RECURRENT WARSCAPE IN BEIRUT PUBLIC SPACES: FORTY YEARS LATER (1975-2015)

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In the context of a tormented Middle East geopolitics and the ongoing Arabo-Israeli conflict, a civil war erupted in Lebanon in 1975 and went uninterrupted for fifteen long years. As early as the first two-years-round of civil war in 1975-77, violent armed conflict manifested itself in an urban nature and contextualized in the capital Beirut. Back then, the civil war targeted systematically the public spaces and achieved purposefully the dual objective of mutating social practice and mutilating their urban form into a geography of fear. Intriguingly, during the unreconciled civil war aftermath, the display of instability and conflict kept on marking sporadically the same public spaces at different incidents. Three decades following the eruption of urban violence in 1975, intermittent events of social and political nature took place between 2005 and 2015, triggered by the assassination of the prime minister. This paper will tackle the two case studies of public spaces which are the pivots of the recurrent warscape: Place des Martyrs and the seaside hotels' area, both symbols of social and geographic contestations at simultaneous times of peace and war. Based on an interdisciplinary literature, the socio political manifestations will be highlighted by unfolding them across time and space. Signs of discontentment and instability are manifested under different facets and patterns varying from passive intangible representations to active outbursts. The perpetuation of events hitherto occurring in the same urban spaces will be studied from the perspective of the social and political realities. In the absence of a mono-causal factor for warscape recurrence, mapping conflict in the urban space is a suggested tool to approach the perpetuation issue from a context-specific perspective. It is as well an opportunity to raise the question on the relation between the socio-political claims and their reverberation in the same urban spaces.

Keywords
warscape, public spaces, recurrence, conflict

INTRODUCTION

In the context of a tormented Middle East, Lebanon was at crossroads with fifteen years of civil war erupted in 1975. The lack of internal consensus among different sectarian components was fuelled during the ongoing Arabo-Israeli conflict by the settlements of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon among other surrounding countries. The massive influx of Palestinians did not only imbalance the demographic distribution, but it weakened further the vulnerable internal political confessional system.[1] At the rhythm of both internal and regional schisms, the civil war unfolded over fifteen long years. War goals and agendas were reset over time following both internal and regional schisms, and the actors changed over the long course of the conflict.[2]

The following is an attempt to frame some definitions of war, civil war, warfare, conflict, violence, from a multi-disciplinary perspective, then to cross-relate them with the Lebanese condition of civil war. From the political science perspective, according to Kalyvas *'civil war refuses to speak of itself'*[3] but digs its meaning from *"semantic contestation"*, what the conflicting situation means and how it is interpreted. In this sense the Arabic defeat against Israel were historically recorded as *'al-Nakba'* (1948) meaning disaster, and *'al-Naksa'* (1967) meaning defeat, presenting euphemism for the feelings about this war. In a similar mode, the Lebanese civil war was commonly referred to by the Lebanese as *'al-ahdath'* and *'the events',*[4] meaning respectively the circumstances and facts, revealing their denial mode, and the attempt to coldly detach themselves from the atrocities of the civil conflict. According to Preston, whatever the word 'war' underlies, it refers to a *'single phenomenon'* but underlies a complexity across *'both time and space'*, related to the geographic context as well as to the beginning and ending of the war among other issues. Nordstrom develops an understanding of war as *'a manifold phenomenon representing heterogeneous cultures'*[6], she considers war as a *'cultural product'* constructed by *'many realities'*. The nature of the Lebanese civil war intersects the decomposition of war as a multitude of realities ranging from the intellectual and the social, to the political, the military and the frontlines. In this framework of 'many realities', warscape was recurrent in different ways at Beirut's public spaces. The conflict of the first two-year round of battle (1975-77) revealed itself of a military nature along frontlines. The recurrent warscape of the assassination of the prime minister Hariri in 2005 was categorized of a terrorist nature with unknown protagonists. In Lebanon, 'war' does not embody necessarily an armed conflict, but is expressed as well as non-armed, of specific goals and claims. While Nordstrom considers that *'the definition of war is a political process'*, this display of war set towards *'political goals'* is closely related to the social claims when analysed in the Lebanese context. In this sense, the recurrence of public manifestations, claims and riots in the same public spaces initiated since 2005 was of a socio-political nature. Ten years later in 2015, social claims were initiated once more at the same public spaces. This time the social and urban nature of the claims were instigated by a rusted political system.

