FRIENDS OR FOES? LEBANESE YOUTH PERCEPTIONS OF
THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON FROM A TRANSITIONAL
JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE

by
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Friends or Foes? Lebanese Youth Perceptions of the Palestinians in Lebanon from a Transitional Justice Perspective

The issue of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon has been addressed quite thoroughly throughout the academic literature. With topics ranging from the Palestinian refugees' unique socio-political circumstances in Lebanon to detailed descriptions of the dire living conditions this marginalized group endure throughout all the camps in Lebanon with no exception, this literature has offered great insight on the Palestinian factor in Lebanon. However, what is mostly lacking in these studies is the research of the perceptions of the Lebanese towards the Palestinians in Lebanon: the viewpoints the Lebanese hold towards the Palestinians residing in their homeland and the many debates that come along with it. The few studies that cover this topic often focus on the attitudes of the generation that lived through the Lebanese Civil War, with emphases on certain religions or sects.

In this research, I will be concerned with the perceptions that Lebanese private university students of all religions hold towards the Palestinians in Lebanon, in light of the topics of collective memory of the Lebanese Civil War, Transitional Justice and Reconciliation. These middle and upper-middle class students were born either during or after the civil war, having formed their attitudes and ideas about the Palestinian refugees mostly from their environment and from collective memory. Although I will be drawing my analysis from Euro-American literature on collective memory and transitional justice, I will attempt to apply these ideals onto a Lebanese context. In this study, I aim to identify the different views these university students have, and, specifically, attempt to link them together and compare them with the perceptions of their parents' generation, to see whether these opinions vary greatly or slightly. In addition to reviewing literature on the perceptions the previous generations hold (focusing mostly on Haddad, 2003), I will rely greatly on my empirical analysis which will be concluded from the 30 in-depth interviews I conducted with these students (see Appendix 1 and 2). My objective is to form a detailed study of the accounts and narratives of the Lebanese youth group towards the Palestinians in Lebanon, as well as depicting the various attitudes the youth hold towards forgetting or remembering the past, the possibility of the application of transitional justice in Lebanon and future reconciliation attempts between both sides. This is crucial for a country such as Lebanon, one that has obviously not recovered from its cruel and bloody civil war.
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To my mother,

Daisy
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

- George Santayana, 1985: 284

Lebanese inevitably agree that any sort of dialogue about the Lebanese Civil War eventually leads to severe political and religious repercussions – in particular, extreme sensitivities that could easily tamper with the fragile confessional system. This gave the act of collective amnesia in Lebanon a structured, tough backbone. It is generally accepted that any mention of the Lebanese Civil War goes beyond the bounds of polite conversation in Lebanese society. It is apparent that the wound has not healed yet. Even the Arabic language itself has been altered to avoid tampering with such a dangerous topic, a phenomenon that has been greatly spoken of by the foreign media: “When they mention the civil war at all, many Lebanese refer to it as ‘the events’, or, indulging the notion that foreigners were mainly to blame, ‘the war of the others’. “\(^1\)

While carrying out a normal conversation with any member of Lebanese society nowadays, it is not hard to identify the fact that most Lebanese citizens undoubtedly admit

