The loss of weaponry and leaders during the Arab Revolt meant that there was no comprehensive military plan or, if there had been, the means to implement it.

For 65-75% of the Palestinians life centred around their village (Morris, 1987: 28). This meant that instead of uniting with forces from other villages, each village concentrated on defending its own land and population. A village under attack from Jewish forces could not expect help from neighbouring villages.

An intervening Arab army – comprising forces from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Syria – despite outnumbering the Jewish forces, was badly organized and failed to prevent the Jews gaining control of Palestine. The Palestinians fled: some because of a direct military threat; others out of fear generated by reports of Jewish military activities: and others because, deserted by their leaders, they felt betrayed and disillusioned. As the Palestinians fled, they locked their doors and kept their keys expecting to return after one or two weeks believing that ultimately there would be an Arab victory (Sayigh, 1979: 68).

As a result of the war, 90% of Palestinians were displaced (Pappé, 1992: 87) and 80% left Palestine (Masalah, 1992: 175). Of the estimated three quarters of a million refugees, approximately 100,000 fled to Lebanon from villages in Galilee and the northern coastal cities of Jaffa and Haifa¹. While other Palestinians from the north fled to Syria, those from Jerusalem fled to the West Bank and Trans-Jordan. Most from Beersheba, Majdal and Jaffa region in the South sought refuge in Egypt and the Gaza Strip, which was under Egyptian control at that time.

The UN reacted to the Palestinian refugee crisis by establishing, in December 1949, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for the Palestinian refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The Agency operates in five areas: Jordan; Syria; Lebanon; the West Bank; and the Gaza Strip.

Believing that the Palestinian refugee problem would be resolved quickly, the international community made only short-term provisions for helping the Palestinians. UNRWA was initially given a mandate for three years; this has been extended regularly for additional three year terms. The mandate limits UNRWA help to a Palestinian:

'whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years preceding the conflict in 1948 and who as a result lost both his home and his means of livelihood and took refuge in 1948 in one of the countries where UNRWA provides relief...[He is] eligible for Agency assistance if [he is]: registered with UNRWA; living in the area of UNRWA operations; and [is] in need' (UNRWA data)

It has never been revised to include those Palestinians made homeless in subsequent conflicts. The international community on a voluntary basis provides funding for the Agency. The temporary nature and uncertain funding of the Agency has made long term, effective planning difficult, and the services provided for the refugees have suffered as a consequence.

¹ UNRWA data. Sayigh estimates this figure at 110,000 (1994:17)

2.ii. THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON

The area known today as Lebanon was under Ottoman rule from the 16th Century and included the districts of Tripoli, Beirut, Saida, and Sour. Mount Lebanon, which had a predominantly Druze population, was also under Ottoman control, but from the 17th century had become increasingly autonomous. At the end of the First World War, The League of Nations gave the Mandate of the former Ottoman controlled districts and Mount Lebanon, to the French. The Mandate officially began in September 1923 and terminated when the French agreed to withdraw in 1946.

The creation of Lebanon was intended to provide the West with a Christian ally in a region dominated by Muslim countries. For many years, the French Catholic Church had championed the Maronite Christian population. However, the Lebanon created by the French Mandate contain sizeable Shia' and Sunni populations as well as Christian. In total there are 17 officially recognized sects in Lebanon. The multi-confessional nature of Lebanese society is at the root of the power struggles that have led to years of turmoil.

Under the French mandate many of the institutes of state were created, although the exact composition of the Government was determined by an agreement in 1943 called the 'National Pact.' The National Pact, negotiated by the Christian Maronite President, Bishara al-Khoury and the Sunni Prime Minister, Riad al-Sohl divided major posts in Government between the different religious communities according to their share of the population as recorded by the 1932 census. Since 1943 the post of President has been reserved for a Maronite, the post of President for a Sunni and the Speaker of the House of Parliament has been given to a Shia. Parliamentary and important Government posts are distributed according to religious affiliation 6:5 in favour of the Maronite Community. The power rested with the President until the end of the Civil War and the Ta'ef Accords when the balance of power was transferred to the Prime Minister.

The population of Lebanon is no longer predominantly Christian. Estimates suggest that 60% of the population is Muslim and 35% Christian². The remaining 5% of the population is composed of various minority sects. There are no accurate population statistics for Lebanon because no census has been conducted since 1932. The civil war and volatile structure of the Lebanese society has meant that it has been impossible to conduct an accurate census; it would be undesirable, as results would be disputed. The complex sectarian composition of

² Oxfam statistics, 1998

Lebanon has, probably more than any other factor, had a detrimental effect on the lives of the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Initially the Lebanese Government accepted the presence of the Palestinian Refugees but, as early as the 1950s, attitudes towards the Palestinians began to change and have continued to become increasingly hostile.

The Palestinians are continually denied Lebanese citizenship for which most foreigners are eligible after only a few years. Consequently, the Lebanese authorities can legitimately regard the Palestinians as foreigners which has repercussions on their social and legal rights. The Government refuses to grant citizenship to the Palestinians, who, according to UNRWA estimates in 1996, represent around 11% of the population, because it is anxious not to upset the country's 'delicate sectarian balance' (Boueiz, 1994³). When the Palestinians first arrived, citizenship was offered to the small number of Christian Palestinians: the majority of Palestinians are Sunni Muslim. Some of the wealthier Muslim refugees were able to pay lawyers to prove Lebanese ancestry and gain citizenship that way (Sayigh, 1994: 24).

Following the influx in 1948, more Palestinians fled to Lebanon as a result of the 1967 Six Day War, when Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai and Golan Heights. The influx of Palestinians continued until after the Yom Kippur War of 1973. The UN estimates that 500,000 Palestinians were displaced by the 1967 War, although many have since returned home to live under Israeli rule in the Occupied Territories (UN, 1978: 72). Sayigh believes that 20,000 new refugees were created in 1967 and that some of these went to Lebanon (1994: 19).

There are no accurate statistics for the size of the Palestinian population in Lebanon. UNRWA keeps a register of Palestinians who qualify for aid, which does not include those Palestinians made homeless after 1948. Often, wealthier Palestinians did not register with UNRWA, either because they did not need assistance or were too proud to accept any. There are currently 362,098 registered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (UNRWA, December 1997). The Directorate of Palestinian Refugee Affairs estimates that there are an additional 40,000 refugees who are not registered (Sayigh, 1995: 33). However, the Economist Intelligence Unit believes that of the 320,000 registered refugees in 1992 only 275,000 were actually living in Lebanon (1997: 15).

³ Interview with al-Safir, 18 April 1994, in Sayigh 1995: 33

When the refugees first arrived, some settled in camps served initially by the Red Cross and other aid giving bodies and later UNRWA. Others rented property in poorer urban areas. The distribution of the camps was dictated by the government. Palestinians were moved away from the south which was declared a security zone. In the early days, this area was patrolled effectively by the Lebanese army which prevented the Palestinians from returning home. Water supplies in Beirut were restricted to discourage the building of camps in the capital. (Camps which were originally some distance away from the city, such as Bourj al-Barajneh, have now been absorbed by the urban sprawl.)

The first camps were Rashidieh and al-Buss, located near Sour. They had originally been created for Armenian refugees in 1935. When the capacity of these two camps was exceeded the Red Cross established a new camp nearby called Bourj al-Shamali. At the same time, the Lebanese Government decided to reuse French Army barracks in the Bekka valley at Anjar and Wavell. In total, between 1950 and 1952, 11 camps were created although Anjar was reclaimed by the Lebanese in 1952 (Gorokhoff, 1984 317).

Christian missions offered shelter to Christian Palestinians and settlements were developed in Mar Elias, Dbayyeh and Jisr al-Basha.

In addition to those mentioned above, Nabateyyeh, Ein al-Helwih, and Meih-Meih were established in the South of the country and Shatila and Tel al-Zaatar on the outskirts of Beirut. By the end of 1952 there were 17 camps altogether with a total population estimated at 40,000, just under half of the 100,000 refugees believed to be in Lebanon (Gorokhoff, 1984: 318).

The camps enjoyed relative autonomy for a few years because the Lebanese Government was happy to liaise with the Palestinian leaders, the Mufti. However, the Government installed the Army's Intelligence Bureau inside every camp which led to an uprising in 1969. The authorities were forced to withdraw and the camps were self-governing until 1982 (Sayigh, 1994: 25).

At first, most Palestinians settled in predominantly Muslim agricultural areas where they were an important source of seasonal labour, and in Muslim urban areas where they were able to find work on construction sites. However, many Palestinians gradually migrated to urban areas which offered better educational and employment opportunities. The authorities have been unable to curb the rural to urban migration (Sayigh, 1994: 26).

During the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1989), camps were destroyed and others were severely damaged. There are now only twelve camps which house over half of the 362,098 registered Palestinian refugees (RR) in Lebanon⁴. (See appendix 10 for the distribution of UNRWA camps in Lebanon).

REGISTERED REFUGEES IN CAMPS IN LEBANON, JUNE 1997

| AREA | CAMPS | POPULATION |
|----------------|-------------------|------------|
| Beirut | Mar Elias | 1,541 |
| Beirut suburbs | Bourj al-Barajneh | 16,506 |
| Beirut suburbs | Dbayeh | 13,096 |
| Beirut suburbs | Shatila | 9,585 |
| Saida | Ein al-Hilweh | 39,588 |
| Saida | Meih-Meih | 11,314 |
| Sour | Al-Buss | 8,409 |
| Sour | Rashidieh | 22,613 |
| Sour | Bourj al-Shamali | 16,526 |
| Tripoli | Nahr al-Barid | 25,131 |
| Tripoli | Beddawi | 14,015 |
| Bekaa | Wavell | 6,691 |

Figure 1.

The Government has forbidden any rebuilding of the destroyed camps and has restricted reconstruction in the surviving camps. Technically, it is illegal to construct buildings of more than one storey although this is largely ignored as the Palestinians are forced to build upwards to house their people. Services, such as refuse collection and sewerage disposal, which are provided by other host governments, are not provided in Lebanon. Government policies, the lack of services and overcrowding caused by building restrictions and natural population growth mean that the refugees live in appalling conditions.

The poor standard of living in the camps is exacerbated by the high level of unemployment. This is as a direct result of the Government's refusal to grant Lebanese citizenship to the Palestinians. Without citizenship, finding employment legally is almost impossible as the Palestinians are regarded as foreigners and, as such, must have a work permit to undertake paid employment. Without a work permit the Palestinians are barred from 52 professions. To practise some professions, such as law and medicine, it is necessary to join a syndicate. A foreigner can become a member only if this right is reciprocated by his home country to the Lebanese. As the Palestinians cannot fulfil this requirement, they are prevented from practising the profession for which they have been trained. Consequently, 60% of the refugees in camps live below the poverty line, and 40% are unemployed (Zacharia, 1996). The economic situation is exacerbated

⁴ UNRWA statistics, December 1997.

because 15% of families are headed by women, widowed during the war, and left without a regular source of income (UNRWA, January 1996). Until 1991, many Palestinians were employed in the Gulf but their support for Saddam Hussein meant that 400,000 of them were expelled and a valuable source of income was lost to the refugees (EIU, 1997: 13).

The civil war, which broke out in the mid 1970s and continued until 1989, was complicated by the sectarian nature of Lebanese society, short-term politically motivated alliances, the Israeli invasion, the American intervention and the Syrian bid for control of Lebanon and the Palestinian population. The details of the war will not be considered here, but the devastating effects it had on the Palestinians psychologically, politically and militarily should be recognised. The Palestinians, who were often used by more powerful groups as pawns, were targeted by the Israelis, Syrians and various Lebanese militias. The massacres at Sabra and Shatila by the Christian Phalangists in 1982 and the camp wars, between 1985 and 1987, when the Amal militia besieged the camps are the most notorious events involving the Palestinians.

The Ta'ef Accords, which ended the civil war in 1989, further eroded the position of the Palestinians. 'All the major Lebanese political forces concurred in blaming the civil war on the Palestinian factor' (Sayigh, 1995: 32). The Palestinians are now excluded from Lebanese politics and are subject to greater state control and restriction of rights. 'The implicit official policy towards the refugees appears in the intensification of long standing pressures towards their migration' (Sayigh, 1995: 32).

Public attitudes and Government policies have become increasingly anti-Palestinian. For example, in September 1995, the Lebanese Government promulgated a law that prevented any Palestinian leaving the country without a re-entry visa. Previously it was necessary for Palestinians to obtain an exit visa before leaving the country but they had an automatic right to return. Now Palestinians must apply for an exit and re-entry visa before they leave the country. The re-entry visa adds to the expense of travel and can be difficult to obtain. The new law makes it more difficult for Palestinians to work abroad and also prevents Palestinians, who have left Lebanon before the legislation was introduced from returning, as they do not have correct documentation. The Government's action in 1995 was a deliberate consequence of Libya's expulsion of foreign workers, many of whom were Palestinian. Many of those Palestinians have been unable to return and some are still stranded in no-man's land between Libya and Egypt. Those who have returned paid large sums of money to smugglers to help them re-enter the country illegally. Families have been divided and Palestinians in Lebanon are forced to save for the correct documentation and expensive travel to visit their relatives stranded abroad.

Nicolas Fattush, the Lebanese Minister for Tourism in 1995, said publicly in response to Libya's expulsion of foreign workers, that the Palestinians expelled would be unable to return to Lebanon because the country would not be a 'dump' for 'human garbage' (Khalidi, M, 1995: 28).

Hostility towards the refugees among right-wing Lebanese has been intensified by the 1993 Oslo Accords and the possibility that the Peace Process would be resolved without allowing the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to return home.

The Palestinians have been equally disturbed by the Oslo Accords. International donors, believing that the Accords signalled the end of the refugee problem, have reduced funds accordingly⁵. UNWRA and other political organisations working with the refugees are less able than they were to assist the refugees. The political implications of the Accords are more serious, particularly for the refugees in Lebanon. The plight of the Palestinians outside Israel and the Occupied Territories will not be discussed until the final status negotiations. (The exact date of these is uncertain as the Peace Process is behind schedule.) UN Resolution 194 extends to the refugees the right to return to their homelands, or to compensation for loss of property or land if they choose not to return. Israel has so far refused seriously to consider allowing the refugees to return. Palestinians fear that by leaving the issue of the right to return until the final negotiations, Resolution 194 will be compromised (see appendix 11 for text of Resolution 194). The implications of this are particularly serious for the Palestinians living in Lebanon whose position 'is arguably worse than that of the Palestinians in [Jordan, Syria, or the Occupied Territories]' (Zureik, 1995).

The politicization of the Palestinians in Lebanon began in the 1960s, the impetus provided by the background of Government hostilities, cross border raids between Israel and Lebanon, and later the 1967 Israeli invasion. The first Palestinian National Council (PNC) in May 1964 established the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA). The Arab League gave the PLO the mandate to consult and represent the Palestinian population. The 1969 Cairo Accords permitted the Palestinians to establish autonomous military bodies in South Lebanon to launch retaliatory attacks on Israeli bases. In 1974, the PLO was admitted as an observer to the UN.

⁵ interviews with NGO workers, Lebanon, September 1996

As well as providing political representation, the PLO offered important welfare and social services such as education and health care. The PLO was forced to withdraw its military presence from Lebanon in 1982. The withdrawal damaged the Palestinian economy because the income generated by the daily requirements of Resistance members disappeared, as well as financial support for building, healthcare and education. In 1991 the PLO withdrew from Lebanon further funding which had a severe humanitarian and psychological effect on the refugees. The nature of the situation in Lebanon meant that the Palestinians had been particularly dependent on PLO aid. Now they are forced to rely on assistance provided by UNRWA and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO). The PLO withdrawal has coincided with the reduction of international aid and the subsequent reduction of UNRWA and NGO services.

More important is the effect of the PLO withdrawal on the morale of the Palestinians in Lebanon who feel betrayed by their own people and fear the future: the Oslo Accords appear to exclude them, they are barely tolerated by their host nation, and their own political organization is failing to provide them with political representation.

The lack of political support from their own people is particularly disturbing as every action by the Lebanese Government reflects its desire to be rid of the Palestinian refugees. It is trying to reduce the number of Palestinians with rights of residence by withdrawing these from any Palestinian who has gained citizenship of a second country. 'The Government would probably also like to [withdraw them from] Palestinians not registered with UNRWA' (Sayigh, 1995:33). The Government claims that these policies are complimentary to the wishes of the Palestinians because any concessions would threaten the prospects of Palestinians returning to Palestine on the grounds that they are properly settled in Lebanon.

Although, it is evident, then, that there is some basis in the truth for the Lebanese argument, it is impossible to ignore the self-serving motives behind the policies. The country is recovering from a long civil war and the Government needs to establish its authority and a strong national economy. It needs to be able to control the Palestinians as it considers them a destabilizing influence which threatens an already volatile nation. In relation to the economy, Palestinians damage the image of an international financial centre which the Government wishes to project. The Government also can not afford to be seen to patronize the Palestinians because this would offend the voting population. The attitude of the Lebanese towards the

Palestinians has been described as varying between 'indifference and negativism ranging between active hostility and passive dislike' (Zeine, 1994)⁶

⁶ interview for al-Safir, 1 December 1994, quoted in Sayigh, 1995: 34

3. FIELDWORK

3.i. FIELDWORK IN BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH

I could not be a passive observer in Bourj-al-Barajneh because of my previously formed friendships and because while conducting my research I lived with a family on the camp. This gave me a privileged insight into family life and helped develop a circle of friends so that I quickly became involved in camp life. Living with a family also greatly aided my research. Arab society is family orientated and it is unusual for people, especially single women, to live alone. By living with a family I was more easily accepted on the camp as I was conforming to the social norms. The Palestinians are suspicious of strangers believing that they are spies for the Lebanese Government, the Israelis or the CIA. My integration into the community through family life meant that people were more willing to trust me and participate in my research.

My formal research was in two stages. I began by asking respondents to draw a map of the camp and later conducted informal interviews to look at the history of the camp and village origins. The earlier interviews were arranged through a gatekeeper but after a while my network of friends increased through my research and social occasions and I was able to arrange interviews myself. Some of the interviews were with individuals but where possible I preferred to interview family groups. This created a more informal atmosphere and a sense of security in the participants because they were not alone. As a result, I believe that the information gathered was more accurate.

Although I speak Arabic, I did not feel confident enough to conduct interviews in Arabic without the aid of a translator. My gatekeeper advised me to use a Lebanese translator. She believed that respondents may be reluctant to talk to a Palestinian translator because there would be less privacy if a member of the community were present during the interviews. I accepted this advice and used two female Lebanese translators in their 20s. Although we discussed at the outset how we would work together while conducting the interviews, after the pilot studies we realized that it would be necessary to explain in detail to the respondents that the translators needed time to translate and were a medium of communication only and not the researcher. Most respondents tried hard to co-operate and speak in short sentences that could be translated easily. The slower pace of the conversation helped both the translators and me to consider the phrasing of questions so that they would not lead respondents.

Inevitably, because of this process, though some of the conversational momentum was lost, particularly when a respondent became excited and had to be asked to slow down or repeat

information. The interviews in English and Arabic that I conducted without the help of a translator were easier because the flow of the conversation could be maintained. The respondent could be asked immediately for a more detailed explanation of a particular point without having to wait for a translation. It was also clear to the respondent that I and not the translator was conducting the research.

While the Lebanese translators were sympathetic towards the Palestinians and generally followed the guidelines we had discussed, I felt uncomfortable bringing strangers onto the camp who enjoyed a better lifestyle than the Palestinians. I was also concerned that the tensions between the Lebanese and Palestinians would lead to political arguments during the interviews. Despite my reservations, the Palestinians responded well to the Lebanese translators and did not appear uncomfortable with the situation.

On occasions I used Palestinian translators, often family and friends of the respondents. This arrangement worked well, particularly when younger members of the family translated for parents or grandparents, as it created a relaxed atmosphere that produced a wealth of information. I also believe that the translations were better because the translator was able to empathise with the respondents. If I conduct similar studies in the future I will try to use Palestinian translators.

Most arranged interviews were taped so I did not need to take notes which might have distracted the respondents and me, and intimidated respondents who were illiterate. However, much information was gathered on social occasions when it would have been inappropriate to use a tape recorder or take notes. In these cases I memorized information until I could record it taking care to note only the details of which I was certain.

Maps¹

After conducting pilot studies, I carried out eight mapping interviews with individuals or groups, who according to my gatekeeper, originated from villages with a large representation on the camp. (One respondent was a friend from a village with few members on the camp.) Some respondents refused to draw a map of the camp preferring instead to describe it. This information could be used in conjunction with the maps.

Respondents were given an A2 piece of paper and a pencil and asked to produce a simple map of the camp. No guidance was given about how this should be done. When a family group

¹ See appendices 4a and 4b for examples of maps produced by inhabitants.

was involve in producing the map there was a great deal of discussion and redrawing. If the paper was placed on the floor many members of the family would often gather around to watch and comment on the drawing.

Respondents were asked to label areas of the camp that had names and show the position of any important landmarks. Respondents were confident when labelling areas of the camp but less confident when adding landmarks and few were added without prompting. Perhaps respondents were unsure about what could be classed as a landmark, or avoided marking them because it required greater accuracy than labelling an area and they were afraid of making a mistake. So that I had the same points of reference on all the maps, I asked respondents to mark the airport road which is next to the camp and the Technical College which is opposite the house where I was living.

When the map was complete, I asked respondents to indicate the newest and oldest area of the camp and discuss events that had caused people to settle in or leave the camp. These questions were simplifications of those posed in the pilot studies which had asked respondents, in detail, about the development of the camp and incidents influencing population size. It was apparent that because of the turbulent events in Lebanon, the size and population of the camp had changed many times and respondents were unable or unwilling to answer detailed questions.

Interviews

I interviewed 43 people in 22 prearranged interviews. The interviews were informal and usually took place in the evening when many family members would be at home. Most interviews were conducted with family groups, although some interviews were with individuals. So I did not have to refer to notes and so the interview could flow as much as possible like a conversation, I memorized five broad questions:

- What can you tell me about the village in Palestine from which your family originates?
- Why and how did you or your relatives travel from Palestine to Bourj al-Barajneh?
- Why do you live in this particular place on the camp?
- Do villages and their inhabitants differ from one another?
- What significance does village origin have in the camp?