WARSCAPE AS URBAN MUTILATION

This paper will tackle the relation between warfare and the urban context, both morphologically and socially. Armed conflict and *"war-related activities"* produce warscapes and transform the city *'landscape'* into *'places with embedded social meaning'*[8]. At the eve of the civil war, the public spaces at Beirut centre had their share in the 1963 Chehabist [9] master plan for Beirut (CEGPVB). They lagged behind its materialisation which aimed at separating the mobility and pedestrian flows at Place des Martyrs, the latter conceived as an interplay of terraces and open spaces cleared in favour of taller buildings around the square reaching 33 floors [10]. In this framework, the proposed plan conceived public spaces as supportive of the international and Mediterranean image of Beirut. One of the proposals aimed at dealing with both squares Place des Martyrs and Riad al-Solh to form the capital's central space.

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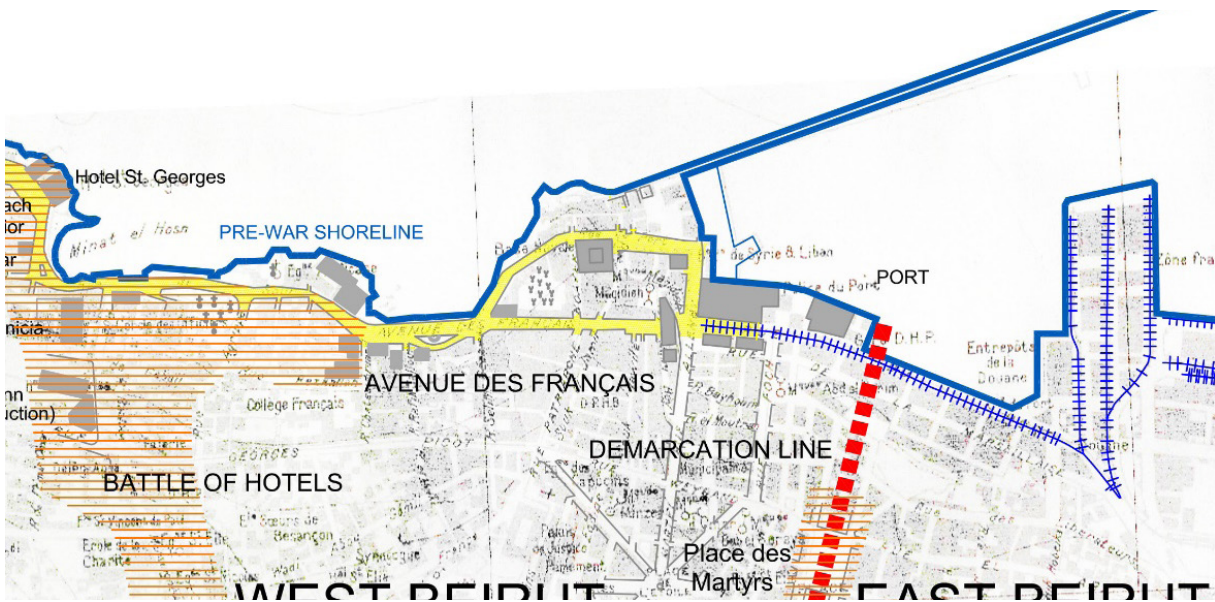THE POSSIBILITY OF RENOVATING SOME OLD BUILDINGS INTO AGED CARE FACILITIES DURING OLD TOWNS' RENEWAL

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FIGURE 1 The diagrammatic map shows the context of the Battle of the Hotels, Place des Martyrs and demarcation line splitting Beirut in two. Diagram by author N. Hindi, based on the 1964 map.

