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Research Master Planning and Sustainability: Urban and Regional Planning

Innovation of Public Spaces in Beirut_Lebanon



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Introduction

Looking in the Oxford dictionary, one of definitions of space is "a continuous area or expanse which is free, available, or uncopied". It also defines it as the dimensions of height, depth, and width within which all things exist and move.

"Public spaces in cities define the protocols for cohabitation used by a community to build a society. It is the place where code lines for social interactions are written, where the culture of belonging and of urban identity is created. It is also the territory that houses the infrastructures making a city operate." (Guallart, 2006)

After sixteen years of Brutal Civil War, Beirut is being rebuilt. Periods of Post-War reconstruction are often the backdrop for new socio-economic and political dynamics. The Public spaces in Lebanon are neglected due to a massive disrespect of laws and regulations and the lack of government authority.

"Space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things" Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space, 1974.

In order to understand the importance of the innovation of public spaces in Beirut, a densely populated and exhausted metropolis, we should be aware of the impact of the Lebanese Civil War on the society.

This Thesis describes, conceptualizes and explains the divisions in Post-war Beirut. It elaborates the notion of segregated cities by conceptualizing division practiced by individuals of different religious backgrounds in the Post War Beirut; explaining the logic behind the Phenomenon of division and revealing the harmony between perceived, conceived and lived space of the city. It also discusses privately owned public open spaces as terms to describe a type of public space that, although privately owned, is legally required to be open to the public under a city's zoning ordinance or other land-use law. Hence it highlights the importance of the privatization of public spaces and lands in Beirut after the war in 1990, specially the work that was done by Solidere.

Urban public spaces are considered as essential part of the cities throughout history. They play a particular role in the life of urban areas, whether a memorable, accessible, or meaningful places. People may feel attached to both the social and physical aspects of public spaces. Therefore, these spaces may be places for socializing, hosting the greatest number of people's interactions. Moreover, their physical attributes may indicate particular meanings to the people, having a significant impact on people's perceptions, interactions and activities.

This thesis will focus on the creation and innovation of public spaces that have the power to influence the community on different levels. This will be the platform to create a Post-War reconciliation project and a step further towards building a sustainable, unified and creative city.

A discussion will be raised about the relationship between perceived, conceived and lived space as per the French philosopher and sociologist "Henri Lefebvre's" analysis of the social construction of space. This will be elaborated through the importance and the harmony among the Space/Place and Culture as tools for social inclusion.

The main research hypothesis is as follow: **The Re-injection and the Innovation of Open Public Spaces in Beirut should contribute to the territorial cohesion of the city**

Phase 1: (Conceived space)

How the private sector in post war Beirut impacts the open public spaces in the city?

Phase 2: (Lived space)

How Individuals of different communities in Beirut have a different image of their city and perceive it based on their various often in cohesive social memories?

Phase 3: (Perceived space)

What Urban interventions can strengthen the relations between people from different communities?
Can the re-injection and the Innovation of Open Public Spaces in Beirut contribute to the social cohesion of the city?

Phase 4: (Intervention)

How can we intervene in order to create a sustainable and social reconciliation project through the open public spaces in Beirut?

The purpose of this research is to analyze and introduce a new vision for Sustainable Urban Strategy through Beirut Public Spaces, as an initiator for building a unified community, a crucial factor to boost the economy and a way into creating a healthy, sustainable and creative metropolis.

In the following, it will be introduced the Structure and analytical framework, as well the methods of data collection of this research paper.

| Structure and analytical framework

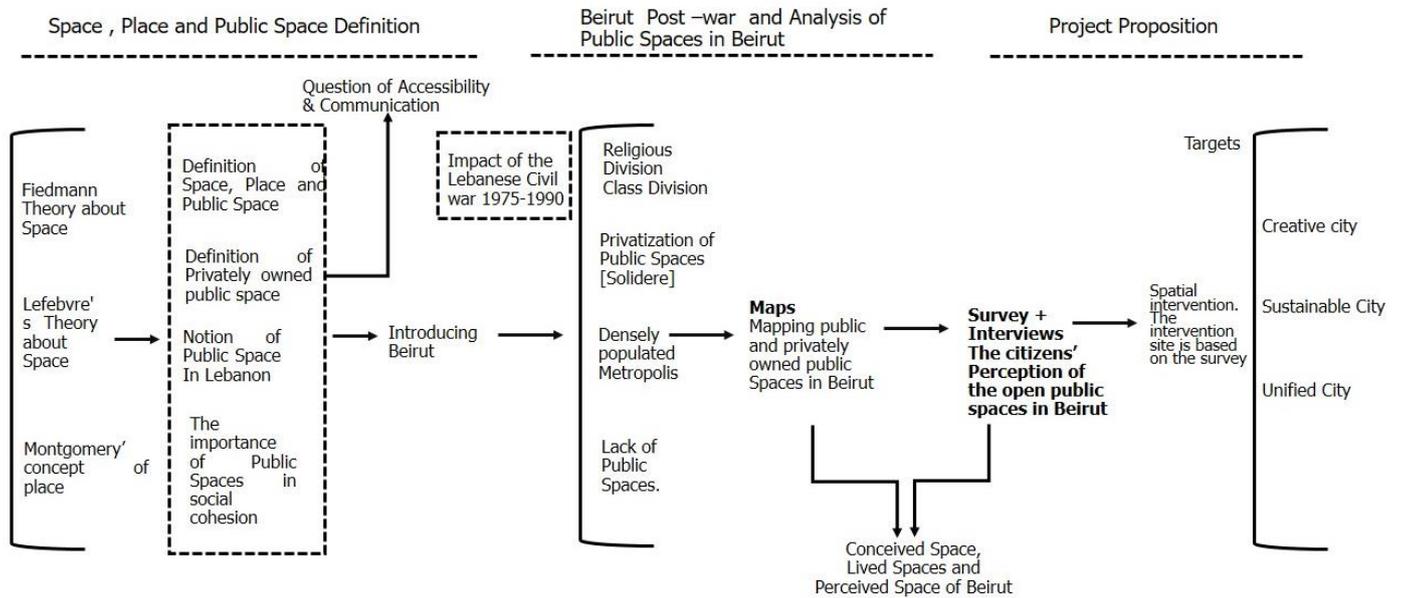


Figure 1: Analytical Framework. Made by Chamoun, 2018

<p>Conceived Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mapping Beirut's gardens ▪ Mapping Beirut's square ▪ Mapping Beirut's commercial streets ▪ Mapping Beirut's waterfronts ▪ Mapping Beirut's sports courts ▪ Understanding the impact of Solidere on the open public spaces in Beirut. ▪ People trust the private sector in the innovation of open public spaces.
<p>Lived Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The division within the city ▪ People demand green public spaces ▪ People demand a good management and renovation for the existing open public spaces. ▪ People prefer to be in Public spaces privately managed. ▪ A new kind of segregation is noticed in the open public spaces. ▪ People are not aware of the existing public spaces.
<p>Perceived Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on the conceived and lived space, people will help to find a solution to create a sustainable reconciliation project for Beirut City.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People demand as first step the renovation of the existing public spaces in order to attain social cohesion.
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Table 1: Methodological Approach. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Chapter one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of Open public spaces: the two main criteria are ACCESSIBILITY and COMMUNICATION • Importance of innovation of public spaces in social cohesion.
Chapter two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing Beirut history, specifically the impact of the war on the society. • Importance of the private sector into building Beirut post war.
Chapter three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing Beirut open public spaces. • The citizen’s needs and perception about Beirut open public spaces.
Chapter four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spatial intervention based on people demands.

Table 2: Research design. Made by Chamoun, 2018

| Methods of Data collection

Data collection and management procedures are an essential part. Applying a mixed method for gathering data requires time to manage data accordingly.

The data collection for this study is mainly based on reading and Interviews to analyse the public space in Beirut and to understand the needs of the people. The next step will be the mapping of the public spaces based on observational and analysis work, in order to propose a project.

	Data collection
Primary Document	Books, Previous Thesis, Articles, Journals, Website...
Primary Document	Mapping Public spaces in Beirut
Primary Document	Surveys and Interviews
Secondary Document	Observation

Table 3: Data Collection. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Chapter one: Public Space

| 1.1 Place and Space

What is Space?

"Space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things" Henri Lefebvre, *The production of Space*, 1974.

The Change in the nature of urban space can be followed in the relationship between space and place in the literature: Space is considered to be more abstract and impersonal, place is identifying as having meaning and value.

Therefore **Space** is the starting point for understanding **Place**.

"Places are spaces when are being used, experienced and lived" (Cresswell, 2009, p.170)

In the following, two theories about space and one theory about place is going to be discussed through Friedmann, Lefebvre and Montgomery.

According to Friedman, he defined two opposite geographies:

Life Space and Economic Space (Friedmann, 1988).

1-Definition of Life space:

Life space is basically where life take place, where people meet, interact, live...etc. It is seen as a place made of people. People are the only and one contributor that create and compose the Life Space and make an influence on it through their practices, so it's not a physical space of which can be reformed anywhere else.

The life space expands based on the needs of population's increase, which determine in which direction it shall appear and develop. These needs were badly hypnotized by capitalism which consequently put the life space under attack in what so-called Economic space.

2-Definition of Economic Space:

The Economic Space in which the livelihood conditions take place (Friedmann, 1988). It's a nonphysical place as well. Lefebvre for example had named it an "abstract space".

The production of economic space is identified both physically and hypothetically through the product of the production process: dwellings, retail shops, shopping mall, stock market...etc.

On the contrary of the Life Space where people are the contributors, in the Economic Space firms and corporations are the contributors and they act according the central principle:

"The amassing of surplus from production should be private, while social costs should be absorbed on public account" (Friedmann, 1988, p.97)

Lefebvre in his book "The production of Space" analyze what space is and how is it being transformed due privatization policies. The Conceptual triad consists of the "Perceived Space" which embodies the spatial practice, the "Conceived Space" which embodies the representation of space and the "Lived Space" which embodies the representational space (Lefebvre, 1991).

Lefebvre's Conceptual Triad

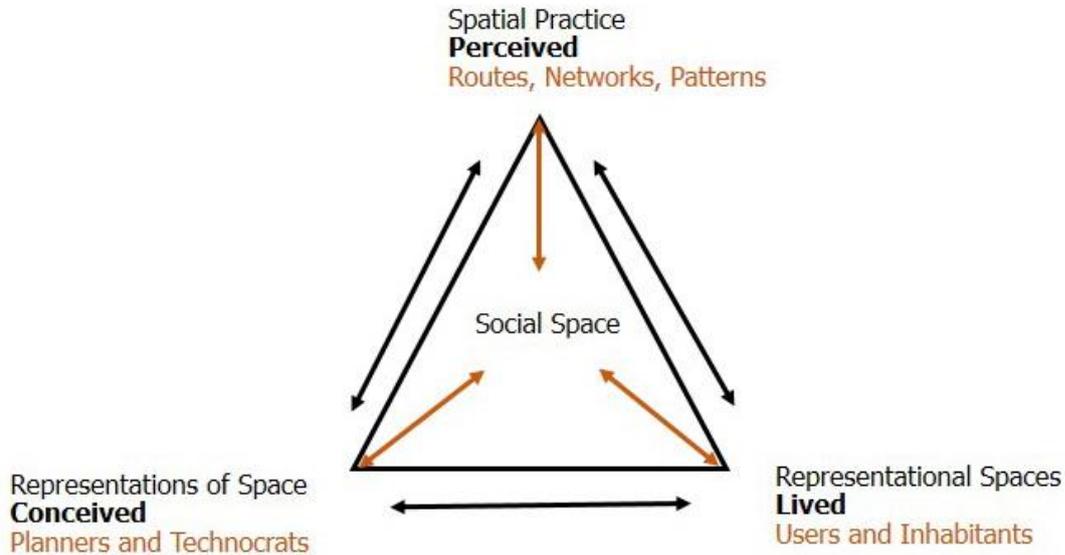


Figure 1: Lefebvre's Conceptual Triad. Source: Lefebvre

1-The Perceived Space:

It's a space produced by Human design. It has a physical, geometrical nature, visible and readable aspect: It is represented by the buildings, streets, roads...etc.

The components of which the Perceived Space is made, touches everyday human life: neighborhoods, shopping malls... It responds to the "What" question; "What urban intervention can strengthen the relation between place and image?" That is the task given to urban planners and spatial organizations.

2-The Conceived Space:

The Space that contains the abstract, the imagined space as well as the visual order, signs, codes of the city, dominated by political rules, planners and economic Interest.

It's a mental Space, made through the intellectual practice of scientists, planners, architects...etc., of what is called representation of space. The conceived Space has an idealistic approach, whereas the Perceived Space adopts a materialistic character. The importance of the Conceived space is resembled in being the brain of the space that is manifested in its physical form: Perceived Space

3-The Lived Space:

The space that describes how people inhabit everyday life, the way they create their city as "users" through practices, images and symbols.

Both the Perceived and the Conceived Spaces influence the practices occur in the lived space. The Lived Space is the representational space, therefore it's a social space, called by Friedmann the "Life Space". It encompasses both idealistic and materialistic characteristics.

The Place definition by Montgomery in his book "Montgomery's Concept of Place" in 1988, is based on these components listed below. The author believes that based on these components, there is

an opportunity to derive a set of principles for place making and creating successful urban spaces. (Montgomery, 1998, p.97)

The Sense of Place depends on three components:

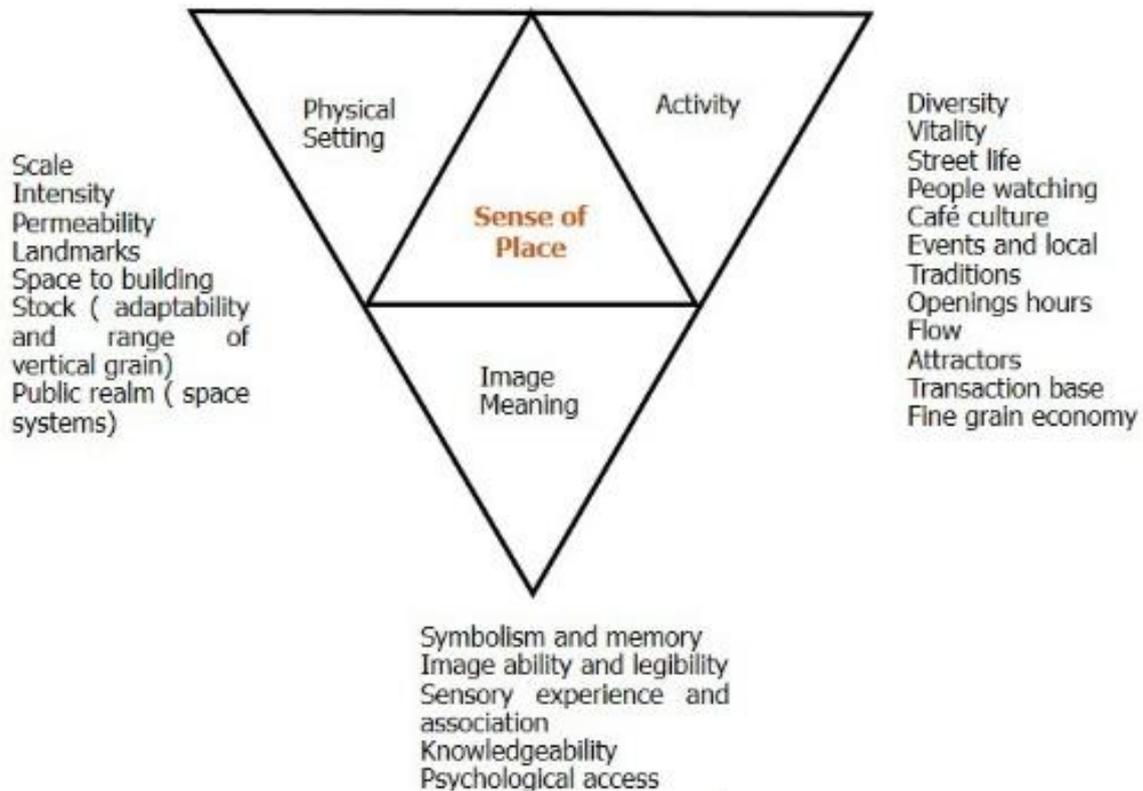


Figure 2: Montgomery Concept of Place. Source: Montgomery

- 1- The physical setting which can be interpreted through the buildings, the road, and the landmark etc...
- 2- The Activity which represents the type of activity that people are exercising
- 3- The Image Meaning, means the symbolism and the memory of that place in the eye of the people.

So Far, there are 4 perspectives of space based on 2 theories: The Lived Space and the Economic Space proposed by Friedmann, The Perceived, Conceived and Lived Space proposed by Lefebvre, and 3 Perspectives of Place based on 1 theory: the Physical setting, Activity and the Image meaning proposed by Montgomery.

But what is the relation between Friedmann, Lefebvre and Montgomery perceptions on space and place?

How these spaces have influence on each other?

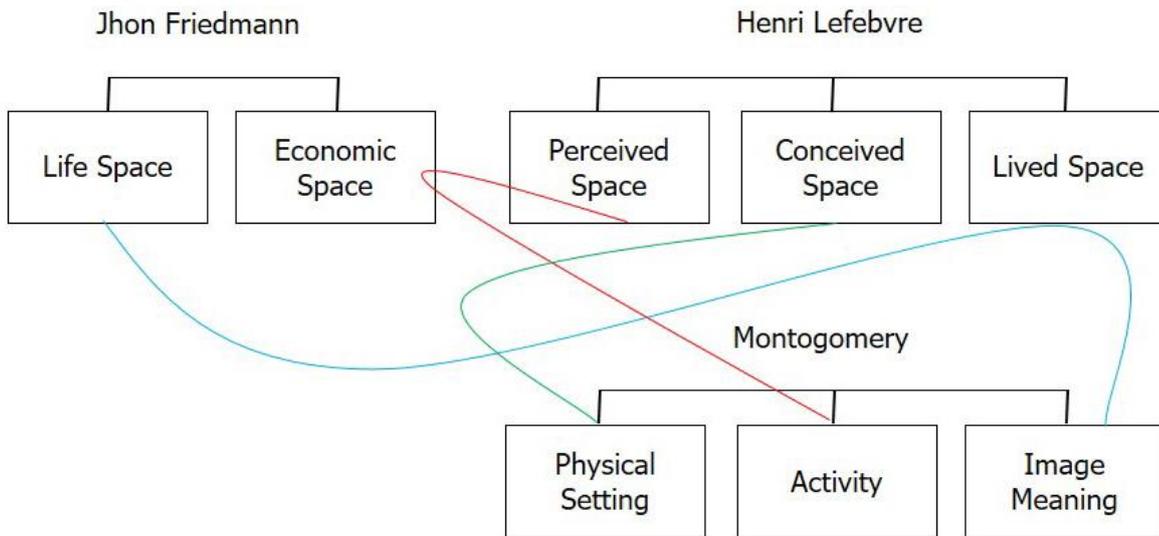


Figure 3: Theories of Space and Place. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Theoretically speaking, The Lived Space, The Life Space, and the Image Meaning would create one space called "The Social Space | Place" which is the theatre of everyday life and is the heart of every place.

The Economic and The Perceived Space and the Activity have a materialistic approach called the "The Economic Space | Place" or Abstract Space according to Lefebvre.

| 1.2 Public Space Definition

There is often a discussion raised about an artist making an intervention in public space, but what exactly do we mean by public space?

In public spaces we are all equal, in the sense that we can all exercise our shared right to the city without having to display our social status nor our ability to spend money.

Lyn Lofland describes Public Space in his book "A world of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space":

"...those areas of a city to which, in the main, all persons have legal access. I refer to the city's street, its parks, and its places of public accommodation. I refer to its public buildings or the public sectors of its private building". (Lofland, 1985, p.19)

Each city, town or village has her own characteristic which differentiate her and create her own urban fabric. The one mutual element of any urban fabric is the "Public Space". Urban public space have been considered an essential part of cities throughout history. It continuously reflected the complexities of their cities' cultural, social, and economic contexts. Public spaces play a particular role in the life of urban areas, whether as memorable, accessible, or meaningful places.

The challenge today for planners and researchers on public space, lies mostly in the difficult encounter of two main visions of public space defended by the social sciences:

- 1- The public sphere: It's summed by the concept of the conversation and debates, its raises the important and ever pressing question of participative democracy.
- 2- The public accessibility: Question of mobility. It lends more attention to the idea of individual liberties, notably under
- 3- The form of a "right to the city" [Lefebvre 1968; Mitchell 2003]



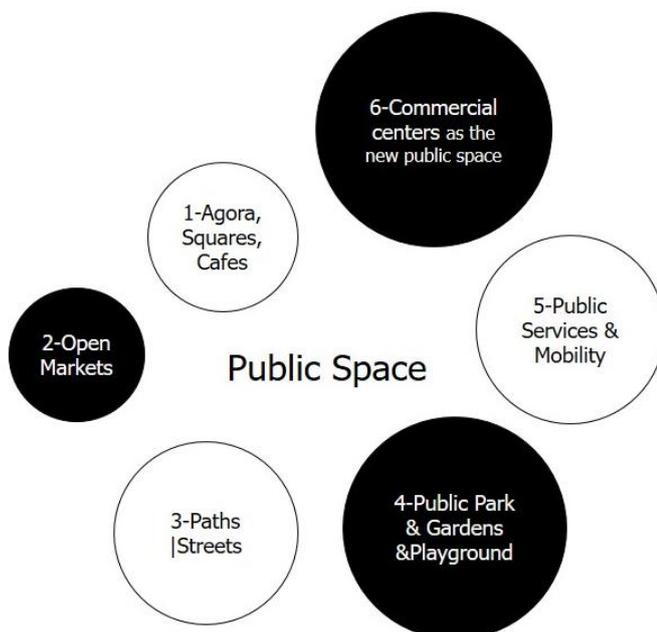
Figure 4: The Two Visions of Public Space. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Public Space in an integral part of the public realm. For Montgomery (1998), the public realm in a city accomplishes different functions by providing meeting places, defining spaces for local traditions and identifying meaning and identity (Montgomery, 1998: 110).

"Public spaces work best when they establish a direct relationship between the space and the people who live and work around it" (Thompson, 2002, 61).

Public Space where is the public have free access. It encompasses: all the streets, squares and other rights of way, whether predominantly in residential, commercial or community uses; the open spaces and parks; and the **"public-private"** spaces where public access is unrestricted. It includes the interfaces with key internal and private spaces to which the public normally has free access. Cooper and Francis (1998) gave a definition drawn from the work of Lunc (1981) who argues that open space is open when it is accessible;

*"Urban open spaces are defined as **publicly accessible** open places designed and built for human activity and enjoyment including parks and downtown plazas"* (Cooper and Francis 1998: 76)



- 1-Agora, Squares & Café
- 2-Open Markets
- 3-Paths | Streets |Roads
- 4-Public Parks, Gardens & Playground
- 5-Public services & mobility: Train-Bus...
- 6-Commercial centers: Considered as the new public space.

Figure 5: The different Types of Public Space. Made by Chamoun, 2018

In order to tackle the purpose of this paper, the public space will be examined from different part of the world .This paper will target 2 kinds of Public Space: Squares and Gardens.

The following questions will address the goal of this study:

- Why and how some public spaces work or do not work in Beirut?
- Is the notion of an open shared arena that belongs to all of us, a neutral container for civic activities, realistic?
- How can we intervene to create sustainable strategies for public spaces in Beirut while the city is concurrently being hijacked by the private sector?
- How do Public spaces affect the urban social sustainability of Beirut city?
- How can we create a social reconciliation through Public spaces?
- How to innovate Public Spaces in Beirut in order to obtain a Creative Metropolis?

| 1.3 Public Space Characteristics

The design of public spaces would grow out of a deep understanding of how people use and perceive the places they used. But, there are still public spaces built today that are empty and lifeless.

Why do some Public Spaces fail while other works?

"Place making needs the understanding of place design theories and practices, the skill to design theories and practices, the skill to design for a vibrant space and the judgment to know when a place need to be designed and when should be left for organic growth and development According to people's needs". (Montgomery, 1998, p.94)

"In terms of use and design, public space characterized in three main categories. Thus, these places as well as being Meaningful allowing people to make rich linkage and attachments with place, being Democratic protecting the right of user groups, being accessible to all groups and providing for freedom of action should be responsive to address resident's needs."(Carmona, 2010, p.208-209)

A set is considered to list the principle characteristics of public space by Silk Nissen at the University of Leipzig, and will provide people's primary needs within the public spaces:

1-Safety	<i>"Feeling safe is an open space has been identified in several studies as an important prerequisite for people's use of a place particularly for women, children and elderly "(Copper and Francis, 1998, p.89)</i>
2-Comfort	<i>"Adequate and Comfortable seating, solar access, and protection from wind, rain, and other climate elements have been considered as important reasons for open space use and satisfaction"(Cooper and Francis,1998, p.90)</i>

<p>3-Aesthetics, Public art & Perception</p>	<p><i>"These are important aspects of Landscape quality but not understood appropriately. How people perceive a space may contribute to the space use or lack of use"</i> (Cooper and Francis, 1998, p.91)</p>
<p>4-Meaning</p>	<p>There is a growing awareness that use of an open space may not in itself be enough to make a space successful. Open space can have a larger connectedness for people, as seen for example in the national attachment to Times Square in New York City or local attachment to a central park in a small town.</p> <p><i>"Some researches have discussed that people do not have to use the space since it has a particular meaning or value to them. The fact that a space is considered as an important symbol or reference may be enough for people to attach meaning to the open space even though they are not using it"</i> (Cooper and Francis 1998, p.91)</p>
<p>5-Control and Participation</p>	<p>The amount and freedom and control a space offers have been suggested as the basis for people's use and enjoyment of an open space.</p> <p><i>"Use participation in the design and management process can directly contribute to the later satisfaction of nonparticipating users"</i>(Cooper and Francis , 1998, p.91)</p>
<p>6-Publicness</p>	<p>Public Access is a critical factor to open space quality. Lynch's 1981 defines accessibility in terms of an open-space rights such as the right of presence, use and action.</p>
<p>7-Natural systems & environmental quality</p>	<p>"Open spaces are part of a larger natural system critical to healthy city life. A growing body of research is focused on the relationship between people and the natural environment" (Cooper and Francis, 1998, p.93)</p>
<p>8-Economic benefits and impacts</p>	<p>"Some research has centered on the economic impacts and benefits of urban open spaces" (Cooper and Francis, 1998, p.94)</p>

Table 4: List of the principle characteristics of public space. Source: Silk Nissen

| 1.4 Privately owned Public Spaces definition

The term of "Privately Owned Public Spaces" was first invented in 1960 in New York. It comprises two parts.

"Privately owned refers to the legal status of the land and/or building on or in which the public space is located. Owners would continue to control overall access and use of their private property and the public as a whole could not secure rights of access and use without the owner's express permission. Thus, it is a Public Space rather than a public property in this case since it is not owned by the city"(Kayden, 2000).