Reducing the areas that I wanted to discuss to five topics meant that they were easy to remember and could be elaborated if necessary. Initially, I did not elaborate on the questions,

as I wanted the respondents to answer as freely as possible. When respondents felt uneasy with open-ended questions because they wanted to avoid giving the “wrong” answer, it was necessary to go into greater detail. During later interviews I was able to cross check information. I also added a new question asking older respondents to tell me about the social history of the camp. Usually, I began by asking respondents to describe the camp as it was when they first arrived and what life in a tent was like.

As I suspected, using this structured but free flowing approach created a relaxed atmosphere and allowed me to pursue points as they arose without being restricted by a list of questions. I also believe that the information collected was enhanced because respondents were not limited by over specific questions and discussed topics that I had not previously considered.

Informal Research Using Unobtrusive Measures

As I was living in the camp, most waking hours could be used to gather information. Often interesting details would emerge in the course of daily life. For example, someone might ask for directions within the camp and various names referring to different areas of the camp would be used. In an ordinary conversation a wife might scold her husband and say, “you behave as if you come from such and such a village.” It was also possible for me to participate in conversations when they were particularly relevant to my research and ask questions that sprung naturally from the conversation in progress.

When walking in the camp and the surrounding area I would try to make a mental note of the physical structure of the area so that I could compare it later to respondents’ maps. When with friends in the camp, I would ask about the area we were in. Two friends volunteered to walk around the camp with me describing and naming the various areas. I was fortunate to have a number of friends who spoke English and acted as key respondents, corroborating information from each other and other respondents. They were heavily involved in community work and consequently were knowledgeable about the camp.

Factors Hindering Research

I had considered many possible factors that could have hindered my research. These factors had been influential in my adoption of PRA and RRA methods which are more flexible than traditional techniques in difficult circumstances. However, most of the potential problems I had considered were cultural or ones arising from suspicion of a foreigner which tend to be unpleasant rather than disruptive to research. What I had not appreciated fully were the political problems which severely limited aspects of my research.

Before beginning I had to obtain permission from the camp's security committee. I had a letter from an academic body confirming my identity and research plans. This was taken by friends to the camp's security committee. My friends were instrumental in obtaining permission, without them I may have been unable to conduct my research. I am ignorant of the methods used to obtain this permission.

Once permission had been obtained, it meant that the camp's self-appointed authorities were aware of my presence on the camp. As a consequence, I had to conduct my research with care and avoid causing any kind of disturbance, as I did not want to be asked to leave. Technically the camp is reserved for the Palestinians and UNRWA had the right to ask me to leave.

Some respondents were reluctant to talk to me in case their neighbours, or worse, one of the political factions on the camp, thought that they were liasing with a spy. I was particularly anxious not to cast suspicion on any of my friends with whom I spent a great deal of time. This meant that I was always conscious of my behaviour and avoided attracting attention to myself or making overtly political or provocative statements. During interviews, I avoided introducing topics that may have been considered controversial, as I did not want to cause offence or risk being reported to the security committee. However, when respondents volunteered controversial information I felt comfortable asking for more details.

It was not possible, because of the suspicion of strangers, to check with passers by the names of different areas of the camp. For the same reason I could not ask people to whom I had not been introduced for interviews. This means that the respondents I used were limited to my social circle and that of my gatekeeper. It also means that respondents were often aware of the topics likely to be discussed and had time to consider the information they would give before the interview. However, this was the only way to arrange interviews safely and effectively as potential respondents were reassured by seeing that their friends already trusted me and learning that the information I wanted was not particularly controversial.

The plans of the Lebanese Government to route a new road to the airport through the camp also impeded elements of my research. The plans to build the airport road through the camp have existed for a number of years. Although construction work has already begun, it has been suspended several times because of financial problems. Since September 1998, when the

road extended almost to the boundaries of Bourj al-Barajneh, until April 1999 no further building work has taken place².

The inhabitants are concerned about the future of the camp which will be divided in two by a major road once the construction work has been completed. 600 families, whose homes lie in the path of the planned road, will see their houses destroyed. UNRWA documents produced in July 1998 reveal the Agency's plans to re-house the families displaced by the road construction in areas adjacent to the camp. Some Palestinians believe, although details are not included in the UNRWA documents, that subways will be built under the road to connect the two parts of the camp³.

According to Robert Fisk, Middle East correspondent for the *Independent*, the Lebanese Government has plans to build, or re-route major roads through all Palestinian Camps in Lebanon⁴. In doing so the Government believes it will aid its efforts to be rid of the Palestinian population in Lebanon. The Government also believes that by forcibly dividing communities, Palestinian morale will be weakened, and that those who have the opportunity to leave Lebanon and settle elsewhere will be more likely to do so. A smaller and weaker Palestinian community poses less of a threat to the stability of Lebanon. (See chapter 2 for a discussion of Government and popular attitudes towards the Palestinian population in Lebanon.)

Among the inhabitants of Bourj al-Barajneh, the building of the airport road is a highly controversial issue and all fear for their future. In 1995, I was aware that Lebanese officials conducting a census in the camps had suffered physical and verbal attacks from camp inhabitants⁵. Consequently I did not want to be associated with the road construction in any way so decided against using the maps created by respondents to navigate my way round the camp to determine the accuracy of the information. I did not feel either that I could take measurements or make notes in an attempt to produce my own map of the camp, as I feared that the inhabitants would believe me a government surveyor.

² Status of airport road construction discussed with respondent from Bourj al-Barajneh during telephone conversation, April 1999.

³ UNRWA refused to discuss its plans for restructuring Bourj al-Barajneh when the airport road is built. UNRWA documents relating to Bourj al-Barajneh and the airport road were obtained from a reliable source as I was leaving for the airport to return to the UK. Aerial maps of the camps (which UNRWA denied existed) contained in these documents would have aided my research had I been able to consult them during my stay. Unfortunately, without the help of camp inhabitants, I am unable to distinguish the camp boundaries from the surrounding area. See appendix 12.

⁴ Informal conversation with Robert Fisk, Beirut, August 1998.

⁵ Informal conversation with Lebanese friends, Beirut, Spring 1995.

The area surrounding the camp is controlled by Hizbollah which might be why there is only one checkpoint controlling access to the camp. Hizbollah monitor all activity in the camp and are aware of any strangers in the area. As Syria sponsors the organization it is unnecessary to establish many official Syrian checkpoints. It is claimed that the Lebanese police and military avoid the area, recognizing it as Hizbollah territory.

Hizbollah have installations near the camp, which have been Israeli targets as recently as April 1996, during the military campaign, Grapes of Wrath. Consequently, Hizbollah will detain anyone who appears to be taking an unusual interest in the area on suspicion of being an Israeli spy. Several aid workers have been detained by Hizbollah in the past two years. This meant that I could not risk sketching the perimeter of the camp or taking photographs.

Another factor, which causes a surprising number of problems, is the inability of any stranger to travel confidently from A to B within the camp. It is a labyrinth of narrow twisting streets and I was dependent on friends to take me to interviews, or to houses of people I already knew to arrange an interview. I wanted friends to show me the exact location of the camp perimeter and to walk around the camp with me answering detailed questions but I felt, in view of the political situation inside and outside the camp, that I was exposing them to unnecessary suspicion.

As a result of the political tensions on the camp, I have decided not to identify any of the respondents by name. A list giving a limited number of details about each respondent involved in the mapping interviews can be found in appendix 1 and appendix 2 lists details of respondents who participated in the second series of interviews. The ages of respondents range from 15 to 92 but, in an attempt to protect anonymity, I have created a number of age bands.

The environment in the camp was not ideal for conducting research or interviewing people. There was a great deal of background noise and many distractions. As there is little space, the interview room was often hot and overcrowded. The lack of private space meant that friends and relatives of respondents were constantly arriving and disrupting interviews. The Palestinians are proud of their hospitality and would interrupt the interview to tend their guests. Although disruptive, often these visits would provide introductions to another person who would participate in the interview or invite me to interview them at another time.

Only three interviews were spoiled by visitors. One respondent felt that she had to abandon the interview to show her next door neighbour, who visits several times each day, the appropriate respect. During another interview, a visitor thought that his relatives were cooperating with a spy for the CIA. Although he was persuaded that this was not the case and the interview continued, the atmosphere remained tense and the interview concluded early. The worst incident occurred when a visitor felt that we should be discussing more controversial issues about the political and legal status of the Palestinians in Lebanon. An argument developed that lasted twenty minutes and completely disrupted the interview. Fortunately, my relationship with the family involved was not damaged.

Another problem I encountered with most respondents was their tendency to be vague. I would often have to pose the same question several times in a different form before a definite answer was given. For example when I asked, "How did you know there was a camp in Bourj al-Barajneh?" respondents would say, "We just knew", or "We always know where other Palestinians are." Respondents also had a habit of using pronouns rather than referring to a person or a body by a proper name. "They brought us to the camp", would be the response to explain how they had come to Bourj. It was extremely difficult, sometimes impossible, to establish the identity of "they".

One of the reasons I think that respondents were vague is because they did not realize how important it was to me to have a definite answer. There is also a difference between the Arab and Western cultures; the Arabs are not as concerned as people from the West with the details of any issue. The vagueness of answers may also reflect reluctance, especially among the older generation, to talk about the loss of Palestine and related events. Younger Palestinians have told me that their parents and grandparents refuse to discuss the past because they are ashamed of what happened and younger generations hold their elders responsible for their problems. Undoubtedly memories have faded over time and sometimes respondents were unable to remember the details that I wanted. It should also be noted that many of the events being discussed occurred at times of fear and confusion and respondents may never have known exactly what was happening.

PRA and RRA techniques advocate the use of qualitative methods of data collection to achieve reliable results more quickly. The preference for qualitative data has practical significance in a country where there are no accurate statistics. For confessional reasons there has not been a full census in Lebanon since 1932 and the chaos of the civil war means that few records of any kind have been maintained. No one is sure of the population size of its

confessional divisions. (See chapter 2 for further details about confessional structure of Lebanon.)

Similarly, no one is sure how many Palestinians are living in Lebanon because for various reasons UNRWA statistics are inaccurate. Only those who arrived in Lebanon as a result of the 1948 war and their descendants are eligible to register with UNRWA. However, not all Palestinian refugees from 1948 registered. Those who arrived after 1948 as the result of later wars are ineligible to register although some manage to obtain false identification to enable them to do so. For example, unregistered refugees marrying into a registered family may be offered by that family the identification papers of a deceased relative whose death was never reported⁶.

There are also discrepancies in details of births reported to UNRWA. To secure UNRWA assistance for children of unregistered refugees, friends or relatives registered with UNRWA will falsely claim that the child is their own when the birth is recorded. Palestinian families with citizenship in other countries will register the births of their children so that if they return to Lebanon their children will be entitled to attend an UNRWA school. Palestinians also believe that if a peace settlement is reached and compensation offered by Israel, UNRWA records will be used to determine who is eligible to receive it. Failing to register children with UNRWA, although the family has no intention of returning to Lebanon, may forfeit their right to compensation in the future⁷.

The lack of reliable statistics means that quantitative research in the camp, unless extensive, proves very little. Also, as there are no accurate statistics for the Palestinian population outside the camp, information collected in Bourj can not be extrapolated confidently and applied to the whole of Lebanon.

The methods I used for my research allowed me to gather as much information as possible in the time available without drawing too much attention to myself and becoming embroiled in political problems. The informal approach meant that interviews became social events and took longer than strictly necessary from a research point of view. Often patience was required to tolerate the many distractions. However, I was in the camp as a guest conducting research that interested me, respondents were giving their time voluntarily and to remain aloof would have been impolite and disrespectful. It would also have been counter-productive, as such

⁶ Informal conversation with local NGO worker

⁷ Informal conversation with Frances Moor, Save the Children.

social contact has provided me with a greater understanding of the Palestinians in Bourj al-Barajneh which I believe has helped my analysis.

3.ii. FIELDWORK IN OTHER CAMPS

A friend in Ein al-Hilweh Camp in Saida and another in Rashidieh Camp near Sour gave me a brief tour of their respective camps. This allowed me to confirm some of the information provided by respondents from Bourj and examine the physical structure of other camps in Lebanon. The trips to Ein al-Hilweh and Rashidieh camp were both social visits to see Palestinian friends. It would have been inappropriate to take notes or ask detailed questions. The PLO is more active in the camps in the South of Lebanon and I did not want to attract attention to myself by appearing to be anything other than a foreigner visiting old friends.

Ein al-Hilweh is located on the outskirts of Saida and is the largest camp in Lebanon. UNRWA estimates that the camp has a population of 39,588⁸ although it is likely to be higher than this. Some inhabitants of Ein al-Hilweh believe that the camp is home to 100,000 people.

Entrances to the camps are controlled by Lebanese checkpoints and cars must slow down when approaching the checkpoint to allow the soldiers to see inside the car. In recent months, without any explanation, the Lebanese Government has closed some of the entrances. After the Lebanese Army checkpoints the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLO) has established its own checkpoints. Ein al-Hilweh is not as densely populated as Bourj al-Barajneh and some of the houses are set in green well tended gardens. Houses tend to be one or two stories high, some are crowded together along small alley ways, but others line quite broad roads. One of the streets was wide enough to accommodate a market with stalls selling mainly fresh fruit and vegetables and second hand clothes. Unlike Bourj al-Barajneh where the streets are surprisingly clean, the roads in Ein al-Hilweh were littered with household waste. There is also a mosque on the camp. There was no time to establish whether there are other public buildings such as a community centre or hospital.

Lebanese and Syrians also live in the camp. On the edge of Ein al-Hilweh are a series of modern, low-rise flats where many Palestinians originally from the camp live. These flats are private and not part of the camp, but the Palestinians who inhabit them consider themselves residents of Ein al-Hilweh and socialise and shop within the camp.

⁸ UNRWA statistics, June 1997.

Rashidieh camp is on the coast near Sour. It is close to the Israeli self-declared security zone and camp inhabitants can hear the fighting between Hizbollah and the Israeli proxy army, the South Lebanese Army. From the camp the Palestinians can see Palestine.

In June 1997 the official UNRWA population of Rashidieh was 22,613, although inhabitants believed that the size of the population was between 15 and 20 thousand.

Between Saida and Sour there are many checkpoints. At some of the checkpoints the soldiers wear uniforms, at others their authority is established only by the machine gun they are carrying. There is only one entrance to the camp controlled by two checkpoints. The first belongs to the Lebanese Army and the second to the PLO. Within the camp the PLO is active and are suspicious of strangers visiting the camp. It would have been difficult for me to enter the camp had I not been visiting a friend.

Rashidieh is not densely populated but further building on the camp has been forbidden by the Government. Houses are one or two stories high and are not crowded together. There are gardens and open spaces and the roads, although not properly surfaced, are clean. Along the roads are open channels carrying dirty water away from the houses.

The camp is surrounded by fields owned by Lebanese. The Palestinians in the camp rent small pieces of land to grow food. Apart from farming, there is little work available for those living in the camp.

There appear to be several schools on the camp, one of which is run by the PLO but will soon be handed over to UNRWA. There are also two mosques and two churches, both on the edge of the camp, which were destroyed during the Civil War. The Christians in the camp fled during the fighting and have not returned. It was not possible to establish where they have settled. There are numerous shelters on the camp used by the inhabitants during the war. The entrances have been blocked. On the edge of the camp, there is a large graveyard where a monument has been erected to all those who died during the years of fighting.

According to the respondent, there is an area in Rashidieh occupied by Bedouins from Palestine who were semi-nomadic in 1948. It is unclear whether there are any Egyptians or Syrians living in the camp.

4. SOCIAL HISTORY OF BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH

This chapter provides a brief social history of Bourj al-Barajneh Camp. It is not an exhaustive study and is based mainly on information respondents gave voluntarily. For this reason I have concentrated on the early days in the camp, and life during the Amal sieges. Sayigh's, *Too Many Enemies: the Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, is an excellent social history of Shatila camp and many of the anecdotes echo the experiences of those in Bourj. Consequently, I did not want the inclusion of a social history of Bourj to dominate my thesis and, in an inferior manner, repeat much of Sayigh's work.

4.i. ORIGINS OF CAMP LAND

The first part of this chapter discusses the confusion over the origins of the camp land and differs from the rest of the chapter because I often had to introduce the topic into conversations with respondents. When I tried to establish details, respondents were vague. Some would claim that Palestinians had begun to settle in the area so UNRWA decided to establish an official camp on the site. UNRWA negotiated with the Lebanese Government to rent the land and agree a lease. Many respondents maintain that according to the terms of the agreement with the Lebanese Government, Bourj al-Barajneh was leased to UNRWA to accommodate the Palestinian refugees for a period of 95 or 99 years. When inhabitants discuss their uncertain future because of the hostile Lebanese Government, or exclusion from the current Arab-Israeli peace talks, the length of the UNRWA lease seems to offer some security. The Palestinians regard it as a legally binding document ensuring their right to live in Bourj al-Barajneh until its terms expire.

One of the older respondents who had been among the original inhabitants of the camp told me what he knew of the origins of the land for Bourj al-Barajneh. He claims that the *Mukhtar* of Bourj al-Barajneh gave the land to the Palestinians. He had become aware of their plight because there were a number of Palestinians in the area renting accommodation who, after five or six months, were beginning to run out of money. When the *Mukhtar* offered his land, the Mustafa family was the first family to settle there. The Mustafas had been prominent members of Tarshiha but had no official role in their village. However they were respected, and when other families from Tarshiha heard that the Mustafas were in Bourj al-Barajneh, they went to join them.

The above information contradicts an article written by Philippe Gorokhoff in 1984. He claims that the Agha family, also originating from Tarshiha, is responsible for Bourj al-Barajneh. According to Gorokhoff, the Agha family were on holiday in the Lebanese village

of Aley when Tarshiha was taken by the Haganeh on 31 October 1948. The Agha family had friends in Bourj al-Barajneh, which was then a village, and went to stay with them until it was safe to return to Tarshiha. Those in Tarshiha at the time of the attack had fled to Sour in Southern Lebanon. The Lebanese Government wanted to move these people to Halab in Syria. However, when people from Tarshiha heard that the Agha family was already in Lebanon, 452 of them refused to go to Syria. Instead they went to join the Aghas and rented accommodation in and around Bourj al-Barajneh.

The Agha family felt responsible for their friends from Tarshiha and tried to secure land to establish a camp. The first camp was in Ein el-Sikké, south of Bourj al-Barajneh, on land given by the *Mukhtar* of Bourj al-Barajneh. Many Palestinians, originally from Tarshiha, who had been in Syria or other parts of Lebanon, came to Ein el-Sikké and soon the land became too small. In its place, Hajj Rachid gave 100,000m² of his land in Bourj al-Barajneh to the Palestinians for as long as they needed it. If this is true, then Bourj al-Barajneh is the only camp in Lebanon built on private land rented to UNRWA.

My respondent disputes Gorokhoff's account of the origins of the land for Bourj. Instead he claims that the Agha family had been the first family to receive a tent but maintained that the Mustafa family had been the first to arrive on the camp. Sabri Mustafa was the first UNRWA director on the camp. He was chosen because he had been involved with the camp from its inception, spoke good English and commanded respect; a fact confirmed by many respondents originating from different villages. The Agha family also seemed to be respected and had owned a coffee shop on the camp and worked with UNRWA.

I have been unable to find UNRWA documents or other information describing how Bourj al-Barajneh was formed. Although respondents denied, when it was suggested, that the Agha family had been responsible for the creation of Bourj al-Barajneh, the similarity between what I was told and what Gorokhoff relates, suggests that there is some truth in the claim that a local landowner donated the land to the Palestinians or a notable Palestinian family. However, if a Palestinian family was involved with the creation of Bourj it is strange that so few people are aware of it. It is the sort of fact that would enter popular folklore, especially as it attributes some independent power, at a time when it was being undermined, to the Palestinians. It may be that because of the confusion in 1948 and 1949, few inhabitants were concerned with the details surrounding the establishment of the camp, or that 50 years on they have forgotten.

4.ii. THE EARLY DAYS

When the Palestinians first began arriving in Bourj al-Barajneh it was a barren area of sand dunes and cacti. From the camp many inhabitants remember being able to see the airport in one direction and the central areas of Beirut in the other. Now the capital's suburbs have absorbed Bourj and extend as far as the airport.

Respondents claim that initially it was the Red Cross that provided assistance and not the UN. UNRWA did not begin to provide assistance on behalf of the UN until May 1950. Gorokhoff confirms that the Red Cross offered help to the Palestinians when they first arrived in Bourj and adds that help also came from the Lebanese Government and certain religious authorities (1984:314)

The first inhabitants remember receiving help from the municipal authorities to remove large amounts of sand so that the camp area would be more level. Where Haifa hospital now stands, children used to slide down the sandbanks on metal trays.

The Palestinians were given tents which they described as either bell shaped or pyramid shaped. The bell tent was for an average size family and the pyramid tent for a larger family.

Initially, the Palestinians received mattresses and other household necessities. They also received daily food rations. Respondents explained that the food rations became less regular although I was unable to confirm when general distribution stopped. The poorest refugees still receive food rations from UNRWA.

Those who were children in the 1950s remember attending UNRWA schools almost as soon as they arrived on the camp. At first the school was a large tent inside the camp. Later UNRWA rented a building outside the camp.

Life in the tents was hard. When it rained, water used to blow in through the sides. When it was windy, sand got into everything. One respondent described how the bread and any other food she prepared was always full of sand.

Water had to be collected from a standpipe outside the camp supplied by the Red Cross or UNRWA. One couple said that they did not believe that the water was suitable for drinking and cooking and used to buy mineral water from private Lebanese vendors who traded on the camp. It seems to have been the women's job to collect the water. They would go several

times a day and fill large containers which they carried on their heads. Sometimes there was no water available on the camp.

There were communal toilets some for men and some for women provided by the aid agencies. As far as I can gather, there were no showers or rooms for washing. One woman described having to wash from a basin in her tent. She had only two dresses and would wash one of them at the same time as washing herself.

Initially cooking was done over an open fire; later gas stoves were used. Gas was also used for lighting although many respondents talked about using candles.

One family told me how they used to bury the dead in the centre of the camp because they did not know where else to bury them. A proper cemetery was created about 14 years ago immediately outside the official camp boundary (see map).

After a few years, the inhabitants began building makeshift shelters. Stones or breezeblocks were used to make low supporting walls, and zinc or flattened barrels were used for the roof. As a result of Lebanese Government legislation, the shelters could be only a single story high any more would be illegal. To stop more floors being added to these, inhabitants were forbidden from attaching the roof to the walls. It was illegal even to weigh down the roof with stones, although many ignored this because, without the stones, roofs regularly blew away.