Civil war aborted the implementation of the public spaces project and brought forward different tools for changing or rather mutilating the urban landscape. It was initiated over the unfortunate bus incident on a Sunday in April 1975, in the suburban area of Ayn el-Remaneh but the armed conflict extended immediately to the context of the city centre[11]. Assuming the nature of an *'urban war'* [12], a first round of heavy shelling known as the two-year wars spanning 1975-77, targeted the urban spaces turning them into main frontlines, basically for what the city represented in terms of *'symbolic and economic value'* [13] and communal life [14] . This paper will unfold the recurrence of events in the two main public spaces of *Place des Martyrs,* symbol of communal life and the *Avenue des Français* and the seafront Hotels' district, economic symbol of the golden age of the independence. Armed conflict deployed along many fronts on this city centre, ravaging simultaneously Place des Martyrs and the seaside hotels' district. Only few days after the start of the clashes, armed men devastated and occupied Place des Martyrs, targeting central buildings like Cinema Rivoli, police stations and expanding westward in the direction of the Souqs. They were setting fire on some main targets in an intentional act of appropriating the space of the square and turning it into a geography of fear, coupled with the fear of physical *'liquidation'* as Herrero describes. The latter describes the urban changes, whereby access points known as *'ma`abir'* (plural of ma'abar), and checkpoints known as *'hawayiz'* (or hawajiz plural of hayez/ hajez) will govern the new mobility of the space, occupied henceforth by new users of the space, arriving from elsewhere, the militiamen and snipers. The armed conflict did not only bring about physical destruction but a transformation in the city's spatial, economic and social organisation also ensued. A demarcation line splat the city into East and West [15] reaching through *Place des Martyrs* as its last segment, transformed the pre-war city characterized by *'pluralism'* and *'tolerance',* into *'exclusive and closed communities'* [16] on both sides of the demarcation line (Figure 1).

Simultaneously, on another front, the pieces of the warscape panorama in Beirut became complete with the complex *'Battle of the Hotels'* [17]. Commonly known also as '*Ma'araket el fanadek'*, it became more than a strategic target, but also a symbolic one under the alibi of anti-Capitalism from the part of the left Muslim parties, revealing an increasing '*cleavage'* between '*Christian conservatives' and Muslim progressive'* [18]. Initiated in October 24th 1975, the battle targeted the seaside hotels and lasted several months; The brutality of the first round of battles '*brought the Green line to its completion'* and imposed on the city a '*territorial reconfiguration'.*[19] The Holiday Inn hotel had been open for only one year when the civil war erupted. Symbol of the internationalization of Beirut and being the tallest hotel in the district at that time, it turned into a sniper location since then. The hotel itself was not the only battle target, rather the whole sector of the hotels was. It witnessed one of the most violent outbreak of battles [20] which lead to burning the hotel, occupying big number of hotels by both fighting militias and consequently paralyzing the whole sector for the coming fifteen years. In the absence of political consensus, armed conflict prevailed and became the only means for negotiation. The latter usually happen following the imposition of a certain order of power and control over the territory. The conflict assumed a 'cyclical nature' [21] of armed conflict and violence, but the demarcation lines that split the city remained stable throughout the whole war duration. Some view that the 1975 civil war had its roots in previous mini rounds of civil-wars. As per Charles Call, the failure of political *'powersharing arrangement'* resulted in the occurrence of a first civil war in 1958 [22]. One of many factors of the eruption of the so-called second civil war had its traces in the repetitive failure of reaching a consensus over political sharing in a multi-confessional country.