"Public Space means a physical place located on Private property to which the owner has granted legally binding rights of access and use the members of the public. Ownership continues to reside with the private owner, public space may be thought of as an easement held by the public on the owner's property"(Kayden, 2000).

The invention of this policy improves the pedestrian experience by creating better and instant public spaces with co-operation between the Private and Public sectors. **Public Spaces are a place where all the public is allowed, and have the rights of access and use, but NOT necessarily related to its ownership.** Both the Private developers and the Government provide public spaces to serve the public life.

The policy of "Privately owned public spaces" allows the contribution of the private sector and is also beneficial to the private urban development. This trend policy in 21st century is a strong shaping force on the city and transforms commercial districts into enjoyable places, it has a totally different impact from the traditional European piazza, which contains strong symbolic meaning and combined with the public buildings and churches, even though they can serve as leisure spaces in high density cities.

The involvement of private sector can help with cost of urban development and improvement if the city, but Privatization of the Public spaces may easily occur without careful guidelines and regulations, it causes misuses of the policy for owner's benefits and neglecting the social welfare.

Accessibility, Visibility and Usability are important to ensure the protection of the public realm.

The terms "Public Space" and "Privatization" both contain long and elaborate scientific reflections that cannot reproduced here. Instead we need to narrow our examination and down to pragmatic and manageable definitions of Privatization of public spaces in the city. Hence, the main question arises about the usability. Peter Marcuse highlights the fact that public space cannot be adequately qualified by differentiating between Public and Private Ownership.

*"...public space for most policy purposes cannot be delimited simply to that space is publicly owned. Ownership is itself a complex category, and... I use **Publicly Usable**, rather than **Publicly Owned**, as the relevant category for analysis". (Marcuse, 2003)*

"Public space is traditionally differentiated from private space in terms of rules of access, the source and nature of control over entry to a space, individual and collective behavior sanctioned in specific spaces, and rules of use". (Low and Smith, 2006, p.3)

The rule of access is more important than the rule of ownership, to specify a Public space. Privatization entails constraints on the public rights of accessibility and usability. We can call these kind of space "Spaces of Hybrid Character". The emergence of hybrid spaces is a global phenomenon that has spread across continents for varying degrees.

As mentioned before, this paper will target 2 kind of public space: Gardens and Squares.

Public parks and open spaces include public gardens, Squares, recreation areas and playground that are open for the public use free of charge.

Free accessibility but there are rules and regulations for park use. 4 trends can be observed:

1-Local authorities maintain the responsibility for care and organization of parks and public plazas. The effort to increase their attractiveness to middle-class citizens can be taken as one of the main goals of the local commitment to the city's parks and open spaces. In order to reach this aim, public area uses are redefined towards middle-class interests.

2-Private companies. Activity groups or residents take over the maintenance tasks of public parks.

3-The complete park, plaza or other open space enters a privatization process.

4-Public parks are neglected or even closed, and private spaces taking over their functions, but with limited access.

These symbols contribute to the definition of public spaces as a public usable space or as a space with reduced public access and usability. Landscape architects remodel the public parks by answering the question of security as an essential interest. Public greens are fenced in and can be closed after a specific hours. Benches are replaced with seating that cannot be slept on. Benches in parks are for people enjoying nature, there are not for people with nowhere to go.

The Belvedere Park in Vienna, which contain reference to historic garden, is newly designed. The garden is open to the public during certain hours and seasons and is equipped with set of rules and regulations that permit certain uses and prohibit others.



Figure 6: The Belvedere Park in Vienna. Source: Unknown

Another example, is the public garden Bryant Park in Midtown Manhattan. The park was redefined twenty years ago. It is maintained by the Bryant Park Restoration BPC, private management company and a cooperating business improvement district of neighboring property owners. After many years of suffering in the condition of the park, it's reopened in 1991 after 4 years of renovation with a budget six times the level under prior city management.



Figure 7: Bryant Park in Midtown Manhattan. Source: Unknown

It's one of the remarkable effort in the nation made by private management backed by private funding to a public park, and it has been a success with public and the press. New entrance were built and the opening hours were harmonized with offices hours. Security and Police patrol the site. The park includes commercial usages like concerts and fashion shows, which eventually make Bryant Park visually and spatially representative of middle-class consumerism. New Parks like Bryant Park use design in order to raise its appeal, bringing it closer to middleclass preferences, and thus trying to keep out undesirable clientele.

Public spaces either changes their character or are replaced by private spaces, where accessibility and usability are privately controlled

Incremental shifts can be seen between public and private spaces, visibly interpreted in built like fences and an exclusive material, personal means security forces and cleaner. These processes generate space of hybrid character, which have various mixtures of public and private structures, different degrees of accessibility, and varying extents of usability.

Nissen also elaborate a table summarizing six levels of shifts from public to private spaces:

Constraints of Usability and Accessibility	Examples
01-Reshaping of Public spaces through private management, installation of signs of private character. Symbolic exclusion through signs.	Pedestrian areas.
02-Semi-Privatization of public space by transfer of rights of use and of maintenance tasks on private subjects. Temporary exclusion through opening hours	Redevelopment of parks and public greens.
03-Construction of private spaces with limited public character. Exclusion through signs and security staff.	Plazas at the entrance of high-rises
04-Full privatization through sale of quasi-public property. Exclusion through signs and security staff.	Transformation of an open market into shopping malls.
05-Full privatization in the course of public property sale. Accessibility reduced to consumers, controlled by security staff.	Sale of public property with subsequent erection of shopping centers.
06-Full privatization in the course of public property sale plus political and administrative spin-off from the municipal collective. Private Access only.	Gated communities.

Table 5: The six levels of shifts from public to private space. Source: Silk Nissen

Development of Hybrid Spaces due to privatization tendencies.

Rising degree of privatization from 1 to 6. These gradations stands as a step towards the development of Hybrid spaces.

What are the factors leading to Privatization and why?

Giving the awareness of the loss of public space, it is important to inquire the factors contributing to hybridizing processes. To answer this question, the actors behinds the development must be analyzed. Privatization in cities does not just happen, it is promoted and steered. City administrations, local political and administrative representatives held a great part of responsibility for the development of Hybrid spaces. Therefore, it's mandatory to look at the motives and driving forces at the level of local actors in each city.

Two main factors appears:

01-The reduction of local public debt:

The municipalities are focusing on the protection of the political ability to act and strive for success in the competition among cities. By selling the public property, mayors and heads of administration or treasurers are looking after local welfare. Most Municipalities are in critical financial situations, and the privatization of public property can help relieve the budget pressure.

02-Safety:

The design, the publicity and the architecture of safety seems to be a main factor of the most visible developments in privatized spaces. To ensure that the citizens feel protected and to create an impression that the city's development is under control, a local answer of safety, cleanliness and service is seen as an answer to people's demands. According to the world situation of terrorism, refuges, and crimes, the demand for the security seem to be decisive for the citizen's opinion and they are ready to fund it more than other expenses. That why, if a local administration is overwhelmed by the task of providing security and the police's financial resources are insufficient to increase the sense of security, the municipalities are under the risk of being unable to satisfy citizen's expectations. In this case, Privatizing public property as a way of reducing the responsibility for maintaining a safe environment to the new owner is a solution for the municipalities.

| 1.5 Notion of Public Space in Lebanon

Lebanese Cities have very few Public Spaces, in terms of Parks, Squares and Gardens. Public life often happens in the streets.

Post-war Urban Policies have not privileged Public Spaces of encounter and have instead invested in infrastructural equipment and building highways which have led to the consolidation of an urban life style away from public street life. People spend their free time in secure Private environments such as resorts, clubs, shopping centers and Malls, a similar city dominated by Neoliberal Urban Policies and Privatization strategies. Public Parks and Gardens have not been a priority of local urban policies.

Young people in the cities thus have very few freely accessible open spaces they can go to, hang out, socialize and interact within. Those who can afford it, go to private clubs and resorts to play sports and hour out, and to expensive shopping malls to consume and spend their free time. Those who cannot, go the few public spaces available. In Beirut, that would be the seaside corniche, the public beach and the few Parks. Young men also patronize street corners, monitoring the neighborhood, smoking arguileh, playing cards and checking out the passers-by. Cafes and restaurants have become an important destinations for youth who spent a lot of time there, away from their parents and the freedom to smoke, to play...

The city center is privately owned in Beirut, Lebanon. Policed by private security firms, narrowly focused on creating the best conditions to receive maximum returns in Terms of shopping and spending. Through so-called "open malls", such as ABC or Souk Beirut and the city center that can be locked down completely at night, the concept of the civic center has been re-defined in the interests of the capital, essentially becoming a privatized domain governed by its own laws. A key feature of these new "private-public" spaces is the set of rules governing behavior that ensure only certain types of activities and certain types of people will be allowed to join them. Typically in Private-Public Space beggars and the homeless are denied entry by private security, while activities such as skateboarding, smoking or drinking alcohol are banned. Such policies, which overlap with the government's anti-social behavior agenda, come under the banner of "reclaiming the public realm", with proponents arguing that they provide a CLEAN and SAFE environment. Critics on the other hand claim they create sterile, uniform places, which inhibit genuine public access and lack the diversity and particularity of traditional street life, while also displacing social problems into neighboring ghettoized areas of deprivation.

As a concept, public spaces can be traced back at least as far as the ancient Greek Agora. The Agora or Marketplace was the place where citizens came to meet, talk, trade and vote, intertwining the

concept of democracy and citizenship with public space. **But as citizenship rights in ancient Greek democracy were exclusive to free, non-foreign men, and excluded slaves, woman and foreigners**, hence more than half the population were not part of this “public”, and were excluded from the arena for debate. Lack of inclusion, then, as much as citizenship, has characterized the nature of public space from the outset. Access is clearly a key issue, as is the question of who controls the space, determining whom is or is not allowed to use it. Of course, ownership plays a central role in this. Today nearly all so-called public spaces are owned by somebody, be it the crown, government, private organizations, individuals or financial institutions.

Hence is the notion of an open shared arena that belongs to all of us, a neutral container for civic activities, is realistic?

In Lebanon exist 3 Typologies of Public Space:

1-Public Property:

- Any space belonging to a public entity
- Legal Classification
- Zoning Classification DP
- Accessibility and use is determined by the public entity that exercise a dominant force.
- Space and the institutional power are bound and inseparable.

2-Accessible space: Private accessible space | Public accessible space

- Any space organized for a usage that can welcome a specific type of crowd under some explicit rules and regulations.
- Any planned, controlled space by a public entity or a private management.
- These spaces in general have a certain limit that the public can't cross when it comes to the freedom of expressions

3-Spatial Practices:

- Terminology by Abir Saksouk and Marwan Chandour.
- Any space produced by practice and usage.
- Any improvised and informal space where people have no limitations and where the freedom of expression is at a maximum.
- A space that all the elements of an urban entity can come together.

Comparison: Lebanese Notion of a Public Space vs. Common Notion of a Public Space.

Lebanese Notion of a Public Space	Common Notion of a Public Space
<p>A. Public Property A big fraction of the waterfront is privately managed Entrance Fees: Range between 10 & 40 \$/ day Opening Hours: Non accessible at night time and outside of opening hours of the resort. Accessibility: Not accessible to several social classes which encourages the middle and upper classes to frequent these places considered to be Upscale.</p>	<p>A. Public Property Public property is commonly managed by local authorities Entrance Fees: Usually accessible free of charge. Opening Hours: Accessible all the time. Accessibility: Since they are public property then the access to them must be unconditioned and non-selective.</p>

<p>Maintenance: The privatization of the public spaces allows a good maintenance of these spaces, a task that is often disregarded in public.</p>	<p>Maintenance: Unlike Lebanon, the maintenance of public spaces is considered one of the local concerns of local authorities. A significant budget is allocated yearly to maintain these spaces</p>
<p>B. Public Accessible Space Parks, Public Beaches, Riversides, Forests... Scale: These spaces are minimal in size compared to the private part and their existence in cities is rare. Entrance Fees: None Opening Hours: Usually closed at night in order to prevent "immoral acts". Accessibility: The fact that they are accessible for everyone, makes them less frequented by the medium and upper social class. Maintenance: Usually poorly maintained since they are managed by the public sector.</p>	<p>B. Public Accessible Space Parks, Public Beaches, Riversides, Forests... Scale: These spaces constitute a significant part of any modern city since they are its breathing lungs and a space of recreation for people. Entrance Fees: None Opening Hours: Usually closed at night in order to prevent vandalism. Accessibility: Accessible for everyone. Maintenance: Very well maintained by local authorities.</p>
<p>C. Private Accessible Spaces Parking spots, communal spaces, private projects. Type of Activities: Left out pieces of Land are often transformed into parking spots, playgrounds, or even camp sites. Communal spaces owned by religious institutions, are often meeting spots even used during festivities. Entrance Fees: Even though these spaces are privately owned, sometimes people exploit them illegally. Maintenance: Fairly maintained in general Nuisance: People use these spaces with no regard to their surroundings.</p>	<p>C. Private Accessible Spaces Private spots are usually pieces of Land that belong to a certain person or group of people, other people do not have the right to access it, or exploit it. Any illegal activity on a land owned by another person is sanctioned by the law. In Lebanon however, the same theory applies, but in practice there are some exceptions that have become very common.</p>
<p>D. Spatial Practices Sidewalks, Roads, Waterfront etc... Human Presence: Popular amongst Lebanese people: They tend to tame and transform these spaces regardless if they are allowed to or not. Type of Activities: Commerce, Pubs and restaurants, even personal recreation are examples of activities that occupy sidewalks even streets. Opening Hours: All day and all night, activities alternate and the same space can practice countless actions. Nuisance: People use these spaces with no regard to their surroundings, from loud noise at</p>	<p>D. Spatial Practices These practices are common in third world countries, where urban Planning is very unfamiliar. Nevertheless in Europe, we can notice some spatial practices, especially now with the abundance of homeless people in capitals; gypsies and illegal citizens. In Lebanon, the practice of this so-called illegal space is very different because it derives from local people's culture. In Europe, the people rent the sidewalk from the municipality to put</p>

<p>night to inconvenience to pedestrian circulation, practicing the space is a liberating action with no rules or limits.</p>	<p>their tables for example; In Lebanon, the sidewalk is practiced with no regard to Authorities.</p>
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Table 6: Lebanese Notion of Public Space Vs. The common notion of Public space. Source: Chamoun, 2018.

Public Spaces are among formative entities of towns and cities. They attract the interest of social science researchers and urban designers. Therefore, it is in the public interest for researchers and designers to join forces and inform each other so that design public spaces which are appreciated and user-friendly.

It's essential to study the cultural, social background, and the political status quo in order to define the notion of a public space and its applicable rules.

Five Hundred years ago, Shakespeare addressed this inseparable dualist in one his dramas, asking, "What is the City, but the people? True the people are the city."

Leonardo de Vinci, the multitalented thinker, artist, scientist and engineer held that "man is the measure of the Universe".

| 1.6 The importance of the Innovation of Public Spaces in Social Cohesion

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the role of public space to bring about greater social cohesion.

The studies made for Public Spaces has been evolving in the direction of greater understanding of its ability as a structural element of cities. This fact has led many authors, such as Lefebvre (1973), Friedmann (1988), Lynch (1960), to consider that **THE CITY IS THE PUBLIC SPACE.**

Hence, the public spaces are considered now as an important factor in economic, social and environmental issues. Therefore, the Public Spaces plays a fundamental role in the urban structure and city life, and it's becoming a privileged element in order to promote Social Cohesion. That's why, planning and designing public spaces are evolving to find such solutions for the structural problems of the urban patterns.

This paper aims to reinforce the importance of knowing the public spaces of Beirut, enabling planning, programming and designing public spaces in a logic of an integrated network, intending to contribute to the territorial cohesion of the city.

What do we mean by Social Cohesion?

According to Danielle Gris (2010), Social Cohesion is the binding force that brings people together in a neighborhood, especially in a context of diversity. It also refers to how intensely people feel connected to a city, and the degree to which the diversified community members share their experiences, identities, and value with each other.

Why Public spaces are important to the urban development?

Briefly put, the general opinion about public spaces, is that are an essential ingredient to the sustainability of cities for political, social, economic and public health reasons. We use them, on a

daily basis, and consequently they contribute to our general wellbeing. Public space plays a crucial role in facilitating community interaction within a neighborhood.

As mentioned before, in urban planning, public spaces has historically been describes as an open space, meaning the streets, parks, recreation areas, plazas and other outdoor spaces. This paper is only analyzing 2 kinds, gardens and squares.

The squares and gardens play an important role in a life of a city as a gathering point, a shared space and a place where the local community feels it has a sense of belonging to.

According to United Nations Human settlements, global indicators of segregation: class, race, gender, religion and ethnicity seem to show a worldwide growing separateness of different categories of the population. Today, for a huge number of planners, Public Space appears as an important tool to alleviate and medicate these ills, while at the same time addressing emerging issues such as the imperative sustainable development and social justice.

A great Public space cannot be measured by just its physical attributes, instead the function and the location of public space should be put ahead of its form. The community should be the source of inspiration of Public Spaces so that citizens feel it as their own.

"Cities have always been the meeting point of different population". (Aristotle, 1992)

Usually the major public spaces of the city have always had an important significance. They are used to attract investors and tourists. At times, these places are seen as nodes for social cohesion, they bring different people together. That's why, many appear to connect their investment in public spaces clearly to city marketing, intending to remodel their cities as a desirable destination where firms can relocate and tourists visit.

Improving Public Spaces can improve the actual condition of life in their neighborhoods, while injecting a sense of hope and better image in the eyes of residents and the outside world. Free expansion can be a significant asset for such diverse population.

In European cities, the public spaces are considered as the major elements. They have always received much attention and investment, emblazed with artworks, events and perceived as Landmarks in Europe's social life. They are considered a catalyst for change. Its significance for social cohesion and economic competitiveness is well understood.

In the following, the research of some examples as Toronto, Berlin, England and Dublin will show that the attention given to public spaces can be a catalyst for change, through actions initiated by residents, as well as by public authorities and private sectors.

Toronto, is the best example to show how social cohesion is achieved through unique urban planning. It is one of the world's most diverse cities, knowing that half of its population was born outside Canada. After War World II, numerous waves of immigrant flew into the city which led to a diversified community. 153 languages and dialects is spoken, Toronto is seen as mosaic where cultures are distinct from another. The city succeeded in creating social cohesion through its clearly defined, contemporary mixed use public spaces, such as Nathan Philips Square.

Nathan Philips Square is situated in front of Toronto city hall, located in a constantly evolving neighborhood. It had successfully create a social cohesion between local downtown residential communities, and tourists of all different culture, by creating a place where people partakes simultaneously in a variety of activities. The square hosts small and large scale activities and events

such as concerts, art displays, a weekly market and many other public events. Flexibility of the square is crucial, in the summer locals and tourists around the pool, and during the winter, it is used as skating rink. An arches stretches over the reflecting pond under the names "Freedom arches", and a piece of Berlin Wall lays at the base of the center arch. The Citizens of Toronto dedicated these arches to millions who struggled to gain and defend freedom, and may who suffered and died for the lack of it. In the Middle of the square, the Peace Garden is located, to prove the commitment of the Torontonians to the principle of world peace. Beneath the square, an underground parking is conceived with space for 24 hundred cars. The functional mixed-use public space is bringing the residents and tourists for small, large events while also uniting them in a spiritual way through its symbolic monuments. **To sum it up, a successful neighborhood is where people are brought together and feel a sense of belonging to.**

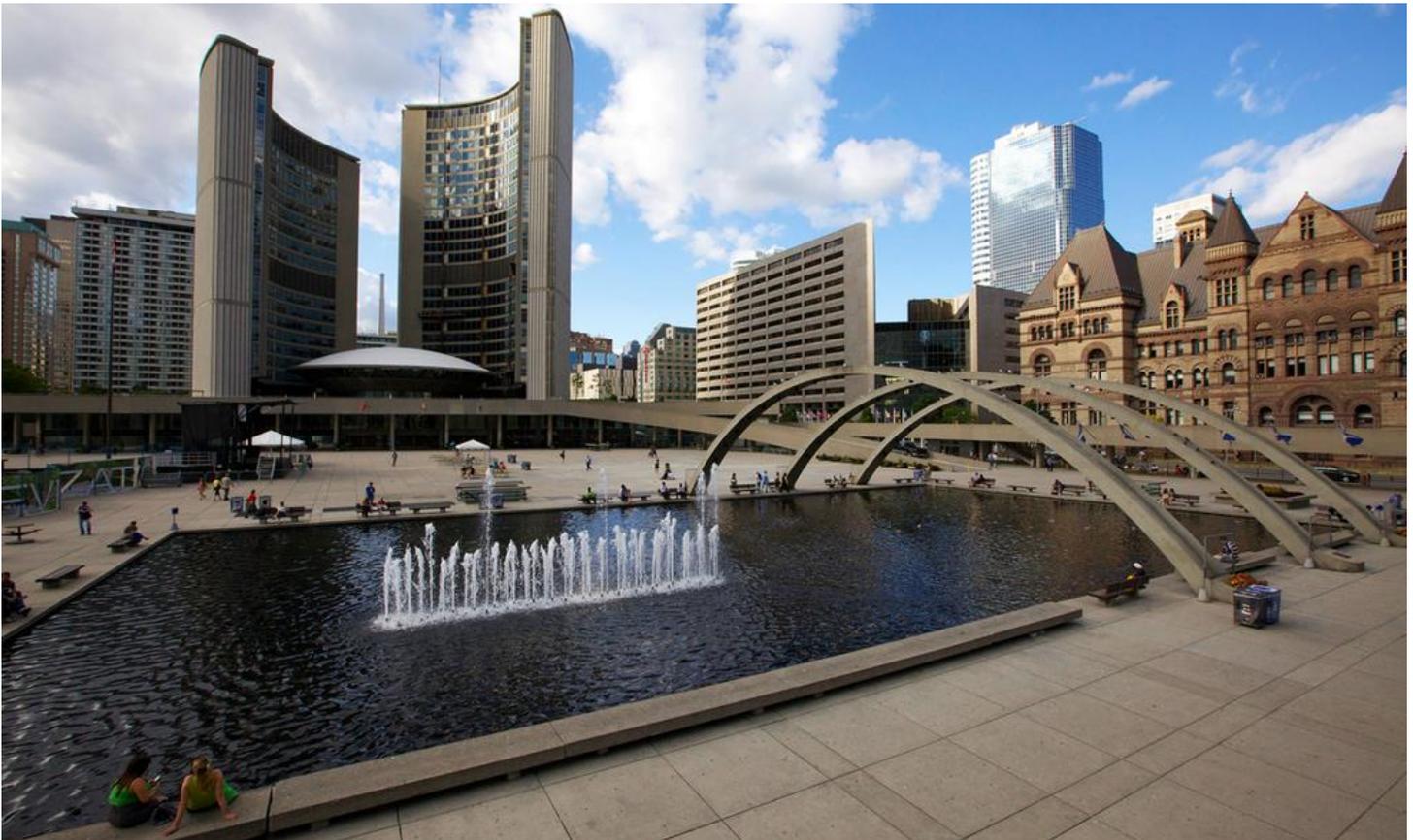


Figure 8: Nathan Philip Square, Toronto. Source: Pinterest.com

In Berlin, to re-integrate the divided city, central public spaces as Potsdamer Platz was the focus of attention. Public Spaces was promoted by some as a vehicle of social integration. Potsdamer Platz is meant to heal the wounds of the dividing line that was imposed on the city for decades.

The square get his name from the gate that stood on the main road from Berlin to Potsdam. In 1924, the cultural elite met in the cafés and restaurants around the square, it was a meeting point for the citizens, full of life. During the Second World War, the square was left devastated, it was the point where the Soviet, British and American met. It was divided by the Wall. 40 years neglected, a wasteland between the east and the west. After reunification, the idea was to build a complete new district in the center of the city. The concept was based on the European city model, which refused the dense concentrations of high rise buildings. The buildings were designed by international architects, well known, such as Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers and Arata Isozaki. In only 5 years, the rebirth of Potsdamer Platz was complete, the destroyed site was transformed from nothing into a

new urban center. Even though, you can still take a trip back in time to experience the disastrous war through a QR code, digital cobblestone laid on the ground, with historical panorama views. A metal strip laid also on the ground marks the route of the Berlin Wall.

Taking care of public spaces by authorities, communities, private sectors and others can improve the quality of Environment for local residents.

In 2003 Coventry, England, some refugees start to use the only open public space in the area, the football park. The local young people, who had played football there for all their lives, considered this as an intrusion. This is a typical case of competition for use of public space, which led to several fights around the use of the park.

A local man decided to create a football team from the refugees, and he was able to persuade some local residents to join the team. The ability of the two groups to play together enabled them to accept each other and to come to better terms with each other. Now, their football team is strong to defeat an established local team.

The Participation of the residents in public space maintenance and management is proved to be a way to improve the physical environment and develop the social capital in the area

In Dublin, the public spaces improvement combine environmental improvement with job creation for the local population. Saint Teresa's gardens is a small high density flats complex located in the south-west of Dublin city, is suffering from years of neglect with the public investment in infrastructure. The environmental regeneration of the estate, becomes an under sourced, fragmented and isolated community.

In 1999, since its establishment, the project has been impacting significantly upon the local residents through improving the quality of life of the tenants in physical, social and economic terms and creating sustainable jobs for local people. The jobs given, helped in improving the physical conditions of the area. Hence, an estate management agreement has been signed between Dublin City Council and the residents of Saint Teresa's gardens. The agreement includes issues as maintenance of the flats and the complex, future development, etc... Since then, a massive decreasing in anti-social behavior, vandalism and drug dealing was remarked, plus the level of unemployment was also down.

Public spaces can be used to bring people together in order to improve their quality of life and to project a positive image for its residents.

The group activities, events and public celebrations have an excellent way to promote social integration and to defeat stigma. By setting up events that can bring the people together, a better image of the city will be projected. That is the case in Walker, Newcastle, with the summer festivals in the park and the Jubilee celebrations in the streets. In Osteraum, Wuppertal, a staircase connects the neighborhood to the city center. Usually the stairs are considered dirty and dangerous. An artist came by an idea to illuminate the Platz and the stairs by candles once per year, to show that these areas can be enjoyed as public spaces. This gesture had a big impact on the people which pushed the institutions, professionals and residents, to work together, hence a sense of community development was created.

Briefly, these cases show that the ability of how to use a public space in new ways and to mobilize people around their use, can bring some change in the social life of a neighborhood. The challenge usually is found in poor neighborhoods, where open public spaces is limited like other resources. The only solution to use these limited resources peacefully together is an organized framework that help the citizens mobilize their resources. By nature, the public space is neutral, which is useful; in

allowing different activities to take place. Hence, the neutrality needs an extra frameworks to allow for a shared use of its space when conflict of interest arises.