The regulations concerning the shelters were introduced to prevent a permanent settlement developing. The Lebanese Government has always insisted that the country will not absorb the Palestinian refugees and believes that, as long as the camps look temporary, the international community can not mistakenly think that the refugees are permanently settled. The difficult living conditions on the camp are also intended to discourage the Palestinians from wanting to stay.

Although an improvement on the tents, the shelters were far from ideal. If it was sunny, it was hot inside and, if it rained, it was extremely noisy. In the 1950s, one woman recalled taking her young daughter to see the Doctor outside the camp. Immediately the little girl wanted to know why it was so much quieter in the Doctor's house than her own when it rained.

People tried to improve their homes but were constantly in trouble with the Lebanese authorities for doing so. Many made a concrete step at their main entrance. If this was discovered, the step was destroyed and the person concerned fined. A fine was also imposed

for having water in the shelter so women using water to wash or cook took great care not to allow any to trickle outside.

4.iii. DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE REVOLUTION

Everything changed with the Revolution in 1969 when the Lebanese authorities were pushed out of the camp. All the respondents talk about having the freedom to do what they wanted within the camp. Everyone was building and there was no one to stop them. There was money from the PLO to help build proper houses. People built their own houses, and most seem to have used the same land as that occupied by their shelter. The areas of the camp where Haifa hospital and the political party offices are located and the area where the Resistance fighters settled were all developed. Later, in al-Ramal Aali, buildings were also constructed with the permission of the resistance.

Information from respondents about when they began to receive electricity and piped water into their houses varies, although all agree that it happened while the Resistance was in Lebanon between 1969 and 1982. It is unlikely that all areas of the camp were developed simultaneously and it is unclear whether connection with water and electricity supplies was dependent on personal finances.

Electric lights and fans were fitted. People also began to buy large electrical appliances. Many seem to have bought a refrigerator first. Televisions were fairly late additions to household possessions. One respondent told me that because there were few televisions on the camp, those that owned one were effectively running a cinema. All the friends and neighbours would crowd around to watch it. Now everyone seems to have a television which is the main source of entertainment.

One respondent admitted that he tended to buy expensive household items only after a friend or neighbour had made an investment in such a product. I was unable to confirm whether this was because he did not want to be considered poor in comparison or because it seemed prudent to wait to see how a product performed before making a similar investment.

Respondents reminded me that the electricity supply is still unreliable and that it is often necessary to use candles and gas lights. (I did not need reminding!). Many people also have generators, particularly shop owners who need to be able to keep freezers and refrigerators working.

All the ovens and hobs appear to be gas. They run on canisters of gas which, when empty, are exchanged for new ones. This seems to be common practice in the Middle East and, to a Westerner, a cheap way of heating an oven.

The electricity powers pumps so that water can be piped around the camp and to tanks on the tops of houses. Water for washing is heated in electric boilers. In the past some sort of oil was used and respondents told me how the fumes from the oil would hurt their eyes while they were washing.

4.iv. THE CIVIL WAR

The inhabitants of Bourj suffered during the Civil War. The camp was attacked on numerous occasions and most people lost family and friends. According to Gorokhoff, 50% of the camp was destroyed in 1982 (1982: 321). In the camp, there were underground shelters in the camp where people would flee during attacks. However, the most vivid memories were of the Amal sieges in 1985 and 1986 and all respondents wanted to talk about them. Without exception, they all considered the sieges their worst experience in the camp. There were three altogether. The first lasted a month, the second six weeks and the third six months.

During the sieges people were starving. Many people told me how they had been forced to eat plants and cat and dog when they became really desperate. A Shaykh in Lebanon declared that to survive, people inside the camp could eat the dead. Normally this would be against Islamic Law although respondents assured me that it had not been necessary to eat anyone.

One respondent claimed that a well was dug in the camp in an effort to obtain water. Women became so desperate to feed their children that they risked their lives to get food from outside the camp. Many were killed trying to do this especially at the end of the sieges when they believed that it was safe to leave the camp.

According to one respondent, all the young men carried guns. Many died during the Amal sieges but the camp did not fall. One respondent believed that that was because the people of Bourj have a strong united community. Another told me that she overheard the Shia militia on the radio saying that the camp could not be stormed because the alleys were too narrow and soldiers would be easy targets for Palestinian militia in first floor buildings.

The Palestinians on the camp have numerous conspiracy theories. Many believe that the opening of international borders to allow Palestinian emigration from Lebanon at the end of the Amal sieges was a plot. Once out of the region and resettled in numerous Western

countries, the International Community could claim that the Palestinian refugee problem had been solved and there would be no efforts to repatriate them.

Throughout the civil war people were continually rebuilding and repairing their houses. One respondent on the edge of the camp claims that he and his family rebuilt their house four or five times. The rebuilding is still in progress and there is much work to be done especially in the Samid area.

TODAY

The standard of living varies dramatically among the camp inhabitants. Those who work or have family abroad and receive remittances are naturally better off. Disparities of wealth can be seen in the houses. The poor live in small dark rooms with rough concrete floors and the furniture minimal. Those who have money have decorated their houses. The floors are tiled and the items of furniture more numerous. There are Western style beds instead of the traditional roll mattresses on the floor. Some have installed air conditioning and have computers. However, the apparent comfort some enjoy in the homes is not a sign of great wealth. As the inhabitants pay nothing for their homes and the cost of services is comparatively small for Lebanon many have only their houses on which to spend their excess money. Very few are able to save enough money to rent or buy accommodation outside the camp.

Other major costs for the Palestinians include private education if parents do not want their children to attend UNRWA schools and healthcare. In recent years, UNRWA assistance for healthcare has decreased significantly and many Palestinians are forced to fund part of, if not the full costs of medical treatment. The inhabitants of Bourj live in fear of incurring heavy medical costs and all have stories to relate about friends and family struggling to pay for essential medical care.

I was also aware that people rarely leave the camp unless there is some practical purpose. There did not seem to be money to go to the cinema or for a meal in a restaurant. Families who went for a day at the beach would go to one of the public beaches or one of the cheaper private ones. For many children, the trips organized by NGOs, during the school holidays, were the only times they left the camp.

The presents couples receive on their wedding day also give a false impression about wealth on the camp. When a couple marry they receive everything that it is believed they will need for their married lives. Many have the attitude that wedding presents have to last a lifetime. A

marriage is the major social event and parents save for years to be able to provide their children with a good start in life. The home of a newly married couple often looks palatial in comparison with other homes on the camp. However, this means only that they have generous family and friends who want them to have a good start in life and does not necessarily reflect the wealth of the couple.

5. A MAP OF BOUR AL-BARAJNEH

This chapter describes the physical structure of the camp and examines whether, according to the claims of Palestinians and the work of some academics (see page 1), there are village quarters on the camp.

The map (figure 2, page 43) is based on information obtained from respondents' maps and discussions about the camp. Its purpose is to show only that different areas of the camp have different names and mark their approximate location on the camp. It is not an accurate representation to scale of the camp which would have been impossible to produce in the sensitive political environment. Information, corroborated by several respondents, about entrances to the camps and landmarks are also shown on the map.

5.i. AREAS OF THE CAMP

The Arabic word for quarter as in area of a town is *hay*. This word was used for most parts of the camp. Sometimes the word *muntaqa*, pronounced colloquially as *munta'a*, was used which means area, place or region. The following areas are all named after villages located in the Acre district of Palestine which borders Lebanon (see page 43 for a map of the camp and appendix 13 for a map of northern Palestine showing village locations).

Hay Al-Ghabsiyyeh

Hay Al-Kabri

Hay Al-Kuwaykat

Hay Sha'b

Hay Shaykh Daoud¹

Hay Tarshiha (see below)

Other areas of the camp are called:

Hay Amliyyeh (al-Mahaneyyeh Amliyyeh is the Technical College near the camp)

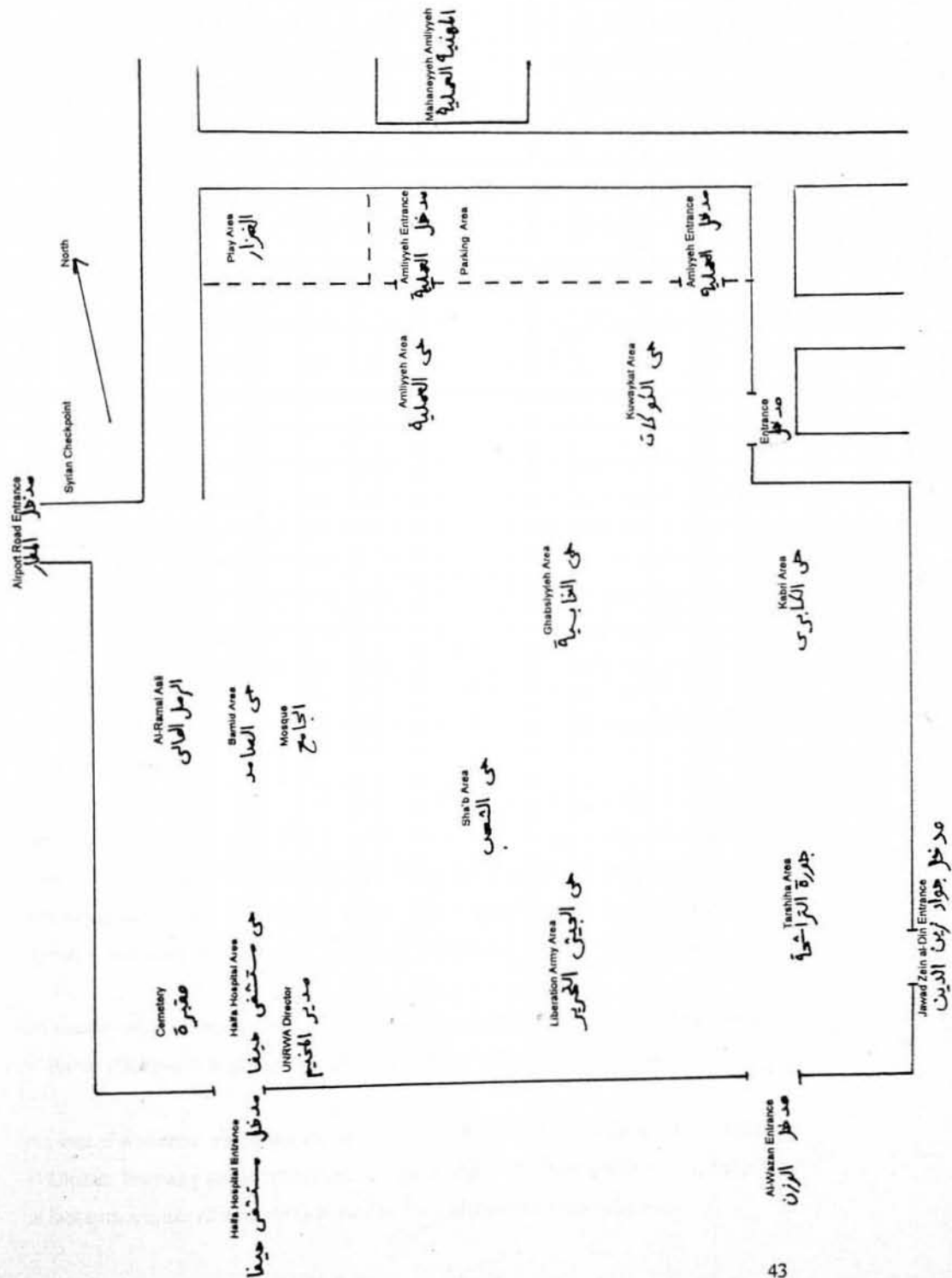
Mustashfa Haifa (Haifa Hospital)

Jaysh al-Tahrir (Liberation Army)

Samid (from the Arabic verb to resist)

Al-Ramal Aali (High sand)

A Map of Bourj al-Barajneh Camp – showing the names and approximate locations of areas, entrances and prominent features.



The names of the villages are often pronounced differently. For example, Hay al-Kabri becomes Kawaabri, Kuwaykat becomes Kuwaaykat and Ghabsiyyeh becomes Ghawaabsi. I was unable to establish a reason for this. Respondents said that it was simply a more familiar way of referring to the village than using the proper name. It could be a plural form that refers to the people from the village rather than just the village itself.

The name Tarshiha was invariably pronounced Tarash ha. I was unable to establish any reason for this popular pronunciation. The area named after Tarshiha is known as Jourat al-Tarash ha. *Joura* means ditch or pit and describes the Tarshiha area because it was lower than the other areas of the camp. A respondent from Tarshiha, living in the Tarshiha area of the camp, told me that other areas of the camp are referred to as Tel, which means 'up' because they are higher than the Tarshiha area.

Sometimes prominent family names are used to name an area. Al-Habit family is a large, well known family from Kuwaykat so the Kuwaykat area is sometimes referred to as the Al-Habit area. The same is also true of the Kabri area which is occasionally called al-'at'ut after a large family from that village.

The areas that are not named after villages are sometimes named after prominent buildings. In conversation, the al-Adawi family told me that the area of the camp they occupied is sometimes named after them, although it is more commonly called Hay Amliyeh after the Lebanese Technical College, al-Mahaneyyeh al-Amliyeh, opposite the camp. The area surrounding Haifa Hospital is named after the hospital.

Haifa Hospital and the surrounding area were developed during the Resistance era at the same time as the area called Jaysh al-Tahrir and Samid. Jaysh al-Tahrir is named after the many Resistance fighters who lived there. The PLO built a number of factories on the camp called Samid, which although gutted during the civil war, still give their name to the area.

Al Ramal Aali is the newest area of the camp and is outside the official boundaries. The name al-Ramal Ali appears have existed before the Palestinians began to exploit the area.

An area of wasteland which may also be outside the official camp boundaries, is referred to as al-Ghazar. The name suggests that the area is green and fertile (Wehr, 1980: 672) although it is in fact a barren area of sand which is used by camp children as a football pitch.

5.ii PROMINENT FEATURES

The respondents from Kuwaykat and Kabri marked several *madkhal* or entrances to the camp. One of the entrances was not named and not all the details given about the entrances correspond. However, because of the clarity of the Kuwaykat map and corroborative information gathered from other sources I have decided to use mainly the names of the entrances given by the respondents from Kuwaykat:

Madkhal Amliyeh (there are two entrances with this name)

Madkhal Jawad Zein al-Din

Madkhal Wazan

Madkhal Haifa

Madkhal al-Matar

The two entrances Madkhal Amliyeh are named after the technical college opposite. There is an entrance into the Tarshiha area called Jawad Zein al-Din. There is an entrance called Al-Wazan and another entrance near the hospital is named after the hospital. The entrance nearest the main road to the airport is called the airport entrance. I never heard any of the entrances referred to by name and there may be more entrances than are marked on the camp map. The two Amliyeh Entrances that are marked on the map are merely gaps between the houses on the edge of the camp which some inhabitants may not consider proper entrances.

Respondents also marked the position of the mosque, hospital, cemetery and the office of the UNRWA official on the camp. Some respondents were keen to mark the location of the many nurseries on the camp but, as I am unclear about how accurately their locations were recorded, I have not shown them on the map or the camp.

The respondents from Kabri discussed the names of the different paths and roads on the camp. Two of the paths, which were identified as the main routes through the camp, lead to the mosque and were called *Tariq al-Jam'i* or the Mosque Road. These are not marked on the map. Other respondents did not mention the names of paths and roads and I did not learn any of their names in conversation although it seems likely that the more major routes have recognized names.

The smaller pathways on the camp weave between the houses and do not appear to have names. This could be because some of the smaller alley ways are transient as on occasions inhabitants decide to extend their houses and, in so doing, block a pathway.

There are a few open areas called *saha* or squares which, although small, serve as points of reference on the camp. All the squares appear to have a name. One of the *saha* in the Tarshiha area of the camp is near Madkhal Jawad Zein al-Din and named after the late Abu Ta'a who owned a shop on the square.

5.iii DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMP

According to the early inhabitants of the camp, the names of areas developed naturally and once established did not change. Areas were named after villages because they were occupied by people from that village. During the years of violence, many areas of the camp were destroyed and have been rebuilt. It was impossible to gather reliable information about the history of development and redevelopment. However, the total area the camp has always been the same and as the population grew new areas have been developed and open areas filled in. Areas named after villages seemed to have been developed first. Respondents agreed that Jourat al-Tarash ha was the first area to be developed. The areas, Samid, Jaysh al Tahrir and Haifa Hospital were all developed later during the Resistance.

Gorokhoff (1984: 321) explains that the "jourat" was the first area to be developed because it was lower than the surrounding area. The small hill in the middle of the camp could be used for water storage and gravity provided a natural pump.

It is agreed that Al-Ramal Aali is the most recent area to be developed although opinion differs about which year in the 1980s development began. A few inhabitants of al-Ramal Aali argue that building began in the area in the 1970s. It is considerably less crowded than the rest of the camp and the roads are wide enough for two cars to pass. The houses tend to be only one or two stories high and are often set in their own walled area. Palestinians refer to these walled areas as gardens although they are little more than open spaces of sand where a few fig trees can grow. Despite this, the Palestinians with land consider themselves very lucky to own some private space.

Al-Ramal Aali is outside the official boundaries of the camp and not serviced by UNRWA so there is no refuse collection and the roads, which have not been covered with concrete like the rest of the camp, are loose rubble. Those living in al-Ramal Aali take water and electricity from the camp. It is not clear whether residents have had permission to do this from UNRWA.

During the Resistance, makeshift houses were constructed on the area opposite the Technical College which the Palestinians now use for parking their cars. This land is not officially part

of the camp and according to the Palestinians belongs to the owner of the Technical College. The houses were occupied mainly by young men working with the Resistance and were destroyed after the Resistance left. As the land did not belong to the camp and was never occupied by inhabitants who originated from the camp, there have never been any attempts to rebuild this area. To my knowledge, this is the only area of the camp, or area considered part of the camp, that has not been redeveloped after the War.

It was impossible to determine the size of each area and whether recognized boundaries between areas existed. Nor was there the time to survey each area to establish similarities and differences. However, areas named after villages and the Hay Amliyyeh seem more crowded than areas developed during the Resistance. There are many shops scattered throughout but in some areas they seem to be concentrated. A number are along a pathway running through the Kuwaykat area and along another pathway in the Ghabsiyyeh area. Both the entrance and road leading to Haifa Hospital are wide, presumably so ambulances have easy access. The road has also enabled the development of commercial establishments. There are many mechanics' workshops and large shops which stand out because they are lacking in other areas of the camp. One resembled a covered market which seemed to sell mainly food, although I was told that almost anything could be bought there at competitive prices.

5.iv. VILLAGE ORIGIN AND CAMP STRUCTURE

To a certain extent, the physical structure of the camp reflects the origins of the population. The majority of people on the camp originate from the villages of Kuwaykat, Kabri Tarshiha, Shaykh Daoud, Sha'b and Ghabsiyyeh. People originating from the same village have settled together in an area of the camp and the name of their village has been used as the name the area. Most respondents agreed that Kuwaykat has the largest number of representatives on the camp and that Kabri and Tarshiha also have significant populations. However, respondents estimate that there are as many as 30 villages represented on the camp. This corresponds with Gorokhoff's claim that there are people on the camp from thirty-two villages in Northern Palestine (1984: 321)

I did not attempt to establish how many villages are represented in Bourj al-Barajneh and accept that there are inhabitants who originate from places other than those mentioned in this thesis.

During my fieldwork I identified fifteen villages and three cities present on the camp. The twelve villages listed below are located close together in the district of Acre. The first six, which have significant populations on the camp, have already been mentioned:

Kuwaykat

Kabri

Tarshiha

Shaykh Daoud

Sha'b

Ghabsiyyeh

The following have a smaller population:

'Amqa four families

Um al-Faraj four families

Al-Bassa

Shaykh Danun

Al-Nahr

Al-Zib

There is a small number of people originating from the city of Acre and Haifa.

There are also people on the camp from the Northern Palestinian province of Safad:

Fara

Sa'sa 10 families

There are two people from the village of Hittin in the district of Tiberias south of Safad and several people from the coastal city of Jaffa. There are also people from the occupied West Bank town of Hebron who fled their homes during the 1967 Six Day War.

The village composition of the camp population corresponds with the following UNRWA data which show that the majority of Palestinians in Lebanon originate from the Northern districts of Palestine.

REGISTERED REFUGEES BY VILLAGE ORIGIN, LEBANON, 1992

| DISTRICT | No. of RR | % TOTAL RR |
|---|-----------|------------|
| JERUSALEM (including al-Khalil, Hebron, Ramallah) | 1,583 | 0.5 |
| GAZA (including Beersheba) | 411 | 0.13 |
| LYDDA (including Jaffa, Ramla') | 26,871 | 8.41 |
| NABLUS (including Jenin, Tulkaren) | 394 | 0.12 |
| HAIFA | 61,420 | 19.23 |
| GALILEE (including Acre, Belsan, Nazareth, Safad, Tiberius) | 228,580 | 71.56 |
| OTHERS | 168 | 0.05 |
| TOTAL | 319,427 | |

Figure 3².

It was interesting to discover that some inhabitants, particularly those employed outside the camp who spent less time socializing in the camp, had limited knowledge of areas that were not adjacent to their own. When unsure of a location, inhabitants use several methods to find places on the camp. Very often a person is taken to his destination or given directions using landmarks, which might include water tanks, squares, shops or other prominent buildings. The name of the area may also be used to give an indication of the general direction.

Respondents told me that when discussing a person the area is seldom used as a means of identification. As Arabs traditionally have long names that include names of other relatives a person's full name is used to aid identification. Other details may also be given, such as profession, but one of the last pieces of information to be mentioned would be location on the camp.

While different areas of the camp have different names, which appear to be standard and in daily use, it is not true that the village origin of the inhabitants in one area is the same. The areas named after villages contain a large number of people originating from that village but these areas are also occupied by people from other villages. The areas of the camp that developed in the 1970s have very mixed populations.

Respondents freely acknowledged that areas of the camp were occupied by people from different villages but at the same time insisted that there were "pockets"³ of people living together from the same village. A respondent, with more knowledge of the camp structure

² Taken from an UNRWA web site.

³ English speaking respondent summer 1998.

than most inhabitants because of his work with UNRWA, toured the camp telling me from where the occupants of each house originated. It was clear that, throughout the camp village origins were mixed although there were areas where small “pockets” of people from the same village could be found. According to early camp inhabitants, areas have always been mixed, although less mixed than they are today. Reasons for the development and evolution of the camp structure are discussed in the following chapter.