ABSURDITY OF PEACE AND URBAN ALIENATION

The war ended as absurdly as it started, with the Taif agreement [23] putting an end to civil violence. However public social consensus was never achieved nor sought in the first place. There is no victorious nor vanquished, as the war belligerents changed repeatedly over the long course of war. Similarly to the lack of public consensus, the communal and public spaces targeted heavily during war conflicts were not given priority in the reconstruction master plan. In the post-war reconstruction master plan by Solidere [24], an undeclared reconstruction priority favours the real estate development over the communal spaces. The considerations of Solidere, being a private reconstruction company, were not commensurate between the urban considerations and the real estate *market-driven* goals [25]. As a matter of fact, the reconstruction company refers to public spaces as open spaces, in addition to delaying thus far the revival of Place des Martyrs, previously known as Sahat Al-Bourj, which embodies the main public space. The Green Line segment at Place des Martyrs which imposed a geography of fear since the first sparkle of civil war in 1975, transformed over the years into a no-man's land, never dominated by a single militia. Both public spaces constituting the case studies of this paper unfold as different urban scenarios in the post-war reconstruction aftermath.
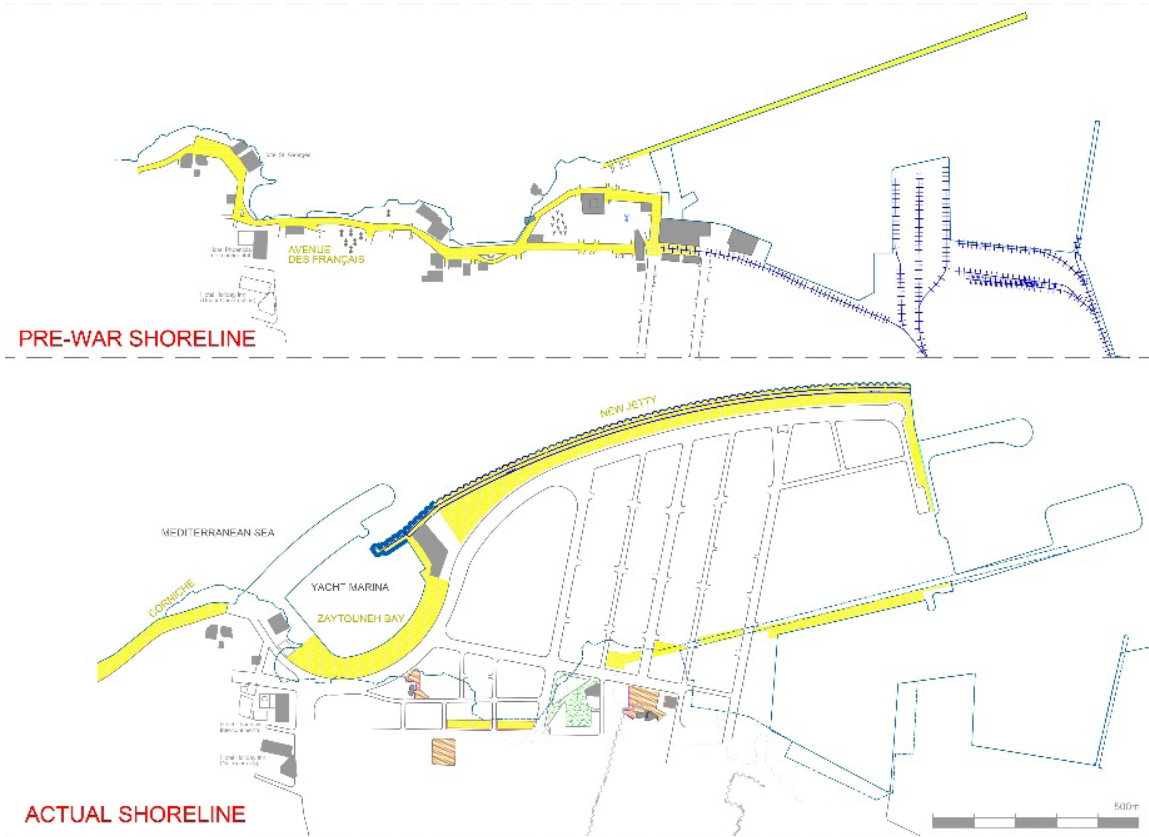
FIGURE 2 Shorelines comparison. By author N. Hindi, based on the 1964 map and Solidere's master plans

Regarding Place des Martyrs, the surrounding of the square was razed down by the reconstruction bulldozers leaving the square as a big void. As the surrounding buildings were torn down except for two surviving ones[26], the space lost any sense of scale if it wasn't for the renovated statue of Martyrs, renovated and re-placed in its pre-war location on the square. It was restored carrying the scars of the war [27], the holes of the bullets and an amputated hand, as the only witness of the past at large. The sculpture goes unnoticed as the new construction rises higher around the square, as alienated as the Lebanese public from its public spaces. The seaside hotels area and the public space known as the extension of the *'avenue des Français'*, the pre-war seaside promenade, underwent a different urban scenario. During wartime, the latter was dumped by the war and destruction waste and was lost gradually until the post-war reconstruction transformed the pre-war shoreline with the new landfill (Figure 2). Further urban development contributed to change the pre-war urban context. Widened streets distanced the public seaside space from the hotels' district, new high rise luxury hotels marked a luxurious waterfront silhouette, and yacht marina at Zaytounay Bay replaced the pre-war Saint George bay.