The essential and the main quality of space is its ACCESSIBILITY, the more open and unconditional the access, the more public it becomes. The openness of a space should include physical as well as social accessibility, access to the place and the activities. Without free and open access, a public space is not quite public. Of course this open access will create a tensions between those who tend to use it more and the rest of the population, the conflict of interest and use should be managed; that's another issue, which should be elaborated in a later thesis. But we can mention shortly, that involving the residents themselves to sort of these problems with the support of a framework could be a solution.

To ensure that public spaces are well used and well looked after, it's a must to involve the local residents in the process of shaping the conditions of life in the neighborhood, which can lead somehow to a sense of ownership in the community. The creation of a sense of attachment to the area is a key node to ensure the continuity of an environmental care and quality.

Therefore, public space can only be improved through developing partnerships with stakeholders varying from public, private and voluntary sector, as well as the local residents.

| 1.7 Conclusion

Public Spaces envelop a wide array of spaces, from old historic centers and plazas to suburban developments. Their use, form and maintenance raise a lot of questions regarding urban planning from the local to the metropolitan scale. Today, they are considered as assets for urban renewal, new developments, public health, wellbeing, mobility, conviviality, the city image and the sustainability.

The concept of social cohesion is related to the notion of sustainability. This concept is associated to management of time and space. The term sustainability is linked not only to the reduction of carbon emissions, but also to economic factors and social factors seeking to promote social inclusion. In addition, there is a physical, functional factor related to urban form, such as the continuity of space, targeting that all spaces are easily accessible, and permeability which promote a better understanding of the area and its functions, facilitating people circulation and allowing a necessary links to the proper functioning of the urban network.

Therefore, in order to contribute to social cohesion, the planning of the public spaces network should be based on 4 types of indicators:

1-Mobility, Accessibility and Connectivity:

Connecting the different public spaces and make an easy access for the citizens. Not to forget, the importance of following the existing network such as roads, pedestrian circulation, in order to allow an easy access to the entire urban tissue, eliminating all kind of barriers.

2-Land Uses and Activities:

Creating a multifunctional public spaces is an asset for the urban network, ranging from commerce and services to facilities such as recreational activities.

3-Social Dynamics:

The generation of social dynamics between public spaces and the activities available, promote the arising of urban experience which is capable of minimizing the phenomena of social exclusion and marginalization.

4-Comfort and Safety:

Promotion of safety and comfort conditions in all modes of movements such as roads, cycling, etc... will contribute to the success of the socio-economic dynamics generated.

Through this indicators, it is possible to analyze and evaluate the Open Public Spaces as a part of a coherent and cohesive network in the area.

To sum it up, the need and the success of public space is before anything else predetermined by its ability to join together two main and necessary quality upon which all the rest depends: ACCESSIBILITY and COMMUNICATION.

Chapter Two: Introducing Beirut

| 1.1 Beirut, the City and the People: Post-War

1.1.1 Introduction

According to Aristotle:

"A city is composed by different kinds of man: Similar People cannot bring a city into existence".

Beirut, the capital and the largest city in Lebanon, survived a decade and a half of conflict, taken over multiple times, destroyed and rebuilt, has earned by that the right to be called "The City that would Not Die".

It is located on the Mediterranean coast at the foot of Lebanon's mountains. The city sits atop two hills, Achrafieh at East Beirut and Al-Musaytibah at West Beirut. It enjoys a Mediterranean climate that is mild and temperate in winter and hot and humid in summer.

Beirut's history dates back to more than 5,000 years. The city has evolved under the reign and influence of many civilizations, including Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arab and Ottomans. Not to forget the huge impact of The French Colonization on the planning of the city. This rich and diversified history is a privilege and a setback for the Lebanese people. In a country that has witnessed one occupation after another and countless clashes of civilizations, the Lebanese constantly struggle with the question of identity. This reality breeds a constant debate and adoption of new ideologies and values. In that, we can notice the French influence in every facet of Lebanese culture. At the time, Beirut was at the center of political discourse and intellectual endeavors. Even after the independence of Lebanon, the city didn't lose the cultural renaissance within the masses.

The fusion of East and West, of tradition and modernity gave the Lebanese capital the nickname of "The Paris of the middle-east".

Before 1975, Beirut was considered the most westernized city in the Arab middle-east. It retains basically Liberal and tolerant way of life.

War-torn and tired, the people of Beirut show they can turn tragedy into cultural innovation.



Figure 9: Beirut Pre-War Martyr's Square. Source: Habeeb.com

1.1.2 Historical Background

A short Chronological overview of the history of Beirut will be briefly discussed, to give an insight into the significance of the Place through time.

Pre-War:

Beirut has always had a cosmopolitan character with close connections across the Mediterranean Sea. The First settlers in Beirut were the Canaanites 4000 BCE known as Phoenicians by the Greeks. In 15 BCE, the city was founded under the reign of the Roman Empire, and got destroyed due to an earthquake in 500's CE. In 635 CE Beirut was occupied by the Arabs, and then in 1110 CE conquered by the Crusaders who were driven out in 1291 CE by the Mamelouks.

During the 1500s, the city came under the Ottoman's rule, it was considered a province and important place to trade, it was fortified in the 17th century before the Ottomans took rule again in 1763 till 1920.



Figure 10: The busy port in Beirut in the 1800's. Source: Gyldendal, 2014

In the 18th century, Beirut was carving out a name of itself as a major port and hub for commercial activities, among the help of the European's Power.

In 1860s, a conflict occurred as result of religious conflicts and changes in the political system, and this sowed the seeds for future conflict. After the end of the World War I, the country went under the French Mandate. In 1943 Lebanon gained its independence and Beirut was elected as the capital of the country in 1946. The city became a center for financial and banking activity for the oil countries. It represents the political and commercial center of the Middle-east, it attracts Arabs as well as European tourists. Unfortunately all this came to an end during the 1970s.

During The Lebanese Civil War: 1975-1991

As mentioned before, the Beirut's Population as well as the rest of Lebanon, consists of several ethnic and religious groups as well as political differences, which ignited a Civil war between Christian, Muslim by the arrival of the Palestinian refugees in April of 1975, after the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. Many Palestinian refugees settle in the South of Beirut, where they still live today. The city was split between Eastern part and Western part, Christian and Muslim by a physical line called the Green line or Demarcation Line. It functioned as a completely closed border during long periods, passed through the old city center, "Place de Marty's" which was completely ruined.



Figure 11: Beirut Demarcation line. Source: Eshter CharleWorth

According to Eshter CharleWorth:

"The sectarian division in Beirut rapidly increased as residents in formerly mixed neighborhoods moved to be on the appropriate side of the Green line. For example, the number of Muslim living in Christian East Beirut who had made up 40% of the 1975 population, dropped to just 5% of the 1989 population. A similar redistribution occurred in West Beirut, where the Christian population dropped from 35% of the total in 1875 to 5% in 1989"

In 1982, Israel occupied the city and led to a massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps Sabra and Shatila. Thereupon, the poor suburbs in south Beirut became an Islamic home power for the future Militia Group Hezbollah.

In 1976 the Syrian government stepped into the Lebanese territory to gain control over its citizen, by sending troops to give aid. Which led to the Al-Taiif agreement in 1989 who brought peace to Beirut under the supervision of Syria. The Syrians occupied Lebanon for 25 years coming to an end on April 26, 2005 by the Cedar Revolution who created a kind of temporary optimism for the citizens.

The city was ruled area by area, by militias loyal to one or other factions. Beirut suffered significant damage. The Lebanese civil war last too long, 15 years of internal conflicts. Approximately 150 000 people were killed, 300 000 were wounded, 700 000 were displaced and at least 1 million people emigrated permanently. By 1990 one third of the population had left the country.



Figure 12: A scene in Beirut during the Civil War. Source: Unknown

Lebanon's economy was burdened by high unemployment, a devalued currency and high inflation.

The old city center of Beirut, the Martyr's square was the most severely damaged area.



Figure 13: Martyr's square before and after the war. Source: Habeeb.com

This led to a fragmented population along sectarian lines. A particularly significant aspect of the destruction of the old city center was the destruction of the souks, a cosmopolitan market that had been shared by members of all faiths and sects before the war.

Post-War:

By the end of the war, the Lebanese Government launched an extensive and ambitious plan for the reconstruction of the city, and into creating an artificial peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea. The people want to bring back the prosperous and cultural image of yesterday. However, dark times continue to be seen in the area, including 2006 Lebanon war, the assassination of Rafic Hariri, the subsequent Cedar revolution, and bombings, slowed down the development.

Ramifications from the Lebanese civil war, from the occupation of Syria and from Syria's own civil war in 2012, are still being felt to this day with the Lebanese government and population.

Beirut is now in the process of recovery, it has made attempts to rebuild and to bring together its divided population, continuous wars and bombings have come a threat to the city. It will take many years to complete the rebuilding program and to fully restore the infrastructure of the city.

Certainly the title given to Beirut as Paris of the middle-east is gone for the moment. What re-emerges in its place, will remain to be seen. Lastly, the transition in Beirut, from a culture of war based on extreme sectarian, ethnics and religious ruptures to city based on reconciliation, will not be persuaded by the Politicians who are governing the country. The government focused on repairing the physical infrastructure and rebuilding the city. But the challenge of reconstruction was to find a strategy to bind together the complex issues of multi confessional society of 18 identifiable religious groups, and to fix the financial stability even though the current situation in the neighborhood is not stable.

Many accounts of the Lebanese civil war describe the actual fighting that everyone fought everyone, not just Christians fighting Muslims. There was internal Christians fighting's, Muslim fighting, Shi'a fighting, Intra Shia's-Druze fighting as well as Palestinians and Druze fighting Christians...and so on.

"One off the most profound consequences of the war has been the redrawing of Lebanon's social geography, the most rudimentary social ties which normally cement a society together, ties of trust, loyalty, compassion, decency, which have been in many respects, grievously eroded. It is easier to state than to reassemble a society. (Khalaf, 1993, p.17)

1.1.3 Demographic

Lebanon has witnessed a rapid and uncontrolled urban growth and sprawl over the year, causing an increasing in the construction especially in the coastal zone (Beirut-Jounieh...), where the majority of the Lebanese population resides, contributing to the uncontrolled urban expansion. Beirut contains approximately the half of the population.

It is mandatory to mention, that the Lebanese community living abroad consists of approximately 15 million people, almost 4 times the Lebanese population living in the homeland. No recent population census have been done since the 1930s. Because of that, the population number are estimated and vary depending upon the source. The future growth of Beirut's population is difficult to predict due to the absence of an accurate date.

	Population	Growth Rate (%)	Rate Growth	
2030	2437	0.038347	90	According to the latest version of UN World Urbanization Prospects estimation, Beirut's 2018 population estimation is estimated at 2,272,000.[more than one million to slightly two million].
2025	2347	0.042185	95	
2020	2252	-0.0088	-20	
2018	2272	0.020665	46	
2015	2226	0.118593	236	
2010	1990	0.119865	213	In 1950, the population was 322,000. The city has grown by 46 000 from 2015 to 2018, which represents a 2.07% change. These estimates represent the Urban agglomeration of Beirut, which includes also Beirut's population in addition to adjacent suburban areas.
2005	1777	0.195024	290	
2000	1487	0.172713	219	
1995	1268	-0.01933	-25	
1990	1293	-0.18423	-292	
1985	1585	-0.02341	-38	
1980	1623	0.082	123	
1975	1500	0.625135	577	
1970	923	0.259209	190	
1965	733	0.306595	172	
1960	561	0.32	136	
1955	425	0.319876	103	
1950	322	0	0	

Table 7: Beirut Population data, urban area,

Source UN World Urbanization Prospects

Lebanon is the most religiously diverse country in the middle-east. 99% of the population of Lebanon includes numerous Christian and Muslim sects. The religious partition and the religious balance is a

very sensitive political issue in the country, therefore as mentioned before a national census has not been conducted since 1932 and numbers are unknown and difficult to track. The only recent statistics (post-war) available are estimates on a study made by a private organization.

Based on a 2012 study made by private research firm, the population of Lebanon of approximately 4.3 million is estimated to be: 54% Muslim [27% Shia, 27% Sunni], 40.5 % Christian [21% Maronite Catholic, 8% Greek Orthodox, 5% Melkite Catholic, 1% Protestant, 5.5% other Christian], 5.6% Druze and very small numbers of Jews, Buddhists, Hindus and Mormons.

The present Lebanese Constitution officially acknowledges 18 religious groups: 12 Christians, 4 Muslims, 1 Druze and 1 Jewish. The religious diversity of the country is seen and its reflected in the legislative power of the state, within 128 members of the National Assembly. The seats are divided equally between Christians and Muslims.

In Beirut, there are nine major religious communities: Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Sunni Muslim, Shiite Muslim, Druze, Armenian Apostolic, Armenian Catholic and Protestant. According to the government, the resident population in Beirut is more or less evenly divided between Christians and Muslims. In the absence of reliable statistics, this supposition have never been possible to verify.

The city was fairly well blended until the civil war, when segregation occurred. A demarcation line emerges separate Beirut between East and West. The Eastern side of the city is mainly Christian, while the Western side has a Sunni Muslim majority. In recent years, the religious groups are becoming more integrated.

Outside and on the outskirts of the city, large refugee camps are located, housing refugees from the Arab-Israeli wars and now from the ongoing wars in Syria.



Figure 14: Palestinian Camp in Beirut-Burj Al barajine. Source: benrubigalle

There exist 12 Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, which 448,559 are registered. We have: Bourj el Brajneh in Beirut, Ain al-Hilweh in the South, El buss in the south, Nahr el bared in the north, Shatila in the south, Wafel in Baalebek, Mar Elias in Beirut, Mieh-mieh in Sidon, Biddawhi in the North, Burj Lshemlai in Tyre, Dbayeh in Matm and Rashidieh in Tyre. Two camps of 12 are located in Beirut, approximately 18,607 Inhabitants. As shown in the picture above, the reality of the Palestinian refugee camp type in Beirut. Extreme density, dark and narrow alleyways.

In 2012 Lebanon welcomed more than 1.2 million Syrian refugees registered with UNCHR till the end of 2015, and much more are present but without registration. As the Lebanese Government has not permitted the establishment of formal camps, many Syrians remain dispersed all over the six districts. Since March 2012, the number of people residing in Lebanon has increased by at least 30%. Today 1 in 4 is a refugee in Lebanon.

After 4 years, since the start of the Syrian revolution, keeping aside the humanitarian impact of the Syrian's refugee in Lebanon, the country is facing other consequences such as: The Demographic Impact, The Economic; Development Impact and The Security | Political Impact.



Figure 15: Syrians refugees in Beirut- Source: © REUTERS/ Mohamed Azaki

The official language is Lebanese Arabic, but because of the French Mandate, almost 40% of Lebanese community are considered Francophone. 70% of Lebanese secondary school use French as a second language, and the 30% use English. Many Lebanese speak a patois, kind of combination of these languages, most commonly an Arabic-French mixture. In fact, all Lebanese are bilingual.

1.1.4 Economic Practices

Lebanon is known for his competitive, free market regime and a strong “laissez-faire” commercial tradition. Private property is widely common and encouraged, while the government owns most public services. The Lebanese economy is service-oriented (which has been the largest employer before and after the war), the two main growth sectors include banking and tourism. The Government does not restrict foreign investments. The investment climate suffers from red tape, corruption and high taxes.

In order to have a brief review over the economic history in Lebanon, we can distinguish three phases, regulated by the Civil War. The first phase, The Pre-War economy, which was known as the prosperous phase of Lebanon. As mentioned before, Lebanon represented an economic hub for the region. The War economy, which seriously damaged the economic infrastructure of the country, loss of human and physical activity. Finally, the Post-War economy know also by the reconstruction phase. An effort was made to rebuild the physical and financial infrastructure by borrowing heavily from domestic banks which saddled the government with a huge debt burden. Chronic fiscal deficit have increased Lebanon’s debt to GDP ratio, the third highest in the world, most of the debt is held internally by Lebanese banks.

The Pre-War Economy:

Since 1943, the independence, Lebanon has adopted a liberal economic system that allowed the private sector a freedom of initiative in the economic field, including financial and monetary aspects, with no restrictions imposed on currency transfers and external trade. This trade gave Lebanon a comparative advantage in the region, and enable it to attract Arab and foreign capital and investment, which helped to transform Beirut into an important regional trade and financial center, and allowed to its banks to create an important share of the deposits by the Arabs, especially from the oil revenues of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

The prosperous economic period of Lebanon in the late 1960 and early 1970, is mainly due in using adequately its human (Lebanon embraces the most highly educated population outside the most industrialized countries, and the existence of a diversified and advanced universities system serving the whole region), institutional and geographical resources and location (Lebanon’s geographical location, with a coastline open to the West at the cross roads of three continents, established an advantage for the transit of goods) to benefit from the rapidly expanding wealth of the Oil-rich Arab regions countries. The GDP per capita in 1974 was 2 980 Lebanese Pound (1279 US\$).

The War Economy:

In 1975, the broke out of the war has been noted as a devastating impact on the economy. More than 5% of the population died, 10% wounded and a huge number of immigration out of Lebanon gravely reduced the human capital in the country which was an essential part of its previous development.

Estimations reclaims that more than 200,000 professionals and skilled laborers emigrated to build their career outside the country. The United Nations estimations values the destruction of public infrastructure, buildings and the communication networks as \$25 Billion. In fact the actual damage was certainly larger. Lebanon missed most of the potential benefits and opportunities from the booming of the oil in the mid-seventies to the early eighties. It lost also most of the foreign

companies doing business in the area and lost its role as the regional business capital. In 1990, at the end of the war, real GDP was at 33 % of its 1974 level of \$35 Billion.

The Post-War Economy:

The main economic plan of the Government after the end of the war can be summarized by the following objectives:

First, achieving Political and Fiscal stability in favor of restoring the credibility of Lebanon and confidence in its economy. Second, the reconstruction of the public infrastructure of roads and communications. Plus to the strengthening of the public intuitions and administrations which are a major requirements for the growth in business activity. Third and last, attracting foreign financing and investments and reestablishment of Beirut as a modern and financial center for regional businesses and tourism. The governments has developed many plans aimed at achieving these goals. The most important sign of the regained stability in the Lebanese economy is the recent reversal of the slide in the value of the Lebanese pound against the dollar and of the dollarization of the economy. After reaching a very low value against the dollar at the end of 1992, the Lebanese pound has been steadily appreciating since. ...then.

An increased discipline in the controlling of the fiscal deficit has been requested by the World Bank and the IMF as a condition for increased loans to Lebanon.

Tourism has started to pick up again. Major hotels have been reopening in Beirut and plans for the expansion of capacity are being implemented.

Construction and general trade received more than 66% of all banking loans to the private sector. On the socio-economic side, the issue of unemployment wages and the distribution of income are the most important.

In the real estate sector developers are whinnying about the empty apartments for sale, but prices are steady. The only booming industries in this city seems to be cafes, restaurants, hair salons... Lebanese people are depending on 3 or 4 good summer month, when Arab tourist flock to the country's hotel, mountains, hospitals and when the Lebanese immigrants return home for the annual family visit. The stress on weak public institutions and finances as a result of Syrian refugee flows into Lebanon pushes more and more people into unemployment and poverty. Lebanon's unemployment crisis, have a rate of 34%. But there is more than just external causes behind the current crisis in Lebanon. It's also due to the postwar neoliberal policies, the same policies that less than a decade ago wreaked havoc in the global economy: Post-war wages in Lebanon were intentionally repressed despite steady price increases, tax structures and the state's fiscal policies are designated to benefit economic cartes, holdings, and off shore companies.

The collapse of public services, such as electricity, water supply and the recent garbage crisis led to sizable popular demonstration. Lebanon continues to face enormous challenges emanating from Syria's war, by hosting the largest assembly of Syrians refugees in proportion to the population. 1.5 million registered in 2011 till present, increased internal tension and slowed the economic growth to 1-2% range in 2011-2016 after 4 years of averaging 8% growth.

According to a study made by Credit Suisse in 2014, 0,3% of the Lebanese own 50% of Lebanon. Gentrification in Beirut has taken place during the post-war reconstruction of the city. According to Eric Clark, Gentrification is a socio-spatial urban transformation with the context of the law, it fosters within legality in-line with laws and regulations.

In Beirut gentrification of the post-war consist of two components. The production of an upgraded space through capital investment and the change in population of land-users. Hence, we can notice the residential gentrification which consist of demolishing its old buildings and the construction of up-scale high-rises. Gentrifies are usually divided in three categories: The Lebanese expats, The Lebanese High-class and Gulf National.

1.1.5 Beirut Administration Divisions & Main law in terms of development and Urbanism

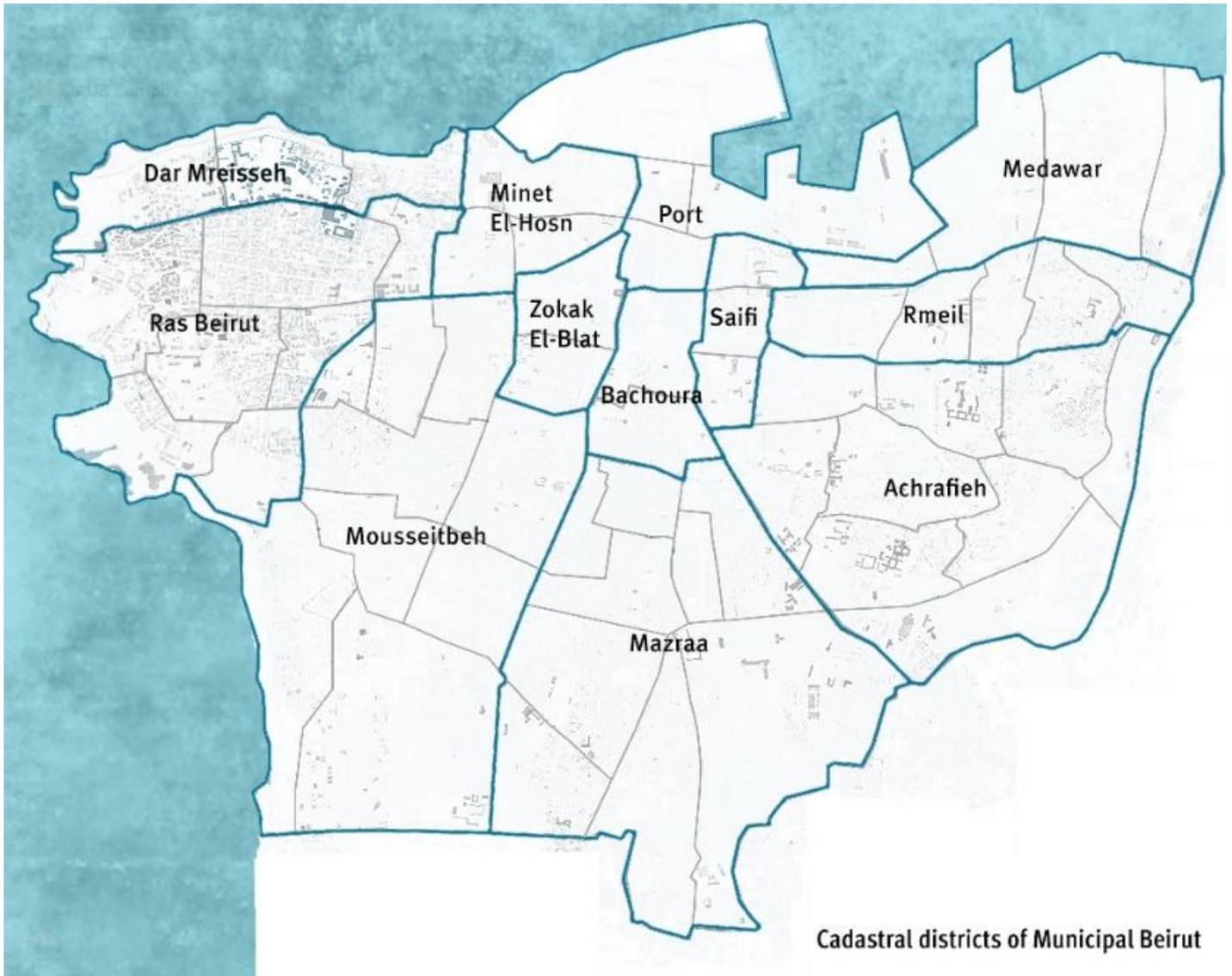


Figure 16: Beirut Administrative divisions. Source: Unknown

Beirut cover an Area of approximately 20km². The city is considered one of the six governorates of Lebanon.(mouhafaza). The city is divided into electoral districts and quarter, called locally "mahallat" and "manatik". Officially the city is composed of 12 Mahallat or districts as shown above: Acharfieh, Bachoura, Dar el Mreisseh, Marfa', Mazraa, Medawar, Minet El Hosn, Msaytbeh, Ras Beirut, Rmeil, Saifi and Zokak El Blat. And its composed alos with 60 Quarters or Manatik, each with a name and a number. The quarters are aslo called sectors because they were created during the French Mandate in 1920-1946.Planning in Lebanon is executed in a highly centralized manner due to the various planning actors; Many ad-hoc developments; and the primacy of the real-estate sector and the most important factor is the influence of Politics.

They exist tools in Lebanon to regulate planning, such as the National Physical Master Plan for the Lebanese Territories from 2005. Unfortunately, the master plans and the building codes planning does not respond to the Territorial specificities; urban disparities and to the latest impact of the Syrian crisis.

Lebanon has a list of national actors who are concerned with urban planning, yet state policies in this sector remain minimal.

1. The local authorities [municipalities and unions of municipalities]
2. The Directorate General of Urbanism [DGU]
3. The Higher Council for Urban Planning [HCUP]
4. The Council for Development and Reconstruction [CDR]
5. Other sector ministries

To understand how the urban planning works in Lebanon, the 4 types of professional cultures who are in charge of the decisions of the planning in the country, and which are defined by the combination of the 3 elements [Profile-Control-References] are listed below:

1-State-controlled culture.

The government is the legal authority, she defines the general interest and she is the principal leader of the studies. The urban planner is considered as experts.

2-Neoliberal culture.

A private organization [real estate Company] is in charge. The urban planner is considered a consultant to this private customer.

3-The Municipal culture.

The municipalities are being part of the progressive development of local planning. This type of planning culture is becoming more popular in Lebanon.

The role of municipal urban planners lies in understanding the political control and decoding the social needs, then interpreting them into urban projects. The municipalities suffer from a lack of human and financial resources, few of them are relying on the commitment of local politicians.

4-Participative culture.

The citizens want to participate in the planning of their city after the civil war [many protests over the project for the downtown area of Beirut-conflicts over heritage- conflicts over environmental matters...]. The interest of the citizens in urban issue and their willingness to getting organized and influence urban projects are noteworthy. The groups which emerged the action of the public collectivity include planning professional often young, committed the new idea, promoting the democratic decision. Urban planners are considered here as intermediates attending to the interest of the citizens and the promotion of new values.

1.1.6 Short History about the Planning in Beirut

Pre-War Master Plans:

Under the Ottoman Empire and the French Mandate, the growth of Beirut city was planned, but after independence in 1943, it was rapid and it was haphazard. It is estimated that the Population of the capital highly increased between the early 1930s and early 1970s, the city's area grew to three times the size it had been in 1900. In 1975-1990 most traces of the old city were destroyed under the civil war. When the war ended in 1990, massive divisions arose between Christian and Muslim sides of the plans for reconstructing the Old city. For that reason, the progress of reconstructions has been slow.