6. JOURNEY FROM PALESTINE TO BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH

Although the inhabitants of Bourj al-Barajneh have not re-formed their Palestinian village communities to the extent that Palestinian claims and academic sources had lead me to believe, there still appears to be a pattern to the population structure on the camp and areas of village clusters. For example, in 1948, 418 villages (Khalidi, 1992)¹ were depopulated, yet only a handful of these, most of which are located in the same area of Acre in Northern Palestine, are represented on the camp.

This chapter attempts to explain the pattern of settlement in Bourj al-Barajneh and establish whether the areas of village clustering were formed accidentally or as the result of deliberate social in-gathering. To do this, information was collected from respondents about their respective villages in Palestine, their route to Bourj al-Barajneh, and their reasons for coming to the camp and choosing to settle on a particular plot of land.

The following is based mainly on information gathered during fieldwork and concentrates on the villages of Tarshiha, al-Kabri, Kuwaykat, Ghabsiyyeh and Shaykh Daoud. Other sources have been used to confirm and supplement this information but not to provide data about villages largely ignored or superficially described by respondents. This is a deliberate choice as I am anxious to focus on information supplied by respondents and not summarize work by other academics.

6.i. VILLAGE DESCRIPTION

Older respondents were asked to describe their village in Palestine. Many younger respondents, born outside Palestine, were also able to discuss their family village using information imparted by older relatives. All respondents gave similar information describing life in Palestine as idyllic; claiming that they had all enjoyed simple lives and had few worries.

Before 1948, the Palestinians had lived a simple life, farming the plot of land belonging to their family. Their produce had included wheat, olives, figs, dates, tomatoes, okra, oranges, lemons and grapes. Some families had kept goats for meat, milk, cheese and yoghurt, hens for eggs and bees for honey. The relatively successful farmers who owned more land than they could farm alone hired help. However it appears that very few were wealthy. A female respondent from Ghabsiyyeh claimed that her family had owned fertile land because it had its

¹ Morris lists 369 depopulated villages (1987); Abu-Sitta names 531 depopulated villages (1998).

own water supply and had been famous for its comparative wealth. While this success meant that she and the other female members of the family did not have to help in the fields, they still had to work in the home, as there was no money remaining to pay domestic servants.

Surplus produce was exchanged at local markets in neighbouring villages, although some travelled to Acre to sell their wares. Most respondents claimed that villages were self-sufficient and were not obliged to rely on purchases of food produced outside the village to feed inhabitants.

Several of the villages were particularly close together. Shaykh Daoud and Shaykh Dannun, both of which are named after the shrines located in the respective villages, overlapped in places and were only 500m away from the village of Ghabsiyyeh (Khalidi, 1992: 14). Respondents in Bourj did not recognize Shaykh Daoud and Shaykh Dannun as two different places and usually referred to both places as Shaykh Daoud explaining that there were two shrines that had lent their name to the same place.

Tarshiha does not appear to be marked on Abu-Sitta's map showing only the locations of villages depopulated in 1948, and it may be that it was often considered a town. A map produced by the Survey of Palestine in 1946 locates Kabri in the same place as Tarshiha because at the end of the mandate period land belonging to Tarshiha and Kabri were amalgamated and their total areas calculated together (Khalidi, 1992: 20). Another map produced by the Survey of Palestine in 1942 shows Tarshiha as a town although Morris describes it as a village (1987: 195). Respondents implied that Tarshiha was larger than other villages and suggested that it was regarded as a regional capital. It was located in the mountains and known as Kursi al-Jibal, or The Seat of the Mountains. (see map)

The lifestyles in the different villages appear to have been very similar and respondents often emphasized this fact. Obviously, some villages were larger than others and factors indicating this, such as the presence of a school or a mosque are described below. Statistical details were not discussed by respondents and therefore will not be included here. Statistical information about each village mentioned here can be found in Khalidi's, *All that Remains* (1992).

Respondents from Tarshiha explained that it was rare for a village to have a secondary school so were proud to have had their own. Usually, children wishing to attend secondary school would have to travel to a city, although it was often necessary to travel to neighbouring villages to acquire even a basic level education. A respondent from Shaykh Daoud explained

that he attended a school in the nearby village of al-Nahr where a man taught children how to read the Qur'an and to write. Kuwaykat had a primary school but no secondary school so children had to travel to Karf Yasif, a village, about 2.5km southeast, to pursue their education. Kabri also had a school.

Respondents from Ghabsiyyeh, Kuwaykat and Kabri mentioned that each village had its own mosque. It seems likely that Tarshiha would also have had a mosque although this was not confirmed by respondents who were anxious to explain that before 1948 there had been Jews and Christians as well as Muslims living peacefully together in the village. The co-existence of people of different faiths, coupled with the presence of the secondary school seems to have elevated the status of Tarshiha. Respondents from all villages implied that Tarshiha was considered more developed than other villages in the region and the population, because of the secondary school and contact with other religions, more educated than those from other villages.

Respondents from al-Kabri explained that the name of their village means rich and wealthy, a fact confirmed by Khalidi (1992: 19). The village was given this name because of the abundance of water and, therefore, fertile farming land.

There was an olive press in Shaykh Daoud, to which everyone in the village had access. It was implied that it was village property and did not belong to an individual.

Relations between the different villages were described as good although respondents admitted that there were tensions but were reluctant to go into detail. Respondents explained that there was regular contact with people from other villages and many of their friends would come from neighbouring villages. There were joint religious and social celebrations and often marriages between couples from different villages.

As these villages were close to the Lebanese border, there were trading and social ties with villages in Southern Lebanon. Respondents explained that lifestyles on both sides of the border were very similar. A respondent from Kuwaykat claimed that in the 1940s there were 50 Lebanese women married to men in the village.

6.ii. FLEEING THE VILLAGE

As a result of Jewish immigration and the subsequent violent events, the simple lifestyle enjoyed by the Palestinians gradually came under threat and finally vanished with the onset of the first Arab-Israeli War. From respondents' descriptions of the events surrounding the

exodus from their villages, it is immediately apparent that this was a time of great fear and confusion. There was wide spread panic exacerbated by rumour and misinformation and people fled with only the clothes they were wearing and little idea of their destination. There are many stories of families becoming separated and parents forgetting one of their children, leaving them at home in their rush to escape. The following descriptions are based on respondents memories of this time and arranged chronologically. (see appendix 13 for a map of Northern Palestine showing the location of depopulated villages and villages where refuge was sought. See also appendix 9 for a map of Lebanon showing the locations of towns and villages where Palestinians also sought refuge)

Ghabsiyyeh

Khalidi records that Ghabsiyyeh was captured during operation Ben Ami, 13-21 May 1948, the last major Haganah offensive to begin before the end of the British Mandate (1992:14) (Abu-Sitta, 1998: 11). Respondents from Ghabsiyyeh describe being very frightened during the Jewish attack and claim that as many as 70 people were killed. Most fled the village with their families to either Tarshiha or 'Amqa. One of the respondents who went to Tarshiha with his wife stayed for 40 days until she had delivered their baby, before moving to Sour, a coastal city in Southern Lebanon, and Bourj al-Shamali Camp where they lived for seven months. They then spent a further seven months in Jouaiya in Southern Lebanon before travelling north to Tripoli. From Tripoli the respondent explained that he came alone to Beirut in search of work because he could earn three lira a day in the capital rather than two lira in Tripoli. When he arrived in Beirut he asked about Palestinian camps and discovered Bourj al-Barajneh. He claims that he did not know about Bourj before arriving in Beirut.

A female respondent fled to Tarshiha with her husband and stayed there with relatives. After three months she moved to Sour with several members of her family. From there they were taken by the Lebanese by train to Halab in Northern Syria where they stayed for three years in Neirab refugee camp near the airport. Although this is now an UNRWA camp and may already have been at the time the respondent was there, the respondent believes that it was the Syrian Government and not UNRWA that provided aid. She states that the Syrian Government was generous and gave them food, clothing, shelter and bedding.

Members of her family were divided about what they should do. Her Uncle wanted to return to Palestine but other members of the family could not bear to return because they had seen how the Israelis had killed her mother (details of her death were not given). Some relatives tried to return to Palestine, others chose to go to Bourj. The respondent did not explain how,

while in Halab, they had heard of the camp at Bourj, but states that many people from Ghabsiyyeh who were in Halab at that time were leaving for Bourj.

A third respondent from Ghabsiyyeh, who attended school in Acre, remembers the Jewish forces besieging the village. First he went with his family to 'Amqa but they soon decided to leave. This was because he his sister and one of her friends had been picking tomatoes near the village and were challenged by Haganah forces. The three children ran away and were physically unharmed although several shots were fired at them. The respondent claims that after that incident his parents decided to move to Tarshiha believing it safer. After a month, the respondent left Tarshiha with his family and travelled to Qana via, Aita Al-Shab, in Southern Lebanon where they stayed until 1951. Through other Palestinians travelling in Lebanon, the respondent's mother heard about Bourj al-Barajneh and decided that they should move there. When they arrived there were only ten tents occupied mainly by people from Tarshiha.

Shaykh Daoud

Two female respondents from Shaykh Daoud were children when they left their village and remember few details of their escape. One remembers travelling in the countryside before going to Harris, a village in Southern Lebanon, for four years. When her grandfather died the family moved to al-Buss camp near Sour. When she married, the respondent moved to Bourj al-Barajneh although her parents are still in al-Buss.

The second female respondent also moved to Bourj al-Barajneh when she married. From Shaykh Daoud she had fled to Sour with an Aunt. They had thought that her parents were dead until they too arrived in Sour two or three months later. After her father had recovered from an injury they moved to Bourj al-Shamali camp until UNRWA took them to Anjar near the Syrian Border and then on to Nahr al-Barid in Tripoli, Northern Lebanon. Through relatives she met her husband who was already living in Bourj al-Barajneh.

A third respondent from Shaykh Daoud states that everyone left the village together. He fled to Yirka, a village to the southeast of Shaykh Daoud. He stayed for about two months before moving further southeast to Majd al-Karoom. Finally he went to Southern Lebanon and, for about three months, stayed in Jouaiya where he received aid from the Red Cross. When he and his family learned from other Palestinians that people from Tarshiha were living in tents in Ein al-Siqay, an area of Bourj al-Barajneh, they decided to go there.

Kabri

The respondent from Kabri was young when he left his village with his family. He describes how they took a donkey, two cows and a camel with them. His grandmother was blind and rode on the donkey and because he was only seven and tired more quickly than the others he was allowed to ride on one of the cows. First they travelled to Jouaiya and then to Sour before moving to Anjar where they stayed on a camp that had been built originally for the Armenians. In Anjar, UNRWA provided French bread, luncheon meat and cheese and later also gave yeast, rice and powdered milk. Large families received more milk and there was special milk for babies. Through UNRWA, the respondent's family learnt that there was a camp in Bourj and more work available so decided to move.

Morris explains that because members of Kabri had been involved in attacks against the Jewish forces it had experienced several attacks before finally being depopulated in May 1948. Consequently, many people had already left the village before the major Jewish offensive. This corresponds with description given by the respondent whose family had obviously had more time to plan their escape and take their animals with them.

Kuwaykat

All respondents from Kuwaykat mentioned the Jewish attack on their village, during which many fled. Those who remained, mainly the elderly, were later expelled to nearby villages (Khalidi, 1992: 22). Respondents who were there remember the bombardment beginning at night. Some describe the village being surrounded with a way left clear by the Jewish troops through which they could escape.

Three respondents say that they went first to Abu Sinan, a Druze village southeast of Kuwaykat. Apparently people from other villages had also fled to Abu Sinan because it was felt that the Jews largely ignored the Druze. After two months, one respondent said that the Jews took the Palestinians from Abu Sinan by bus to Jordan where they stayed until certain "paperwork" had been completed before returning to Lebanon. Unfortunately the respondent did not identify Palestinians who accompanied him to Jordan, or say whether he returned to Lebanon with the same people. He may have been referring to members of his family or village, or any Palestinians who were in the same place as he was at that time.

The respondent and his immediate family decided to go to Sour because it was close to Kuwaykat. He explained that information about the whereabouts of other Palestinians was communicated, from one group to another, by those travelling around the country. In this way

the respondent's family learnt that there was a camp in Bourj and decided to go and settle there because they had no money and few prospects of work in Sour.

Information provided in separate interviews by a father and daughter from Kuwaykat differs slightly. This could be because the daughter was only 9 in 1948 and confused about events, or because the elderly father, with the passage of time, may have forgotten some of the details.

Like most members of his village, the father took his family to Abu Sinan to stay with friends. After about a year he claims that the citizens of Abu Sinan asked the Jews to take the Palestinians elsewhere because there was not enough water for everyone. The father went to Qana with his family, and others from Kuwaykat went to Syrian and Jordan. It is unclear whether other people from Kuwaykat also went to Qana. In Qana he rented a house but was unable to find work so after a short time had no money for rent or food. A friend from Acre told him about Bourj and initially he travelled alone to Bourj to arrange accommodation for his family.

The daughter's account of events agree with her father's except that she also claims when they were forced by the Israelis to leave Abu Sinan after two years, all the Palestinians sheltering in the village were taken to the West Bank in about 60 trucks. She claims that they were forcibly moved from place to place before being taken to Qana. She did not explain what happened during this time or how much time passed between leaving Abu Sinan and arriving in Qana.

Another female respondent also describes being taken with other members of her family to Ramtha in the West Bank, which was under Jordanian control at that time. In Ramtha, the Jordanians provided aid for the Palestinians. Then they moved to Qana for about two months because it was closer to Kuwaykat. She remembers being taken from there in a truck by the Lebanese army to Bourj with other Palestinians. As she was only young at the time she does not know whether this move was voluntary or enforced. When they arrived in Bourj they began asking for information about their friends and relatives.

One respondent's experience differs markedly from the others. He fled from Kuwaykat to Qana with his Uncle and stayed there about a week before moving on to Saida. Meanwhile his parents travelled through the mountains with their flock of sheep to Yarta and from there contacted their son who went to join them. Apparently arrangements had been made before leaving Kuwaykat to enable the parents to contact their son in Lebanon but the respondent, a young child in 1948, had been unaware of this and believed that he had lost his parents.

From Yarta the family travelled to Bourj Rahali near Sour because there was a river there for the sheep. The respondent lived there for three or four years before marrying someone also from Kuwaykat who had been living in Bourj al-Barajneh. The respondent did not explain how he met his wife but says that after he had married her, he went to visit her parents' home in Bourj. He could see that the opportunities in Beirut were greater than in Bourj Rahali. He went to Bourj al-Barajneh with his wife and took her to her parents house while he arranged accommodation for them both and his parents. After a week he returned to Bourj Rahali to collect his parents and bring them to Beirut.

Tarshiha

An elderly respondent from Tarshiha remembers the Haganah attack on his village in October 1948. He claims that everyone left although after a couple of weeks, some, mainly Christians, returned. Morris (1987: 228) states that most of the Christians did not leave the village at all.

All the respondents describe fleeing to the nearby mountains for safety before travelling further to villages in Southern Lebanon. One respondent's family appears to have travelled steadily towards Bourj al-Barajneh after arriving in Lebanon. He thought that the journey had taken several days and involved stopping in many places along the way. He remembers staying in Bint al-Jubeil and one of the coastal cities. For part of the journey he and his family were taken by train to Bourj but he does not explain who had arranged this transport. When they arrived there were already others from Tarshiha on the camp.

Another respondent also claims that after spending several days in the village of 'Amish in Southern Lebanon and then moving onto Sour she and her family were taken by force to Bourj al-Barajneh by the Lebanese Government. Other Palestinians were taken to Syria, Jordan and Iraq. Similarly a respondent remembers travelling to Sour where many Palestinians were put on trains by the Lebanese and taken to Hama, Homs and Halab in Syria.

Other information suggests that people from Tarshiha chose to go to Bourj. A second-generation refugee believes that while his parents were in Saida they heard from friends, already living in Bourj, that there was work to be found in the city and decided to move.

Another second-generation refugee described in detail what her mother had told her. Apparently large numbers of villagers fled together to Qana taking any money and gold that they possessed. At first people rented houses using their own money and stayed for about six months. During that time the UN began to provide some assistance and started asking people

to move to the Bekka' valley. Many moved to Majd al-Anjar near the Syrian border. After a short time the UN asked people if they wanted to go to Syria or Beirut - the respondents' relatives chose Beirut and decided to come to Bourj along with most people from Tarshiha because they wanted to stay together.

The impression given by the two second-generation refugees is that it was their relatives decision to settle in Bourj rather than being forced to do so by outside authorities.

Other Villages

Respondents from other villages such as al-Bassa on the Palestine-Lebanon border and Sa'sa' in the district of Safad described their villages, flight to Lebanon and route to Bourj al-Barajneh in a similar manner. The experiences of other respondents who settled in Bourj al-Barajneh after the early 1950s will be discussed in the following chapter.

6.iii. ARRIVAL IN BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH

Respondents explained that they were given a tent upon their arrival in Bourj al-Barajneh and told that they could choose where to pitch it. An account of their actions on arrival and reasons dictating their choice of plot shows how village clusters developed within the camp.

Many of the early inhabitants encouraged other friends and family to come and join them in Bourj. Palestinians were still travelling around the country and people relied on word of mouth to contact friends and relatives. Respondents were anxious to remind me that they did not have telephones and there was no reliable postal system.

Some people apparently made no effort to contact others. One respondent explained that she had arrived in Bourj with all her relatives and there was no one left outside the camp that she considered worth contacting. Her claim supports the evidence suggesting that some Palestinian families travelled together in large groups and made collective decisions about their future. It also shows, at least for some, that immediate family ties were regarded as more important than village ties as it was considered necessary only to contact family members and not friends from the village.

All respondents claim that they, and not the authorities, chose the site to pitch their tent. Many respondents argue that it is natural for people to settle with family and friends particularly in times of fear and uncertainty. A respondent from Kuwaykat claimed that he expected people from his village to settle together.

People already settled in the camp would often invite newly arrived friends and family to settle next to them. A first generation refugee from Tarshiha believes that this was for security as well as company. He explained that originally Bourj was on an isolated open area of sand and that many people were scared and preferred to be surrounded by others.

As many refugees had been farmers in Palestine, those who arrived first often marked out large areas of land around their tent so that they could keep some animals and grow a little food. However, as a respondent from Kabri explained, his family soon had to abandon efforts to produce their own food. When friends arrived in Bourj the respondent's father would invite them to take a piece of his land and pitch their tent next to his family's. After a short time the respondent's family had very little land. Another respondent from Tarshiha had a similar story to tell about her husband's family. She explained that although people wanted land for their own smallholdings in an attempt to be self-sufficient, they did not regard it as very important as they believed that their stay was only temporary.

Not all families were anxious to settle near others. A family from Kuwaykat pitched their tent on a vacant piece of land in the Ghabsiyyeh area. Soon many people settled around them forming a circle so the family decided to move their tent to another vacant piece of land. The family claims that other people from Kuwaykat began to follow them to the same area which led to the creation of the Kuwaykat quarter of the camp.

Although many preferred to settle near people from their own village, it was not a necessity. An elderly respondent from Shaykh Daoud explained that he arrived in the early 50s, after a group of people from Shaykh Daoud had already settled in the camp. As there was no room to pitch his tent near them, he chose to settle in the Tarshiha area and claimed that he had never regretted it.

However, it appears that most of the original habitants settled with other people from their village and have remained in the same area, eventually building a more permanent home on the site of their tent. An English speaking respondent explained,

“People came to Bourj looking for friends and family. It was easy to find them if you could go to an area which was composed mainly of one village.”

6.iv. VILLAGE REPRESENTATION ON OTHER CAMPS

It is possible to find in other camps in Lebanon people from the same villages as those represented in Bourj al-Barajneh. I was unable to conduct an extensive survey but the

following demonstrates that each village is not confined exclusively to one camp. (See appendix 10 for the distribution of UNRWA camps in Lebanon).

Kuwaykat, which by population, is the largest village in Bourj is also represented in Rashidieh; a fact confirmed by a Kuwaykat respondent in Bourj and my respondent from Rashidieh. According to the respondent from Ein al-Hilweh, Kabri is also represented there, despite its having one of the larger representations in Bourj. However, most respondents believe that majority of people from Tarshiha live in Bourj, although a large number live in Beirut. (see page 73 for more detailed explanation of Tarshiha population distribution)

Often villages with a smaller representation in Bourj have larger populations elsewhere. Although Ghabsiyyeh is one of the larger villages in Bourj, respondents claim that there are people from Ghabsiyyeh in Ein al-Hilweh, and in al-Beddawi and Nahr al-Barid camps near Tripoli. Apparently there are also people from Ghabsiyyeh in Syria. This corresponds with respondents' accounts of time spent in Syria between leaving Palestine and settling in Bourj.

The respondent from Hattin moved to Bourj from Ein al-Hilweh when she married. Most people from Hattin have remained in Ein al-Hilweh.

The majority of people from Fara and Bassa, which have only a small number of people in Bourj, have settle in Rashidieh. Acre is not well represented in Bourj but respondents from this city believe that there are people from Acre in all the camps in Lebanon.

Within Ein al-Hilweh and Rashidieh there appear to be village clusters although it was beyond the scope of this study to examine in detail the nature of these clusters and how they were formed. However, a brief description of the two camps indicates that similar patterns of settlement can be found in other camps.

Rosemary Sayigh believes that there are village quarters in Ein al-Hilweh that are more defined than in Bourj al-Barajneh². The respondent from Ein al-Hilweh confirmed that there are village clusters in the camp although she did not explain whether different areas are named after villages. Most of the villages represented are from the Galilee area of Palestine, but unlike the villages in Bourj, most of which are located close together, the villages in Ein al-Hilweh are drawn from a wide area. The largest population in the camp comes from a village called Saffuriya which is south of all the villages represented in Bourj. The respondent

² Informal conversation with Rosemary Sayigh, August 1998.

claimed that as a result of the massacre in 1976 at Tel al-Zaatar camp many Palestinians resettled in Ein al-Hilweh.

The respondent from Rashidieh explained that the structure of his camp differs from the other camps and that the different areas do not have specific names. The camp is divided in two: the old part and the new part. In the old part of the camp there are village clusters. The people living here tend to have gardens because when they first arrived they claimed the area surrounding their tents as a garden. More permanent houses were built on the same site as the tent, so the originally inhabitants of the camp were able to retain their gardens. The newer area of the camp is occupied by people from many different villages. The respondent believed that this was because many people came to the camp after the massacre at Tel al-Zaatar.