Over the post-war decades, the city underwent an irreversible transformation of the cityscape. Following the civil war urban mutilation, both spaces underwent urban transformations in such a manner that made them further unrecognizable. While armed conflict detached and disengaged the public from the public spaces, the post-war reconstruction strategy resulted in further alienation. In the same way *'material signature'* on the landscape were categorized as forms resulting from armed conflict [28] , different tangible and intangible forms resulted in the context of Beirut. From buildings' destruction, changing borders, creating access and check points, demarcation lines, using tall buildings for snipers during war times, these *'material signature'* assumed different forms at post-war times. This urban alienation is sometimes expressed in passive ways, like the gigantic sign of *Stop Solidere* on the unrestored Saint Georges Hotel [29], the last silent call for preserving the last remnants from the glorious past of the 60's and the 70's. It also demarcates virtually the border between the old Corniche promenade and the

new Zaytounay Bay space, forming part of the Solidere area. The mummified condition of the Holiday Inn hotel building still carrying the war scars is another live witness of the unreconciled war territories. Though the Holiday Inn and the Saint Georges Hotel stand individually each at one end of the Hotel district area, they altogether constitute an absurd urban panorama reminiscent of the civil war times *(Figure 3)*. In an ironic coincidence, the next event that will disturb the prosperous post-war years in 2005, will take place next to the Saint Georges Hotel.

FIGURE 3 the picture shows the actual Beirut's waterfront. Both buildings remnants of civil war appear in the cityscape, the Holiday Inn in the background to the left and the Saint Georges Hotel in the foreground to the right, with the sign of 'Stop Solidere'. Picture by author N. Hindi, 03.04.2016.

In 2005, three decades following the eruption of the civil war, a massive car bomb rocked Beirut over a calm February day resulting in the assassination of the Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri. The death of the tycoon, symbol of peace time and reconstruction resulted in a spectacular mass mobilization in expression of anger and *dissent* [30], spontaneously filling the void of *Place des Martyrs*. The peaceful movement started on the overnight of the assassination coinciding ironically with Valentine's day and went in a peaceful crescendo rhythm for a month, marking the national calendar on the 14th of March, with a manifestation estimated to reach 800,000 to one million person in the square and all roads reaching to it. In the framework of this collective protest, young activists set up their tents in *Place des Martyrs*, lobbying for the political claim for Syrian troops withdrawal from the country and setting a unanimous young social trend transcending different religious backgrounds and socio-political belongings. The square which historically witnessed for hangings during Ottoman occupation and French mandate times, riots, protests and celebrations of mostly political nature, was hosting the actual patriotic happening. The collective or national memory which seemed dormant for few decades, was reawakened; charged with emotions. At this *'momentous turn of fateful events'* [31], memory was capable of mobilizing the users spatially and temporally. The manifestation and the subsequent Revolution of the Cedars remained peaceful till the end[32]. Memory draws its contents from history whereas it is itself manipulated by upcoming or recurrent events[33]. Despite the nothingness that appropriated Place des Martyrs, the place or Sahat al-Shohada as Lebanese refer to it, was filled, re-appropriated and *'reclaimed as public space'* [34].

WARSCAPES RECURRENCE IN UNRECONCILED SPACES

Once more, Place des Martyrs became the common platform for civil manifestations in August 2015, protesting against the government for garbage collection and disposal crisis, which has dragged unresolved thus far. The 'You-Stink' campaign which majority are young protestors, academics, activists from NGO's and other civic movements, captured with their two words name a genius dual meaning, as per Zogby observations [35]. The name alludes to the politicians' cumulative corruption and the smell of piling up garbage rotting in the heat of August. The Lebanese society claim in perfect unison their social right, for once not divided along the traditional lines drawn by the political leaders. Though protestors have been attacked with excessive force from the riot policemen, and Internal Security Forces, they spontaneously extended their claims to the accrued societal needs such as electricity and water cut-offs. Neither the blurred fate of the most of Arab spring nor the frustration of Lebanon's own cedar revolution initiated in 2005, refrained them. A new front line has been drawn between Martyr Square and Riad al-Solh Square, where the governing authorities built the '*Wall of Shame*' [36] as a defensive wall to the nearby Grand Serail, headquarter for the council of ministers. It is intriguing how the same space which was turned into a warscape and a battleground in 1975, was re-appropriated in 2015 by its initial users, the civic society.