Based on "Architects without Frontiers: War, reconstructions and design responsibility", a book written by Esther Charlesworth in which she briefly explained the Major Plans that influenced the actual formation of creation of Beirut .

There are listed below:

- 1- The Danger plan in 1932 under the French Mandate by the French consulting firm of "Frères Danger". The plan includes major circulation routes, zoning densities, street wall regulations and Public open space. It was mainly characterized by the traffic circulation and the transport which was reflected in a high level of regional understanding of how to connect the capital Beirut to its secondary regional centers: Tripoli, Sidon and Damascus.
- 2- The Ecochard Master plan in 1943 for the Beirut city which was made after the independence of Lebanon from the French mandate in 1943. Back then, the city was experiencing a high level of economic prosperity. The Ecochard plan was limited in its applicability. It was primarily concentrated on zoning controls without developing the urban regulations.

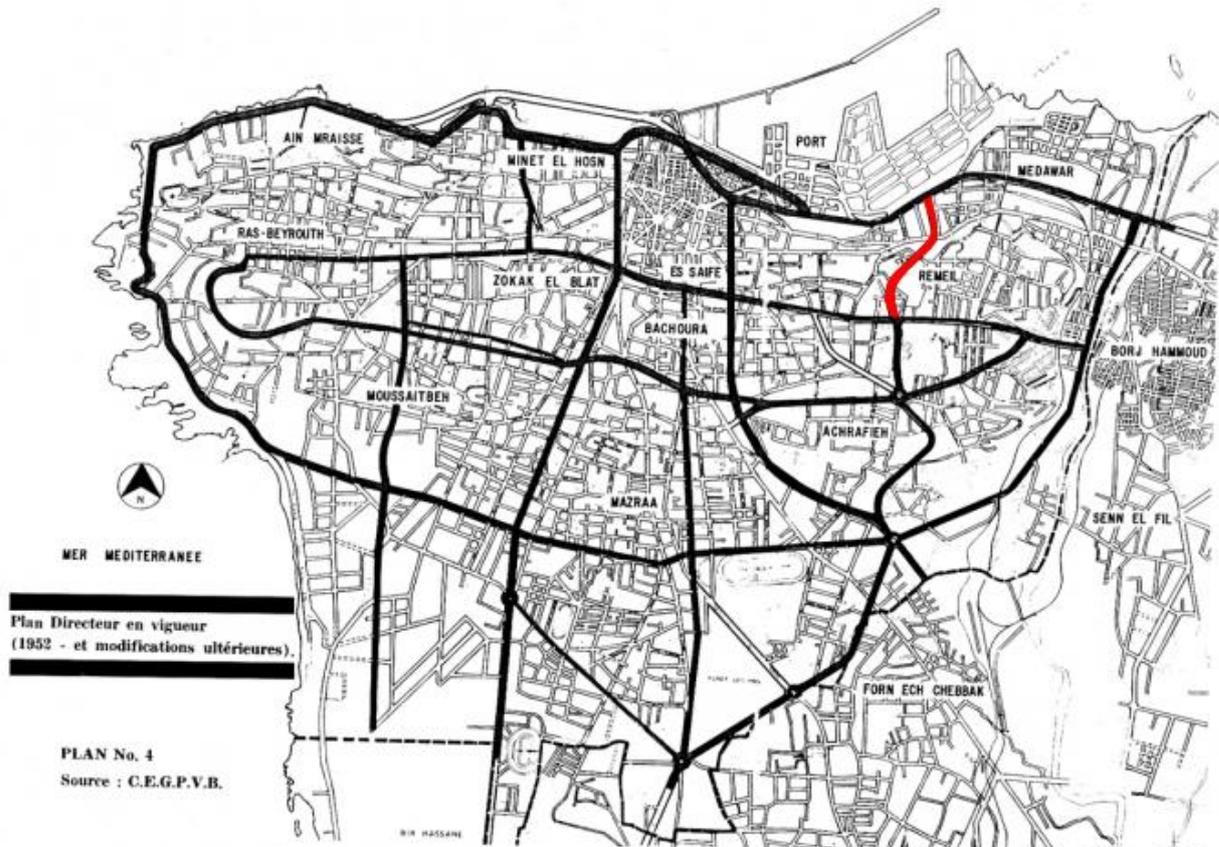


Figure 17: The Ecochard master plan from 1952, showing the expressway grid in red. Aga Khan Trust for Culture

- 3- The General Master Plan in 1952 based upon a plan by the French planner Egli, under the Shihab political ear of 1958-1967 which was a prosperous time for Lebanon. It is recognized as the only legal planning strategy who is still governing Beirut. The plan envisaged new transportation hubs to control future population mobility and the decentralization. The main purpose was to develop a modern Lebanese society with Beirut, the epicenter of trade and culture in the Arab world.
- 4- The "Plan directoire Beyrouth et ses Banlieux" in 1964 who was also made by the French planner Ecochard. It was mainly an effort to deal with the spreading urbanization on Beirut's periphery. He wanted to build Healthy city next to and Ailing city, the plan was never restrictive in terms of curbing building development, it was limited to the projects that were not materialized. The plan coincide with the creation of the General directorate of Urban Planning. Ecochard cautioned against over construction and the imminent destruction of the environment, ironically two issues that now beset contemporary Beirut.

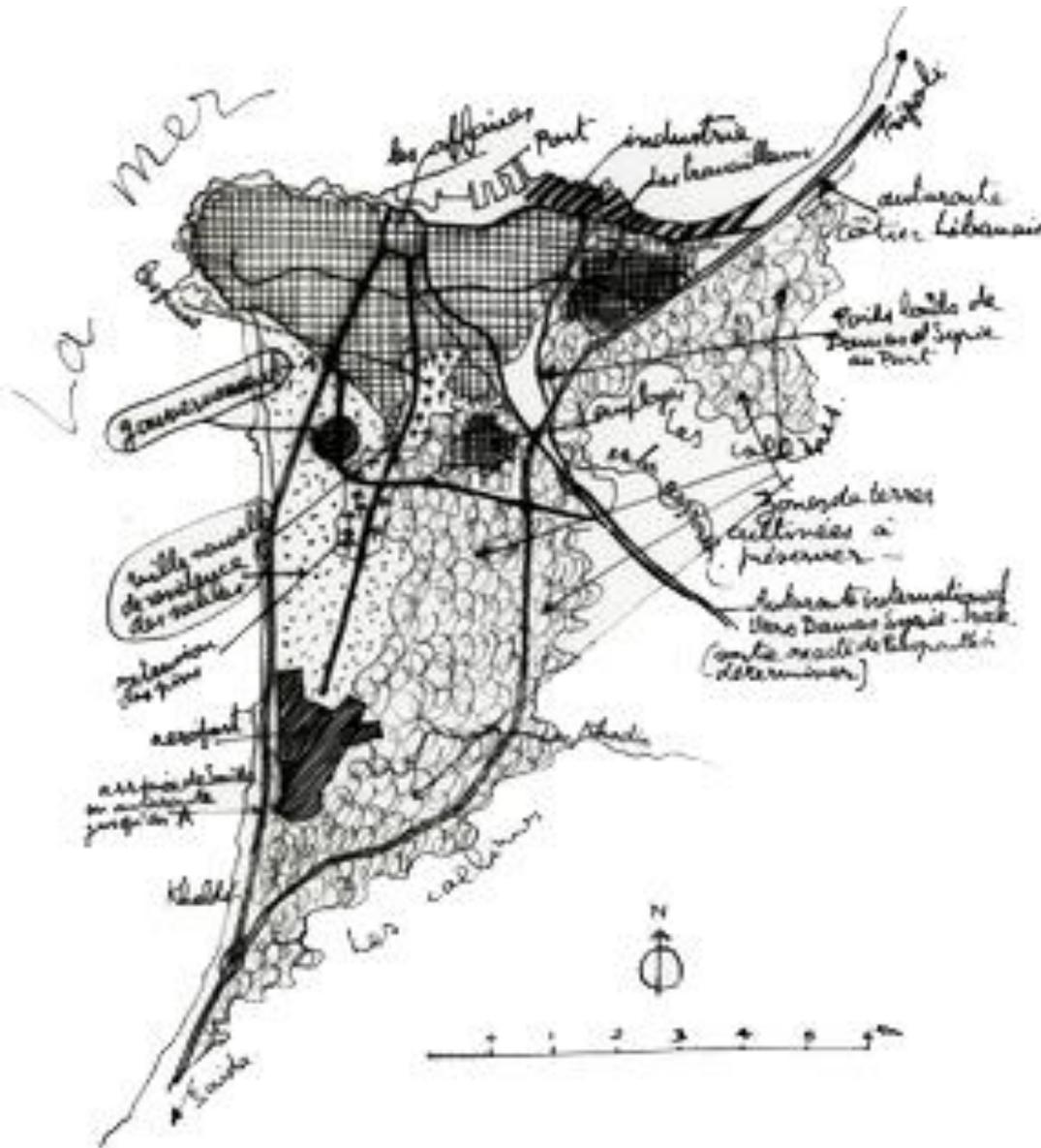


Figure 18: Master plan of Beirut and its Suburbs, 1963. Source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture

Post-War Master Plans for Beirut’s reconstruction:

After the end of the war, many master plans have been elaborated of the approach of the “city as heart”. The first one represented by the APUR “Atelier Parisien d’Urbanisme”, adopted an approach based on the preservation of the urban fabric through small and medium scale development based on the help of the original owners and, the participation of real estate companies in the damaged areas. The proposal was highly criticized. During the first break in 1977, the government appointed a committee guided by the APUR in order to draw a master plan for the destroyed central district of Beirut. The strategy was to protect the existing cultural heritage and also predicated on heavy investment in infrastructure projects. It was approved in 1978, but the resumption of war in 1982 with Israel delayed the progress.

As well, during a truce in 1986 another master plan was drawn by “L’institut d’aménagement et d’Urbanisme de la région Ile-de-France” l’AURIF. The target was to create a series of secondary centers to Beirut while preserving to it the main hub for Lebanon. One more time, the plan was never materialized, for the sake of lack of political direction and finance.

In 1991, Dar al-Handasah called for a master plan for the reconstruction of Beirut by the cooperation of the real estate company called Solidere. The idea was that such company could make an imperious bargain of land and damaged buildings.

The tactic of "Urban Privatization" is not something new. London Docklands and La Defense in Paris are the right examples for this form of finance. The master plan focused on the old city center, excluding the periphery of Beirut instead of providing a new vision for the country. Under the authority of the council for Development and Reconstruction and most importantly following the vision of the Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, the plan was implemented.

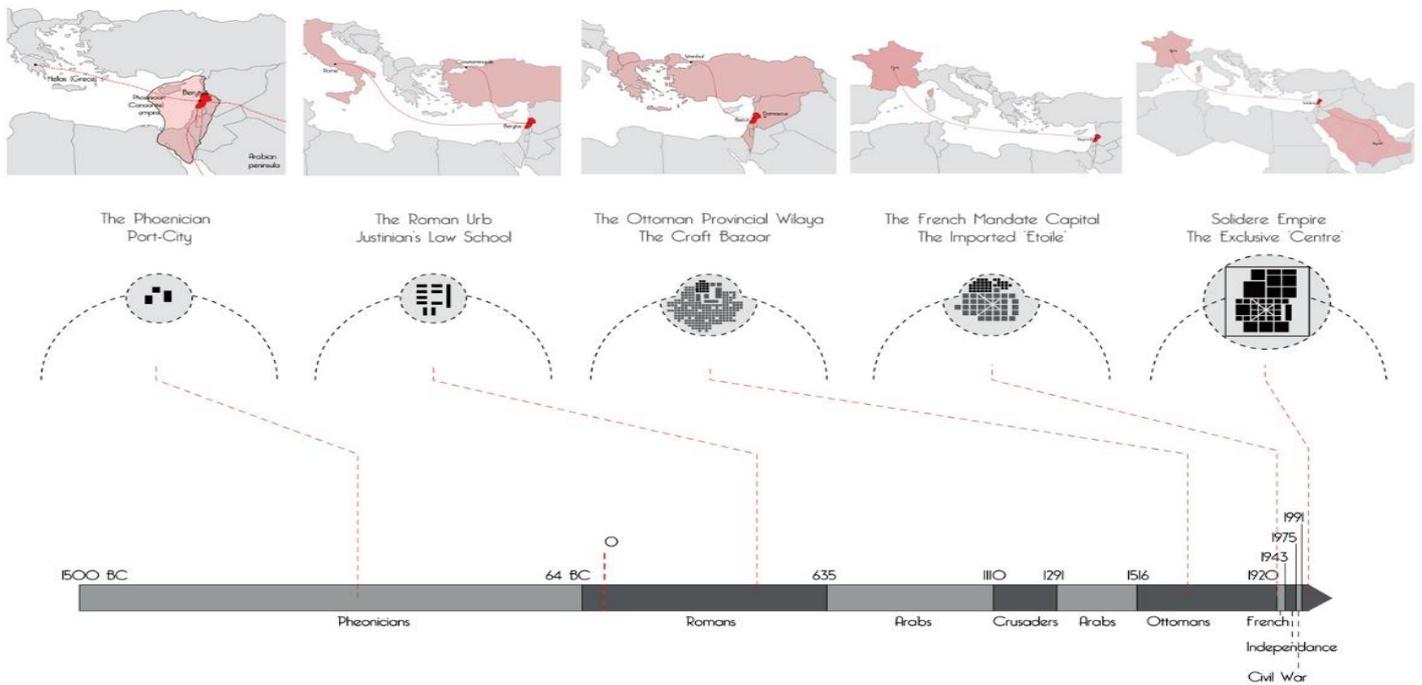


Figure 19: Development Comparison: Beirut and Urban Mall Typology. Source: Yasmina-el-chami-from-multiple-city-to-corporate-city

| 1.2 Solidere Company

The damage caused by the war was too big for the almost bankrupt municipal administration to address it. The city has lost its city center, souk, building and many other features. In 1991, a new law was passed which authorize the creation of a real estate companies in war damaged areas and to put them in charge of the implementation of the urban plan and the promotion, marketing and sale of properties to corporate developers or individuals. Hence Solidere was created on May 5, 1994 under the authority of the Council of Development and Reconstruction and following the vision of then-Prime Minister "Rafik Hariri". He is the head of Lebanese-Saudi construction company Oger and the biggest shareholders of the company. The name stands for "Société Libanaise pour le Développement et la Reconstruction du Centre-ville de Beyrouth", "The Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District". Solidere became by contractual arrangement the only owner of Beirut downtown. It took in charge the reconstruction of Beirut by creating public spaces, buildings, towers, and waterfront. The company enjoys a powerful position making it a unique form of public-private partnership

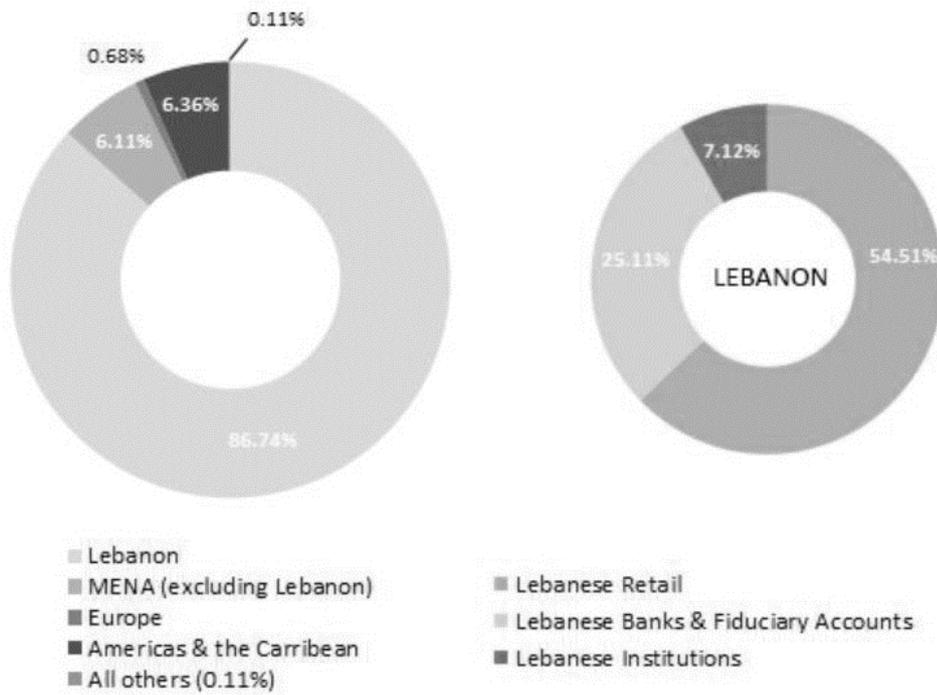


Figure 20: Solidere Shareholders. Source: Solidere estate development

Solidere is a joint venture partner of Stow in the Beirut Waterfront Development. Stow Capital Partners Limited is an international property investment, development and management company with operations in the UK and the Middle East.

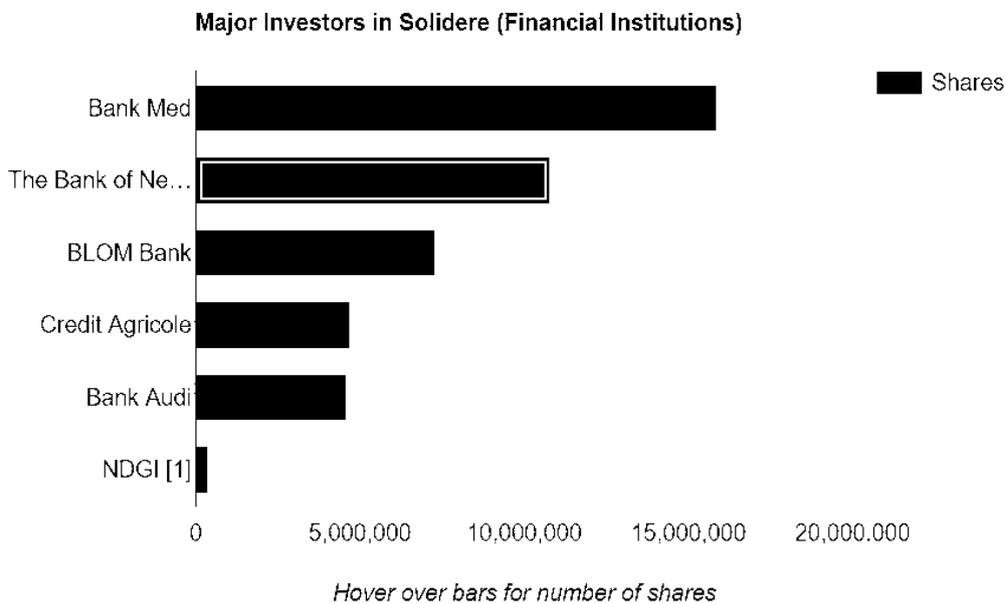


Figure 21: Major Investors in Solidere [Financial Institutions]. Source: Solidere estate development

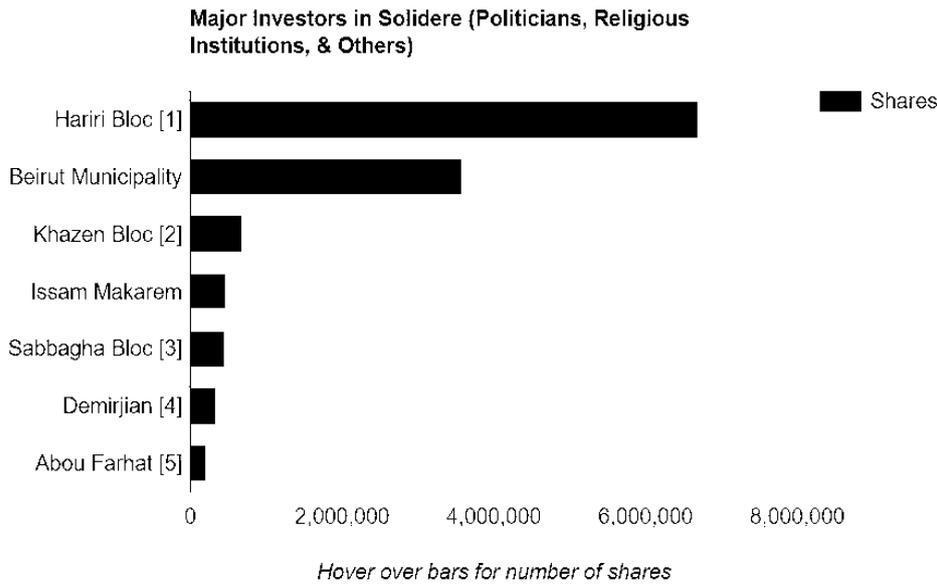


Figure 22: Major Investors in solidere [Politicians, Religious, Intuitions & others]. Source: Solidere estate development

It was a necessary step in the process of healing the scars of the war, not only economically but also socially.

The master plan was designed by the French Lebanese architect Henri Edde of Dar el-Handasah, and was approved by the Lebanese parliament in 1992. 1.2 Million Square meters of Land from the historic central district were expropriated by the government for Solidere. That means about 250,000 Lebanese owners and tenants, as well as 159 acre of reclaimed landfill from the sea north of the site. The plan focused on the old city center and neglecting all the rest of the city, there were no scope for integrating the development on the periphery of Beirut.

The development strategy proposed by Solidere was actually a part of a national Lebanese economic recovery project called "Horzion 2000", created by the Council for development and reconstruction. The aim of the plan was to complete the reconstruction and the recovery of the city by the year 2007. But due to many crisis in the region, the plans was delayed.

According to the personal vision of the Prime Minister Hariri, he described the reconstruction of Lebanon by focusing on Beirut. This vision resembles to the development of Dubai, a city constructed on the edge of the desert, and right now to the glass-walled towers, privatized marina and, skyscraper world trade.

There were 3 major aspects in the plan. The redevelopment of the waterfront into a promenade as a continuous corniche, the preservation of 400 low-rise building in the central business to protect the low-rise area and an international competitions to rebuild the souks and nearby housing projects such as the Saifi village.

The reconstruction was planned as a 3 phase process over a 22 year period. The first phase included the preservation of the city's heritage, the next stage is the modernization of the city center and finally the development and enhancement of the road networks.

Solidere task was over 1.8 million square meters. The first phase of the 22 year plan begins around the "Place de l'étoile", the Serail area, the old radial center of the government and the Souks. The reconstruction of Beirut involves choosing what to keep and what to destroy.

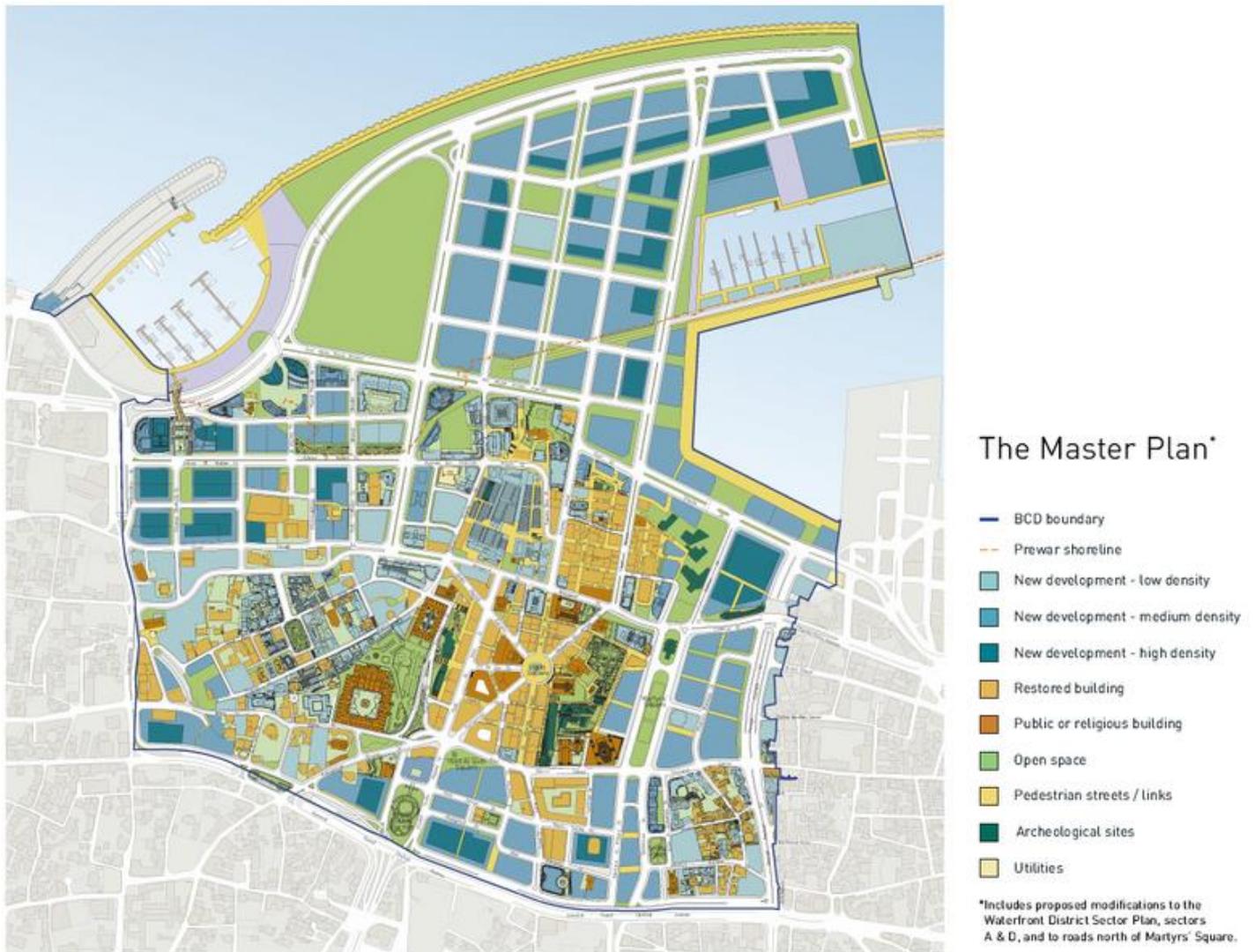


Figure 23: Beirut Central district Master plan by Solidere. Source: WordPress.com

By that, we can say that the one destroyed city center is thriving once again by Solidere to become a hub of activities. Owing to Solidere, Beirut has regained its status as a tourist, intellectual and culture center in The Middle-East.

For several years, downtown Beirut has been a Ghost town. As of August 2017, 18,7% of all residential apartments in downtown have not been sold, approximately worth \$750 million, \$3.1 million per apartment.

According to a citizen in Beirut

"I don't consider the war is over. The shelling has stopped but the war isn't over. The mentalities are still at war".