that Lebanon has not yet recovered from the disastrous effects of the Lebanese Civil War – and that Lebanon might not fully recover in the future. Consequently, it is not hard to distinguish the overwhelming threat that most Lebanese citizens don’t deny feeling: the genuine, real fear of another go at the Lebanese Civil War looming on the horizon, either in the near future or in several generations to come. It has become crystal clear to the Lebanese that grudges can easily be awaken: bitterness and feelings of resentment that most Lebanese citizens hold towards certain political groups, parties or confessional groups as a result of the atrocities that took place during the Lebanese Civil War. Not only do these sentiments undermine the so-called “reconciliation” and “peace” that political leaders have hailed about incessantly after the Ta’if agreements until this very day, but they are also transferred from generation to generation, chipping away at possible true reconciliation and peace efforts that could take place between the various parties in Lebanon led by members of the future generations. Such feelings have been transmitted easily from parents to offspring, aiding parents in forming the mindset of their children, children who did not live through the civil war as their parents did. Moreover, the induction of the warlords into the Lebanese government and the subsequent passing of the General Amnesty law both contributed to the common narrative that is constantly rewritten by the country’s leaders: that Lebanon’s war is over, and we should “turn the page”. Through these methods, Lebanon has – forcefully – succumbed to the dominance of a culture of collective amnesia, reinforced by the absence of accountability, truth, and justice. In order for one to speak of collective memory in Lebanon one must bring up the notion of collective amnesia: for many years Lebanon has not struggled to remember what happened during the civil war, but struggled to forget. For most Lebanese, collective amnesia comes in quite handy: while
covering the literature pertaining to the historical accounts, events and consequences of the Lebanese Civil War, one narrative appears to be dominant: that most Lebanese – and in particular, the Christians – blame the Palestinians for the start and subsequent fueling of the civil strife that took place for about 15 years. The role many Lebanese played in the civil war seems to have been conveniently forgotten – through blaming the Palestinians for the civil war, many political aims were successfully won: Palestinians were marginalized even further, reduced to bare lives in spaces of exception where they are not even granted the right to work or live with dignity. The questionably large responsibility given to the Palestinian refugees concerning the Lebanese Civil War in addition to the politically-sensitive issues surrounding their stay in Lebanon in the refugee camps has hindered remembrance of the civil war even further.

The issue of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has been addressed quite thoroughly throughout the academic literature. With topics ranging from the Palestinian refugees' unique socio-political circumstances in Lebanon to detailed descriptions of the dire living conditions this marginalized group endure throughout all the camps in Lebanon with no exception, this literature has offered great insight on the Palestinian factor in Lebanon. However, what is mostly lacking in these studies is the research of the perceptions of the Lebanese towards the Palestinians in Lebanon. The few studies that cover this topic often focus on the attitudes of the generation that lived through the Lebanese Civil War, with emphases on certain sects.

In this research, I will be concerned with the perceptions that Lebanese private university students of all religions hold towards the Palestinians in Lebanon, in light of the
topics of collective memory of the Lebanese Civil War, transitional justice and reconciliation. These students were born either during or after the civil war, having formed their attitudes about the Palestinian refugees mostly from their environment and from collective memory. In this study, I aim to identify the different views these university students have, and, specifically, attempt to link them together and compare them with the perceptions of their parents’ generation, to see whether these attitudes vary greatly or slightly. In addition to reviewing literature on the perceptions the previous generations hold (focusing mostly on Haddad, 2003), I will rely greatly on my empirical analysis which will be concluded from the 30 in-depth interviews I conducted with these students. I will certainly not pretend that the attitudes expressed by this group of students represent the attitudes of all the youth in Lebanon but I intend to show what kind of attitudes the Lebanese youth can have and what these attitudes are related to. My objective is to study the accounts and narratives of the Lebanese youth group towards the Palestinians in Lebanon, as well as depict the various attitudes the youth hold towards forgetting or remembering the past. This is crucial for a country such as Lebanon, one that has obviously not recovered from its cruel and bloody civil war. Transitional justice, although a fairly new domain, can offer Lebanon some closure concerning the issue of the civil war, and especially offer help with confronting the past, remembering it, dealing with it and honoring it in the proper manner and most importantly aid in the reconciliation progress between the Lebanese and the Palestinians.

Transitional justice can be defined in several ways. The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) refers to it as “a range of approaches that societies undertake to
reckon with legacies of widespread or systematic human rights abuse as they move from a period of violent conflict or oppression towards peace, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for individual and collective rights.” Hany Megally (2007), in a lecture at the Lawyer’s Union in Beirut, insisted that justice should be reached on the levels of both state and civil society. Transitional justice constitutes a field of inquiry and activity at the intersection of jurisprudence, politics and sociology that takes hold during times of political flux (such as totalitarianism, civil war, and colonialism) to facilitate a smooth transition from societal chaos into societal stability, and hopefully, a more democratic or peaceful future.