The recurrence of civil movements and violence in the same space can have its roots in different factors. Recurrence might be related to the geographic and spatial aspect, the socio-cultural dimensions, or to socio-political reasons. Is this recurrence of events in the same geographic and urban context, a '*spatial coincidence*' happening in the same context [37], unfolding at different periods of history and manifested by different users? The recurrence of passive and active manifestations, uprisings and riots in the same space might be related to the cityscape itself and the built environment, or as Kim refers to it as '*landscape*' or '*physical landscape*', being impregnated with cultural and political connotations [38]. Beyond the observations on the recurrence of warscapes and violence in the same spaces, another dimension could be explored related to the reasons for the '*re-eruption*' of violence as Nordstrom refers to it. Based on fieldworks observations and years of research on violence, Nordstrom is far from concluding that the '*cultural wounds lead to ongoing cycles of social instability and violence*' [39]. Having lived my childhood and adulthood during civil war times, I concur with the latter conclusion that the cultural reality is a myth during wartimes. The recurrence of a kind of warscape at Place des Martyrs as a space is one important dimension, but it is equally important to highlight that the opponent groups have changed since 1975. The August and September clashes of 2015 took place between the civilians and the police protecting the governing authorities. In this sense, the re-eruption of violence at the same space is not politically but socially driven, claiming social rights and directed against a ruling political system. The 'You Stink' campaign was initiated as the direct result of the government's failure to manage the garbage crisis, and was joined by other community groups like 'Badna nasseb' ("*we want accountability*") in reference to the political corruption. The ruling class did not only fail hitherto to manage and resolve the garbage crisis, but reacted violently against the protests since the beginning of the manifestations. This would intersect the idea that violence is used by the governing authorities against the social feeling of deprivation to establish '*political acquiescence*', control and social submission [40].

The awareness to the social rights tackled by Leontidou, was coupled with the awareness to public rights, expressed by claiming the right to urban and public spaces. The erection of the short-lived "wall of shame" raised the awareness of the public, to the government's attempt to draw limits between the public and the state in the context of public spaces. Since 2005, the public was already eager to fill the public spaces and express themselves. By 2015, the public awareness to their right to public spaces and their right to the city has increased. This eagerness to the 'right to the city' intersecting the social claims, is highlighted by Harb who observes that '*the claims are urban in nature*' [41]. The urban awareness to public spaces was not restricted to *Place des Martyrs* and started to be expressed at different occasions in attempts to reclaim and protect public spaces and waterfronts, most remarkably the claims for the *Pine Forest* and the *Daliyeh*. In this particular contest, 'You-Stink' campaign

protestors marched on one of the sit-in days in the direction of *Zaytounay Bay,* manifesting to reclaim the waterfront space back for the public.

CONCLUSION

The spatio-temporal display of warfare manifestations in the context of Beirut over forty years, allowed tracing a clearer picture on the dynamism of social and political struggles over geography, re-territorialisation and appropriation, the everyday users and the forceful invaders of space. Public spaces embody the contested space of communal living and urban diversity. Mapping multi-sited warscapes in the urban context is like collating together the different pieces of a puzzle to complete the image. The case studies of the two public spaces of Place des Martyrs and the seaside Hotels' district are two pieces of the larger image that cannot be perceived in isolation of the larger context. As chaotic and tangled as they seem, the multi-sited different battles in the city reveal the different war motivations and constitute a warscape geographic network. In the specific context of Beirut where war and peace alternate, at wartime urban warfare is manifested in battleground that transforms the city into a product. However during cold war aftermath, war of a social nature, uses the city and its public spaces as a tool for expressing social and urban claims.

Public spaces are the spaces where everybody else is different; but also the space where we are aware of differences and exposed to them. As public spaces remain mainly the spaces of confrontation, one inescapable step towards containment of perpetuations of instability is through re-conciliating them with their users. If the civil war targeted the city's public spaces in the first place, reconsidering their role and design seems both a natural remedy and an anti-dote for urban violence.

Disclosure Statement
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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Image sources

Figure 1: Diagram by author N. Hindi, based on the 1964 map (Army map).

Figure 2: Diagram by author N. Hindi, based on the 1964 map and Solidere's master plans.

Figure 3: Picture by author N. Hindi, 03.04.2016.

Endnotes

1   According to Picard, 'during the summer of 1948, some 100,000 Palestinians were driven out of Galilee and crossed the borders of Lebanon. Of all the Arab nations neighboring Israel, Lebanon was second only to Jordan in admitting Palestinians'. In the exodus aftermath, Call highlights the subsequent escalation of political tension and the imbalance of power-sharing system in Lebanon, 'the massive influx of Palestinians into southern Lebanon transformed the demographic foundation upon which power-sharing was based'. See Elizabeth Picard, Lebanon a shattered country: myths and realities of the Wars in Lebanon (New York: Holmes and Meir, 2002), 79. See also Charles T. Call, Why Peace Fails: The Causes and Prevention of Civil War Recurrence (Georgetown University Press, 2012), 180.