Solidere excluded the green line area of the city from its boundaries, even though this former front line of war is right on the edge of the developable land in the reconstruction project.

The Critics:

The project handled by Solidere, came under fierce opposition from architects, planners and journalist. Apart from issues of property rights and fears of any former residents would have sufficient capital to afford a house or an office in the Centre-Ville buildings, a major concern was a perceived lack of cultural appropriateness in the proposed urban design and architectural form. The plan was conceived upon the total demolition of the damaged urban fabric in the city center, and creating a new urban scar. Many accused Solider of creating a huge damage, even bigger than the previous decades of civil war.

The plan was based on a vision of an isolated island or instant city with little consideration of the regional impact of such development. Some say that the reconstruction should have taken a more timid approach. There were very limited vision of how the reconstruction of the central business would relate to adjacent regional centers, north and south, and how to accommodate the massive post-war demographic shifts of displaces persons across all Lebanon. By isolating the city center from its wider metropolis, the segregation patterns imposed by the civil war have been deepened and extended. Instead of returning the displaced to their homes, Solidere contributed to the displacement of the original inhabitants of the center, even if many of them had been relocated at the beginning of the war. Many of the original tenants were forced to give up their property in exchange for shares. If they decided to keep their property, the conditions set by Solidere would have cost them far more than the property was worth. The treatment given to the central district as a privatized real-estate project, say by many, as a paradise for the rich. What is being rebuilt? For whom and why? What to destruct and to preserve? Establishing what people choose to remember and what people choose to forget has a direct relationships with how planners and Architects can restructure the urban fractures. Disempowering marginal groups from participating in the reconstitution of their country and society is a weak point for the reconstruction plan. The reconstruction master plan in Beirut have tended to ignore the necessity for urban integration and to deepen the divisions, disunity and segregation existing between different regions and social classes.

Restoration work		
Solidere restored buildings	Marfaa: Mina El Hosn Saiffi Zokak El blatt	
NEW DEVELOPEMENTS	LOCATION	STATUS
Beirut Souks	Marfaa	South Souks: Completed North Souk: Under Construction
Pinwheel Projects	Marfaa	Under Design
Grand Theatre Hotel	Bachoura	Under Design
Zaitunat Bay	Mina El Hosn	Completed
800 Mina El Hosn	Mina El Hosn	Completed
Triple-A Office Building	Mina El Hosn	Under Design
1338 Mina El Hosn	Mina El Hosn	Under Design
1386 Mina El Hosn	Mina El Hosn	Under Design

178 Saifi	178 Saifi	Awaiting Permit
Saifi Village		Completed
Un House-ESCWA	Zokak El Blat	Completed
Embassy Coumpound	Zokak El Blat	Completed
Rue de France Complex	Zokak El Blat	Completed
1144 Zokak El Blatt	Zokak El Blat	Completed

Table 8: List of Real estate Project. Source: Solidere real estate development

The open space created by Solidere:

SQUARES	LOCATION
Ajami Square	Marfaa
Amine Al Hafez Square	
Bab Idriss Square	
Bazerkan Square	
Castle Square Belvedere Park	
Garden Tueini Memorial	
Garden of Forgiveness	
Harbor Square	
Imam Ouzai Square	
Intabli Foutain Square	
Jewelry Souk Square	
Khan Antoun Bey Square	
Martyr's Square	
Municipality Garden	
Nejmeh Square Place de L'etoile	
WaterLfront District Infrastructure Landscape	
Leila Osseiran Garden	
Samir Kassir Garden	
Sayyour Square	
Amir Amin Square	Bachoura
Riad El Soleh Square	
Basil Fuleihan Memorial	Mina El Hosn
Beirut Marina Landscaping	
Corniche Promenade	
Jean Paul II Garden	
Mina El Hosn Square	
Old shorline walk and gardens	
Omar Daouk Square	
Starco Fountains	
Wadi Abou Jamil Garden	
Waterfront City Park	

Debbas Square	Saifi
Saifi Square	
Cascading Garden	Zokak El Blatt
Gibran Khalil Gebran Garden	
National Evangelical Church Garden	
National Unity Square	
Omar Onsi Square	
Shehk Abd Al Rahman El Hout Garden	

Table 9: List of The Open Spaces restored and created by Solidere. Source: Solidere Real estate Development.

Green public spaces and pedestrian promenades is covering 39 ha of Land. The city center will contain half of the capital’s green areas. The public domain will consist of no less than 60 landscaped and opens spaces providing a large park, gardens, squares, pedestrian areas, quaysides and seafront promenades.

| 1.3 Conclusion

Since we cannot launch a future of a city without building on its urban and social fabric. It’s essential to study the cultural, social background, and the political status quo in order to define the notion of a public space and its applicable rules. Solidere as elaborated throughout this study, is a double-edged sword, offering many advantages and disadvantages.

My approach consists on taking advantage of what Solidere Project offered so far in the field of Public spaces which are the essence of the urban advantage. These spaces are vital in sustaining the productivity of the city, its social cohesion and quality of life. We as urban planners have the duty to uncover their role as a tool for reconciliation.

Chapter Three: Exploiting Open Public Spaces in Beirut

| 3.1 Beirut Open Public Spaces through history

In order to understand and to read Beirut, a brief overview on its public space over time will be made. The public spaces had been associated with external intervention since the early stages of the city's development.

The available public spaces result from the overlay of different periods and political eras, away from few exceptions like the reconstructed city center managed by the real estate company Solidere. Further, private initiatives to create public spaces is very common and it's emerging across the city. The Public spaces that date back to the Ottoman period are listed below:

The Martyr Square, The Sanayeh Garden, the Serail and its garden, Sahat Al solh or **Riadh Solh Square** and the **Corniche**. This Spaces were constructed back then to modernize the city following the example of Istanbul, and to reinforce the reign of the empire over Beirut.



Figure 24: Martyrs square, Sahat Al Hamidiyeh, Sahat al Burj. Source: Unknown.

Martyr's square is the biggest town square in Beirut, it was created as an open space called "Maydan". Built by the Ottoman during their occupation of Lebanon in the 19th century. Initially it was named Sahat al-Burj or Tower Square. In 1773, it took the name of "Place du canon", after the Russian cannon was placed on the square. The Municipality of Beirut decided in 1878 to modernize the square as the main meeting place of the city. In 1884, the square was named Hamdidiyeh square to honor Sultan Abdul Hamid II. In 1906, by the creation of the tramway, the square was placed as the center of Beirut's transport network. A garden with fountain and kiosks overlooked by the Petit serial, the seat of Beirut's general governor, and a public buildings and souks was created. It becomes Union square and then Freedom Square with the advent of the young Turks revolution of 1908. During 1931, The Square took its present same "Martyr's Square" to commemorate the Martyr's that were executed there under the Ottoman rule. After the demolition of the "petit serial" in 1950, the square became Beirut's bus and taxi terminus and a popular place for cinemas, coffee houses and the red light district. During the civil war in 1975-1990, Martyrs Square formed the Demarcation line that divided the city in half. After the end of the war in 1990, the reconstruction of the square began.

2005



Anti-Syrian demonstration following assassination of Sunni Prime Minister hariri, later becoming a coalition of Sunni and Christian partis under the name of March 14

2007-2009



18 months sit-in organized by Pro-Syrian Hizballah and Christian Aoun coalition of March 8 calling for stepping down of Pro-western government.

2009- present



Figure 25: The Martyr's square metamorphose. Source: Yasmina Al Chami

After the assassination of the Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, the square regained its original role as the throbbing heart of the Political life in Lebanon. It became the ground zero for the protests of the cedar revolution in 2005. Solidere took in charge to redesign and landscape the square, after an international urban design competition for the Martyrs Square axis that was conducted by an international organization.



Figure 26: Sanayeh Garden or Rene Mouawad Garden. Source: Unknown.

Sanayeh garden is one of the oldest open air public spaces in the Capital. It was created in 1907 under the order of Khalil Bacha (1864-1923), commander of the Turkish Sixth Army in the World War. The name of the garden changed many times. It was first called the Hamid Public garden, but the citizens for decades referred to it as the Sanayeh Garden. Sanayeh name means creation, in reference to the schools of arts and crafts that was established in the area. Later on, it was renamed in honor of the President Rene Moawad who was assassinated in 1989 not far from the garden. The garden presents more than 22 000 m² of open green space, is the largest plot of verdure in the city with the exception of the Pine Forest.

The garden has been renovated after a years of being in bad shape (the toilets didn't work, lack of maintenance of the greenery, poor shape of the children playground...). The renovation work lasted two years, the garden was reopened in 2014, regaining its initial function as a ground for dialogue, exchange and development. Thanks to donation totaling \$4.5 million from Holding Azadea, NGO's, Lebanon roots and association for the preservation of the Park. The Garden now contains, a playground for children, paths for jogging and cycling, an amphitheater, exhibition hall, shops around the park and even a pharmacy. The previous problems were fixed and a number of security guards protect the garden from undesirable elements. Before World war II, Lebanon was like one great public park, 80% of the land was being farmland or Woodland. Fifty years later, all the green space has been trampled down.



Figure 27: Serial's Beirut and its garden. Source: Unknown.

The Grand Serail is a historic building, it's one of the last standing Ottoman structure in the country, along with Hamidiyeh clock tower in front of it. This building has earned an important figure through successive roles since 1832. During 1975-1990 Civil war, the Grand Serail and adjacent buildings were destroyed and looted until Prime Minister Rafik Hariri invested in the renovation and were formally inaugurated in their current condition in 1992.



Figure 28: Riad Al Soleh Square. Source: Lebanon in a Picture.

Riad Al-Soleh Square is named after the First Prime Minister of Lebanon. The Spaces was under many transformations throughout the history of Beirut. In Roman Times, the area was dominated by a large public buildings. After, it became a gathering space. In 1863, in the completion of the Damascus-Beirut road and a ring road around the city had a great impact on the area. Hence, it became an urban square under the name of "Sahat Assour". The place

was used as military parade ground and cattle market for decades, a period of modernization was initiated. Later, a furnished public garden with kiosk, and a Fountain in the honor of Sultan Abdul Hamid II was added.

In 1943, after the independence, the square became a traffic island which led in 1950 to the construction of many several buildings such as Capitole. These changes modified the Ottoman character of the square.

In 1957, the square was renamed after it received the Statue of Riad Al soleh, designed by Marino Mazzacurati, an Italian sculptor.

During the French Mandate, the city was reshaped to reflect the French vision of living with its cafes, cinemas and promenades, but mainly this mutation was made in order to step forward towards establishing an independent Lebanese state. Traces of these spaces include **Place de l'étoile** means the Star Squares, **the Pine Forest** and the **Corniche** planned in Ottoman times.



Figure 29: Place de L'étoile, Beirut. Source: Unknown.

Place de L'étoile, Or Nejme Square located in the downtown area of Beirut. The Clock tower was presented to the city by its mayor during the French Mandate, it has become a recognizable icon of Beirut City worldwide. It's always filled with tourists who want to enjoy the street life and cafes. The square is surrounded by smaller pedestrian streets such as the famous Maarad Street which means the exhibition streets in English. The street was conceived during the French Mandate era as a central commercial street, its arched elevation were inspired by the Rue de Rivoli in Paris. The Square is located next to the Lebanese Parliament.



Figure 30: The Pine Forest-Horech al-sanawbar. Source: Unknown.

The Pine forest, in Arabic Horsh Snsawber is the biggest public park in Beirut. The area of the park is around 300 000 square meters of green space.

It has been closed by Beirut Municipality for many reasons, such as fear of vandalism, immoral conduct, sectarian tensions and love making... The access to the Park is limited to some people such as the upper class. For the rest of the citizens, to go inside, they need a special permit from the mayor. Vandalism is a challenge faced by all park managements, and many lessons can be learned from the cities across the world, on how to deal with it. Beirut Municipality choose simply to close the Park, instead of dealing with problems. Recently the park is open during the weekend, from 10:00 to 16:00, and it is separated into two zones between Lebanese people and Non-Lebanese people by fences and gates.



Figure 31: Beirut Corniche. Source: Lebanon24.com.

The Corniche, 4.8 kilometers long, a seaside promenade in Beirut Central District, starting from the Saint Georges Bay, passing by Place Rafik Hariri, then into Avenue de Paris, then Rawche, and then Avenue General de Gaulle before it ends on Rafic Hariri Avenue. It was built during the period of the French Mandate. The Corniche is considered as a popular destination for walkers, joggers and bikers. It's lined with palm trees, giving a magnificent view of the Mediterranean and the summits of Mount Lebanon. The place is surrounded by many famous hotels in the area such as Le Vendome Intercontinental hotel and Phoenicia.

After gaining the independence, the French experts provide several plans for Beirut with varying highlights on its public spaces and an important focus on the transportation network and the urban expansion of the population growth.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the adapted plan in 1954 of Ecochard Plan, based on his 1944 Plan, demonstrate the importance of public spaces. Streets was executed as open spaces. However, through later plans, the public spaces was slowly forgotten at the expense of private development interest. This is due to current dense urban fabric with rare breathing spaces shared by an ever growing population.

During 1975, the civil war period, the city center was evacuated which cause a social and physical fragmentation along the Damascus Road creating a demarcation line, a demolition of public spaces including major squares and transportation hubs and transforming it to militia spaces. This elimination caused a distortion in the socio cultural framework of Beirutis and huge gap in people's everyday public lives. The efforts that is made in the Post-war to rejoin the divided city and re-establish its public spaces were sadly limited to unrealized goals. Beirut's few public spaces left struggled to regenerate or change instead their publicness according to their disposition in the city. In the city center, Solider was in charge in reintroducing public spaces at various urban scales. Securing the public spaces, limited the access.

Most Important Open Public Spaces made by Solidre are listed Below: Zaitunay Bya, Beirut Souks.



Figure 32: Zaitunay Bay in Beirut, Open Public Space managed by Solidere. Source: Solidere real estate development

Zaitunay Bay, located around Beirut Marina, is owned and managed by Beirut Waterfront Development Company. It's a quayside commercial and tourist strip composed of apartments, international restaurants and coffee shops chains such as Paul, Haagen-Dazs...aside to many local outlets serving seafood, Lebanese, Italian, French cuisine... retails sports, two activity centers providing all sea-related services and water sport activities such as rentals for boats, yachts, jet-skis, fishing, scuba diving and parasailing lessons...., a yacht club and a boardwalk.

"Zaitunay", literally meaning olive tree, is in fact the old name of the area in the pre-Civil War era. Ten years ago, this area of Beirut was dead. Zaitunay Bay is designed by American architect Steven Holl, famous for many projects such as the Linked-hybrid mix use complex in Beijing, China, the museum of modern art in Midtown Manhattan in New York City and Simmons Hall of MIT.

The Project is conceived as an urban beach, extending the existing Corniche Beirut and the new sea promenade in a series of overlapping platforms, bringing to mind the sea waves and providing extensive outdoor spaces. These open public spaces in the Bay host cultural events, concerts, art exhibitions and a variety of seasonal celebrations.

Zaitunay Bay is constantly developing new activities and events for all to enjoy and discover while ensuring the highest standards at the several outlets available.

The Destination certainly exceeds all expectations and transcends the national borders to further polish Lebanon's image and allow it to assume yet again its rightful position as a touristic destination.



Figure 33: Beirut Souks. Source: Beirutings.com

Beirut Souks is located in the heart of the city center, in the area which is known for trade since antiquity.

Beirut Souks is offering the residents and visitors an integrated shopping, entertainment, cultural and social destination covering 100 000 square meters of floor space. It's divided into four districts areas designed by different international and Lebanese Architects. Hundreds of International shops, gold and jewelers' market, a supermarket and an entertainment complex including cinemas, restaurants and games center are available in the souks of Beirut.

It's rebuilt on the ancient street pattern and incorporating retained archeological features. Archeological remains found on the site such as Phoenician Persian quarter, Roman and Byzantine finds, a section on the medieval city wall, the ottoman wharf and the Mamluk Iban Irak Zawiya. The souk is adopting an innovative approach to accommodate the contemporary needs.

| 3.2 Mapping Beirut Public Spaces

The maps below will introduce the different types of public spaces available in Beirut, ranging from gardens publicly owned and privately owned, squares, commercial streets, sport courts and waterfront areas. The analysis based on these maps will shed the light on various questions that will be filtered to form the targeted survey of this thesis.

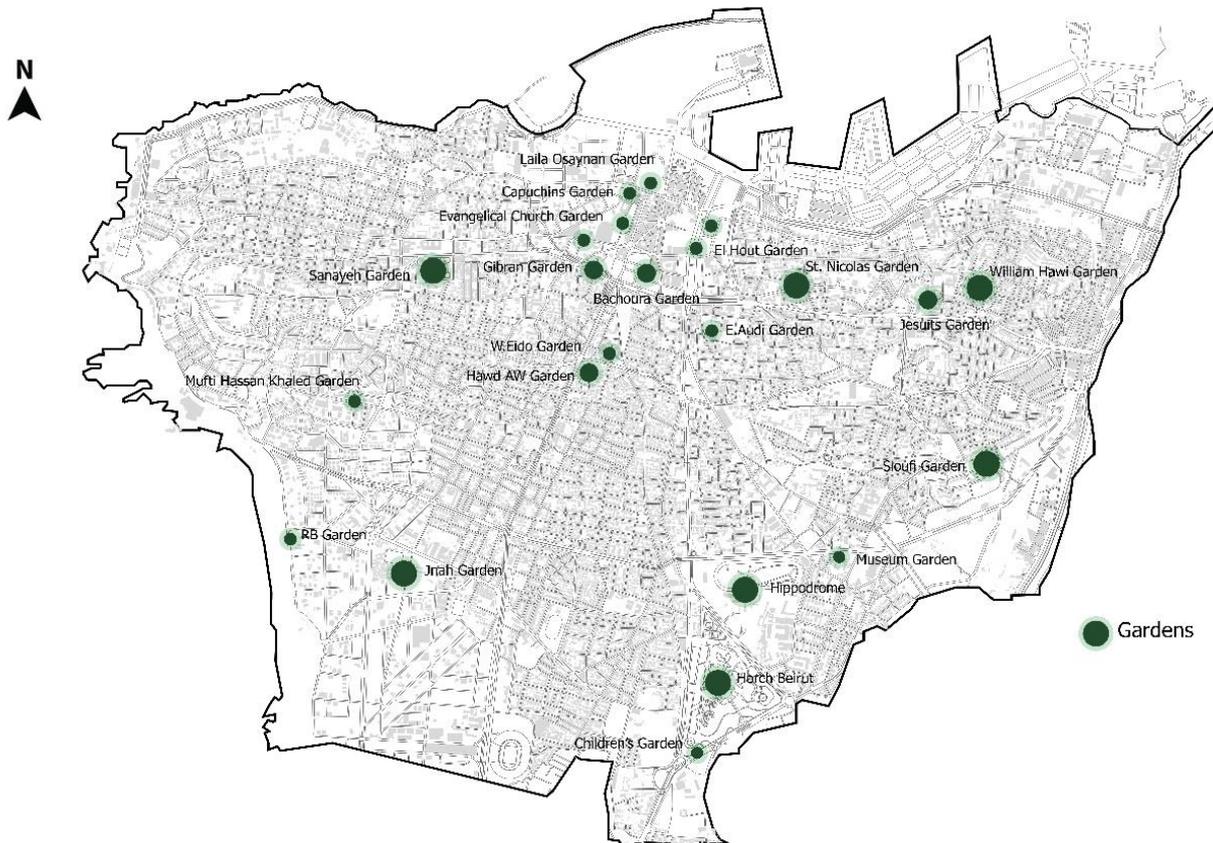


Figure 34: Beirut's gardens. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Garden's Name	Area	Nb of Benches	Nb of Gates	Facilities	Managed by
Leila Osaynan Garden	500 m2	6	2	None	Solidere
Capuchin's Garden	500 m2	10	0	None	Solidere
Evangelical Church Garden	200 m2	3	0	None	Solidere
Gibran Kahlil Gibran G.	6000 m2	15	2	Pets	Solidere
Bachoura Garden	200 m2	1	0	Pets	Public Sector
Belvedere Park	4810 m2	-	-	-	Solidere

Garden of Forgiveness	20 196 m2	-	-	-	Solidere
Municipality Garden	2 474 m2	-	-	-	Solidere
Samir Kassir Garden	822 m2	-	-	-	Solidere
Jean Paul II Garden	510 m2	-	-	-	Solidere
Walid abou Jamil Garden	2 354 m2	-	-	-	Solidere
Cascading Garden	1300 m2	-	-	-	Solidere
El Hout Garden	650 m2	12	2	None	Solidere
Saint Nicolas Garden	2 200 m2	10	2	PG, Toilets, Pets	Public Sector
Jesuits Garden	4 400 m2	34	2	PG, Toilets, Pets	Public Sector
William Hawi Graden	400 m2	9	1	Pets	Public Sector
Elias Audi Garden	980 m2	6	1	Playground	Public Sector
Walid Eido Garden	800 m2	11	1	Pets	Public Sector
Hawd Lwileyeh Garden	7 000 m2	40	1	Playground, Toilets	Public Sector
Sioufi Garden	22 000 m2	50	2	PG, Toilets, Pets, Wi-Fi	Public Sector
Museum Garden	3 200 m2	10	2	Pets	Public Sector
Horsh Beirut	330 000 m2	60	3	Playground	Public Sector
Children's Garden	650 m2	50	2	PG, Toilets, Pets	Public Sector
Jnah Garden	12 000 m2	20	2	None	Public Sector
RB Ramlet Al Bayda Garden	10 000 m2	5	3	None	Public Sector
Mufti Hassan Khaled G.	5 000 m2	38	3	PG, Toilets, Pets, Wi-Fi	Public Sector
Sanayeh Garden	22 000 m2	60	2	PG, Toilets, Wi-Fi	Public Sector
TOTAL AREA:	428 680 m2				

Table 10: Beirut Gardens and Area. Made By Chamoun, 2018

Beirut has 27 gardens, mostly concentrated in the downtown area, where Solidere property owns 12 gardens.

According to Beirut Green Guide, the table above shows the area of each garden in the city, the kind of facilities they hold and the owner of the land.

The total Area of gardens is approximately 461 146 m², thus covering 1/5 of Beirut area.

The current state of the greenery in Beirut, according to a project made by Dima Boulad, a graphic designer, the green area per citizen in Beirut is 0.8 square meter; The World Health organization recommends a minimum of 9 square meters per person. Only 1.8% of the surface of Beirut is green, this number has to be multiplied by 22 to reach the world health indicator. In this case, the city would have to demolish 41% of the built up area and convert it into Green Parks.

The above information will arise many questions such as:

- Are the citizens of Beirut aware of these gardens?
- Are these gardens well equipped to host people?
- Are the green areas in Beirut relatively sufficient to the number of its inhabitants?
- Are the gardens owned by Solidere accessible to people?
- Why is there a shortage of green open public spaces in Beirut?
- Is there any possibility to add more green space in the city?
- How do Beirut citizens perceive their city?

This thesis analyses the public spaces in Beirut and the importance of the innovation as a means to realize social inclusion. Green spaces are another issue which can be developed at a later stage. The differentiation has to be made between the concepts of public spaces versus green spaces. Apart from gardens, some green spaces do exist in Beirut such as the AUB campus, LAU medical center, etc...which are not accessible to the public.

In light of the analysis of the over urbanized fabric of Beirut, would the combination of green spaces and public spaces be a favorable remedy for the citizen's needs?

Knowing that the real estate is highly expensive in the capital, the government concern has never been the promotion and development of the greens public spaces rather than the exploitation of land in order to generate maximum profit.



Figure 35: Beirut's Squares. Made by Chamoun, 2018



Figure 36: Beirut's Waterfronts. Made by Chamoun, 2018



Figure 37: Beirut's Football Courts. Made by Chamoun, 2018

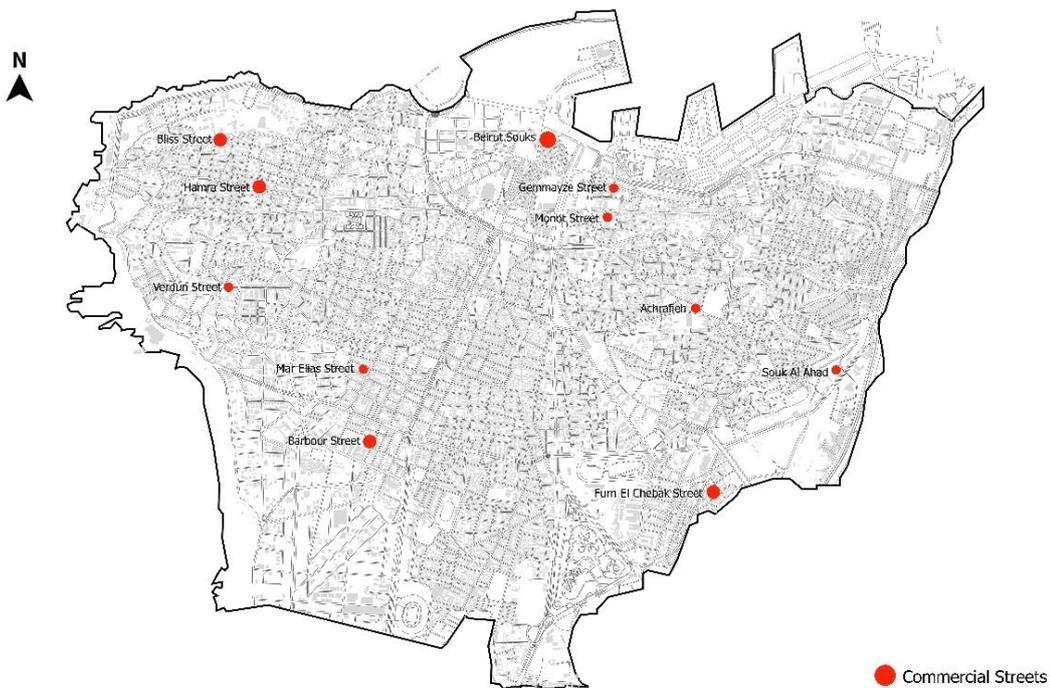


Figure 38: Beirut's Main Commercial Streets. Made by Chamoun, 2018

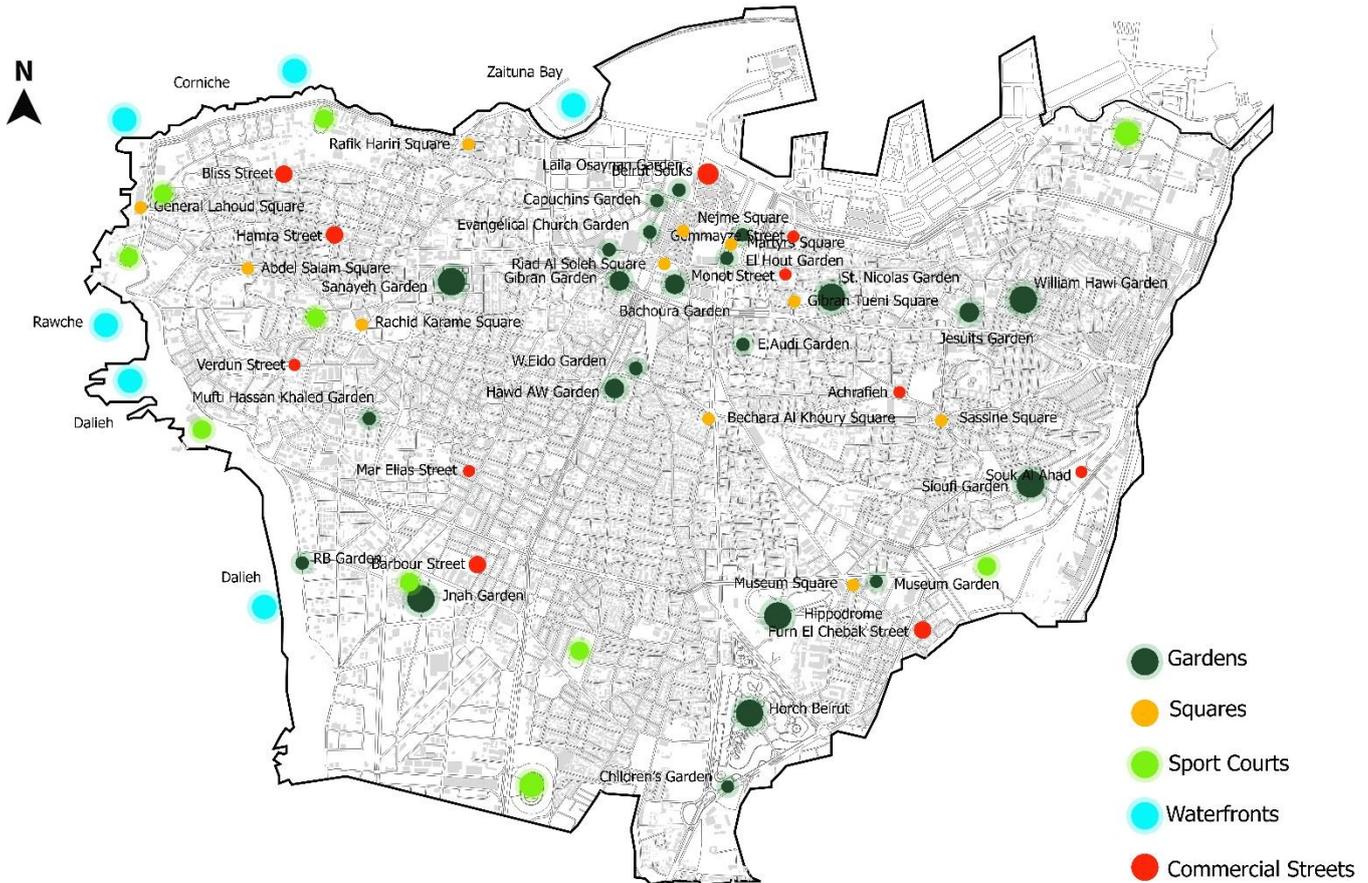


Figure 39: Beirut's Main Open Public Spaces. Made By Chamoun, 2018

The maps above shows different types of open public spaces, gardens, squares, sport courts, waterfronts and commercial streets.