As Lebanon is a country in transition – since the majority of Lebanese have inadequately dealt with the ghosts of their past – I believe that transitional justice may lay the pathway for future efforts in arousing Lebanese collective memory, helping us to deal with our disastrous past and aid in reconciliation efforts, especially in Lebanese youth. Tensions run high when university students tackle the topic of the war and the role of the many parties in the bloody fighting that took place. For instance, I have witnessed first-hand – particularly during elections time – university students holding opposing political views yet claiming to be friends ending up in cut-throat arguments as a result of insults and comments thrown around generously concerning the history of each respective party with regards to the Lebanese Civil War.

The imperative for the success of such a transition from conflict to sustainable peace is the painful confrontation of the legacy and burden of the past in order to not only achieve justice, to reconcile people and communities, but most importantly, to prevent such future abuses from occurring. The need of this new discipline to deal with justice in a certain setting and at a particular moment, in addition to the importance to deal with the past, has many justifications. First of all, no one size fits all: there is no judicial rule applicable in one country that could be applicable to another – and during times of transition after a conflict, a country is in need of rules that serve the country’s own culture, society and values, not those of another country imposed on them. Thus, looking at the past is essential to establishing proper institutions that cater law and justice to both the victims and perpetrators of crimes and injustices. Second, establishing democracy is essential after civil strife, as well assuring justice to perpetrators and making sure victims. This cannot take place without a thorough look at the past. Furthermore, peace-building does not come without looking at the past, and learning lessons from it.

The repeated action of closing and opening the page of our troubled past now resembles a Lebanese national sport. Today, however, with the domain of transitional justice and those in Lebanon who believe in its beneficence, we have become nearer to overcoming this memory and achieving a better future. In this study, I also intend to show that we cannot turn the page unless the history has been thoroughly covered – thus stressing on the need to confront our past. Yes, the truth can be bitter, and yes, the truth sometimes

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hurts. Yet it is our duty in Lebanon to face up to the truth, however demanding it is. Lebanon is a country of victims and the entire nation has suffered from the past in many different ways. Accepting what happened in the past is painful, costly, and lengthy and takes lots of energy and commitment. But it is about time that the Lebanese acknowledge their current situation and know that things are not right. The transfer of civil strife and violence transpires so rapidly in Lebanon – the events of the past year alone are enough proof that something is severely wrong in the fabric of Lebanese society. We must not simply let go and allow the past take care of itself. We have allowed what we choose to remember and what we choose to forget to narrow our identity, yet it is not too late to turn everything around. The building of a common memory is where we build trust between the different parties in Lebanon, rely on our own experience together to get us through political hardships and will ultimately permit us to state in unison that we will never let such an atrocity as the Lebanese Civil War to happen again.

To support my hypotheses, my empirical research will be divided into four different sections: in the first, I will be studying Lebanese youth culture as a whole, determining how similar the students are to their parents. In the second part, I tackle their memories of the Lebanese Civil War: the ways through which they remember what took place between 1975 and 1990, knowing they do not have direct memories of the war. Under this heading, I aim to determine whether the youth predominantly tie the Palestinians to the events of the civil war, and to see whether they blame them for the war as the majority of the members of their parents’ generation did. In the third part, I intend to show the perceptions that the youth hold of Palestinians in Lebanon today, as well as their attitudes towards the
Palestinian refugees’ socio-political situation, tawtin, and the lack of rights given to this marginalized group, as well as highlight the different solutions the youth envisions that would, in their opinions, help the Palestinians overcome their hardships. In the last section, I cover transitional justice and reconciliation with the youth, asking them their attitudes about remembering the past, whether they are open to reconciliation with the Palestinians and finally I highlight the importance of the PLO’s Palestinian Declaration in Beirut to determine the concrete issues that the youth have with the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. As an extra exercise, I asked the students I interviewed to read a couple of texts on the Palestinian issue in Lebanon and comment honestly on what they had read.

I begin my study with a literature review of the different concepts I shall be tackling in my empirical analysis.
A. Collective Memory or Collective Amnesia?