2   Khalaf tackles the changing goals of the conflict over the fifteen years of war in his book Lebanon adrift, from battleground to playground (London: Saqi Books, 2012), 34-35. While Nasr and Verdeil discuss that 'the actors on the scene seriously changed over time'; refer to Nasr and Verdeil, "The Reconstructions of Beirut "in The City in the Islamic World, Salma K. Jayyusi and al., (Brill, Boston: Leiden, 2008), 1122.

3   Stathis N. Kalyvas, The logic of civil war (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 27.

4   For the semantic reference to war, Khalaf mentions how the Lebanese calls the war 'al-ahdath' while Picard use the term 'the events'. See Samir Khalaf, Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon: A History of the Internationalization of Communal Conflict (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 37, and Elizabeth Picard, Lebanon a shattered country: myths and realities of the Wars in Lebanon (New York: Holmes and Meir, 2002), 105.

5   M. Preston, Ending civil war: Rhodesia and Lebanon in perspective (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2004), 2.

6   Carolyn Nordstrom, A different kind of war story (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 7.

7   In the framework of definitions of war, Nordstrom specifies: 'As a term, war isn't intended to match specific facts, but specific political goals. The goals change, and along with these the definitions of war and peace change apace' in Carolyn Nordstrom, Shadows of war: violence, power, and international profiteering in the twenty-first century (London, England: University of California Press, Ltd. 2004), 172.

8   Nam Kim, "Cultural Landscapes of War and Political Regeneration". Asian Perspectives, Vol. 52, No. 2, (the University of Hawai'i Press, 2014: 244-267), 244-245.

9   The 1963 Chehabist master plan for Beirut (CEGPVB) initiated by the president of the republic General Fouad Chehab, reflected in general the political national discourse of this period related to strengthening the State and the economic development of Lebanon.

10   Éric Verdeil, Beyrouth et ses urbanistes: une ville en plan (1946-1975) (Beyrouth, Presses de l'Ifpo, 2010), 210.

11   Fregonese describes the changes to the urban landscape as early as the first two years of war: 'Practices such as blocking streets, piercing buildings to create passages, partitioning neighbourhoods, climbing towers or even commemorating urban warfare martyrs, all played a part in the tactics and strategies used to bifurcate – physically and ideologically – this urban environment', in Sara Fregonese, "The urbicide of Beirut ? Geopolitics and the built environment in the Lebanese civil war (1975-76)", Political Geography 28 (2009) Elsvier: 310.

12   Nasr and Verdeil refer to targeting the city as a warscape, 'Beirut and its suburbs have been one of the major and continuous scenes of the war, which thus deserves the qualification of an urban war', in Nasr and Verdeil, "The Reconstructions of Beirut "in The City in the Islamic World, Salma K. Jayyusi and al., (Brill, Boston: Leiden, 2008), 1122.

13   Nasr and Verdeil, "The Reconstructions of Beirut,'1124.

14   Christine Delpal, « La Corniche de Beyrouth, nouvel espace public », (Les Annales de la recherche urbaine nº 91, 2001: 74-82, 0180-930-XII-01/91/), 74.

15   The Demarcation Line is known as the Green Line where only green shrubs will grow, it is commonly known as well as Khatt al-Tamass, meaning contact line in Arabic. Massive exodus and displacement based on religious belonging took place between East and West Beirut; West Beirut was predominantly Muslim whereas East Beirut dominantly Christian.

16   Samir Khalaf, Heart of Beirut: Reclaiming the Bourj, (London: Saqi Books, 2006), 169 and 126.

17   For more description of the battle refer to Edgar O'Ballance, Civil war in Lebanon: 1975-92 (London: Macmillian Press, 1998), 37.

18   Elizabeth Picard, Lebanon a shattered country: myths and realities of the Wars in Lebanon (New York: Holmes and Meir, 2002), 107.

19   Sara Fregonese, "The urbicide of Beirut ? Geopolitics and the built environment in the Lebanese civil war (1975-76)", Political Geography 28 (2009) Elsvier: 310 and 314.