The two parts of the camp are physically different. The older part of the camp seems to have developed naturally as people arrived. Families chose where to pitch their tents and later built their houses in the same place. The houses are not arranged in straight lines and the roads have developed in the gaps between the houses. The newer part of the camp appears to have been built by UNRWA to accommodate newcomers and the growing population. The uniform houses are arranged in a grid formation.

The respondent implied that most people in the camp originate from four villages, Um al-Faraj, Fara and Kuwaykat, all represented in Bourj, and his own village, 'Alma, located in the north of Safad.

6.v. CONCLUSION

It appears that the predominance of certain Palestinian villages in Bourj al-Barajneh is not the result of deliberate social in-gathering by a village member or leader, or a political authority. Each village is not confined to one particular camp. If it were, it would suggest that deliberate social in-gathering had taken place. However, the majority of people originating from the same village may be found in the same camp. Brief descriptions of Ein al-Hilweh and Rashidieh illustrate that there are patterns of settlement in the camps in Lebanon.

None of the respondents and their families had come directly to Bourj but had remained in the South, near Palestine, until they were moved or decided to leave voluntarily. Examination of the various routes taken to Bourj shows that they were not planned. The refugees did not have a final destination in mind; their movements were dictated by outside authorities and the search for food and shelter.

However, there are various practical factors that help explain the village composition of the camp. During the 1948 war, Palestinians fled to the nearest place of safety. For those in Northern Palestine that was Southern Lebanon. There were social and trading ties between villages on either side of the Palestine-Lebanon border which meant that not only was the region geographically close it also seemed familiar.

Villagers fled for a variety of reasons, sometimes acting on their own initiative, at other times obeying the order of an outside authority. Whatever the reason for leaving the village, people sought comfort and safety in numbers, unintentionally maintaining social links that influenced the village composition of Bourj al-Barajneh.

People rarely fled as individuals or families but with extended families and other members of their village. Certain places in Palestine and Lebanon such as Abu Sinan, Bint al-Jubeil and Qana served as temporary safe havens where people from several villages would gather.

When the refugees were moved by force they may have been separated from immediate friends and family but they were not dispersed in small groups throughout the Middle East. Governments wanted to keep the Palestinians together so that they could be monitored more easily reducing any threat they posed to national security. Aid agencies also preferred to gather together the Palestinians as aid could be more effectively distributed. The creation of settlements facilitated communication between the Palestinians by providing obvious points of contact at a time of great confusion. Respondents explained that they were anxious to learn about friends and family and potential opportunities to improve their situation. Information was passed unofficially by word of mouth. As many Palestinians were travelling, it was possible to learn of events and situations in another part of the region.

Many respondents seem to have heard about Bourj al-Barajneh by word of mouth and decided to go there voluntarily in search of assistance and work. This seems to be true of many who initially found themselves in camps near Sour and Saida. Others were attracted by the greater employment opportunities in Beirut and only learned about Bourj after making enquires upon their arrival in the capital. According to respondents, Bourj al-Barajneh, which was established in the early 1950s (Gorokhoff, 1984:321), was the first camp located near the capital and therefore the only option for Palestinians in need of assistance.

Some respondents' claims that they were taken forcibly to Bourj are given credibility by other accounts of refugees being taken to camps in Syria, Jordan or Anjar in Lebanon. From these

camps, it appears that some decided for themselves to travel to Bourj al-Barajneh. Others were asked by aid agencies or governments if they would like to go there.

Some Palestinians were encouraged to settle in Bourj because of the possibility of finding friends and family there. Although some learnt of the camp through official bodies, most gathered their information through chance conversation. In this respect, the natural tendency of the Palestinians to travel together and settle in groups, and the deliberate policy of containing the refugees in a limited number of areas, played a significant role in facilitating the dissemination of information.

Once the refugees were on the camp it appears that the formation of village clusters developed naturally because people preferred to live near those from their own village. This clustering may not have been possible if some of the early refugees had not reserved large areas of land for themselves which they later divided among their friends. However, it does not appear that there was a conscious effort to establish village clusters or even that inhabitants made a conscious decision to settle in Bourj al-Barajneh rather than another camp.

7. CHANGING CAMP STRUCTURE

The natural desire to live among familiar faces resulted in the partial creation of village clusters in Bourj al-Barajneh. Areas were easily identified by naming them after the Palestinian villages of their inhabitants. Today, these areas still bear the same village names, although the inhabitants of each area often originate from many different villages. New areas of the camp have also been developed since it was first established. This chapter examines the social and political reasons for the evolution of the camp structure and asks whether behaviour differs according to village origin.

Even in the early 50s, there were people from different villages living together in the same area of the camp but respondents claim that most settled with friends and relatives. All respondents agree that throughout the history of the camp, the population has been in a constant state of flux. The political instability in Lebanon, regular immigration and emigration of individuals for personal reasons, as well as natural rapid population growth have all affected the numbers living on the camp.

UNRWA POPULATION FIGURES FOR BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH

| DATE | POPULATION OF BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| 01/07/71 | 7,514 |
| 01/07/72 | 7,672 |
| 01/07/73 | 7,765 |
| 01/07/74 | 7,963 |
| 30/06/75 | 8,194 |
| 30/06/79 | 9,132 |
| 30/06/83 | 10,840 |
| 30/06/84 | 11,348 |
| 30/06/85 | 11,609 |
| 30/06/86 | 11,620 |
| 30/06/87 | 11,657 |
| 30/06/93 | 14,190 |
| 30/06/95 | 13,820 |
| 31/12/96 | 16,389 |
| 30/06/97 | 16,506 |

Figure 4¹

Although UNRWA statistics from 1971 to 1997 - with the exception of 1993 to 1995 - show that the population of Bourj al-Barajneh is increasing (figure 4), the figures do not illustrate

¹ These are the only UNRWA statistics that were readily available.

the fluid nature of the population. For example, in a given year many people may leave the camp so that the number of new inhabitants the following year is greater than it appears from the increase in the population. For reasons discussed on page 31, the population figures are inaccurate and include only registered refugees. Through my research, I know that there is a significant number of refugees living on the camp who are not registered with UNRWA.

Respondents explained that, throughout the early 50s, as a result of the 1948 war, there was a steady stream of people coming to Bourj al-Barajneh. Apparently some of these people had continued to live in Palestine after 1948, but later decided that they had to leave because conditions were too difficult. As many of those were arriving in Lebanon after the main influx of refugees they were not registered with UNRWA.

Within Lebanon in the early 50s there were also many Palestinians who were still looking for a place to settle. A first generation refugee who had been living in the South with his family, came to Bourj when he married because of the improved job prospects in the capital. He claims that when he arrived in the early 50s he was able to buy a makeshift dwelling constructed of concrete blocks and a flattened barrel for a roof. He originated in Kuwaykat and settled in the Kuwaykat area. However, according to some respondents, many of the later arrivals were unable to find shelter among people from their own village. That the respondent from Kuwaykat was able to buy a shelter indicates that some refugees were leaving the camp within a short time of their arrival.

As a direct result of their initial displacement in 1948, Palestinians were regularly moving into the camp until about 1960. Since then families and individuals, previously settled in other camps or other parts of Lebanon, have continued to move into the camp for personal reasons. A respondent from Acre says that in the 1970s her parents built a house in al-Ramal Aali. Initially the respondents' parents had settled in Saida with other members of their family before moving to Beirut in search of work. When the respondent was born, her parents decided that they wanted their own house and moved out of the family home. The only way that they could afford their own house was to build one inside the camp. Other members of the family still live in Beirut.

Another respondent, also from Acre, said that she moved from the family home in the city to the camp when she married so that she and her husband could have their own home. She lives in the Haifa Hospital area which is one of the later parts of the camp to be developed. Her parents and other members of her family still live in Beirut.

That any couple should want a house of their own, away from the extended family, may seem to contradict the emphasis usually placed on family life in the Arab culture. However, the move away from the parental home is often influenced by practicalities. There may be several children in the family, all of whom marry and then have several children of their own and it is impossible to house them all in the same building. Very often, I think that people would prefer to settle near their family. When this is not possible, another place has to be found, and financial restrictions force people to move into the camp.

Families within the camp also outgrow their own homes. For as long as possible, extensions will be added to the family home, usually upwards, producing some precarious looking constructions. When safety considerations exceed love for the family, other accommodation for branches of the family, are sought on the camp. If there is none suitable nearby, people move to another part of the camp and into an area traditionally occupied by a different village from their own.

A respondent from Kabri described how his house in the Tarshiha area became too small for his family. He was one of the first to arrive in Bourj and had reserved a plot of land for himself which he shared with other members of his family. When his brother married he partitioned the house and gave him half. Shortly after that the respondent's eldest son married and an extra floor was added to the family home. When the respondent's second son married, he moved into the eldest son's house. The respondent bought his eldest son a house elsewhere on the camp. In the 1970s the respondent finally accepted that his house would not accommodate his growing family. He purchased a larger property nearby which, coincidentally, is in the Kabri area of the camp.

As well as people moving within the camp and into it from outside, there are also people leaving it for personal and political reasons. Palestinians from all villages represented on the camp who have been fortunate enough to find well paid work have been able to move to houses outside the camp. Many leave the camp to go abroad because the employment opportunities are better. Before the Gulf War, Palestinians travelled to the Gulf to live and work there on a long-term basis.

Other Palestinians have left for Western countries, particularly Scandinavia and Canada. Families originating from all villages seem to have relatives abroad. Most admit that they are dependent on remittances from family abroad to survive. Apparently many emigrated after the Amal sieges when Western countries agreed to take relatively large numbers of Palestinians and relaxed the immigration process.

Although Palestinians from all areas of the camp have travelled abroad or live outside the camp, respondents agreed that more people originating from Tarshiha than from any other village had left the camp. Respondents from Tarshiha, who live in the Tarshiha area, admitted that the majority of people living there were not from Tarshiha. As houses have become vacant, they have been occupied by people from other areas or those moving into the camp for the first time.

As the camp is densely populated, the only way many outsiders can come and live in it is by renting or buying vacant property. In the newer areas, such as al-Ramal Aali, it is possible for newcomers to build a house. There appear to be more foreigners in that part of the camp than in the other areas. Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians and Sri Lankans are willing to live in the camp, because like the Palestinians, they find it cheaper than living in Beirut. A respondent in al-Ramal Aali has noticed an increase in the number of "foreigners" in all areas of the camp in the last five years.

Violence in the South of Lebanon has displaced many Lebanese living there. Some have sought refuge in Bourj al-Barajneh but seem to live there on a temporary basis when the violence is at its worst. Respondents claim that the displaced Lebanese are mainly couples with children, as the elderly can not move continually between the South of the country and the capital. As the Lebanese from the South come to the camp for short periods of time, it seems probable that they would be more likely to rent rooms or property.

Some of those who leave return to the camp after several years. One respondent and her family, who left Bourj for Qatar in 1958, returned in the early 60s and were pleased to be able to purchase a plot of land to build a house near relatives. As she lives in the Amliyyeh area of the camp, which has always been composed of people of different village origins, her temporary absence did not alter the camp structure. However, by building a house next to her relatives there is now a cluster of houses headed by first generation refugees from Um al-Faraj in the mixed Amliyyeh area of the camp. Younger family members have married and left the family home so there are now Um al-Faraj households in other parts of the camp.

A family I met had been forced to leave Qatar, where they had been for 13 years, during the Gulf War. They were able to return to their original house on the camp although they intend to leave again as soon as possible. An estimated 400,000 Palestinians were forced to leave Gulf states because of Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War (EIU, 1997: 13). Some of these returned to Lebanon. According to a respondent who returned from

the Gulf, there are 100 families from the Gulf who have resettled in Bourj. Those who did not already own houses would have had to buy or rent property thus altering the village structure of the camp.

Specific events have also affected the population of Bourj al-Barajneh.

The Six Day War displaced around half a million Palestinians who are not officially classed as refugees. Many of these fled to Lebanon and settled in the camps. Most are now believed to have returned to Israel and the Occupied Territories although it is known that some have remained in Lebanon. Respondents in Bourj acknowledged that some of those made homeless in 1967 still live in the camp. Those that remain are well integrated and have married into original camp families and many have managed to acquire false identity papers.

The 1967 war was a turning point in the development of the Palestinian Resistance Movement which began to adopt a more prominent and militant role. From the late 1960s, members of the Resistance began to settle in Bourj occupying the area opposite the Mahaneyyeh Amliyeh. At this time new areas of the camp were developed (see chapter 4). Members of the Resistance were usually single men. Some came from within the camp but most seem to have come from Jordan. One elderly respondent believes that the camp population swelled to 20,000, the largest in its history. However, their presence on the camp was only temporary and most left in 1982 when, under Nato supervision, the PLO withdrew from Lebanon. A few of the Resistance who had married women from the camp stayed illegally. Although the effect of the Resistance on the population was temporary, its effect on the structural development of the camp is apparent today.

As a result of a nine month siege in 1976 of Tel al-Zaatar refugee camp by the right-wing Christian militia, the Phalangist, during which hundreds of people were killed or died of dehydration, many Palestinians fled and went to Bourj al-Barajneh. Some stayed temporarily until they could arrange permanent accommodation elsewhere but about ten families from Tel a-Zaatar have settled in Bourj. One of these families explained to me that they could not find houses together and are scattered throughout the camp. They were dependent on people allowing them to stay in their houses or renting vacant property. They have been forced to move several times within the camp.

According to the family from Tel al-Zaatar, all the people in Bourj, originally from Tel a-Zaatar, are from a village called Holi in Safad district near the border with Lebanon. I have been unable to identify this village on a map but it seems likely that it is located near Lake

Hula and that Holi is the colloquial pronunciations. Before they arrived there was no one in Bourj originating from this village. The mother decided to take her family to Bourj because her son had been injured some time earlier and was still living on the camp and receiving medical treatment. During this time he had formed friendships so his mother hoped that they might receive help there.

Respondents did not think that many people had settled in Bourj after the massacre at Shatila camp in 1982. Some people from Shatila had come for a few weeks but most, if not all, returned to Shatila. Those that remain have married into families already settled in Bourj.

During the Civil War, some left the camp while others decided to move onto it. A respondent from Sa'sa who had been living in Beirut since the 1960s, moved into Bourj with his family in the 70s after he became frightened for his safety. This man had originally settled in Nahr al-Barid camp near Tripoli but had moved to Beirut when he was twelve to earn money to support himself and his family. He moved into the Tarshiha area of the camp. There are very few people from Sa'sa' on the camp and they do not live together. One respondent from the Amliyeh area gave the impression that the people from Sa'sa' were not among the original inhabitants of the camp and she believed that some of them had begun to form their own cluster. The respondent from Sa'sa' denied that there was any attempt to gather together those from Sa'sa'. However, the presence of the incomers from Sa'sa' has altered the camp structure.

A woman from Shaykh Daoud lived in al-Buss camp with her family until she married. Her husband worked with UNRWA as a teacher and his job took him to Beirut. They lived in the city until the Civil War when they began to suffer attacks on their house. They felt that they would be safer if they moved into Bourj al-Barajneh where they had relatives. They found a house in the Tarshiha area of the camp and have continued to live there because they feel safer and prefer the lifestyle.

Some families left the camp during the Civil War. A respondent from Fara moved to a relative's vacant house in Beirut with her family. They stayed there for five years until the owners of the house returned. When the respondent's family returned to the camp in the early 80s, they did not return to their house in the Shaykh Daoud area but decided to build a new house in al-Ramal Aali area instead.

Although some Palestinians from Bourj were working in Libya, few were able to return after foreigner workers were expelled in 1995 because of the new travel regulations introduced by the Lebanese Government. Those that have returned entered the country illegally.

CONCLUSION

The information in this chapter shows that there is not a particular pattern of behaviour governing movement into and away from the camp and within it. The social and political factors influencing the movements of individuals vary and are based on their own circumstances and judgement. The result is a fluid population and a dilution of the village structure throughout the camp, although the Tarshiha area seems to have been affected the most.

8. THE COMMUNITY OF BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH CAMP

This chapter examines what significance village origin has in the daily lives of the Palestinians in Bourj al-Barajneh and what other factors affect the social and political structure of the camp.

Collecting the data for this part of my research was difficult. Respondents considered many of the issues sensitive and were reluctant to give detailed information. Many respondents were anxious to present a united community and were uneasy discussing topics that might hint of divisions and social tensions within the camp. Information about the camp's political structure is sparse as respondents fear repercussions by or from providing information about political groups. The facts included here have been presented carefully to ensure anonymity of respondents.

8.i. THE INFLUENCE OF VILLAGE ORIGIN

Village Characteristics

Many respondents disliked the suggestion that people from certain villages had particular characteristics. Some respondents were angry and insisted that everyone was the same. It seemed that recognizing any differences between the villages was the same as denying a common Palestinian identity. They also seemed to feel that they did not have the right to comment on others.

I first became aware that certain characteristics are associated with different villages when I overheard an elderly woman telling her husband that he was behaving in a stubborn fashion – like someone who came from Ghabsiyyeh. Apparently it was an appropriate insult because although he was born and educated in Um al-Faraj, his father died while he was still young and his mother returned to her family in the village of Ghabsiyyeh.

Most respondents were aware that those from Ghabsiyyeh have a reputation for being difficult. When asked if they could name villages with well-known characteristics, Ghabsiyyeh was usually the first example respondents gave. A respondent from Ghabsiyyeh claimed also that in Palestine people from his village were good fighters and were quick to defend themselves.

The respondent from Sa'sa' believed that in the past in Palestine, people from his village were supposed to be even more stubborn than those from Ghabsiyyeh.

People from Kabri are aware that they are known for their generosity. Respondents from other villages agreed with this. It seems appropriate as the name of the village means wealth (see page 53) Those from Kabri also see themselves as relaxed and happy. They say that when they have money they will spend it on good food in a restaurant or have a party, and admit that they are not good at putting money aside for emergencies. This may be true to a certain extent but I believe that the cavalier attitude was partly for my benefit. The family concerned owned what seemed to be a successful grocery store. I had already been told that it was the cleanest, largest and best stocked on the camp.

It was generally agreed that those from Kuwaykat are known for being strong, brave and protective of each other. The women have a reputation for being tough. Those from Kuwaykat claimed that they are always ready to fight for their people. They also admitted that they quarrel among themselves although really they love each other.

The respondent from Bassa said that people from her village were also known for their bravery.

People from Tarshiha are known for placing a great deal of emphasis on education. Some respondents claimed that those from Tarshiha sacrifice many comforts to invest in their children's education. Respondents from Tarshiha admitted that this is true, but not to the extent that the rest of their lives are miserable because they are struggling to pay school fees. An educated respondent from Tarshiha claims that she and others from her village are sensible with money and budget carefully.

Respondents claim that parents from Tarshiha like their children to make good marriages. An English speaking respondent from Tarshiha told me the following joke:

A man goes to ask for the hand in marriage of a girl from Tarshiha. The mother, keen to make the man feel welcome, tells her daughter to make some coffee. Then the mother begins to ask the man what he does for a living. "Are you a doctor?"

"No", he replies.

"Are you an engineer?"

"No", he replies again.

"Well are you a teacher?" she asks.

"No", he says again.

At this point the mother turns to her daughter and says, "You needn't bother with the coffee!"

Respondents were anxious to stress that the information they were giving me about village characteristics was essentially folklore. The qualities ascribed to people from certain villages have are traditional and the stories are handed down through the generations as part of the Palestinian heritage.

None of the characteristics attributed to any of the villages is negative. Being stubborn is seen in a positive light because it means that the person concerned will not compromise his principles or beliefs. All respondents seemed proud that they were associated with a village that had a particular reputation.

One respondent believed that the reputations had developed in Palestine because a distinguished family in a particular village may have been described as generous or stubborn and over time this was applied to the whole village. She felt that some well-known families on the camp displayed their village characteristics. However, she said that it was not possible to guess which village someone came from by his mannerisms. All respondents agreed, but said that there were some notable exceptions where people displayed their "village characteristic", although this was believed to be only coincidence.

However, the description of the people from Tarshiha did seem to be based on reality. The families I met from Tarshiha were introduced to me on different occasions and were not close friends. All spoke English, were well educated and anxious to educate their children. The wives were also educated and employed in a profession. The fact that more people from Tarshiha have left the camp suggests that they have been more successful than other inhabitants and emigrated or have been able to afford accommodation elsewhere. One respondent believed that the people from Tarshiha place emphasis on education and tend to be more liberal minded than those from other villages because of their village in Palestine; it had a school and a population composed of Christians and Jews as well as Muslims. Although she also stressed that education is important to most Palestinians. This claim was supported by several other respondents from different villages.

One characteristic that does reveal a person's origin is accent. Respondents claimed that each village has a recognizable accent and words are pronounced differently or speech has a particular rhythm. The easiest one for respondents to demonstrate was that of Tarshiha. The people from this village have a tendency to elongate the ends of the words. Some villages have a slightly different vocabulary although no examples were given. Inhabitants of Bourj believe that the individual accents have been preserved because when a child is learning to

speaking he copies his parents. Respondents did not seem to think that time would eradicate the different accents.

Village Ties

Establishing in detail what importance respondents attached to their village origin was not possible in the time available for my research. However, I formed impressions of how attitudes towards the village of origin differ from attitudes towards other villages.

Respondents claimed that they treat all Palestinians, regardless of their origin, in the same manner and have friends from all villages and all areas of the camp. Social circles are not restricted to an individual's village. Inhabitants seemed to know from which villages most people originated. Marriages take place between couples from different villages as they did, pre 1948, in Palestine. Many of the respondents are in "mixed" marriages. A man from Tarshiha was anxious to explain that it was coincidence that his wife was also from Tarshiha. They had met through work and not socially on the camp.

However, most respondents admitted that they feel more at ease with someone they are meeting for the first time if they share the same village of origin because there is immediately a common bond. One respondent gave the following explanation. In England strangers would not hold a conversation because it is against the social norm, but if the same two strangers met in a foreign country the usual social barriers are broken.

One respondent described a visit she made to Shaykh Daoud in 1991 with the permission of the Israeli Government. While she was planning the trip she did not really feel as if she was returning to the place of her childhood. She had left Palestine when she was 5 years old and had lived in Bourj most of her life which, she admits, has become home. However when she reached the site of Shaykh Daoud she immediately felt attached to the place. It was beautiful and calm. She claims that one particular place drew her attention. According to her cousin, who had remained in Palestine, that place had been part of her parents' farm.

Now the respondent would like to return permanently to Shaykh Daoud and claims that she would rather live there in a tent than in her house in Bourj.