Beirut covers an area of approximately 20km² with a resident population of about 2,272,000 inhabitants, which equals 113 600 inhabitants per km², one of the highest urban densities in the world.

- Do the existing public spaces serve their purpose?
- Is this population satisfied with the existing public spaces?
- What are their preferences?

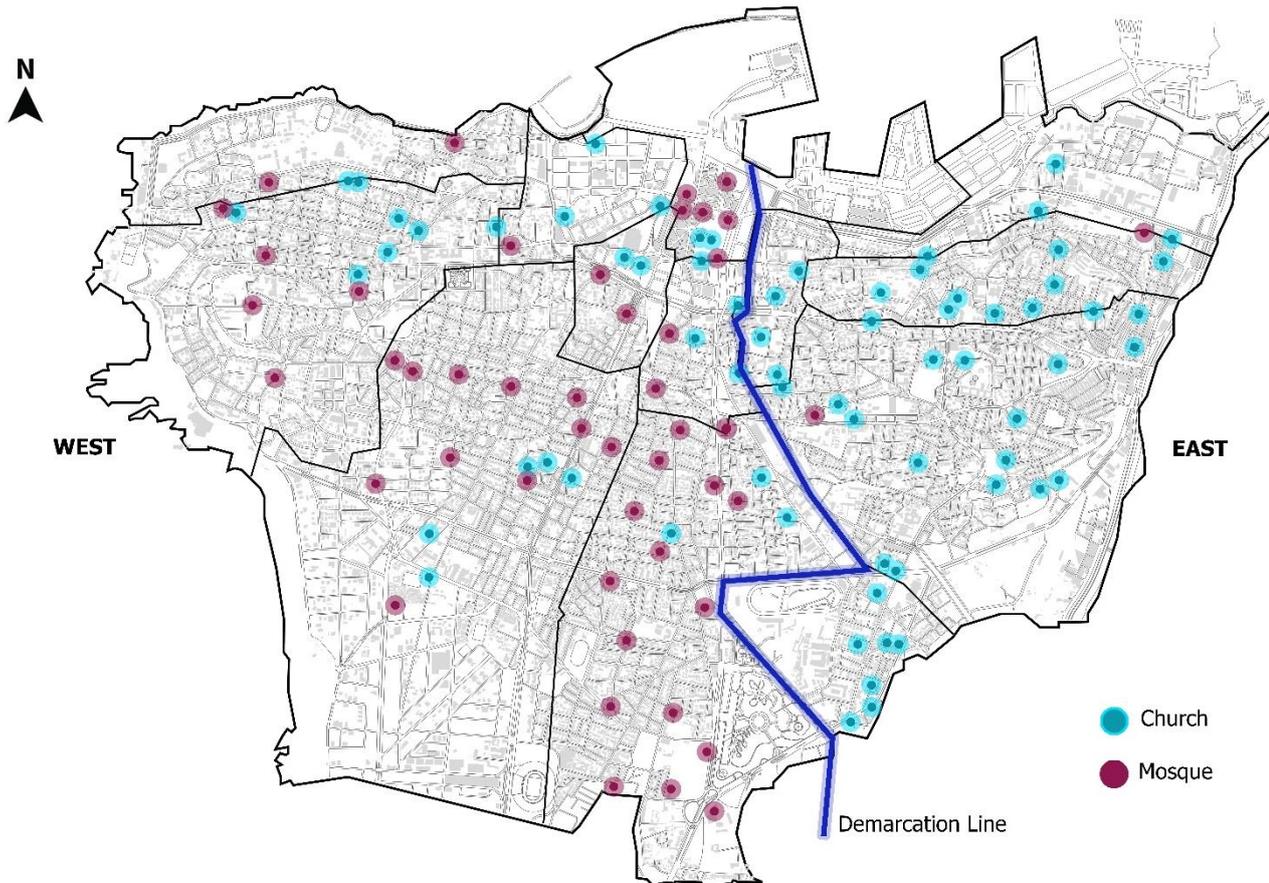


Figure 40: The distribution of the Churches and the Mosques in Beirut City. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Is Beirut socially divided?

A question that will be answered by more than 100 citizens within the survey on page 26.

Mapping the distribution of churches and mosques evidently reveals how the nonphysical line remains, pointing out the dilemma of a divided society, whereby the communities still cluster around their representative religious institutions. It is also evident that the demarcation line still reflects division between the Christian and Muslim communities on the urban fabric. Posters of different sect leaders, graffiti and other religious and political icons give the unavoidable impression of a city deeply divided.

- How to unify the divided society?
- How to remove the demarcation line from the urban fabric of the city?
- Can public spaces be used as tool to reconcile the society?

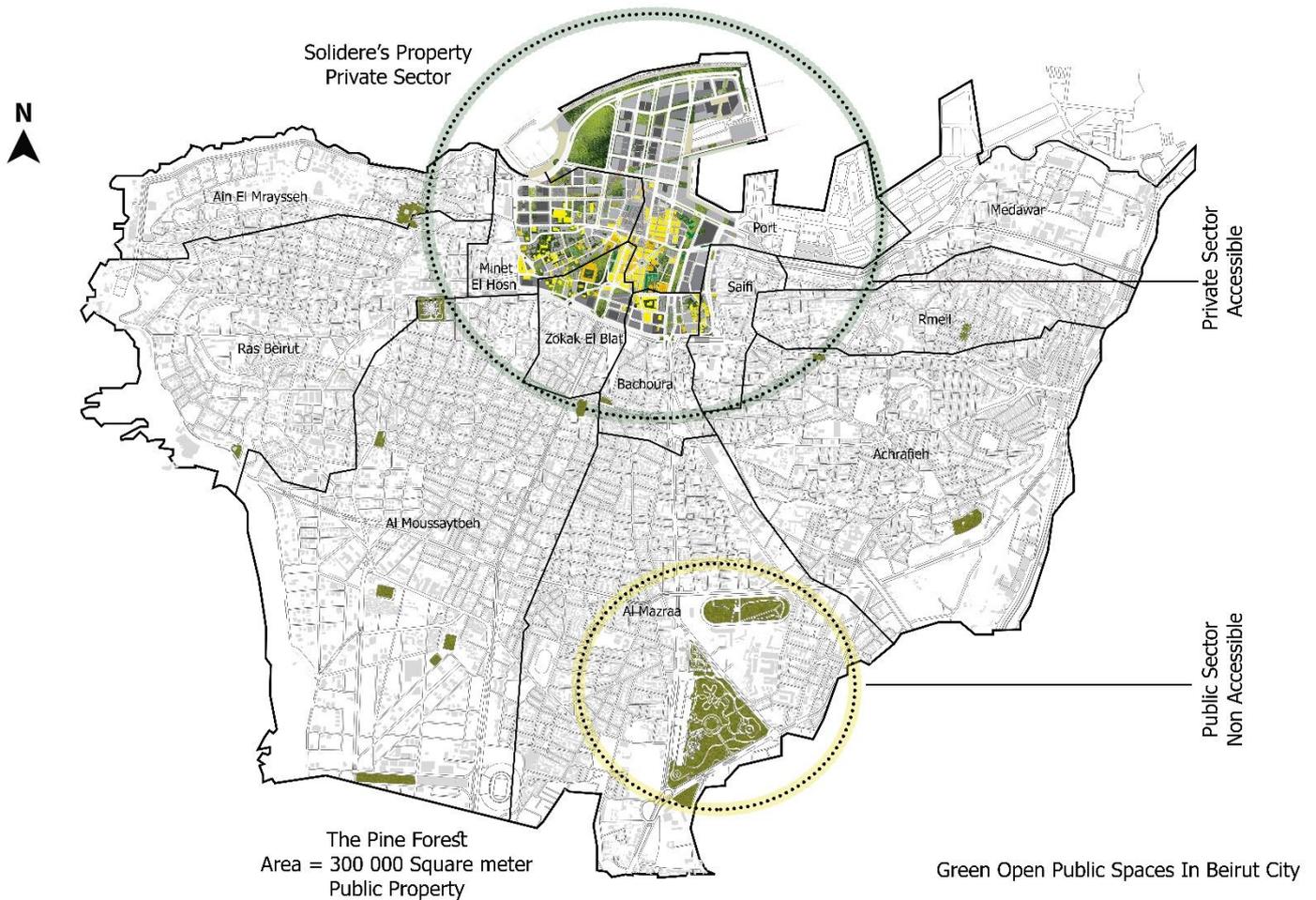


Figure 41: Solidere's area - The Pine Forest area, the biggest Green Open Public space in Beirut City. Made By Chamoun, 2018

This map is included to show the difference between the spaces owned and managed by public sector versus private sector.

On one hand, Beirut downtown hosts many gardens and public squares described in chapter two, which are accessible to the public even if it's owned by Solidere, a private company. On the other hand, the pine forest, the biggest green public space in the capital, is poorly managed by authorities and is not open all year long, and opening time have no fixed schedule.

- Thus, should the innovation of public spaces in Beirut case rely on Public or Private sector?
- Why do people favor spaces managed by private sector?

| 3.3 Public reviews

In the following, an additional study about the open public spaces in Beirut, will be presented based on the citizens' perspective. Two surveys took place in Beirut-Lebanon on March & April, 2018.

The surveys are based on a qualitative research methodology aimed at examining the quality of Beirut Public Spaces through the evaluation of the living privatized open public spaces and the publicly owned public spaces. Furthermore, its serves to highlight the importance of public spaces as a tool for society reconciliation in the post-war era and most importantly to define the needs of the citizens.

3.3.1 Survey 01

The structure of the first survey was built of 15 questions based on the analysis of the maps, addressed to young professionals aged between and 20 and 30 in order to have a general perspective from the young generation about the open public spaces in Beirut.

The survey targeted people from different religious and social backgrounds, in order to create a holistic perspective on the social division, on the importance of the private sector and the role of re-injection or innovation of public spaces in social cohesion.

The survey was completed online through sending the link of the following Google form <https://goo.gl/forms/FtRj7SWEuWA0pHX62> to 117 participants by email and social applications. (what Sapp, Facebook and LinkedIn).

Find below, the questions of the survey:

3/14/2018

Open Public Spaces - Beirut City

Open Public Spaces - Beirut City

* Required

1. **1- In your opinion, are there enough Open Accessible Public Spaces in Beirut ? [gardens, squares] ***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

2. **2- Do you think the presence of such Open Spaces is important in Beirut ? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

3. **3- Please rate the positive social impact of the reconstruction of Beirut by Solidere. [5 being the highest] ***

Mark only one oval.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>				

4. **4- How accessible do you find the Open Public Spaces owned by Solidere? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Poor
 Average
 Good
 Excellent

5. **5- What is your favorite Open Public Space in Beirut ? ***

6. **6- Given the choice between two options, where would you prefer to spend time :**

Check all that apply.

	Column 1
Zaituna Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dalieh-Rawche	<input type="checkbox"/>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1mEWK4VPrWvt297oV4bzl9enXR5hr24A7iYS3-mvGjZE/edit>

1/3

Figure 42: The Survey 01 model page 01, targeted 116 Candidates, took place in March & April 2018. Made by Chamoun, 2018

3/14/2018

Open Public Spaces - Beirut City

7. Please state why. *

8. 7- Why do you think people avoid going to public spaces managed by the authorities? *

9. 8- Do you see the citizens of Beirut as socially divided? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

10. 9- In your opinion, would the re-injection of Open Public Spaces in Beirut help unify the society? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

11. 10- What do you think is Beirut's most famous Landmark? *

12. 11- In your opinion, did the neoliberal policy which led to the privatization [adopted in the Post-war in Lebanon] have a negative impact on the society? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

13. 12- Does Beirut have the potential to reemerge through the culture and the education of its citizens as a creative metropolis? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1mEWK4VPrWvt297oV4bzI9enXR5hr24A7iYS3-mvGjZE/edit>

2/3

Figure 43: The Survey 01 model page 02, targeted 116 Candidates, took place in March & April 2018. Made by Chamoun, 2018

3/14/2018

Open Public Spaces - Beirut City

14. **13- Should the innovation of Public Spaces in Beirut rely on private or public sector ? ***

Check all that apply.

Private Sector

Public Sector

15. **14- Would you trust the private sector to improve the Public Spaces in Beirut ? ***

Check all that apply.

Yes

No

16. **15- In your Opinion, would the construction of Public Spaces in the memory of the Lebanese Civil war contribute to a social reconciliation ? ***

Check all that apply.

Yes

No

About You

17. **Full Name: ***

18. **Age: ***

19. **Profession: ***

20. **E-mail address: ***

Powered by
 Google Forms

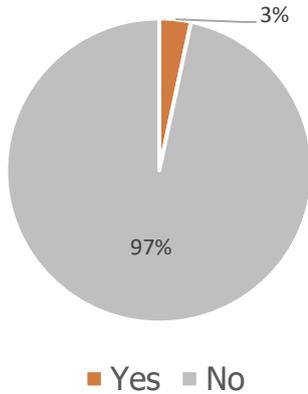
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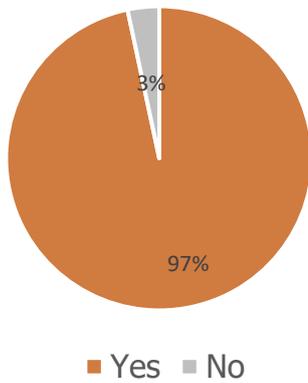
Figure 44: The Survey 01 model page 03, targeted 116 Candidates, took place in March & April 2018. Made by Chamoun, 2018

In the following you will find the answers for the survey as a general opinion of the people about Beirut Open Public Spaces.

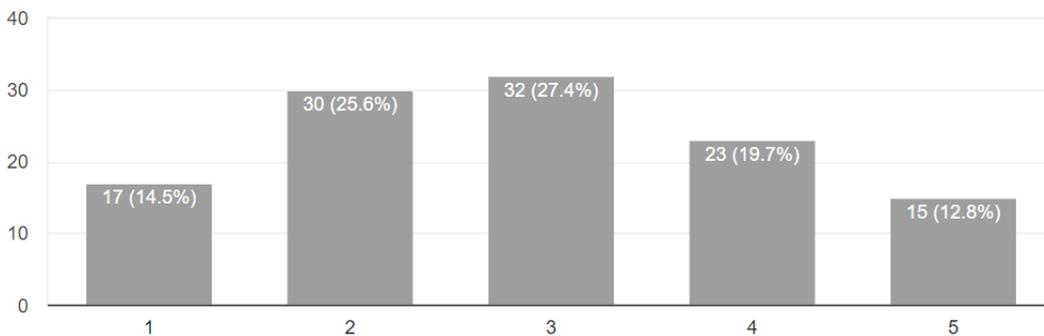
1- In your opinion, are there enough Open Accessible Public Spaces in Beirut? [Gardens, squares]



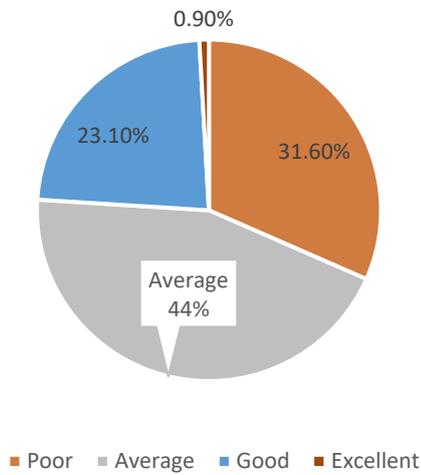
2- Do you think the presence of such Open Spaces is important in Beirut?



3- Please rate the positive social impact of the reconstruction of Beirut by Solidere. [5 being the highest]



4-How accessible do you find the Open Public Spaces owned by Solidere

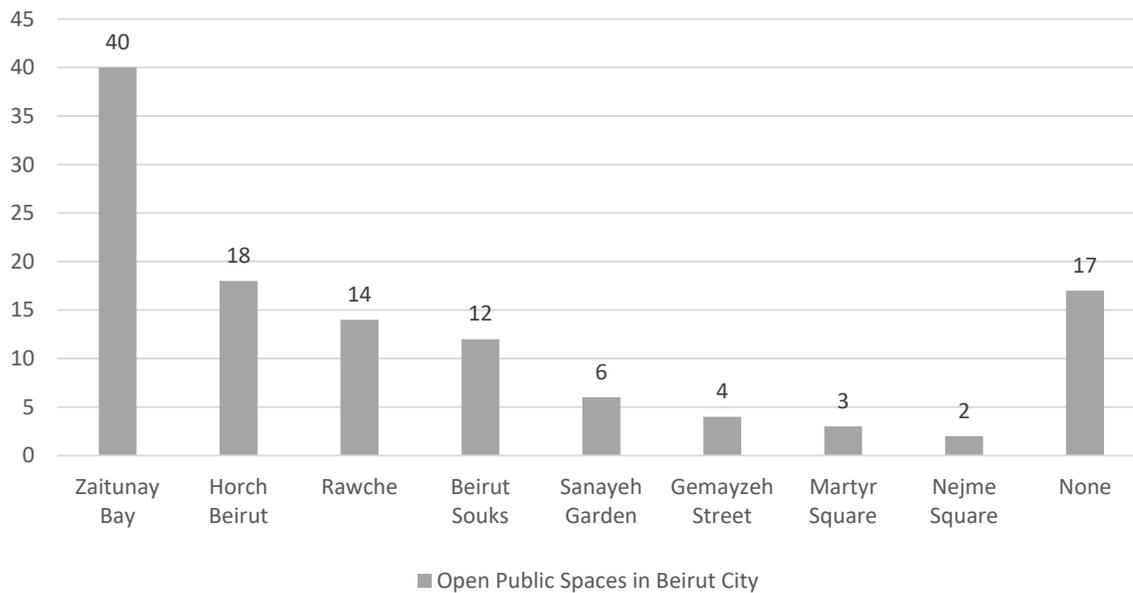


5-What is your favorite Open Public Space in Beirut?



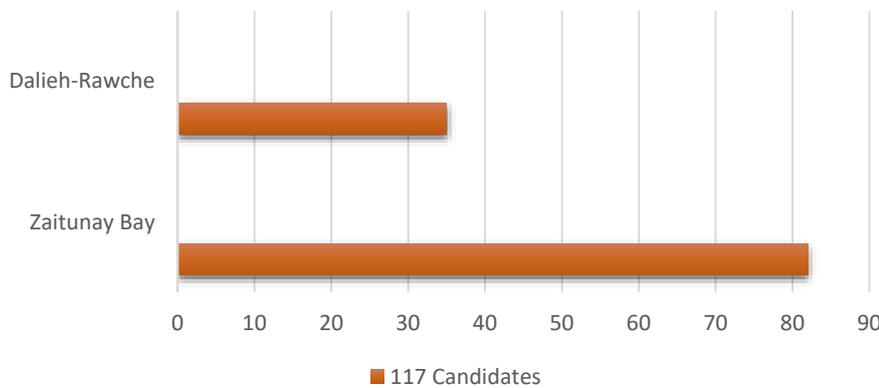
Figure 45: Most Favorite Open Public Space in the eye of Beirut Citizens. Made By Chamoun, 2018

Open Public Spaces in Beirut City



Out of the 117 participants, 40 voted for Zaitunay bay a privately owned public space, 18 for Horesh Beirut, 14 voted for Rawche, 12 for Beirut Souks, 6 for Sanayeh garden, 4 for Gemayzeh street, 3 for Martyr’s Square , 2 for Nejme Square and 17 didn’t vote for any specific location.

6- Given the choice between two options, where would you prefer to spend time:



Please state why.

The candidates preferred Zaitunay Bay even though its privately owned, because the space is clean more organized and comfortable (parking, lights).

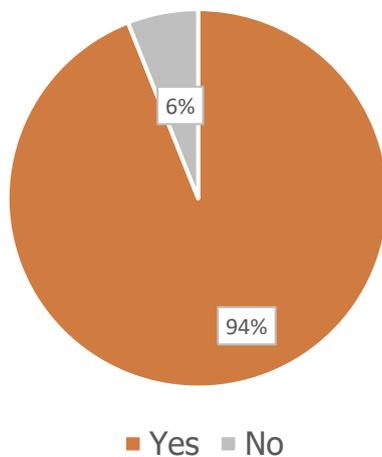
7- Why do you think people avoid going to public spaces managed by the authorities?

According to Public Review, the majority of the participants agreed on a common opinion which is the poor management of the authorities due to the facts listed below:

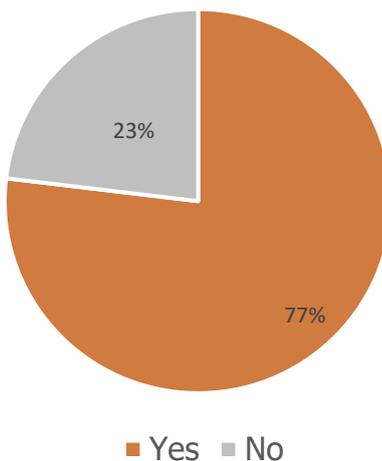
- Lack of security.
- Lack of maintenance.
- Chaotic environment.
- Poor space quality, not well equipped.
- Access restriction.
- Lack of facilities such as benches, lights, etc...

The refugees' crises worsened the problem of segregation since many Lebanese refuse to share the same place with individuals from a different background whether its social, religious, political, etc...

8- Do you see the citizens of Beirut as socially divided?

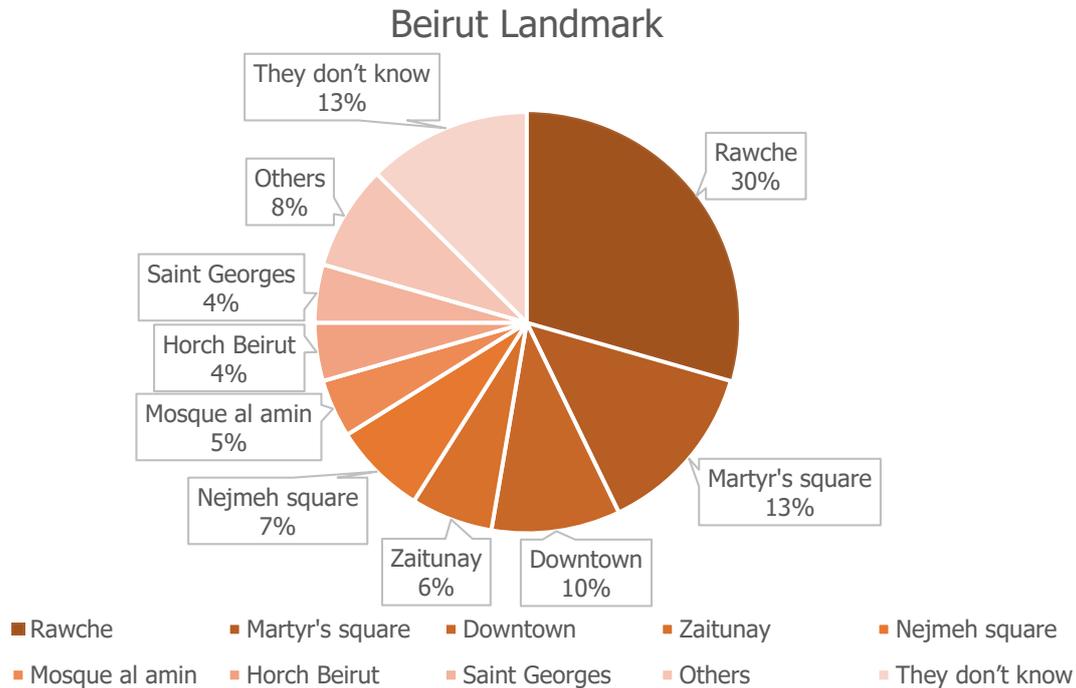


9- In your opinion, would the re-injection of Open Public Spaces in Beirut help unify the society?