20 Courtesy of Sara Fregonese in http://www.hotelgeopolitics.com/, An-Nahar, 24-03-1976 p.4, (translated by Imad Aoun). Fighting in the Hotels area resumed for the fourth consecutive day. Foreign reporters who have covered other civil wars around the world before have claimed that "no other civil war around the world has seen fighting as intense as what we are seeing here today on the Hotels front". While the heavy cannon shelling might have slowed down, the fighting zone has spread out, and the battles have expanded from Starco and Hilton along the Bab Idriss Martyr's Square front all the way up towards Damascus Road.

21 Nasr and Verdeil, "The Reconstructions of Beirut "in The City in the Islamic World, Salma K. Jayyusi and al., (Brill, Boston: Leiden, 2008), 1122.

22 Charles T. Call, Why Peace Fails: The Causes and Prevention of Civil War Recurrence (Georgetown University Press, 2012), 162.

23 The war ended in 1991 following the "Taif Agreement" between all Lebanese fighting parties hosted in the city of Taif at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The outcome was a new formulation of government authorities and a cease fire announcing the end of a bloody chapter.

24 SOLIDERE s.a.l.: stands for Société libanaise pour le développement et la reconstruction de Beyrouth; it is a private company commissioned for the planning and management of Beirut central district following the civil war period, supported from the public authorities.

25 Najib B. Hourani, "People or Profit? Two Post-Conflict Reconstructions in Beirut". Human Organization; Summer (2015) Vol. 74, Nb. 1; Pro-Quest Central: 176.

26 To the Western side of the square, the previous Cinema Opera will be saved to become the actual Virgin Megastore, and part of the building adjacent to it on the North Western corner of the square.

27 Khairallah said that the marks were kept as a historical and social reminder for the future generations." Forty percent of the bullets were kept on purpose as a reminder of the war." In Maya Abou Nasr, "Martyrs' Statue returns to original site after 8-year absence", The Daily Star Leba-non, July 16, 2004, accessed January 5, 2015, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2004/Jul-16/4128-martyrs-statuereturns-%20to-original-site-after-8-year-absence.ashx.

28 Nam Kim, "Cultural Landscapes of War and Political Regeneration". Asian Perspectives, Vol. 52, No. 2, (the University of Hawai'i Press, 2014: 244-267), 146.

29 Due to a continuous conflict with Solidere about the strategic location of the hotel, the latter stands still unrestored and non-operating, except for the swimming pools.

30 Samir Khalaf, Heart of Beirut: Reclaiming the Bourj, (London: Saqi Books, 2006), 191.

31 Khalaf, Heart of Beirut, 191.

32 Heather Sharp, "Cedar revolution's bitter aftertaste", BBC News Website, Beirut, February 13, 2006, accessed March 13, 2016, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4702142.stm.

33 Mark Crinson, (ed.) Urban Memory : history and amnesia in the modern city (Routledge, 2005), XIV.

34 David Humphreys, "The Reconstruction of the Beirut Central District: An urban geography of war and peace". Spaces and Flows: An Interna-tional Journal of Urban and ExtraUrban Studies 6(4) (2015): 10.

35 James Zogby mentions that "It was a stroke of genius that Lebanon's young protesters named their movement "You Stink". In just two words, they captured both the essence of their country's immediate crisis over uncollected garbage and its longer-term structural problems", in Huff-post Politics, August 31, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/james-zogby/you-stink_b_8056484.html.

36 Richard Hall, "Beirut's Berlin Wall moment lasted less than 24 Hours", GlobalPost, Boston, August 25, 2015, accessed March 13, 2016, http://neptune.ndu.edu.lb:2048/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1708481378?OpenUrlRefId=

37 Leontidou, Lila, Urban social movements: from the 'right to the city' to transnational spatialities and flaneur activists, City, 10:3 (2006): 261, DOI: 10.1080/13604810600980507.

38 Nam Kim, "Cultural Landscapes of War and Political Regeneration". Asian Perspectives, Vol. 52, No. 2, (the University of Hawai'i Press, 2014: 244-267), 244-260.

39 Carolyn Nordstrom, Shadows of war: violence, power, and international profiteering in the twenty-first century (London, England: University of California Press, Ltd. 2004), 60.

40 Nordstrom, Shadows of war, 60.

41 Will Worley, "Demonstrations allowing civilians to reclaim public spaces", The Daily Star Lebanon, September 4, 2015, accessed March 12, 2016, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Sep-05/313928-demonstrations-allowing-civilians-to-reclaim-public-spaces.ashx. A version of this article appeared in the print edition of The Daily Star on September 04, 2015, on page 3.