Respondents said that all areas of the camp were the same and that they could live anywhere. However, those who lived in their village area said that they were happier than they would be if they lived elsewhere on the camp. Conversely respondents who lived outside their village area claimed they were happy where they were and did not feel the need to move to be closer

to others from the same village. A respondent from Tarshiha said that it was natural when the Palestinians first arrived in Bourj to want to be next to people from the same village. Now they have been together for 50 years and all know each other. A family from Kuwaykat believed that they were happier living away from their village area because that way they were able to avoid the family squabbles.

Many respondents stressed the importance of living next to family rather than people from the same village. This fact was highlighted by a respondent from Hattin. As far as she is aware, there is only one other person from her village on the camp. She has never met and has no plans to meet this person. She lives with her husband and her son's family and other relatives live in adjacent houses. Being surrounded by relatives has made her happy and she does not mind that she has no friends from Hattin on the camp. She regularly visit friends and relatives from Hattin who live elsewhere in Lebanon.

Although a young woman from Bassa said that she would like more people from her village to live on the camp so that she could feel surrounded by her own people. Respondents from other villages with little representation on the camp generally shared the opinions expressed by the woman from Hattin. However, those with few friends originating from the same village have never known what it would be like to live with people from their village. They are accustomed to the situation and have always been obliged to have friends from other villages.

A female respondent from Acre said that during social occasions she missed having more people on the camp from Acre. When people from other villages, such as Kuwaykat, had a party or celebrated a marriage it seemed that so many people were involved. Another female respondent from Sa'sa' agreed with this sentiment. A second respondent from Acre disagreed, and explained that celebrations do not take place within a single village so that the representation of a village on a camp did not affect social occasions. Most respondents agreed that celebrations involved people from many villages.

The difference of opinion between the two Acre respondents could have been influenced by their different social circumstances. For different reasons they both have difficult marriages but the first has less contact outside her home than the second. The second respondent also seems to have a much broader and more supportive social circle.

Most children that I met and the younger respondents seemed to know from which village their family originated. They explained that their parents and grandparents told them about

their village in Palestine and described the lifestyle there. The images of Palestinian villages, such as those included in chapter 6, are often romanticised. Palestinians say, "We lived in Paradise" (Sayigh, 1979: 10). It appeared that third generation refugees knew less about their village origins than second generation refugees. It could be that they are less interested in Palestine because 50 years on it seems more remote, or that being younger they have not had the time to learn all the details their parents have memorized. It is also possible that the younger respondents were more nervous than the older ones while they were talking to me.

All respondents were adamant that information about village origin should be passed down to their children and that in turn they should tell their children. Several respondents said that it was important that children understand their origins because they were away from their country and unable to visit it. They were in Lebanon and would not learn about their village unless told by other members of the community. For the same reasons younger respondents felt that they should learn about their origins, although a man in his twenties admitted that he was not sure whether knowing about his village origins was important. However, he also said that he would like the opportunity to visit his village in Palestine.

Children of parents originating from different villages, say that they come from their father's village. In Palestine, a wife went to live in her husband's village as soon as they were married. Taking a father's village is based on the same principal as taking a father's name rather than a mother's.

Respondents said that it was more important to remember that they come from Palestine; their village of origin was of secondary importance. Children are also taught this. However, a Palestinian asked where he comes from usually answers by giving the name of his village. This may be connected to the word *balad* which is usually used in such a question. In standard Arabic it can be used to mean country, city, village etc (Wehr, 1980: 72) Other words are often used instead to avoid confusion. However, in colloquial Arabic when the word *balad* is used, it seems to be understood as city or village rather than country. Although a respondent from Um al-Faraj claimed that he rarely answers the question, "Where are you from?" with the name of his village because so few Palestinians have heard of it! He usually tells people that he is from Palestine.

The common bond that respondents claim to feel exists between people from the same village does not override ties with family and close friends. In times of crisis, respondents said that they turned to their immediate family or close friends for help. These people need not necessarily be from the same village. Some respondents said that they have to deal with their

own problems as everyone has enough of their own without trying to solve someone else's. This was often the case with financial problems where few people have excess money to lend.

Some respondents mentioned village funds but the information was vague and it seems that the system does not work well. A respondent from Kabri claimed that the village has a fund which is organized by a respected elderly man from the village. Every Saturday, people from Kabri who can afford to, give the man some money for this fund. Anyone from Kabri who is in financial difficulties can ask the man for some money from the village fund. A person from outside Kabri can also ask for money but the details of individual's case are placed before the whole village before a decision is made. However, another respondent from Kabri was unsure whether the village had ever had a fund and, if it had, he believed that it no longer existed.

A respondent from Ghabsiyyeh explained that the village fund had been abolished because there were arguments about how the money was used. One respondent from Tarshiha said that his village had a fund but this was not mentioned by other respondents from Tarshiha. The same respondent from Tarshiha believed that Kuwaykat had a fund which was available only to people from that village.

Generally respondents felt that village funds, if they exist, do not work. A respondent from Tarshiha said that he would not approach the village fund for money unless he had tried UNRWA, other NGOs and family first.

Apparently another traditional method of obtaining money is to visit the mosque during Friday prayers. People in need of financial help can explain their plight and ask the worshippers for help as they leave the mosque. Alms giving is one of the five pillars of Islam.

A respondent from Sa'sa' believed that it is easier to obtain financial help as a member of one of the larger villages on the camp because there are more people to approach for support. Unfortunately it was impossible to establish whether some villages are wealthier than others. Some respondents believed that Tarshiha had wealthier members because so many, it is claimed, are well educated and have professional employment. Others thought that people from Kuwaykat were wealthier because they form the largest group in the camp. Social connections in the Arab world are important in all aspects of life. A person with the right connections, or *wasta*, can achieve what would normally be considered impossible. *Wasta* may help secure a job or superior medical treatment, save an individual from prosecution, smooth the process of immigration etc.

All respondents agreed that the main factor influencing the wealth of an individual, or family was the receipt of remittances from relatives abroad.

In the event of a crisis, respondents claimed that they would ask their family for help first before exploring any of the other options. In turn, respondents also expected relatives to ask them for help when necessary.

8.ii. COMMUNITY LOYALTIES

Respondents claim that, despite the crowded and difficult living conditions, most people in Bourj al-Barajneh get on well together. Several respondents described the camp as one big house. There is evidence that a certain informality exists within the camp that does not exist in Beirut. Many people sit in the street outside their houses and chat to passers by. It is true that this is partly cultural and, because of the lack of space, one of the few places to sit. However, many people will sit outside in their pyjamas and seem as relaxed as they would in their own home. People are always walking in and out of each others houses and will often look into a house through the window to see who is inside. Women who cover their hair are less strict while they are on the camp. One woman explained that she does not feel the need to be well dressed in the camp and wears casual comfortable clothes. When she leaves the camp she changes into something smarter.

Many described the community on the camp as close and gave a number of reasons for that. In Palestine many of the villages were near each other and so friendships between the inhabitants had already developed before they settled in Bourj. These were strengthened in the camp. The process of developing the camp and creating an environment that was inhabitable also helped bring people together. However, most people cited the Civil War, particularly the Amal sieges, as instrumental in creating a strong community. The inhabitants could survive only by working together. Many hours were spent cramped together in shelters. There was no privacy and grief was shared.

The creation of a strong community has made newcomers feel unwelcome. Camp inhabitants claimed that they are always friendly to strangers, particularly Palestinians, whom they would never regard as strangers but new friends. However, several respondents who arrived on the camp later claim that they were not accepted when they first arrived.

A respondent from Sa'sa', who arrived in the 70s and settled in the Tarshiha area said that initially he was treated with suspicion. People wanted to know who he was and various details about his life. The respondent claimed that this would have happened to him even if he had originated in Tarshiha. Although he believes that, if he had already had family on the camp to vouch for his character and confirm his identity, he would have been accepted more quickly. Now he is settled and feels part of the camp community.

The family from Tel al-Zaatar said that they were not made to feel welcome despite the ordeal that they had suffered. They received help from aid agencies but little from the Palestinians living in Bourj. It was difficult to find accommodation and when they did they were often asked to leave. Original camp inhabitants were unfriendly and particularly unkind when an Uncle died. The respondents explained that they were carrying his body through the camp and other inhabitants said that he had died because the family had come from Tel al-Zaatar. Some of the family members said that twenty years on they still feel like outsiders although the ones who had married into an original Bourj family believed that they had been accepted by the community.

Palestinians are suspicious of strangers which, given their circumstances, is understandable. The Civil War, increased their usual levels of suspicion. It was during this time that the respondent from Sa'sa' and the family from Tel al-Zaatar moved onto the camp. However, most Bourj inhabitants would be surprised and hurt to learn that newcomers to the camp, especially those who were Palestinian, did not feel welcome.

A non-Palestinian who had recently married a Palestinian and moved onto the camp said that she was unhappy. She feels isolated, is treated with suspicion, and has no easy way to make friends. She also finds the lack of space and noise unpleasant, although the lack of privacy is the aspect of life she finds most difficult to endure. This is something that the Palestinian family returning from Qatar had found difficult. Their house is on the third floor so, when entering or leaving, it is necessary to use stairs shared by other households.

Although Arab culture does not attach the same importance to privacy as the Western culture, the crowded camp seems to reduce privacy to a level that even the Palestinians find difficult.

The contradictions, between camp inhabitants' claims that they are friendly towards all Palestinians and non-Palestinians and newcomers' experiences, have been observed by some NGO workers in Lebanon. Apparently Palestinians from different camps can be hostile towards each other. It has also been noted that Palestinians from Tel al-Zaatar experienced

prejudice in the camps where they resettled. I have not conducted research in this area and the information here is based on individuals' observations while they were involved in other work. A minority of Palestinians may be creating a false impression about attitudes towards Palestinians from other camps¹.

Social Tensions

Respondents were reluctant to admit that there were any social problems on the camp. Those that did dismissed them as unimportant and would not discuss them in detail.

Most denied that there were, or ever had been, tensions between the different villages. Some respondents claimed that they had heard of problems between different villages on the camp but did not know the specific circumstances. One elderly man from Kuwaykat admitted that when he had arrived on the camp he had an argument with the people from Tarshiha about access to water. Water was collected in buckets and passed along a line of people and for some reason this had provoked a disagreement. The respondent insisted that it was in the past and forgotten about. Respondents believed that in Palestine there had been rivalries between the villages but those old enough to remember refused to discuss them and younger respondents claimed that they did not know any details.

A brother and sister had heard two stories about village rivalries in Palestine which they related to me. Apparently the people in the village of Sa'sa' had been fighting with people from another village called Dannun. One of the villages decided to make a wall of blankets between the villages by hanging them from a rope. The idea was that the other village would be deprived of air and the inhabitants would suffocate. The second story is similar. There were two rival villages who shared the same well which provided inhabitants with their drinking water. One of the villages divided the well in two by placing a rope across the top. This showed which half each village could use to collect water. However, the village that had devised the scheme cheated, and lowered their bucket on their rival's side of the well to steal the water.

Neither of the respondents believed that the stories were true but said that they were common knowledge and assumed that they were related for amusement.

Respondents suggested that today arguments are usually between individuals or families and are often petty. Outsiders do not tend to become involved by supporting one side or the other.

¹ Summer 1998 discussions with informed individuals working with NGOs.

If problems are not resolved someone might intervene or be asked to help. This will often be a respected member of the community.

A respondent from Tarshiha explained that her father is often asked for advice on contentious issues. It is an unofficial role that has developed because he is seen as wise and just and is willing to make time for people. He will deal with problems outside his village area as well as within Tarshiha. Apparently there are several people on the camp who have a similar role. Village origin or traditional village hierarchy has not been significant in promoting people to this unofficial position.

Some respondents admitted that occasionally there were more serious disputes on the camp. If there are any deaths, the Lebanese authorities are involved. Other issues are dealt with by the Popular Committee and the Security Committee. These bodies are discussed below.

Respondents claimed that in a dispute they would not automatically support someone because he originated from the same village. Again family loyalties seemed to be more important. As people were reluctant to be drawn into conflicts, they tended to remain small rather than escalating into major feuds between two groups.

8.iii. PALESTINIAN LOYALTIES

Ambivalent attitudes have developed towards the camp. Although it is the daily reminder of their status, for many inhabitants it is the only home they have ever known, and because of this there is a certain emotional attachment. However, most first generation refugees want to return to their village in Palestine. Women who have married someone from a different village say that they would return to their husband's village. Many of these first generation refugees were critical of their children who had settled in the West or another Arab country because it is a form of betrayal. A move away from the camp is a betrayal of the community because it is perceived by many Palestinians as an acceptance of the status quo and a forfeiting of the right to return. Despite this, one man in his sixties said that his whole life had been miserable and that he would go to any country that would accept him because there was no future for him in Lebanon.

Palestinians who admitted that they wanted to improve their prospects by travelling abroad insist that they would not forget their origins. They described how Palestinians who are already abroad have deliberately formed Palestinian communities

Most refugees recognize that there is little opportunity in Lebanon to improve their situation. However they feel that by living together in camps they draw upon each others strengths and reinforce the memory of Palestine. Obviously it is important for the Palestinian cause that Palestinians remember their country, and not just their village, as this is the common bond between them. For this reason children have to learn about their country as well as their village origins. An English speaking respondent expressed views held by many on the camp:

"We must remember that there is another country that is ours. Lebanon is not our country.... This is the best country for us but we must remember that we have a homeland"

Younger inhabitants were less clear about their attitudes towards Palestine and their village. Although most said that they would like the opportunity to return, it is clear that they were expressing a desire handed down from older inhabitants.

Although conditions on the camp are difficult, many have turned down the opportunity of travelling elsewhere. In Lebanon, Palestinians told me that they are close to Palestine. Many said that they did not want to leave their friends or the camp showing that Bourj, to many, represents home.

However, other, particularly elderly respondents, were critical of attitudes towards the camp community. A respondent, who is a shop owner, believed that in the past people were more generous. He noticed that people would come and buy goods for others where as now they buy only for themselves.

A respondent from Kuwaykat who spoke in English said:

"I feel that all other villagers are my relatives – there are no differences. When the Revolution was strong everyone forgot about their villages and thought about Palestine. Now people are more insular. At first they looked at their own village and then to their family and then their immediate family. How can we live if people are concerned only with their wife and children?"

Loyalties towards family, village and Palestine differ from one individual to another, as do the evaluations of these loyalties. This makes it difficult to assess the strength of the loyalties and to determine whether particular attitudes are common to a majority of Palestinians. The violent experiences of 1948 and the Civil War, shared by the Palestinians, drew them together against a common enemy. For many camp inhabitants, the presence of the Resistance gave a focus and direction to their struggle, uniting them in a single purpose. Since the end of the

Civil War, although life is extremely difficult in the camp, many of the problems faced by the individual are personal and there is not a common enemy or focus for anger and energy as in the past. Perhaps this is why some older members of the camp feel that the preoccupation today is on providing for the immediate family rather than working on behalf of the whole community. One respondent quoted a Bedouin proverb to explain the strengths of loyalties and how they differ according to the circumstances:

*If a man is with his brother then the cousin is the enemy. But if a man is with his cousin then the stranger is the enemy.*²

The complex system of loyalties in the camp is further confused by many projects currently being undertaken by local Palestinian NGOs. Many NGOs have recognized among the young Palestinians an ignorance of their origins and culture and designed programmes to encourage children to learn about Palestine. It is therefore impossible to know whether Palestinian culture and heritage is being kept alive naturally through family life and traditional social events, or deliberately reinforced by specially designed projects. Without the work of these NGOs much of what forms the Palestinian identity may be forgotten. Without a separate identity that differentiates the Palestinians from other Arabs and creates a sense of unity the Palestinian cause is much weaker.

5.iv. DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

Many problems on the camp seem to be resolved among the inhabitants. However there is a camp director, appointed by UNRWA, and a Popular Committee and a Security Committee composed of camp inhabitants.

The camp director is responsible for UNRWA services on the camp and is the first contact for any inhabitants who have complaints about or requests for UNRWA services. There have been three camp directors.

The first was Salim Mustafa from Tarshiha who was chosen because he had been an early camp resident, had worked with UNRWA and spoke good English. He also commanded a great deal of respect and many respondents had liked him and believed him conscientious.

² Freidman quotes this version, "*Me and my brother against our cousin. Me, my brother, and my cousin against the stranger*" (1995: 88).

Mustafa held the post until 1982 when he retired and was succeeded by another man from Tarshiha. He was also respected and thought to have done a good job although he was not regarded as highly as his predecessor. The current camp director is from Kabri and camp inhabitants continually complain about him. Not only do they feel that he performs his job badly, they dislike him personally and find him rude.

Respondents told me that the position of camp director is not influenced by village origin. Anyone considered by UNRWA to be capable of the job can be appointed. There did not seem to be a particular pride among the people from Tarshiha that their village had produced two effective and respected camp directors. Neither was there any embarrassment among the people from Kabri that the director from their village was regarded as weak and unpleasant. Inhabitants from other villages did not complain that one of their members had not been appointed as camp director.

None of the camp directors was a *Mukhtar* in Palestine or the descendant of one. Respondents claim that the *Mukhtar* never had any power once they arrived on the camps. No one on the camp talks about *Mukhtar* and no one was introduced to me using that title. The role of *Mukhtar*, one respondent explained, has been adopted by elderly prominent figures on the camp who command respect. Such people have been discussed above.

However, several of the villages have powerful families who are able to exercise their influence in the camp. In Kuwaykat there is the al-Habit family whose name is sometimes used to refer to the Kuwaykat area of the camp. The Jishi al-Baqish is a large family in Kabri and the largest families in Tarshiha are the Qiblawi and the Daqaq al-Mo'atm.

Respondents explained that the traditional village leader has been replaced by the Popular Committee. Some claim that the word 'popular' is used because originally each village appointed one of its members to take part in the committee. Others claim that it has never been democratic and has only ever involved those belonging to political movements. Sayigh notes that,

"Although the [popular committees'] members were inhabitants of the camp, they were chosen by the Resistance groups rather than being elected by the quarters, thus creating a certain gap between the affiliated and the unaffiliated." (1979: 169)

Respondents all agreed that the Popular Committee was formed at the beginning of the Revolution when Palestinians were able to be autonomous within the camps. Today all agree

that the Popular Committee is undemocratic and seems to be the focus of much discontent particularly as there are rumours of corruption.

In Bourj al-Barajneh, members of the committee are drawn from the three anti PLO factions in the camp. Like many Palestinians in Lebanon, the inhabitants of Bourj al-Barajneh feel that they have been abandoned by the PLO and excluded from the Peace Process. Most inhabitants are willing to acknowledge openly that they do not support the Peace Process, Yasser Arafat of the PLO. However, the factions within the camp fail to offer alternative representation that inhabitants respect or believe is relevant to them.

Many respondents do not understand how the Popular Committee is elected and because they do not belong to any of the political factions are excluded from the decision making process. Often the composition of the Committee changes without the knowledge of camp inhabitants. Respondents felt that having *wasta* was an important factor enabling someone to join the Popular Committee. Some believed that coming from a larger village helped because an individual commands more natural support. All respondents seemed to feel that the Committee is irrelevant to their daily lives and have little idea of how it functions. Many members of the Committee and those it appoints to fulfil certain roles are often regarded as incompetent.

The Popular Committee is responsible for the distribution of water, the payment of electricity bills to the Government, and arbitrating in domestic disputes in the camp.

The water supply to each area of the camp is controlled by an official appointed by the Popular Committee. All inhabitants appear to be unhappy with their water supply and I witnessed several arguments concerning water in the Amliyyeh area of the camp. Supplies of water are erratic, partly because electricity is required to work the pumps that transport the water around the camp. However, many inhabitants feel that those responsible for the water supply are not conscientious. There were several stories of the pumps being left running once all the tanks had been filled and water being wasted, and of other days when the official was too lazy to run the pumps to replenish the water supply.

Inhabitants are particularly angry because they pay for the water. The money is also collected by the Popular Committee. Many believe that members of the Committee steal the money for themselves. According to some respondents, the Government complained that it had not received payment for the electricity that is supplied to the camp. Respondents claimed that this had been collected from all the households by a member of the Committee and, if the

Government had not been paid, the money must have been stolen. Apparently, the members of the Committee were changed after this incident. I was unable to establish any further details.

One family described a small domestic incident when they had requested help from the Popular Committee. Their next door neighbour had made a hole in her wall to make a window. The family has objected to this because the window looks directly into their house. Unfortunately, I left Lebanon before hearing the outcome of the Committee's decision.

This incident demonstrates that some people approach the Committee with their problems. Complaints about water and electricity supplies can also be taken up with the Committee. However, I felt that many inhabitants were afraid to ask in this way, or believed that it was a waste of time.

Many inhabitants were openly scathing about the Popular Committee and the Resistance Movements. They have little real power outside the camp and are criticized for failing to provide any practical help. Camp inhabitants claim that members of Resistance groups and the Popular Committee do little more than discuss politics. The main tensions in the camp seem to be between the camp inhabitants and the Popular Committee which is perceived by the majority of inhabitants as irrelevant to daily life and failing to provide practical help and support to the community.

8.v. CONCLUSION

The information presented here was collected in a short space of time from a small number of people who were naturally reluctant to reveal to a stranger intimate details about their society. Nevertheless, conclusions can be drawn from this preliminary research. There is scope to conduct more extensive research into the significance of village origin to the social and political life of the camp. It would be interesting to establish whether there is a relationship between village origin and the distribution of power and wealth in Bourj al-Barajneh. If such a relationship does exist, I believe that the inhabitants are unaware of it.

Village origin is important to the Palestinians in Bourj al-Barajneh as a link to the past, an aspect of their identity and a small part of their social life. However, the bond with village origin is an emotional one and has little practical relevance in daily life.

Many Palestinians admit that they feel more at ease with someone who originates from their own village and those that live among their village community claim that they are happier

than they would be if they lived among people from other villages. Palestinians from villages with a small representation on the camp speculated that social events would be more enjoyable if they were able to share them with more people from their own village. However, this is the extent of the role of village origin. Palestinians joked about stereotype images of people from particular villages but recognize that there is little truth in them. In times of crisis people did not turn to people from their villages for help. It is true that some people may have had access to help from their village fund but as few people seemed to be sure whether such funds exist, it seems that the system is ineffective.

It was impossible to establish details of social tensions within the camp but the information volunteered suggests that disputes take place between individuals and groups and not between villages. Village disputes from Palestine and the early days in the camp have been forgotten.