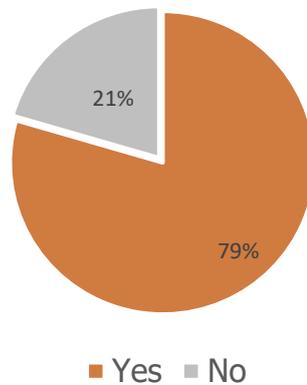
10- What do you think is Beirut's most famous Landmark?

Addressed to 117 dwellers of the post-war generation who come from different areas/ communities in Beirut, the result was 10 different answers for a city that has an area of 85 km²

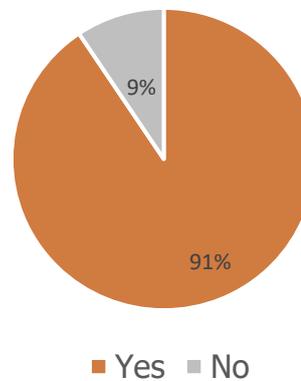


There is a certain gap between the citizens of Beirut that they cannot even agree on a common Landmark.

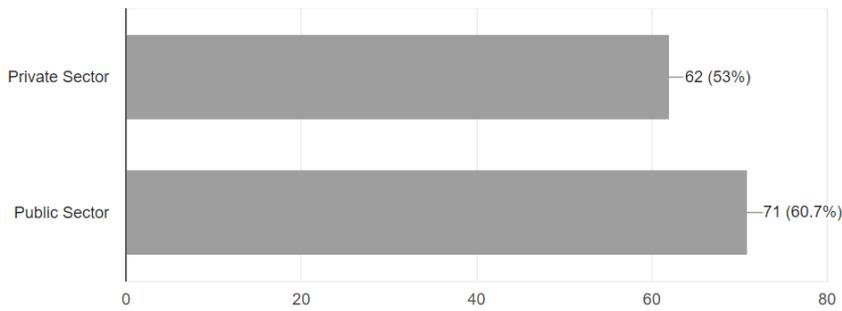
11- In your opinion, did the neoliberal policy which lead to the privatization [adopted in the Post-war in Lebanon] have a negative impact on the society?



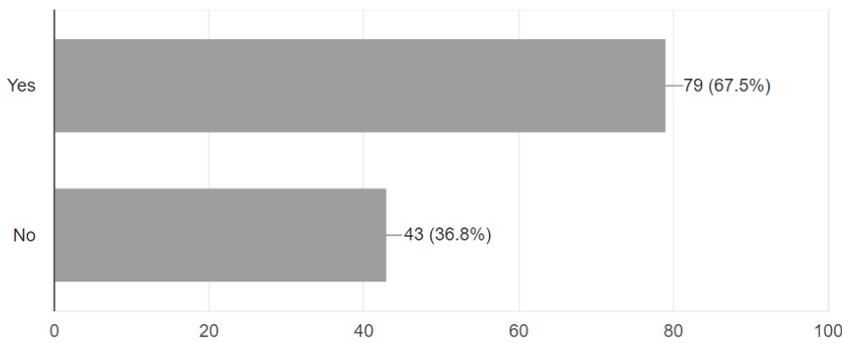
12- Does Beirut have the potential to reemerge through the culture and the education of its citizens as a creative metropolis?



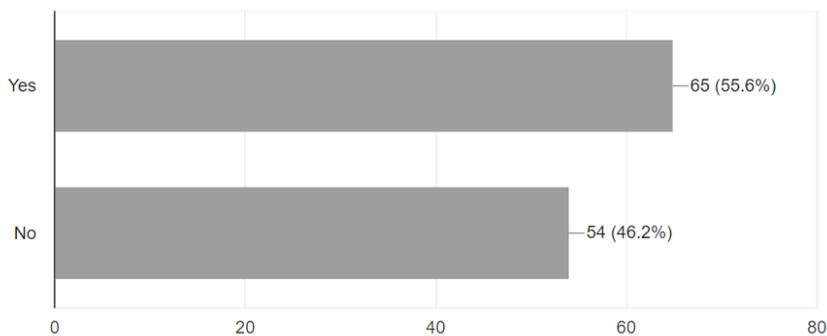
13- Should the innovation of Public Spaces in Beirut rely on private or public sector?



14- **Would you trust the private sector to improve the Public Spaces in Beirut?**



15- In your Opinion, would the construction of Public Spaces in the memory of the Lebanese Civil war contribute to a social reconciliation?



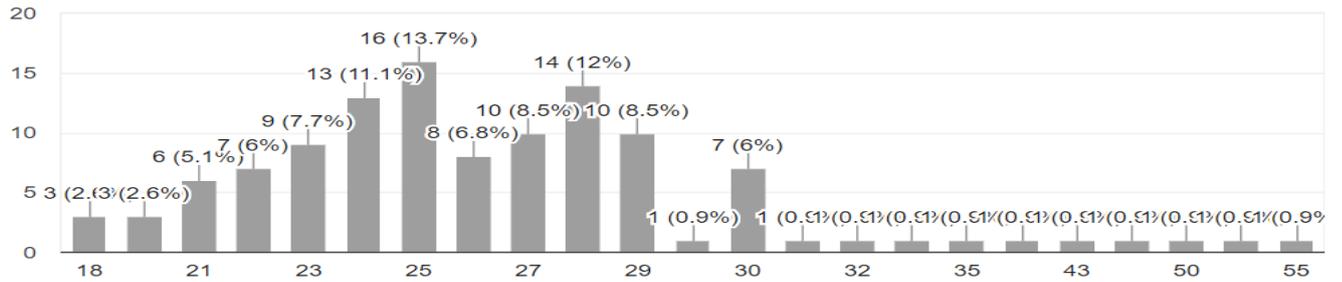


Figure 46: Candidate's age. Made by Chamoun, 2018

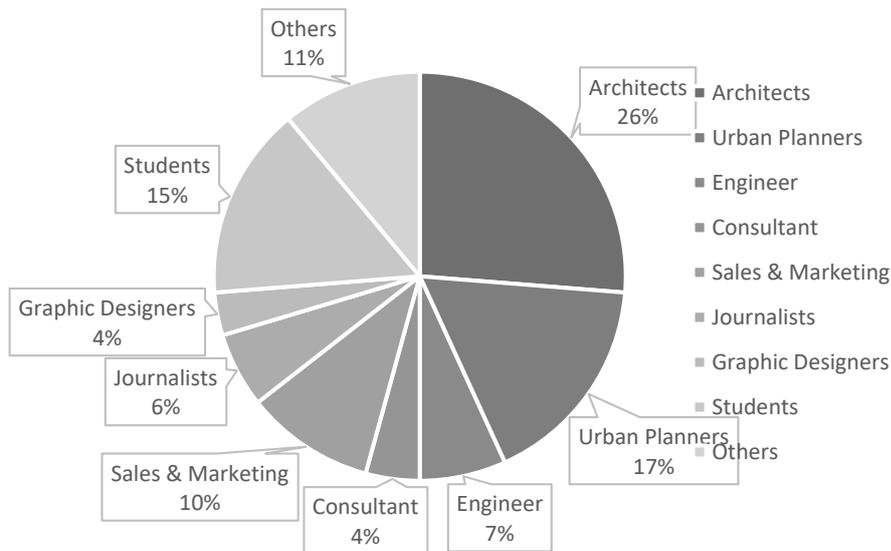


Figure 47: Candidate's Profession – 117 Candidates. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Please follow the below link to check the answers of the survey:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1mEWK4VPrWvt297oV4bzI9enxR5hr24A7iYS3mvGjZE/edit#responses>.

3.3.2 Survey 02

The second survey made in April 2018, is narrowed to 6 questions to further target the purpose of the research and addressed to 50 participants aged 30 and above from different professions, religions and locations in Beirut (east and west) in order to reveal the social pattern of Beirut within its various areas, to collect a diversified opinions about Beirut Public Spaces, and consequently understand the needs of the Beirutis.

The survey was taken from 5 different regions in Beirut, varying between East and West, as the map below.

- 10 Candidates from Achrafieh
- 10 Candidates from Hamra
- 10 Candidates from Rawche
- 10 Candidates from Downtown
- 10 Candidates from Mazraa near Horch Beirut.

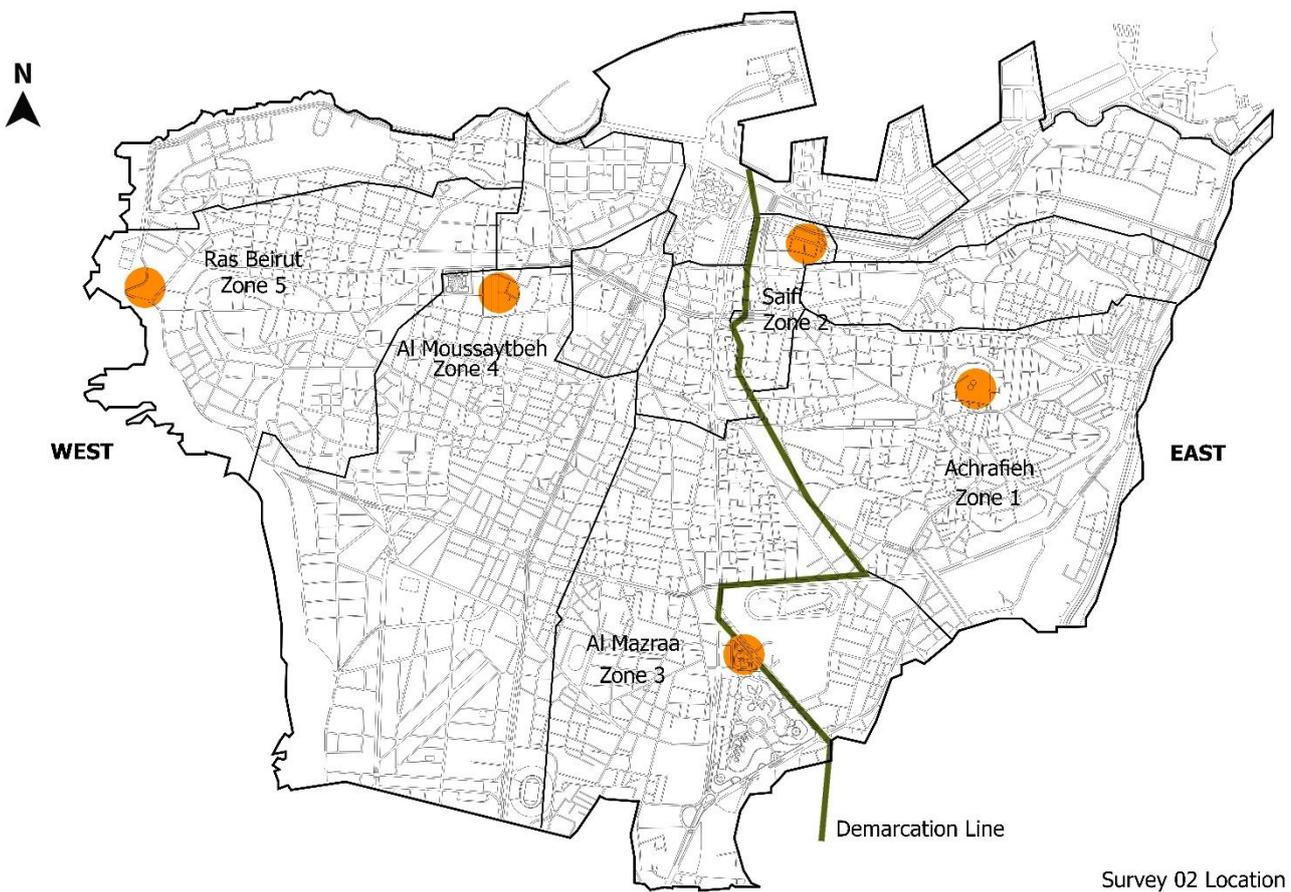


Figure 48: Survey 02 location. Made by Chamoun, 2018

4/5/2018 Open Public Spaces- Survey 02- Beirut City

Open Public Spaces- Survey 02- Beirut City

* Required

1. **1- In your opinion, are there enough Open Accessible Public Spaces in Beirut ? (gardens & squares) ***
Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

2. **2- What kind of Public Spaces you prefer: ***
Mark only one oval.

Gardens
 Squares

3. **3. Please state why ***

4. **4- In your opinion, is there any possibility to open more public spaces in Beirut ? ***
Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

5. **5- Do you think we should improve our existing Open Public Spaces instead of creating new ones ? ***
Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

6. **6- Please name an Open Public Space that needs renovation the most ***

About You

7. **7. Full Name**

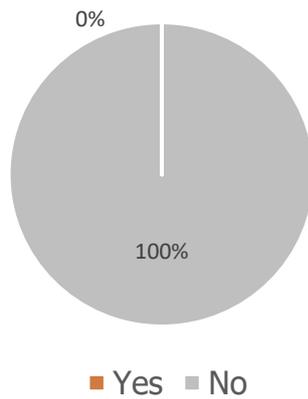
8. **8. Age & Profession**

9. **9. Location**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1dPT2jhF7YpF-P1GZAb1aHdVbDfcq9PQQtPPjfJlCt/edit> 1/2

Figure 49: The Survey 02 model, targeted 50 Candidates, took place in April 2018. Made by Chamoun, 2018

1- In your Opinion are there enough Open Accessible public Spaces in Beirut? (gardens and squares)

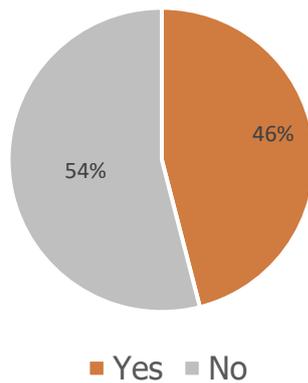


2- What Kind of Public Spaces you prefer:

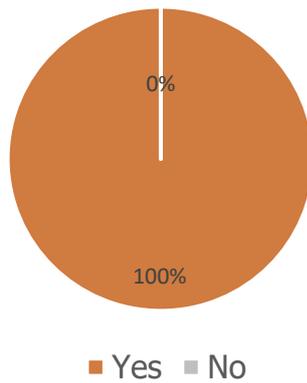


The citizens need more green Spaces in Beirut.

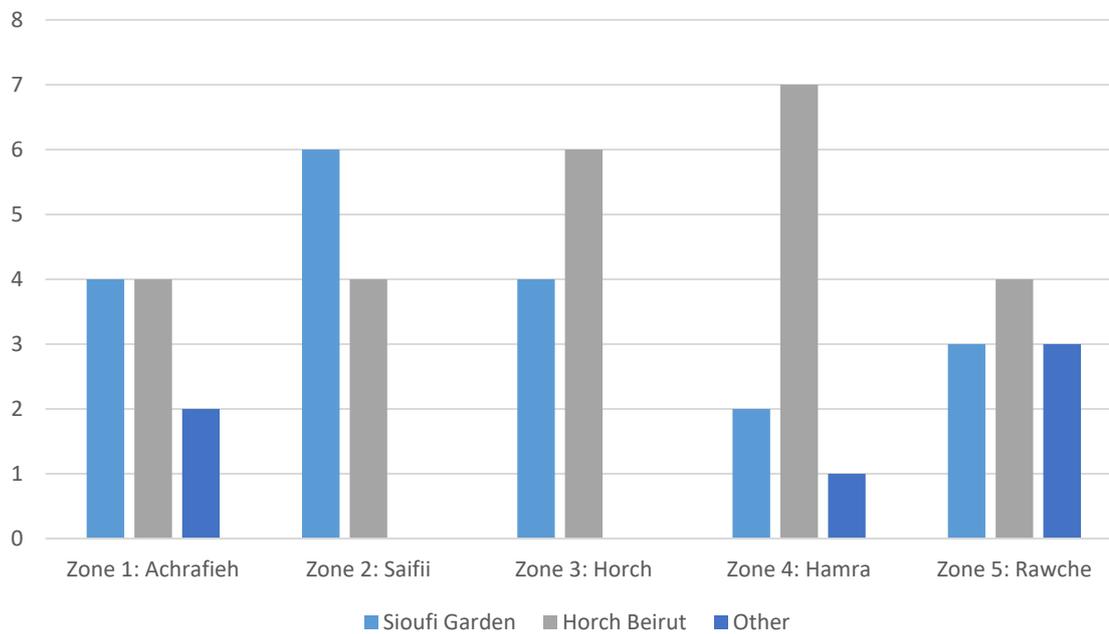
3- In your opinion is there any possibility to open more public spaces in Beirut?



4- Do you think we should improve our existing Public Spaces instead of creating new ones?



5- Please name an Open Public Space that needs renovation the most:



According to the votes, Horch Beirut and Sioufi garden need renovation the most.

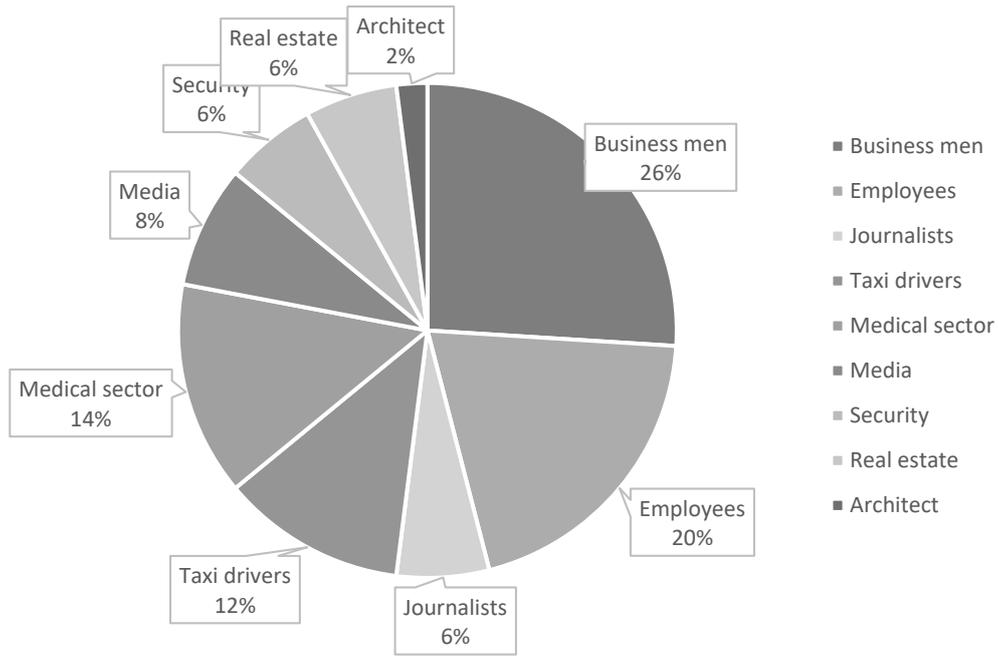


Figure 50: Candidate's Profession - 50 Candidates. Made by Chamoun, 2018

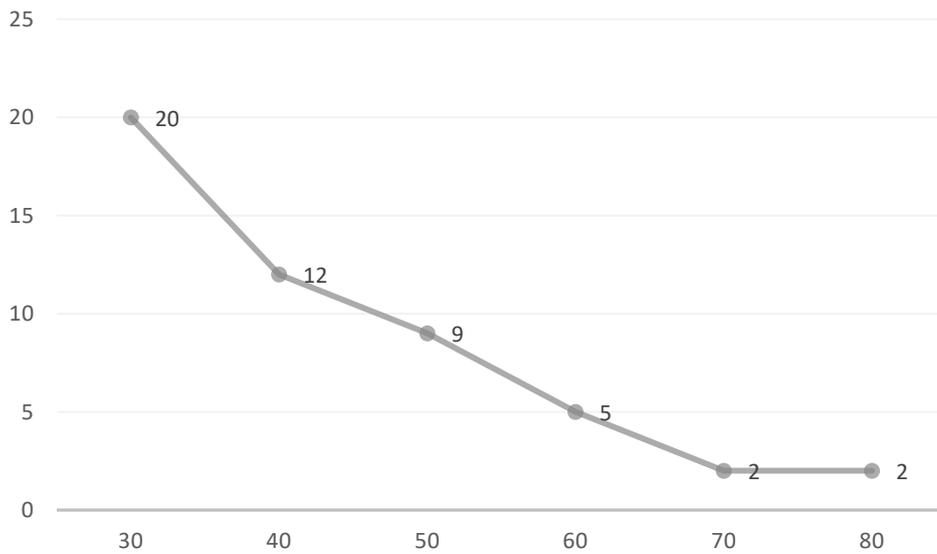


Figure 51: Candidate's Age. Made by Chamoun, 2018

3.3.3 Interviews

Hereinafter is an interview made in April 2018, at Rawche region with two citizens.

The first interview is made with Mr. Itani, aged around 50, a businessmen from one of the biggest and renowned families in Beirut. When asked the questions of the second survey, he stated:

"I believe this is not only my opinion, I'm speaking the mind of a large number of the population when I say that Beirut, is enormously divided, class and religious division, the people, the culture everything...The government is not looking at it as a problem. I don't like Solidere, but I love what they have done so far. I like to take my kids to the public spaces managed by this private company because I feel safe and comfortable.

Even though Sanayeh garden, has been recently renovated, and should be a destination for all the Beirutis, I'm afraid that the citizens doesn't look at it this way, it's not a question of racism, but I have two small girls and I don't feel safe leaving them in a garden with 20 non-Lebanese men. He further added, we have a huge number of unregistered refugees roaming in our public spaces, streets, etc... We are not aware of the kind of people entering our territories. We are fighting for a spot, it's a typical case of competition for use of public space.

The Lebanese society is already divided, and this crisis has worsened the situation. In order to reduce the social gap, the innovation and management of public spaces is a must. He finally said that if adding new public spaces is an option, greenery in those spaces is a necessity because the city is suffocating, and it needs new lungs."

The second interview is made with an architect Mr. Hamed aged around 40.

*"I have been working on Beirut urban planning for 20 years now. I have been a witness of this remarkable diversity as well as the social impact of a long war. The re-injection of public spaces is a great initiative, you can find some empty spots in Charles Helou Street, around Hekme High school, and spinneys Achrafieh, etc...it's not impossible to create new spaces, even though the city is overcrowded. It is a necessity to add **GREEN PUBLIC SPACE** because Beirut is suffering from pollution, the concrete is expanding like a cancer in the city, and in this way you can be resolving two issues instead of one. Of course our existing public spaces need renovation and more importantly a good management, and I'm afraid to say that the public sector is always failing in face of the private sector."*

In Cities that value the density of their Urban Fabric, a green infrastructure network needs to be inserted into the existing city fabric. We need to reimagine what and how we can inject green public spaces in such cities. Exactly like in the case of Beirut, where the urban fabric and the real estate is in such high demand for housing and other fabric needs. It a must to start thinking and dreaming of new types of green public spaces that can be inserted into existing congested cities, but what is most importantly to preserve our existing green spaces

Until very recently, public spaces issue and urban issues were completely absent from the agenda of the NGOs and activist. An increasing number of youth groups and activists critical with the ways authorities have been managing urban policies and concerned with making the city a more livable place, have been voicing their opinions, via blogs and social media, as well as through actively mobilizing in NGOs or looser types of networks.

Nahnoo, Masha3, Dictaphone Group, Paint up and Beirut Green Project and many others are NGOs that have been actively involved in addressing the problem of public spaces in Beirut. In addition to these civil society's groups, artists are contributing also into activating public spaces across the city, and politicizing spaces through tagging and visual appropriation. All these initiatives reveal the emergence of new young voices actively concerned about their rights to the city, to public spaces and experiences.

| 3.4 Conclusion:

In summary, the increasing political and security clashes and the absence of any form of holistic planning for the city of Beirut, are accelerating the ethnic divisions and social tensions.

1-The introduction of Beirut public spaces made in chapter two and the mapping of Beirut Public spaces, helped us understand the Conceived space of the city. It highlights the importance of the Private sector "Solidere" in Beirut Post-war. In addition, the questions in survey 01 addressed to 117 people reveal the dominance of the private sector over the public sector in attracting the people to utilize the space, which proves the research question one. Zaitunay bay, a privately owned and managed public space is the number one destination for the people in Beirut. People are avoiding public spaces managed by authorities due to the lack of maintenance, safety, good facilities and management.

2- Addressing divisions in Beirut city starting with ethno-religious versus socio-economic distributions, reveal a different perception of space based on their collective memory of their city, and this fact is highly affecting their spatial practices.

Based on the survey, 94% of the people in Beirut confirm the existing division within the society, whether its class division or religious division. In addition the distribution of the churches and the mosques among the city evidently reveals how the nonphysical line remains, pointing out the dilemma of a divided society. The demarcation line still reflects division between Christian and Muslim communities on the urban fabric.

The astonishing outcome is a ten different answers about the Landmark in a city that has an area of 20km². In fact the people answers are affected by three factors: cultural background, religious belonging and political affiliation. This analysis of the Lived space in Beirut support research question number two.

3- The conceived and lived spaces which helped us realize the importance of the private sector and the divisions within the city, also contribute in understanding the Perceived space of Beirut. People confirm the lack of open public spaces in Beirut and assert the two aforementioned questions.

Urban planners and spatial organizations answer the following question: What Urban interventions can strengthen the relations between people from different backgrounds? Can re-injection and innovation of Open Public Spaces in Beirut contribute to the territorial cohesion of the city?

77% of the citizens confirm this research question number 3 and demand GREEN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES. As mentioned before only 1.8% of the surface of Beirut is green, this number has to be multiplied by 22 to reach the world health indicator.

4- Based on the surveys and the interviews, 100% of the citizens think that we should start by renovating our existing public spaces in order to attend the thesis target, then add at a later stage green open public spaces. The answers helped us reach an approach for the research question number 4, which is starting by renovating the Pine Forest in Beirut. The renovation strategies of the park will be elaborated in chapter four, in order to achieve a sustainable, creative and unified society through the innovation and improvement of open public spaces.

The whole aim of the analysis is to shed the light on Beirutis perception, opinion, demands and elaborate a project based on people requirement to create a sustainable reconciliation project.

Chapter Four: Spatial Intervention

With Beirut being a city lacking public spaces as stated by the public, the existing public spaces matter even more. This is why they deserve greater attention in research.

Mapping of Beirut's public spaces and the surveys were necessary to choose a site that contain a proposed intervention.

Healing wounds and building peace is not the exclusive responsibility of politicians. We, as architects and urban and regional planners, have a major role to play and a matching responsibility.”(Barakat, p.15, 1998).

1.1 Site Analysis

Beirut offers little public green spaces. The Pine Forest known as Horch was reopened in June 2016, after having been closed for 25 years. According to Annis Freihat, Beirut get its name from the Phoenician word Beriet or Egyptian word Barut that translates to Snawabar in Arabic, means Pine. This explain the association of Beirut with its unique pine forest known as Horch Beirut.

The latest design accredited, was conceived by the architects Jaques Sgar, Pierre Nehme and Effie Papadakis, sponsored by “Conseil Regional d’Ile de France”, organized by “Conseil d’Amenagemnt Urbain de la region d’Ile de France”, managed by “Agence des Espaces Verts de la Region d’Ile de France and the Lebanese company “Entreprise Generale” executed the project under the supervision of the Lebanese Council for development and reconstruction.