For countries that have experienced a civil war, remembering does not come easy. Reminiscence of civil wars has proven to be exceptionally difficult, especially when nation-states come to commemorate the war’s beginning, ending or particular events that took place in between: what one faction may celebrate, memorialize and honor as acceptable and true, the other might see as offensive and false. Moreover, if the dissimilarities between the various groups of the nation are large – such as the religious and political differences of the parties that took part in the Lebanese Civil War – it is extremely problematic to reach a generally accepted explanation of what happened during that war which could be adapted by every single citizen of that nation. This is the very reason why Lebanon has not been able to agree on one history books that can be taught throughout schools in Lebanon.

Moving on, arenas of articulation of these memories most likely only include the members of one certain faction that took part in the war and not the others. In addition, the agencies that articulate the Lebanese Civil War most often include only certain people of certain factions and although not outspokenly limiting membership to the opposing group of people, this will, on many levels, cause divisions throughout the nation-state. This is clearly what has been observed in Lebanon when it comes to collective memory of the civil war.
Since the end of the Lebanese Civil War in 1990, the question “to forget or not to forget” has provoked great divisions among Lebanese society – some calling for the closure of the files of the past, and others insisting that the Ta’if created a superficial reconciliation that cannot be avoided unless memories, stories and truth about the civil war is made public. People question if it is right to remember or right to forget, and most importantly, question the presence or absence of collective memory in Lebanon. What is collective memory, and how can it be situated, particularly in Lebanon? How could Lebanese citizens speak of the civil war without speaking of the clear sectarian divisions that fueled the war? Is a unified Lebanese collective memory far from possible?

B. Collective Amnesia in Lebanon

It is not a mere coincidence that the words amnesty and amnesia are both written and pronounced with quite similar beginnings. In fact, these words are both closely tied etymologically. The world ‘amnesty’ is defined as “a period during which offenders are exempt from punishment” and also as ‘a pardon of past offenses’, and defines the term ‘amnesia’ as ‘a complete or partial loss of memory’\(^4\). Although these meanings may seem a world apart, a quick look at any etymology dictionary reveals the unknown truth: amnesty is derived from the Greek term \textit{amnestia}\(^5\), meaning ‘to forget and ‘oblivion’ – the same meaning as the word amnesia. Thinking further, one would seem to realize that in order to give someone amnesty you should be able to completely forget everything that person did.

\(^4\) As defined on \url{http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn} (accessed on December 10, 2006).

But does this necessarily mean that in order to forgive and forget, you should allow yourself not to remember anything at all?

People tend to place great importance on remembrance, yet forgetting holds as much magnitude and relevance as holding things in mind. It is beyond our means as humans of being mentally capable of remembering every single thing that occurs in our lives. Forgetting at times seems to lead to benefit more than to nuisance. In fact, if human beings were able to remember every simple event that happened we would be left incapable of either discrimination or generalization (Lowenthal, 1999).

Forgetting on an individual level is mostly involuntary. Collective oblivion, on the other hand – in other words, total amnesia on a large scale spanning a society or a nation – is more than often intentional, deliberate, premeditated and regulated (Lowenthal, 1999). Lowenthal (1999) describes this as the ‘Art of Forgetting’: a lengthy endeavor that leads to a general determination of what is right to keep in our minds and what is wrong and should be forgotten and set aside, what to save in our minds and keep revived in our memory and what to discard and place in the past.

A certain amount of forgetfulness about previous events is required in all societies and in all countries, but not just any kind – it is the ‘artfully selective’ amnesia that is essential. Every nationality, culture, community and even family goes through certain processes in order to determine what to keep in mind and what to send into oblivion. Things that embody tradition such as funerals, monuments and symbols, and most importantly that which embodies power – the state – all aid in helping the members of a
certain society to determine what they should selectively remember or simply not recall. It could be necessary for political life to have achieved a certain degree of amnesia (Forty, 1999). Yet it is not permissible to enter a complete state of forgetfulness, as was the case of the Lebanese after the civil war. Any group wishing to publicly commemorate the war and institute methods that could pronounce Lebanese collective memory tends to moves forward with extreme caution, since the sectarian divisions and prejudices that were brought forward during the Lebanese Civil War still rule deep – even in the generation that was born during or after the war.