All respondents were proud of their village origin and insist that information about their village should be passed down to future generations. However, all respondents believed that village origin was only one aspect of the Palestinian history and culture and should be preserved in the broader context of the Palestinian heritage and struggle. The work of NGOs to revive Palestinian traditions and teach Palestinian history to the younger generations obscures the natural preservation of Palestinian culture and influences attitudes towards Palestine.

Village origin does not appear to play any role in the political life of the camp. Positions of power in the camp among the political factions or as an UNRWA employee are not decided by village origin or based on traditional village hierarchies. The political life of the camp stems from the Resistance movement and seems to exist in parallel with daily camp life. The main division in the camp community is between the politically affiliated and the unaffiliated. The unaffiliated are critical of the political factions but the blame for the political tensions is not attached to one particular village.

Much more important to life in Bourj al-Barajneh than village origin are family ties. Arab society places more emphasis on the family than Western society so it is not surprising that individuals cite their families as important to them. The family seems to be the main source of practical and emotional support. The problems and needs of individuals are met by their families. Although many respondents claimed that they feel a close bond to people originating from the same village, personal aspects of life are kept within the family and not shared with the village community. The first loyalty of individuals seems to be towards their families of

which they are extremely proud. It was not possible to establish whether the politically active members of the camp put their political affiliations before family loyalties.

The family is the basic social unit in the camp and has more significance in Bourj al-Barajneh than village origin. Village origin seems to have become subordinate to the camp community which has evolved into a coherent unit in the past 50 years. Although older members of the camp feel that the community is not as close as it used to be and individuals are more concerned with themselves and their immediate families than the camp population in general, most respondents feel that there is a sense of community in the camp. The shared experiences of the camp inhabitants through violent and difficult periods and the passing of 50 years has helped break the barriers between the individual villages and create a new social unit. Inhabitants claim that the villages present in Bourj al-Barajneh enjoyed good relationships in Palestine, whether this is true, does not negate the fact that there is a community of Bourj al-Barajneh and not a series of village communities living together within Bourj al-Barajneh. An English speaking respondent described the camp as one big village. This assertion is supported by the relaxed atmosphere and the claim by some respondents that the camp feels like home.

Obviously there are various social groups, apart from the family unit, that make up the camp community. For example, a group of women working in a nursery providing childcare for children of working parents have developed a strong supportive social circle. This is something that has developed naturally among people who spend time together and not as a result of shared village origin or family relationships. Within the camp community this group of women is a recognizable social unit. Certain families also form prominent social units and have influence in the camp.

The development of a camp community makes it difficult for newcomers to settle in the camp. It also appears that the Palestinian population in Lebanon is divided by camp. This is not surprising as many inhabitants do not leave the camp on a regular basis and have little knowledge of life outside the camp. The division of Palestinian society in Lebanon among the different camps works against the principle of unity promoted by Palestinian Nationalism. Loyalties towards the Palestinian community at large are difficult to assess because the Palestinians in Lebanon are currently excluded from the Peace Process and isolated from Palestinians elsewhere. Inhabitants of Bourj rarely talk about themselves as part of the greater Palestinian community except when talking in broad terms about the Palestinian struggle. Obviously Bourj inhabitants do feel a loyalty towards other Palestinians as they expressed an intention to settle with other Palestinians should they leave the camp and travel abroad.

The camp community is a living organism that changes with time. Refugees of different generations will have a different attitude towards village origin, Palestine and Palestinian political because of their different experiences. Education and social circle will also influence attitude. The dynamics of the camp community are complicated and deserve detailed study. However, preliminary research suggests that village origin is not an important factor in political and social aspects of camp life today. The family provides the basic social unit and political elements exist predominantly outside daily life. Bourj al-Barajneh has developed into a coherent unit, and life functions on a camp and not a village level.

9. CONCLUSION

The aims of this thesis were to present a social history of Bourj al-Barajneh, examine the influence of village origin on the physical, social and political structure of the camp and establish whether there was any deliberate social in-gathering to reform village communities in the camp. In this chapter I shall summarize the main points and present my final conclusions.

From the 16th century Palestine was under Ottoman control until the end of the First World War when the Mandate for Palestine was given to the British. At that time most Palestinians were peasant farmers living in insular village communities. These Palestinians were politically naïve and had little sense of a Palestinian identity or nation.

Jews had been emigrating from Europe to Palestine before the British Mandate but during the Mandate the number of Jewish immigrants increased. Under British rule, the Jews established elaborate military and bureaucratic institutions. To Western eyes, the creation of such institutions gave the Jewish aspirations to establish their own state credibility. The Palestinians had been used to local leadership and failed to form a unified body to represent their interests. Without proper representation the Palestinian case for independent rule in their own land was weak in comparison with that of the Jews.

In 1948, when the British withdrew from Palestine, without properly implementing the UN Partition plan which divided Palestine between the Palestinians and the Jews, the Jews declared independence. The Palestinians, unable to counter the Jewish attacks fled to neighbouring countries. The Arab Armies that attempted to come to the assistance of the Palestinians were badly organized and unable to prevent the creation of the independent state of Israel.

Around a 100,000 Palestinians from the North of the country fled to Lebanon. In 1967 more Palestinian refugees fled to Lebanon. Initially the Lebanese accepted the Palestinians but their presence in the country has become increasingly resented. The Palestinians suffered direct attacks during the Civil War and are regarded as a threat to the country's complex sectarian structure. The Lebanese Government has made it impossible for most Palestinians to work legally and have passed laws to restrict Palestinian freedom of movement and ensure that their standard of living is poor. Over half the 362,098 Palestinians in Lebanon live in twelve UNRWA camps and receive a limited amount of assistance from the UN Agency and other NGOs.

Bourj al-Barajneh camp, located on the outskirts of Beirut, is home to around sixteen and a half thousand refugees. The structure of Bourj al-Barajneh is not based solely on village origin and composed of areas occupied exclusively by Palestinians originating from one particular village. However, there are village clusters and other patterns of settlement.

The camp has always occupied the same area of land, although parts of it have been more extensively developed at different times. The names of the different areas in the camp developed naturally among the inhabitants and, once established, have not changed. There are six areas named after villages in the Northern Palestine district of Acre which are, al-Ghabsiyyeh, al-Kabri, al-Kuwaykat, Sha'b, Shaykh Daoud and Tarshiha. Two areas of the camp are named after prominent buildings. The Amliyyeh area derives its name from the Lebanese technical college which overlooks part of the camp, and the PRCS hospital in the camp, Haifa Hospital, has given its name to the surrounding area. Two other areas, Jaysh al-Tahrir and Samid, have names connected with the Palestinian Resistance Movement. Adjacent to the camp, but outside its official UNRWA boundaries, is an area called al-Ramal Aali. Many Palestinians live there and, although it is also home to Lebanese and Syrians, those living in Bourj al-Barajneh consider it part of the camp.

The areas named after villages were the first to be developed and are generally more crowded than other parts of the camp. Each of these areas derives its name from the village origins of the Palestinians who first settled there. Although in these village areas there is a concentration of people originating from the village giving its name to the area, there is also a large number of people living there who originate from different villages. Even in the early days of the camp, village areas were not occupied exclusively by people originating from one particular village. However, in the past, the village structure of the camp was more rigid than it is today.

The Amliyyeh area, although not named after or dominated by a particular village, was also among the first to be developed. It is occupied by people from several villages.

The areas of Haifa Hospital, Jaysh al-Tahrir, Samid and al-Ramal Aali, were all developed while the Resistance Movement was in Lebanon. These areas are less crowded than the village areas. They are occupied by people originating from many different places, but again located primarily in the North of Palestine.

The area of wasteland between the camp and the technical college was once used to accommodate members of the Resistance in makeshift shelters. These shelters were destroyed

or fell into disrepair when the Resistance left and the area has not been redeveloped. Today it is used by camp inhabitants as a car park. It is the only piece of land that seems to have been used for housing in the past but is no longer.

In total, only around thirty villages are represented in Bourj al-Barajneh. Most of the inhabitants of Bourj al-Barajneh originate from Tarshiha, Kuwaykat and Kabri, There are also significant populations from Ghabsiyyeh, Shaykh Daoud and Sha'b. These six villages are located close together in Acre. The villages of al-Bassa, Shaykh Dannun, Um al-Faraj, al-Nahr, al-Zib and Amqa which have small populations in the camp, are also located in Acre. There are a few people from the villages of Fara and Sa'sa', both located in the north eastern district of Safad, and Hattin in Tiberias. The cities of Acre, Haifa, Jaffa and Hebron are also represented.

The comparatively small number of villages present in Bourj in relation to the total number of depopulated villages can be explained by the nature of village representation in Lebanon and the way in which the Palestinians travelled in the region in search of food and shelter after fleeing their villages.

In 1948, Palestinians fled to the nearest neighbouring countries which for those in the northern districts of Palestine, was Lebanon. Palestinians in other areas of the country fled to Jordan, Syria or Egypt.

The predominance of certain villages in Bourj al-Barajneh is not the result of deliberate social in-gathering by a village member, leader, or a political authority. Each village is not confined to one particular area of the camp or even to one particular camp. If it were, it would suggest that deliberate social in-gathering had taken place. None of the inhabitants had come directly to Beirut and then moved to the camp as soon as it opened, but had remained in the south, near Palestine, until they were moved or decided to leave voluntarily. The routes taken to the camp were unplanned and vary; people came to Bourj from camps in different areas of Lebanon and from Syria and Jordan.

The Palestinian preference for travelling with family members helped maintain the basic social unit although there does not appear to have been a great effort made by many to travel with village members. The initial safe havens, the limited number of places where assistance was available and the forced transportation of Palestinians in large groups, allowed information about the possible location of friends and relatives and places where food and work could be found to be passed among the Palestinians by word of mouth.

Once the refugees were in the camp it appears that the formation of village clusters developed naturally because people preferred to live near those from their own village. This clustering may not have been possible if some of the early refugees had not reserved large areas of land for themselves which later they divided among their friends. However, it does not appear that there was a conscious effort to establish village clusters or even that inhabitants made a conscious decision to settle in Bourj al-Barajneh rather than another camp.

The areas of the camp that developed during the Resistance developed because the Palestinians were autonomous within the camps and there was money to finance the development. Houses were built to accommodate Resistance members and to cope with the natural population growth. Other buildings, such as the hospital and the factories, arose from the contemporary political and social environment. The areas developed during the Resistance fulfilled practical and political requirements and were unrelated to village origin and were not an attempt to form village clusters. As the Resistance emphasized Palestinian unity, the creation of village quarters in the camp would have contradicted this Resistance philosophy.

The changing structure of the camp is a consequence of the instability and the difficult circumstances the Palestinians experience in Lebanon. There is not a particular pattern of behaviour governing movement into and away from the camp and within it. The social and political factors influencing the movements of individuals vary and are based on their own circumstances and judgement. The result is a fluid population and a dilution of the village structure in the oldest parts of the camp, and a greater intermixing and increase in the number of villages represented throughout the camp. The remains of the village structure in Bourj al-Barajneh and the history of development in the camp live on through the names of the different areas.

Village origin does not play a practical role in the daily life of Bourj al-Barajneh. Village origin is important to the individual for sentimental reasons and is a source of pride. The younger generations have been told about their villages by older members of the community. Almost all second and third generation refugees are able to describe their village and express attachment to it although their feelings for it, derived from the memories of others, can not be as profound as those expressed by first generation refugees.

The social life of the camp is not dictated by village origin. Although some Palestinians claim to feel closer to other people from the same village, friendships are not limited to an individual's own village. In the early days of the camp village origin was more important

because people needed the security provided by old friends which initially affected the camp structure. Today after living together for 50 years and having shared many difficult experiences, the camp has developed into a united community and it is no longer necessary for people to live among others from the same village.

The political life of the camp is conducted independently of most aspects of camp life and involves only a small number of the camp's inhabitants. Village origin or the traditional village hierarchies have not, or ever have had influence in camp organized camp politics. There are suggestions that in the early days of the camp arguments occurred between people because they were from different village, but these were on a domestic level and did not involved a recognized political faction.

The village structure is still present in the camp in a diluted form and individuals are still emotionally attached to their village of origin but the camp has developed into a coherent community bridging the original village barriers. This community instils its own loyalties and sense of belonging to the extent that newcomers feel unwelcome and Palestinians in other camp are beginning to be regarded as different.

There is much scope for further study. The significance of village origin in other camps in Lebanon may differ from Bourj al-Barajneh. The population in Bourj al-Barajneh has been more fluid than in other camps because Palestinians chose to settle in Bourj in the hope of finding work in the capital. The effect of the Civil War varied between the camps, some were destroyed while others escaped unscathed. It would be interesting to compare inhabitants attitudes towards their camps with their attitudes towards their villages to determine whether loyalty towards the camps has superseded loyalty towards their villages. If loyalty towards the camps is a significant factor for the Palestinians in Lebanon it is also a potentially divisive factor for the Palestinian community.

Village origin played an unplanned role in the structure of the camp in the early days but that role has become increasingly less important. Social structures were initially influenced by village origin but, once the camp became established, a new social structure developed among the inhabitants. Politically village origin has never had any significance in the camp. Village origin has left its mark on the structure of the camp but its main significance today is to the individual inhabitants who attach great importance to those villages that were depopulated 50 years ago.

Appendix 1: Mapping Interviews, Respondents' Details

| Interview No | Respondent | Age Band | Origin | Location | Occupation |
|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 1 | 60+ | Tarshiha | Tarshiha | retired |
| 2 | 2 | 60+ | Kuwaykat | Kuwaykat | retired UNRWA cook |
| 2 | 3 | 40-60 | Shaykh Daoud | Kuwaykat | House Wife |
| 2 | 4 | 26-30 | Bassa | Kuwaykat | House Wife |
| 3 | 5 | 26-30 | Fara | Kuwaykat | House Wife |
| 4 | 6 | 40-60 | Kabri | Kabri | Shop Owner |
| 4 | 7 | 20-40 | Kabri | Kabri | UNRWA employee |
| 5 | 8 | 60+ | Ghabsiyyeh | Ghabsiyyeh | retired |
| 6 | 9 | 60+ | Shaykh Daoud | Shaykh Daoud | retired |
| 6 | 10 | 60+ | Shaykh Daoud | Shaykh Daoud | House Wife |
| 7 | 11 | 60+ | Shaykh Daoud | Tarshiha | retired |
| 7 | 12 | 60+ | Shaykh Daoud | Tarshiha | House Wife |
| 7 | 13 | 20-40 | Shaykh Daoud | Tarshiha | Teacher |
| 8 | 14 | 40-60 | Sa'sa' | Tarshiha | retired |
| 8 | 15 | 26-30 | Sa'sa' | Tarshiha | Nursery Teacher |

Written transcripts are available

Appendix 2: Interviews, Respondents' Details

| Interview No | Respondent | Age Band | Origin | Location | Occupation |
|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1 | 1 | 26-40 | Tarshiha | Tarshiha | PRCS accountant |
| 2 | 2 | 60+ | Amlyeh | Amlyeh | House wife |
| 3 | 3 | 26-40 | Acre | Ramel Aly | House wife |
| 4 | 4 | 60+ | Kuwaykat | Kuwaykat | UNRWA kitchens |
| 4 | 5 | 40-60 | Shaykh Daoud | Kuwaykat | House wife |
| 4 | 6 | 26-40 | Bassa | Kuwaykat | House wife |
| 4 | 7 | 40-60 | Shaykh Daoud | Tarshiha | Teacher |
| 5 | 8 | 26-40 | Kabri | Tarshiha | Nursery Teacher |
| 5 | 9 | 60+ | Tarshiha | Tarshiha | Nursery Teacher |
| 5 | 10 | 26-40 | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | Nursery Teacher |
| 5 | 11 | 40-60 | Acre | mixed hospital | Nursery Teacher |
| 6 | 12 | 40-60 | Kabri | Kabri | Shop owner |
| 7 | 13 | 60+ | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | retired |
| 7 | 14 | 26-40 | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | Maths teacher |
| 8 | 15 | under 25 | Ghabsiyyah | near office | student |
| 8 | 16 | under 25 | Tarshiha | Tarshiha | School |
| 8 | 17 | 26-40 | Kabri | Kabri | Nursery Teacher |
| 8 | 18 | under 25 | Nahr | - | University |
| 8 | 19 | under 25 | Hebron | Kabri | School |
| 8 | 20 | under 25 | Kabri | Kabri | School |
| 8 | 21 | under 25 | Kabri | outside | School |
| 8 | 22 | under 25 | Kuwaykat | Kuwaykat | Secretary |
| 9 | 23 | 26-40 | Fara | Kuwaykat | House wife |
| 10 | 24 | 40-60 | Tarshiha | Amlyeh | NGO Head |
| 11 | 25 | 60+ | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | House wife |
| 12 | 26 | 26-40 | Um al-Faraj | Amlyeh | House wife |
| 12 | 27 | 26-40 | Um al-Faraj | Amlyeh | Dress Maker |
| 12 | 28 | 40-60 | Kuwaykat | Amlyeh | unemployed |
| 13 | 29 | 60+ | Kabri | Tarshiha | House wife |
| 13 | 30 | 60+ | Tarshiha | - | - |
| 14 | 31 | 60+ | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | retired |
| 15 | 32 | 26-40 | Lebanon | Shaykh Daoud | Teacher |
| 16 | 33 | 60+ | Shaykh Daoud | Tarshiha | retired |
| 17 | 34 | 60+ | Holi | mixed | - |
| 17 | 35 | 26-40 | Holi | mixed | - |
| 17 | 36 | 40-60 | Holi | mixed | - |
| 17 | 37 | 26-40 | Holi | mixed | - |
| 18 | 38 | 26-40 | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | Businessman |
| 18 | 39 | 25-40 | Ghabsiyyah | Ghabsiyyah | Nursery Head |
| 19 | 40 | 60+ | Kuwaykat | Kuwaykat | retired |
| 20 | 41 | 40-60 | Sa'sa | Tarshiha | - |
| 21 | 42 | 60+ | Kuwaykat | Kuwaykat | retired UNRWA employee |
| 22 | 43 | 60+ | Tarshiha | Tarshiha | retired |

Written transcripts of the interviews are available

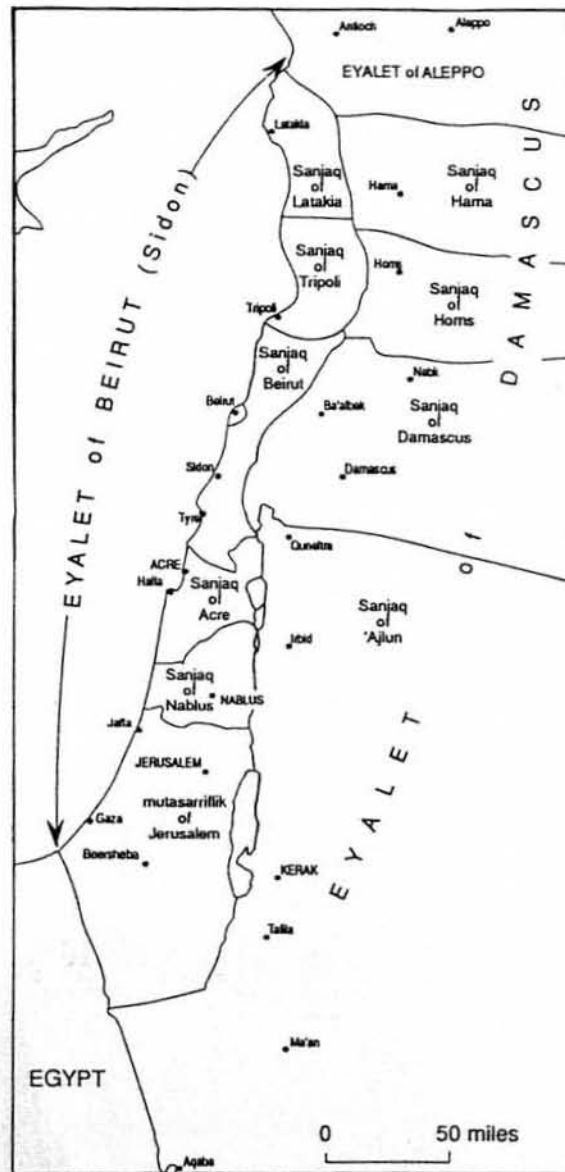
Appendix 3: Selective list of interviews conducted in 1996

| Respondent | Occupation |
|-------------------|---|
| Brisson, Lionel | Director of UNRWA, Lebanon |
| Deeb, Dr. | Director of Haifa Hospital, PRCS |
| Khatib, Rashid | Deputy Director, Norwegian People's Association (NGO) |
| Masri, Hanan | Public Relations Officer, Beit Atfal Assumoud (NGO) |
| Othman, Dr. | Director, PRCS, Lebanon |
| Saad, Qassem | Save the Children, Lebanon |
| Zacharia, Leila | Association Nejdeh (NGO) |