The design was completed in 11 June 1995. It provides three main gates for pedestrian access, 10 major zones including pathways, fountains, birds’ cage, children’s play area, amphitheater and car parking. Services such as guard houses and toilets rooms are accommodated in small structure. There are about 4500 pine trees, 900 other trees and more than 22000 different types of bushes, plants and flowers.

The park has been closed since then to protect the developing trees and plants. At certain time, it was open to public on Friday to observe the interaction between the frequenters and the new landscape. The municipality analyzed that frequenters are only affecting Horch negatively by harming the developing trees and the plants and many other reasons, such as vandalism, immoral conduct, sectarian tensions and love making... For all those reasons, the municipality decided to divide and fence Horch into two parts, an open part and a closed part. The access to the Park was limited to some people such as the upper class, for the rest of the citizens, to go inside, they need a special permit from the mayor. The park was closed for 25 years, because the municipality chose simply to close it instead of dealing with the problems.

The both part of the park are open now during the weekdays from 7AM till 1PM and weekends from 7AM till 7PM. **Fences of steel bars, wire mesh and barbed wire separate between two parts, the open Horch and the closed Horch, and their frequenters, which creates a kind of social segregation and different views of what a public space like Horch should be.**



Figure 52: Horch Beirut, the gate dividing the park into two zones. Taken by Chamoun , 2018



Figure 53: Horch Beirut, the non-Lebanese people in the Open area of the park. Taken by Chamoun, 2018

Open Part:

Through observation, it is clearly noticed that Open Horch attracts people from the nearby neighborhoods of Tareeq el-jdideh, Kaskas, Sabra, Chatila, Ghobeyri, Chiyah and Badaro where it is common that many of them are of low income socioeconomic groups. The correlation between physical attributes of open Horch and its frequenter's practices can be explaining the municipality's fencing and regulating logic.

Now the Open Horch is conquered by the non-Lebanese people specially the Syrian refugees.

Closed Part:

The closed part of the Horch represents almost all of the green area. As previously mentioned this part was closed to the public under the excuse that trees and plants are still developing while it is formerly accessed upon special permission from the mayor of Beirut, which is usually acquired through interpersonal links.

Today the access to this part is open but only to Lebanese people.

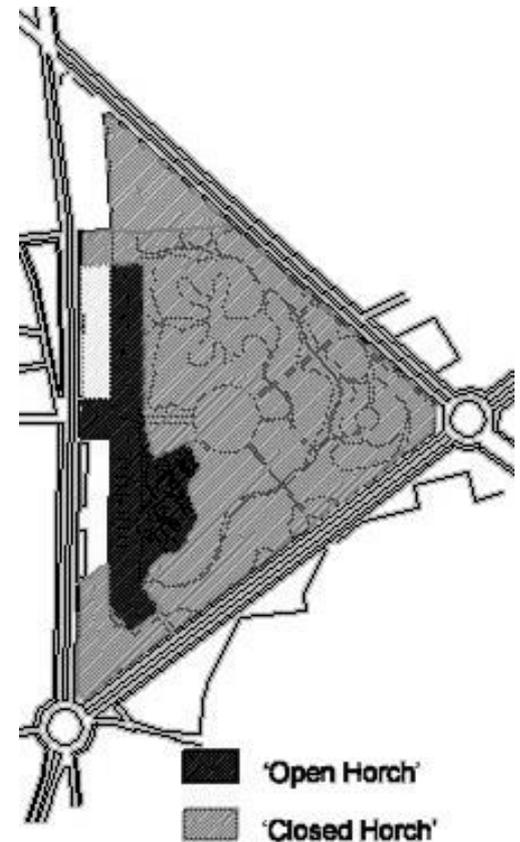


Figure 54: "Open" and "Closed" Horch. Source: Fadi Shayya

Diverse Practices in Horch:

Interviews with current frequenters of Horch reveal different views. One group values Horch, it includes the people who come for jogging, sports, picnics and meeting place. Another group addresses insecurity in Horch since they stigmatize it as Shaabi means popular where bad practices are related to low income groups and lower social classes. Another group looks at the park as hidden place for the teenagers who craves cigarettes or couples desiring intimacy.

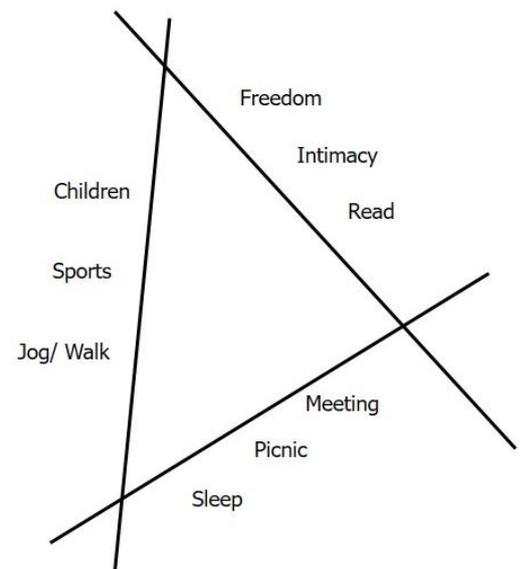


Figure 55: Diverse Practices in Horch. Made by Chamoun, 2018.

The Pine forest is the largest public park in Lebanon's capital. Originally covering 1.25 million square meters, the park's green area is reduced today to a triangle of around 330 000 square meters after years of abuse through history from cutting the trees to the planning of roads and the construction of buildings. As mentioned in chapter 3 the world health organization recommends of 9 square meter of green space per capita, in Beirut the ratio is no more than 0.8 square meter per inhabitant.

Even though the fact that the park is classified as a protected natural site since 1940 and it's a part of the general inventory of archaeological buildings and public landscapes, the municipality of Beirut recently took a series of decisions that will lead to the destruction of its remaining green space. The latest being the construction of a military field hospital inside the Horch and the Municipality is defending the project by saying that it is a temporary structure and that is a basic need for the neighborhood. The neighborhoods and other people who came from different regions are against the project totally. Nahnoo, a Lebanese Ngo, explained that the civil society is not against the hospital project but is against the site chosen for it as **the construction of the hospital which already started on the park is illegal because the Horch is classified zone 9 which means construction is strictly prohibited**. Furthermore, history proved that in Lebanon, nothing is temporary. Nahnoo added that the municipality argues that the site where the construction takes place is a parking lot and that no trees would be cut, the initial master plan of Horch Beirut as designed by "Ile de France" shows that the municipality was responsible of planting this area and that the parking was meant to be temporary.

"The planners should be able to distinguish between sick spaces and spaces linked to mental and social health which are generators of the hearth. As a physician of space, he should have the capacity to conceive of a harmonious social space." (Lefebvre, p.152, 1996).

When public spaces are successful, they will increase opportunities to participate in communal activity. If Horch Beirut can make people from different cultural groups come together in a supportive context of mutual enjoyment, public spaces become vessels to carry positive communal meanings.

"Democracy does not require perfect equality, but it does require that citizen's share in a common life. What matters is that people of different social backgrounds and different walk of life encounter one another, in the ordinary course of life, because this is what teaches us to negotiate and abide our differences." By Michael Sandel in his book why we shouldn't trust Markets.

Beirut citizens are in desperate need for a careful and responsive planning, especially when spaces is becoming a tool for division like in the case of Horch. Didactically, the need methods to understand, create and perform within the public realm. The ignorance and unawareness of any form of communal ownership and shared spaces is very evident and noticed in the city. **The problem currently in discussion is the poor management of the public sector, the division within the park, access restriction, lack of facilities and recently the destruction of the biggest remaining green area in the capital.** From a wider perspective, merging private and public domains could be an opportunity rather than a downside. But how can this be implemented?

1.2 Proposed Strategy

As already shown, the park is facing many challenges. First, the ongoing construction which will erase the last green spot in Beirut, second Horch reflect the existing division within the city, finally the lack of management and service facilities.

As mentioned earlier, public spaces in cities define the protocols for cohabitation used by a community to build a society. **Like everything else that is given, these spaces will not be sustainable if not built through the work of the people.**

Quality public spaces attract a wide cross section of the public and the consequent mix of people contributes to the vibrancy of towns.

Important elements in design for inclusion include:

- A design that aims to include people of all age groups and social strata.
- A design that draws on public consultation and involvement.
- Local spaces that embrace local involvement in their design, purpose and management.
- Spaces with a range of security regimes.

In order to establish sustainable shared spaces that promote communal behaviors for the public users and generate financial revenue for the shareholders, a proposed strategy that ensures a long term consistency and extends over several phases will be discussed below.

The concept is inspired from the concept of place of Montgomery, and it is based on a comprehensive thinking in order to design a context for human interaction based on three major principles:

1. Indefinite structure or Image meaning based on Montgomery as symbol of space which invites the public to relate to the history, memory and character of the space. Empower the symbolic meaning of space.
2. Temporary structure or Activity which allows flexibility and possibility of future modifications of the space. For example building with lightweight deployable structures according to the events that will take place in the park. Subsequently an interactive platform will be created between the shareholders, the private and public sectors and the people.
3. Incomplete structure or Physical setting that involve the public realm to give their input and participate in the notion of decision making. This structure needs time to achieve.

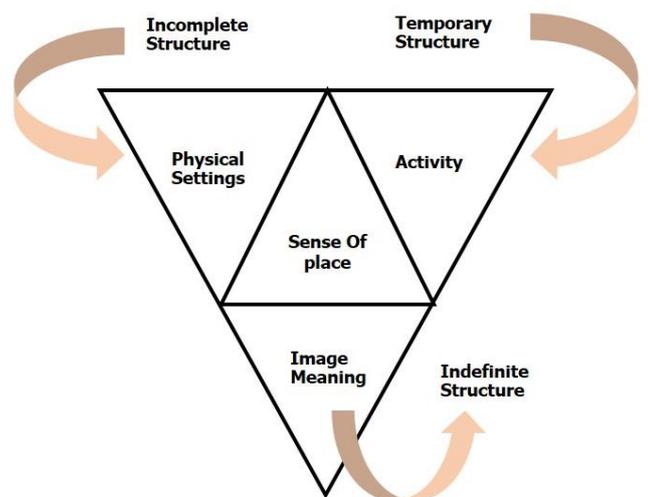


Figure 56: Interpretation of Montgomery Concept of place into three strategies. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Hence, the project intend to empower the concept of sharing through innovative interactive spatial interventions ensuing eco-friendly and environmentally sustainable standards.

The rise of the mix: The value of public spaces and social infrastructure to urban economies should come into sharper focus. The era of centrally-planned single use business districts is being replaced by a focus of a mix: **Mixed use, mixed public-private provision and management and mixed offer that attract innovative firms and workers to these places.**

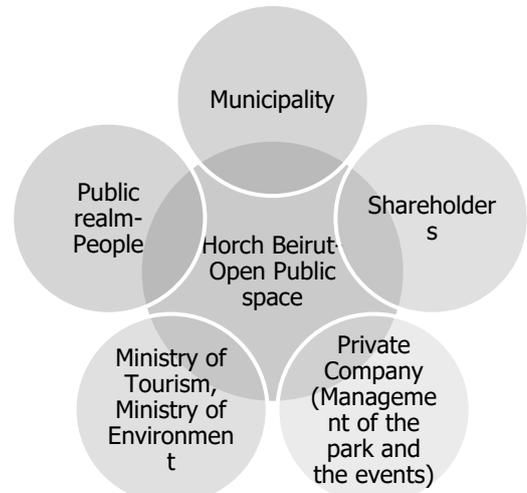


Figure 57: The rise of the mix, mixed provision and management. Made by Chamoun, 2018

STAND UP FOR OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

Solution : How ?

Involvement of International organization. Involvement of Ministries of Environment and Tourism/ Shareholders. Eco friendly system.

Mixed use Design plan, public consultation and involvement

Mixed Public/ Private management. Involvement of people, shareholders in decision making.



Figure 58: A description of the current situation and the proposed strategies to achieve the desired situation. Made by Chamoun, 2018

1- Involvement of international organizations and the involvement of the Ministries to create an eco-friendly project, to obtain a healthy and sustainable park, and to maintain the Image meaning of the pine forest.

The call for the help of international organizations into stopping the construction in the Pine Forest will shed the light on the importance of Green Public Spaces in Beirut city and will create an international concern about the importance of the Horch. Hence, The concerned ministries in Lebanon such as the ministry of tourism and ministry of Environment can also stop the ongoing construction, and transform the park into a healthy and sustainable site. The ministries will contribute in making the site autonomous as implementing innovative self-sufficient strategies and experimentations. (Solar power, wind energy...). They can also supervise any temporary structure that will be implemented in the park to make sure it complies with the ecosystem norms.

2- Mixed use Public / Private management and Provision in order to create a creative and sustainable society

The actors involved in the first step are the stakeholders who will ensure the site management and coordinate with the governmental officials. To activate the space, with the help of a private sector, a set of events and markets (**Temporary structure**) should be scheduled all yearlong, which will help to grow the trust of the public as they experience a new form of spatial innovation unseen before in Beirut. People tend to stay longer in public spaces that offer interest and stimulation and a degree of comfort. Observation data show that people appreciate and look for special events and activities in public spaces. Unique and special events and activities in public also grab the attention and help to define places as interesting. Sanayeh garden has been newly renovated, but according to the collected opinions, the park isn't a trending attraction because it lacks the suitable management. Hence, the renovation of public spaces is not enough in Beirut, what is more important is the efficient management of these places.

Beirut has a special current situation which has led to a dominance by a certain group of people. Imposing certain fee might be necessary to avoid this overused of the place, and to make sure that everyone has a spot. The fee will be allocated to the maintenance of the park.

3- Mixed use Design plan in order to create a project to all types of visitors. (Unified society) (Incomplete structure)

It consists on mixed use concept where all visitors will be able to use and enjoy the Pine Forest as they wish, based on the spatial practices already analyzed. The park is intended to be filled with life all year long. We can redesign the park into three zones:

First zone: Botanical garden, where people can enjoy the green area to relax, to read...

Second Zone: Zone dedicated for activities such as skating park, playground, outside gym...

Third Zone: Cultural, Public programs and community events with space for markets, festival, outdoor exhibitions and installation. The time factor is critical in this case, as it allows the public from different backgrounds, to gradually get acquainted to the concept of shared space until they become eager to improve this space and eventually care for the common good.

This program clearly invites all actors to take role in the inclusive urban renovation of Horch highlighting all the major targets on the social, environmental and financial levels and therefore contributing to social cohesion.

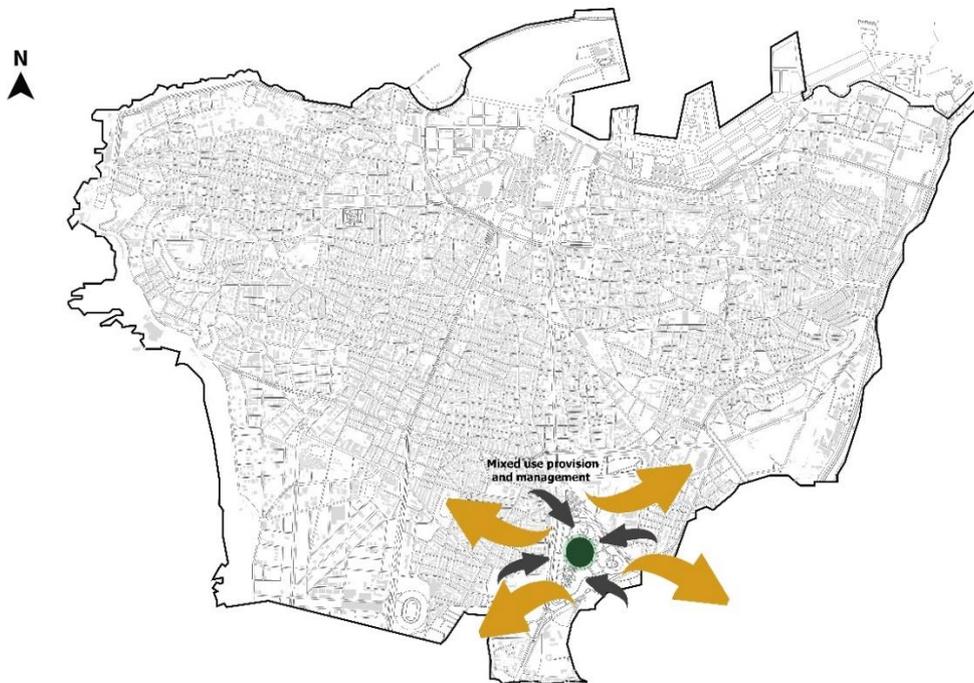


Figure 59: Horch Beirut Intervention concept, Phase one. Made by Chamoun, 2018

Renovating the park is like injecting new blood in the veins of the city and reviving an aspect of cohesion lost a long time ago.

This will be considered as the first step of the plan towards a sustainable and unified society. The next step will start by the renovation of Sioufi garden, Saint Nicolas garden, Sanayeh garden and Mufti Hassan Garden to finally link all the green public spaces in Beirut together in order to create a wider interactive platform in the capital.

The link can be created through events and festivals, which will promote socialization between people from different backgrounds.

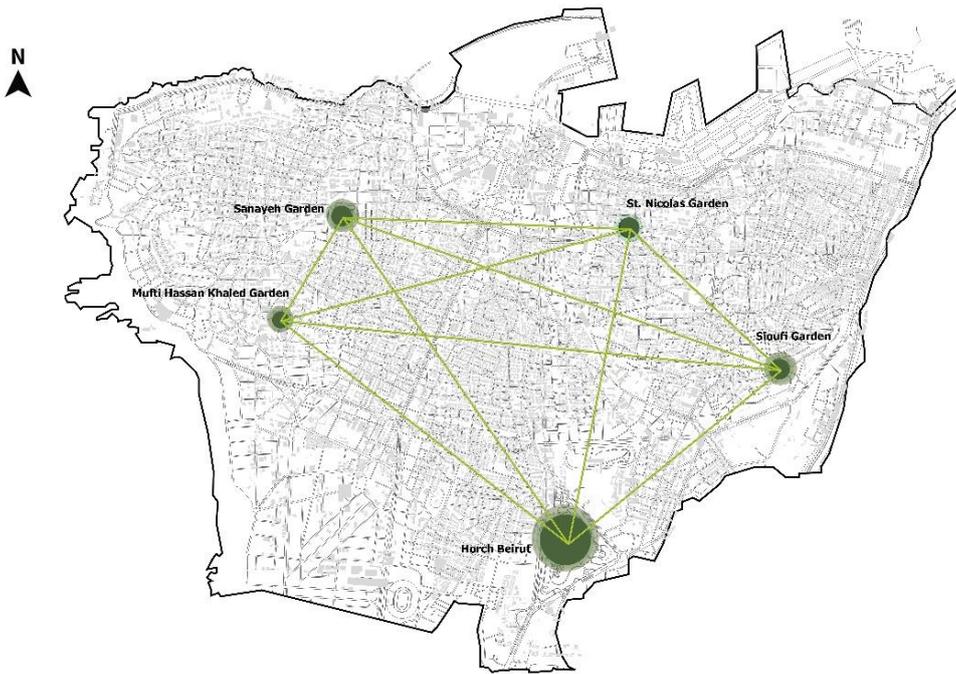


Figure 60: Intervention concept, Phase two: Creating a link between several public spaces in order to create a bigger interactive platform. Made by Chamoun, 2018

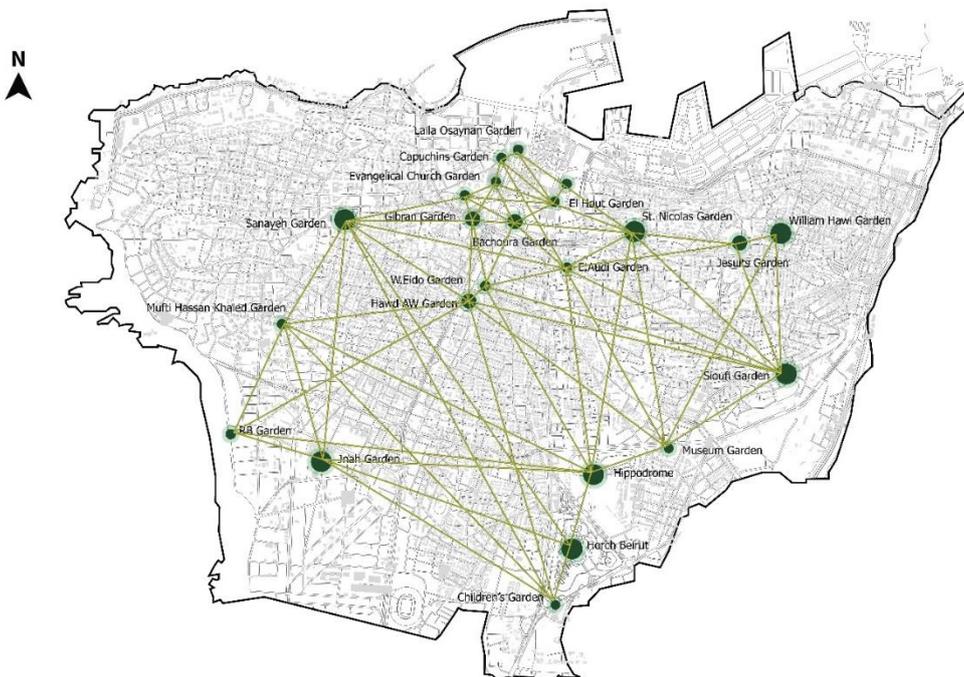


Figure 61: Intervention concept, phase three: Creation of a wider interactive platform in Beirut city through the open public spaces. Made by Chamoun, 2018

1.2 Conclusion

The proposed strategy aims for creating a network of sites, of opportunities that influence each community and emphasize the necessity of sharing on the path of a sustainable and unified society for Beirut city.

Horch, as shared space, is an important factor in the success of a Unified Beirut, helping build a sense of community, civic identity and preserve cultural heritage. This facilitates social capital, economic development and community revitalization, where the public realm has a say in decision making, and where environmental sustainable design, social interactions from different calibers of the society are encouraged. The proposed strategies in Horch can represent a prototype for the rest of the gardens in Beirut creating a Unified and sustainable city. The strategies need time to be applied before we can reach this level of connectivity between regions through the events held in the public spaces.

Conclusion

"It is necessary for our society to have GREEN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES where individuals can interact". Citizens of Beirut

Post war Beirut provides an interesting material for a thesis on open public spaces as a tool for social cohesion. In a city prone to instability on all levels whether economic, social, political and religious; the development of open public spaces is the least of politicians concerns so let alone a social reconciliation project.

As a matter of fact, Open public spaces play a fundamental role in urban structure and city life, they are considered a privileged element in order to promote social cohesion.

The main aim of the analysis is to shed the light on Beirut is perceptions, opinions and demands and to understand the conceived, lived and perceived space of post war Beirut through their eyes in order to shape a spatial intervention based on their requirements, as a way to resolve the mentioned issue by creating a sustainable and social reconciliation strategy.

Considering the government's ongoing failure to form an effective Lebanese statehood, the project proposes to rethink the construction of a functioning state as a process of developing a regional social role of the city and a productive political identity for its citizens.

As per surveys, people think that is necessary for our city to have open public spaces especially green spaces where individuals can interact.

Until very recently, public spaces issues and urban issues were completely absent from the agenda of the NGOs and activists. An increasing number of youth groups and activists criticize the way authorities have been managing urban policies since they are concerned with making the city a more livable place. They have been voicing their opinions, via blogs and social media, as well as through actively mobilizing in NGOs or looser type of networks.

Nahnoo, Masha3, Dictaphone Group, Paint up and Beirut Green Project and many others NGOs have been actively involved in addressing the problem of public spaces in Beirut. In addition to these civil society groups, artist are also contributing in activating public spaces across the city, and politicizing spaces through tagging and visual appropriation. All these initiatives reveal the emergence of new young voices actively concerned about their rights to public spaces and experiences.

Corruption is the main reason why more profitable initiatives are favored over open public spaces.

- 1- Corruption within the government, a weak quasi-state that twenty years after the end of the civil war is still coming to terms with sectarian divisions and political corruption, and is exacerbated by the privatization of the center of its capital by real estate management company Solidere. Public spaces is the least of politicians concern. From their point of view, public spaces are a waste of space that can be used to gain profit.
- 2- Private sector is the solution in Beirut's case according to people themselves, since their basic rights and quality of life have never been the main concern of the public sector but rather making profit and gaining money.

A Rebellion is the only way for the Lebanese people to change the current situation and ask for their rights for public spaces. They can also resort to international organizations as a means to put pressure on the local authorities. Several internal NGOs are raising these demands but they cannot make any effective change without an external help.

Henri Lefebvre underscores how people should own the city, have a take in its process of spatial intervention and claim it as right, through their practices and experiences, especially in the cities open spaces. Lefebvre explains how the loss of this ownership, seized by ruling authorities who conceive and manage the city according to their own capital-based interests, have made most people disconnect from its spaces and their rights to practice and its public domain. (1992).

By nature, public space is neutral, which is useful in allowing different activities to take place. Hence the neutrality needs an extra framework to allow for a shared use of its space when conflict of interest arises. In the case of Beirut, the open public spaces need to be renovated and well managed to be successful.

Therefore, to ensure that public spaces are well used and maintained it is necessary to involve the local residents in the process of shaping the conditions of life in the neighborhood, which can lead to a sense of ownership in the community. The creation of a sense of attachment to the area is a key node to ensure the continuity of an environmental care and quality. Hence, public spaces can only be improved through developing partnerships with stakeholders from public, private and voluntary sector as well as the local residents. Horch Beirut is an example of how public spaces can become a tool of division.

If Horch Beirut can make people from different cultural groups come together in a supportive context of mutual enjoyment, public spaces turn vessels that carry positive communal meanings. The park, as a shared space, is an important factor in the success of a United Beirut, helping build a sense of community, civic identity and preserve cultural heritage. This facilitates economic community revitalization, where the public realm has a say in decision making, and where environmental sustainable design, social interactions from different calibers of the society are encouraged.

In Conclusion, this study validates the role of the planner as a mediator for a unified community and the importance of involving people as a key to ensure the space sustainability.

This thesis investigates the potential of urban planning in shaping and acquiring political agency in the context of the city. Specifically, it looks at the role of planning in the social construction of the capital city, and questions its ability to both form and signify the state.

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Innovation of Public Spaces in Beirut_Lebanon

ABSTRACT

After sixteen years of Brutal Civil War, Beirut is being rebuilt. Periods of Post-War reconstruction are often the backdrop for new socio-economic and political dynamics.

The Public spaces in Lebanon are on the verge of extinction due to the excessive privatization, massive disrespect of laws and regulations and the lack of government authority. The purpose of this research is to analyze and introduce a new vision for Sustainable Urban Strategy through Beirut Public Spaces, as an initiator for building a unified community, and a crucial factor to boost the economy

KEY WORDS

Public Space – Innovation – Sustainability – Creative city – Community – Culture – Private sector – Beirut Lebanon

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