APPENDIX 4b: A MAP OF BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH PRODUCED BY A FAMILY FROM KABRI

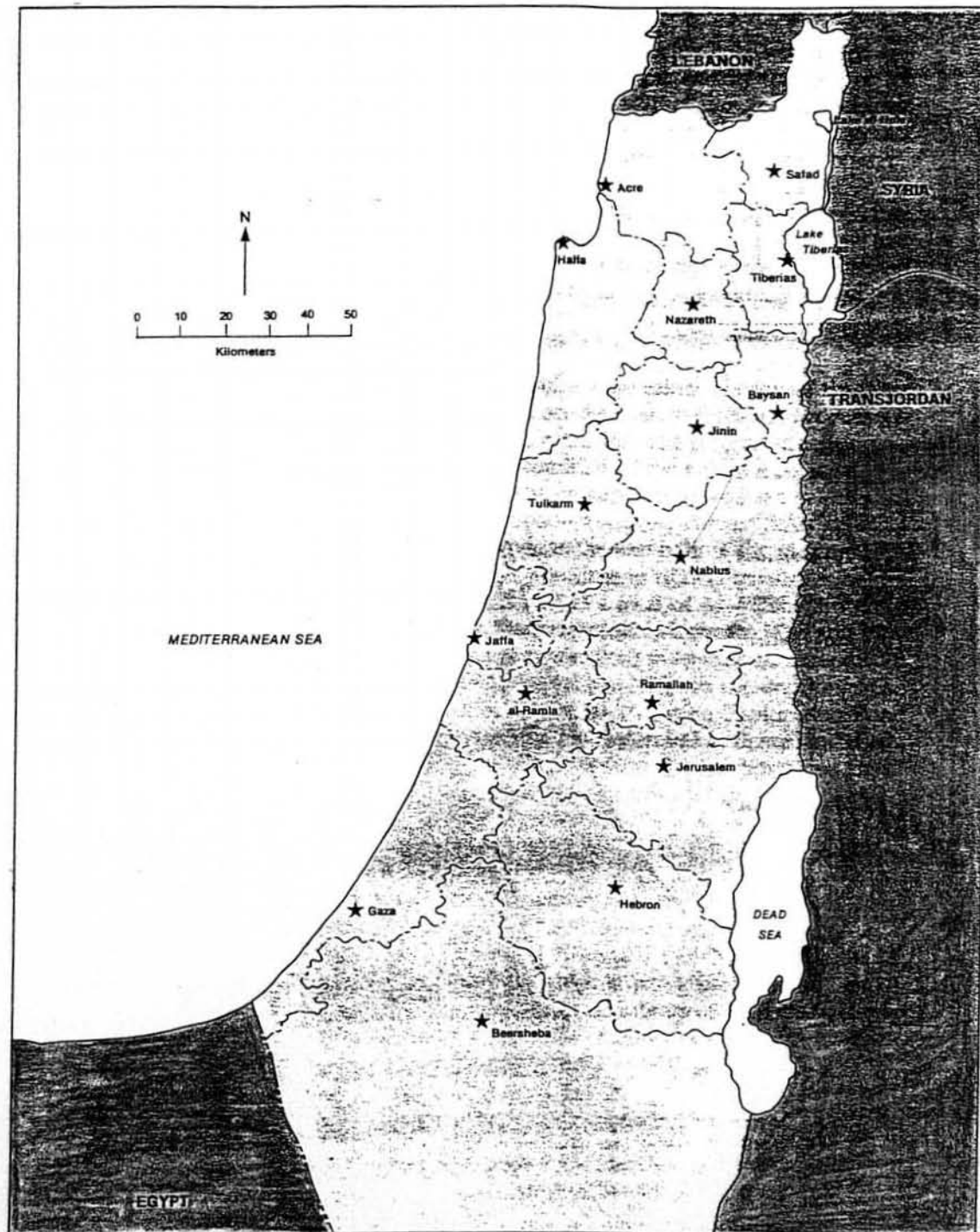


APPENDIX 5: PALESTINE UNDER THE OTTOMANS



APPENDIX 6: MANDATE PALESTINE

The administrative units referred to on this map were designated subdistricts during the Mandate period. The capitals of these subdistricts are shown. (Khalidi, 1992: xxvi)



APPENDIX 7: THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

Foreign Office
November 2nd 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

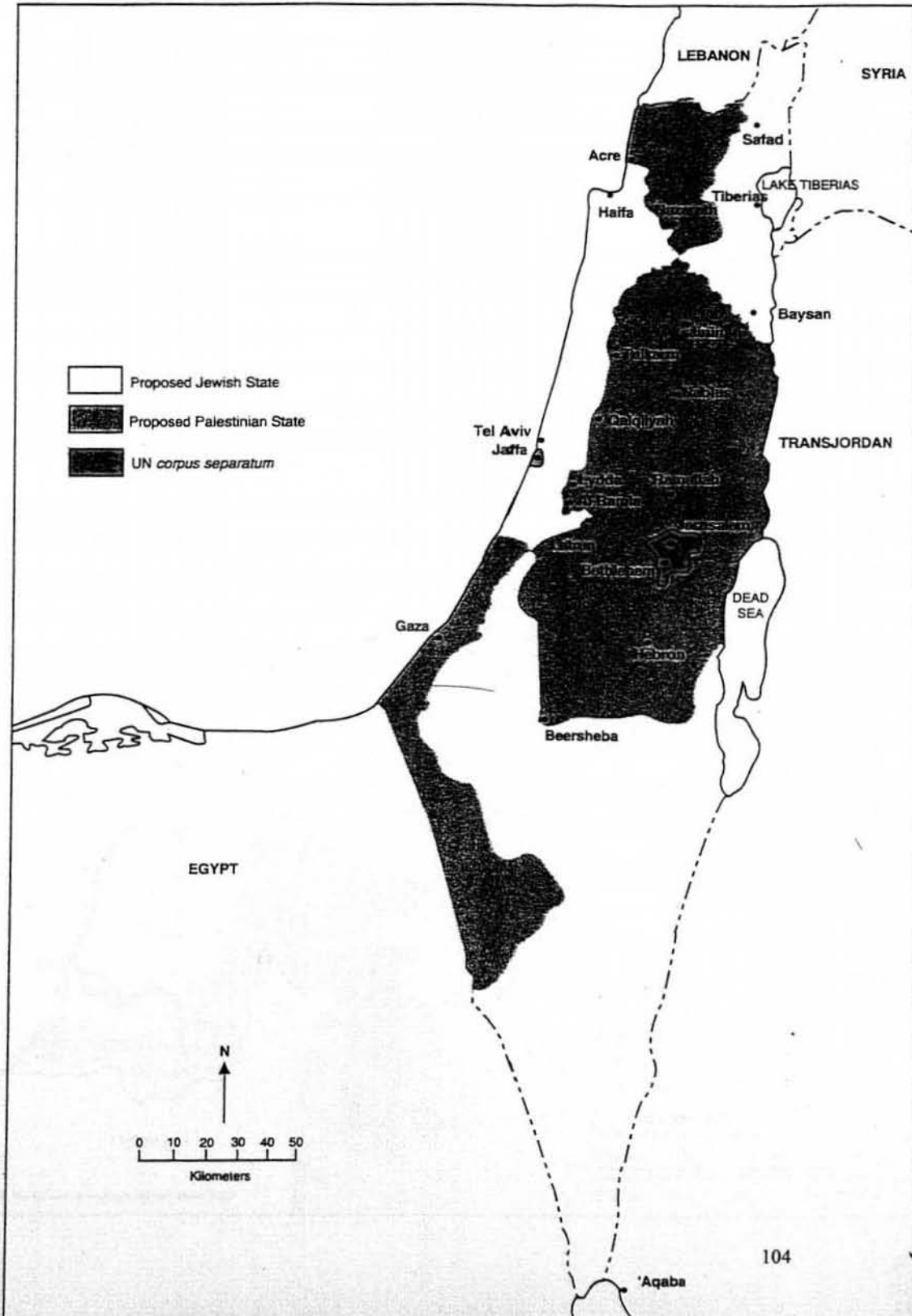
I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of his Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with the Jewish aspirations, which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish People, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country."

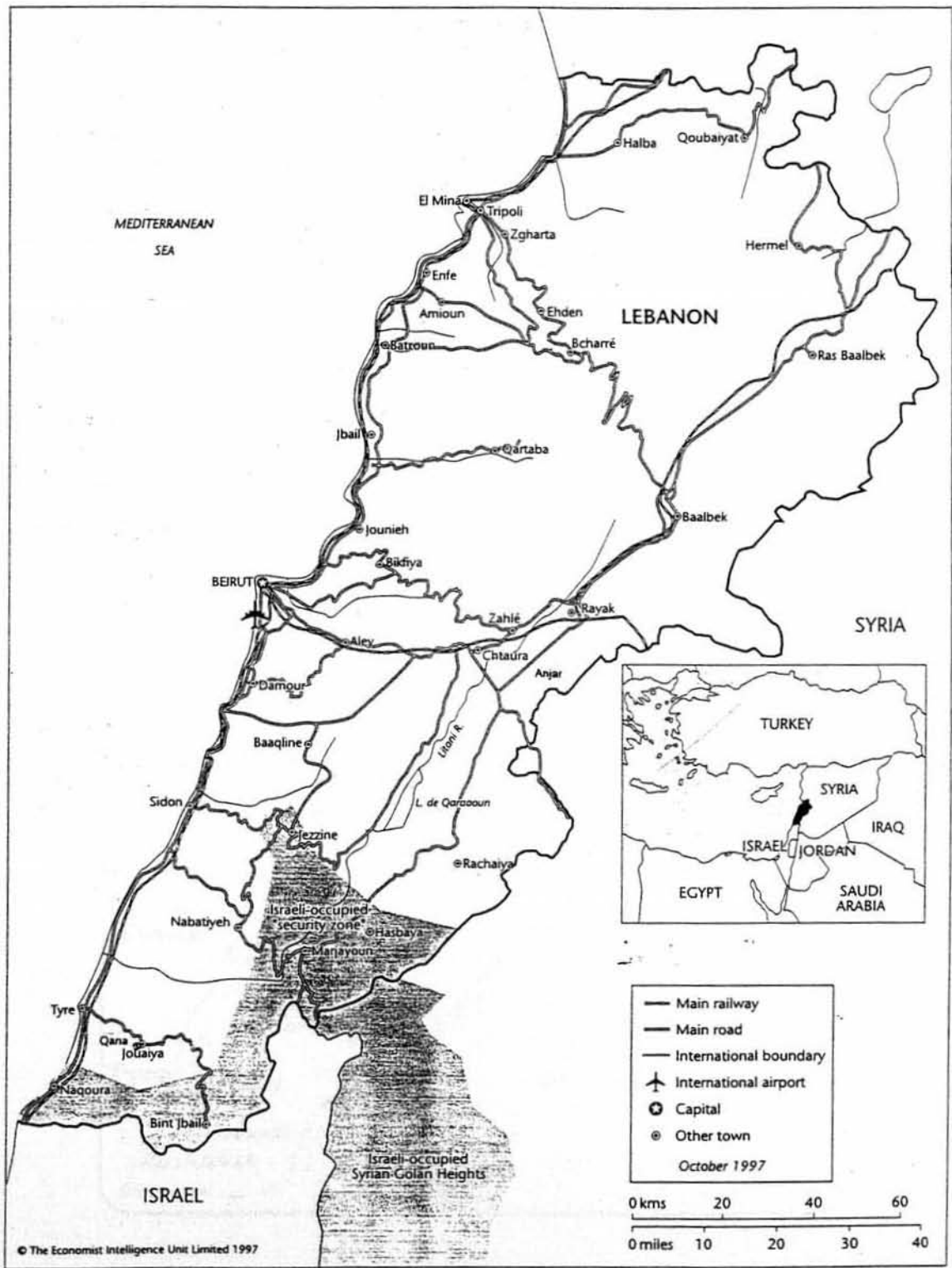
I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Arthur Balfour

APPENDIX 8: PALESTINE: United Nations Partition Recommendation, November 1947 (Khalidi 1992: xxx)

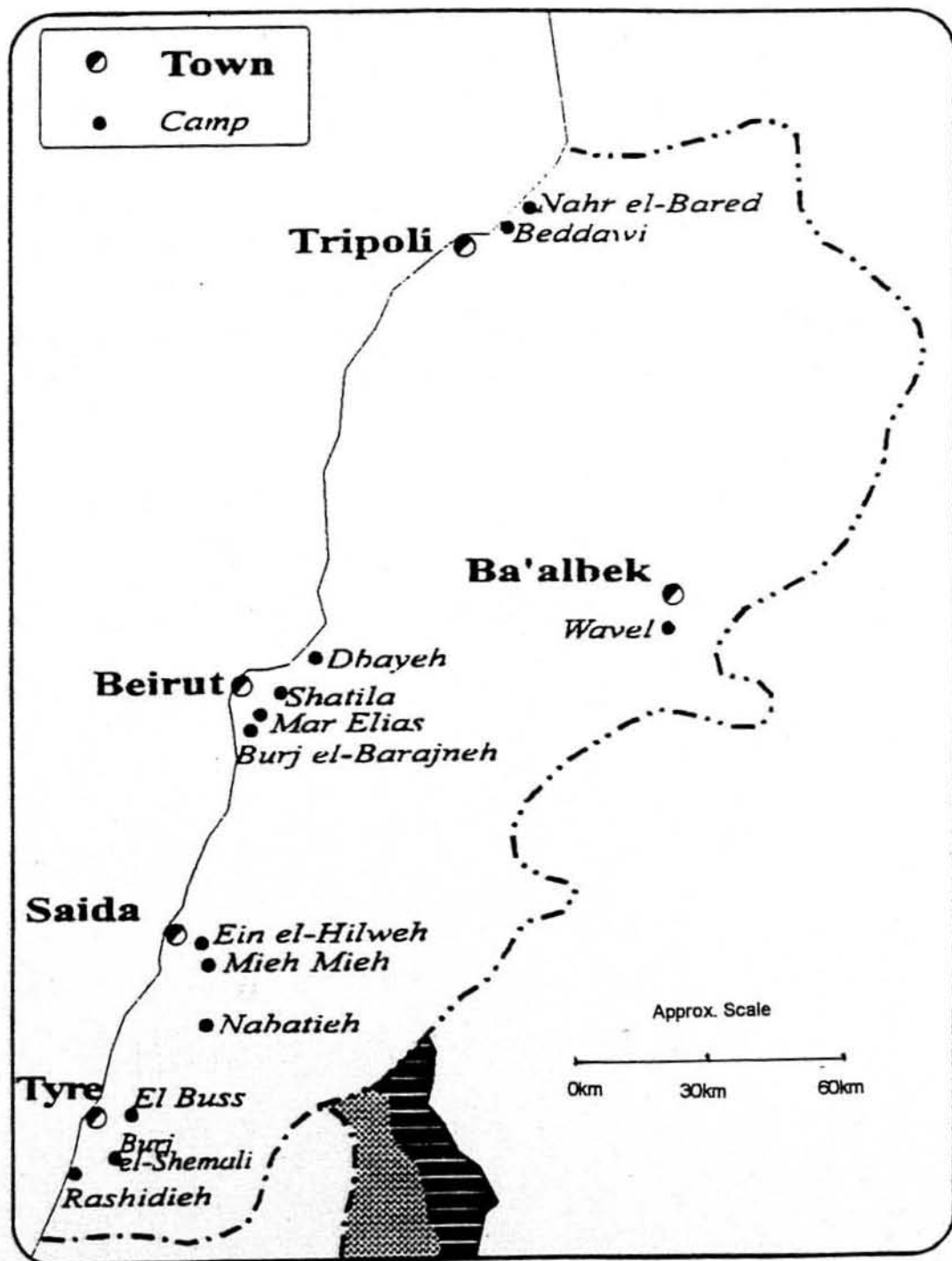


APPENDIX 9: LEBANON



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APPENDIX 10: UNRWA PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS IN LEBANON



APPENDIX 11: RESOLUTION 194 (III) – clause 11

Resolution 194 (III), The Palestinian Question – adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, 11 December 1948.

The General Assembly, -

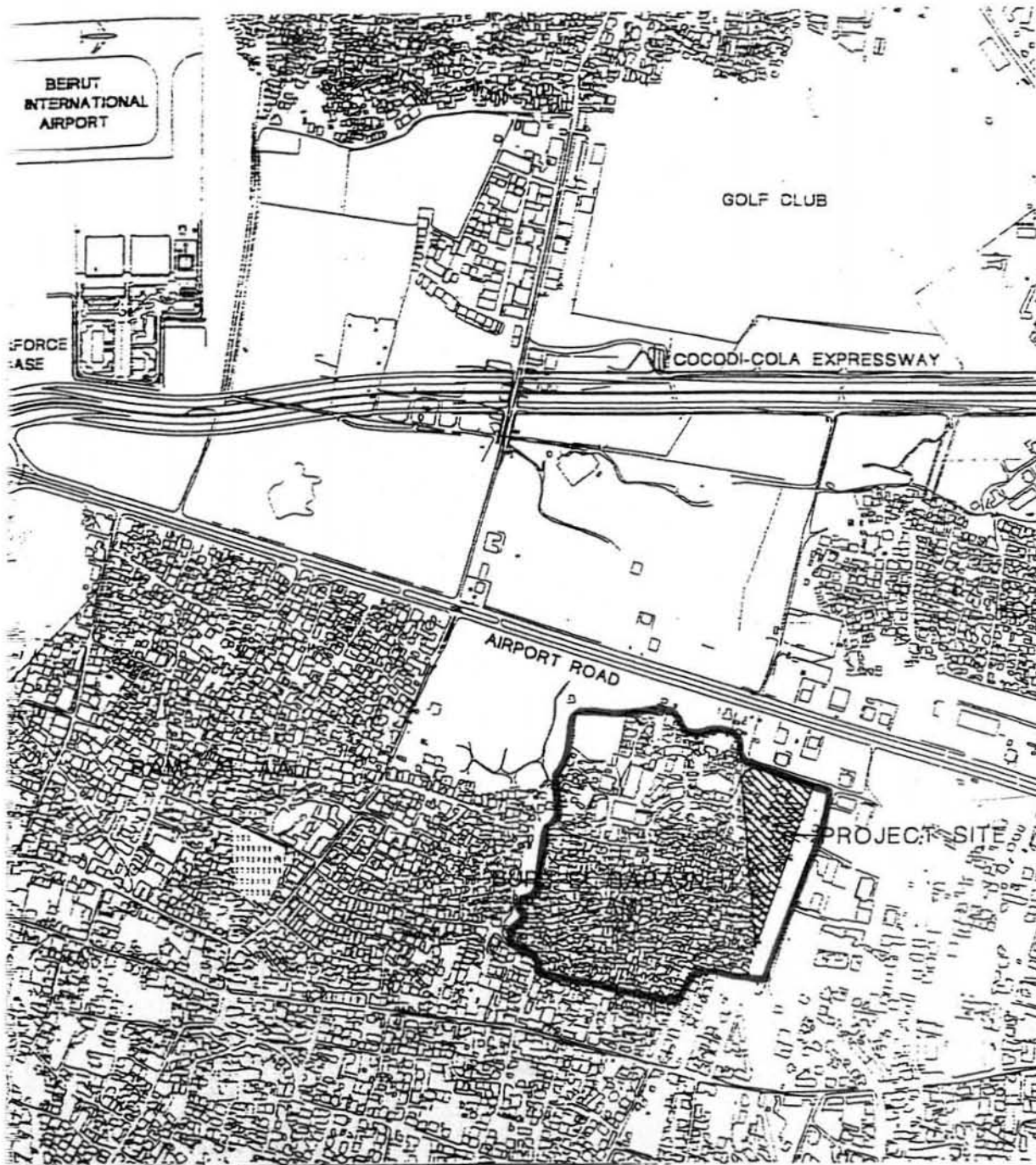
Having considered further the situation in Palestine....

11. Resolves That the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property, which under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible;

Instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation, and to maintain close relations with the Director of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees and, through him, with the appropriate organs at the agencies of the United Nations.

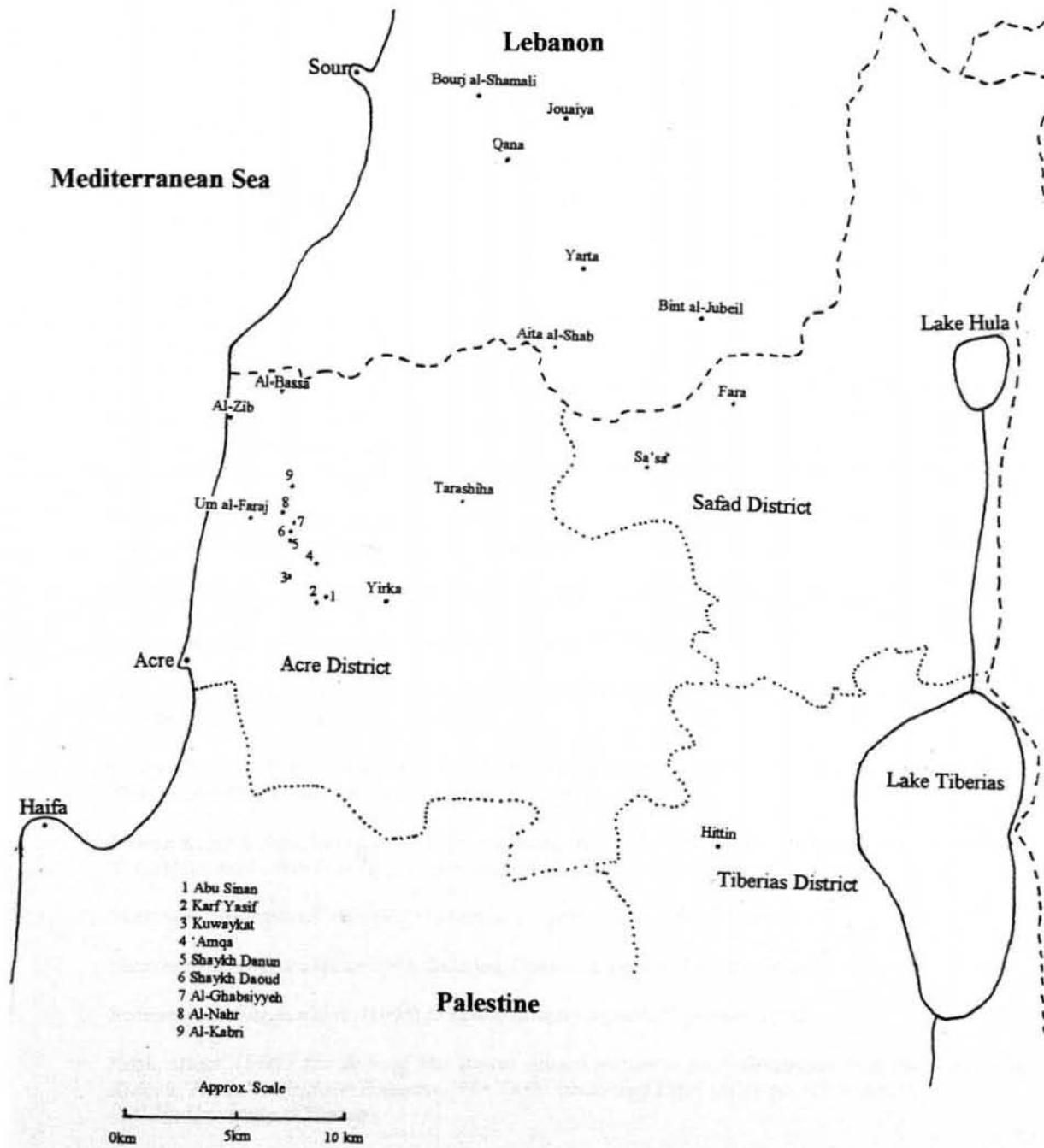
APPENDIX 12: UNRWA AERIAL MAP OF BOURJ AL-BARAJNEH

Possible camp boundary indicated



APPENDIX 13: NORTHERN PALESTINE AND SOUTHERN LEBANON

As no suitable map could be found so a sketch map has been produced showing the locations of respondents' villages and of villages and cities where they sought refuge.



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