Officially and legally sanctioned amnesia has buried memories of the war and prohibited the Lebanese from drawing lessons from it. The General Amnesty Law passed into function after the end of Lebanese social strife in 1991 acts as a main deterrent to widespread public discussion of the war and any possibility of constructive dialogue on several levels. The General Amnesty Law was passed for the “morally deprived Lebanese to give each other a chance to wipe the slate clean, and for the leaders to remain in their seats” (Haugbolle, 2002). This law embodies the statement of *la ghalib wa la maghloub*: no victor and no vanquished. According to this law, there lies a presiding notion of neither winner nor loser of the Lebanese Civil War, with all political crimes pardoned. However, Palestinians increasingly seemed to fall outside the category of the pardoned, as pointed out by Fawwaz Traboulsi (2007): “At the time of the Ta’if conference, a party had to be found to bear the blame for the disastrous consequences of the many wars fought during the 1975-1990 period. These wars came to an end of sorts, but without an honest reckoning and accounting of the responsibilities that had led to them. […] The only party left out of this
equation were the Palestinians. The other parties at the Ta’if conference had thus found the perfect scapegoat that would unite them all – the Palestinian side – which they thus turned into all of the following: the cause and object of that murky ‘conspiracy’ that led to be feared, the reason that there had been internal wars, and the constant danger to fend off against, then and in the future. This made it extremely difficult for discussion or analysis of the war to take place, throwing the question of the civil war into a vicious cycle. Thus, it comes to no surprise that the Lebanese cannot come to a consensus when it comes to the manner of dealing with the memory of the civil war. However, Lebanon’s indifference to its recent history poses many great risks, the greatest of them being that it carries the danger of repeating the past.

The notion of collective memory has also been played down by the warlords that directly entered the government after the Ta’if agreement, and whom later on would be recycled into the same or different posts year after year. These warlords turned politicians, along with the help of the General Amnesty Law they passed, assumed that forgetting would ensure civil calm – keeping them in their government positions, and maintaining their political power. The Lebanese civil war was turned into a horrible event in Lebanon’s history that everyone should erase from their minds. In the words of Samir Khalaf (1993:54): “Had the war been a heroic or redemptive experience, through which Lebanon sought to recover its lost integrity and virtue or transformed itself into a secular and more viable entity, then there would be no problem in representing such a ‘glorious’ national

event. The war, alas, in both its origin and consequences, has neither been a source of collective inspiration nor consensus.” Thus, to escape the burden of the atrocities of the war, many Lebanese resorted to the ‘Art of Forgetting’ (Forty, 1999).

In the past few years, Lebanon has seen various attempts trying to bring to light the significance of remembering the civil war that have mostly been futile, since the state and its institutions – governed by warlords of the Lebanese Civil War, nonetheless – have made it perfectly clear that the general Lebanese narrative does not sponsor any open discussion related to the past. In fact, there is widespread, almost unanimous unwillingness present in the leading politicians of Lebanon concerning probing into the actions of the civil war. This in turn has affected efforts to bring forth a Lebanese collective memory on a nationwide scale – not a collective memory on a religious sect or political party scale – greatly. The need for a Lebanese collective memory of the civil war is of great significance, since the very aim of collective memory after times of violent social conflict is reflected by the approach of transitional justice, which I will introduce later. Justice for those who feel they were wronged during the Lebanese Civil War – whether emotionally, psychologically or physically – cannot be achieved without a comprehensive analysis of the past, in order both to educate society about the perils of repeating such acts as well as to allow them to proclaim that these horrendous acts will not occur "ever again”.

C. Situating Collective Memory

The book ‘The Mind of a Mnemonist’ (1987) by Russian psychologist Alexander Luria portrayed the story of a man who had an extraordinary capability to remember
absolutely anything he wanted. He took his skill to the stage, giving audiences the thrill of
their lives by reciting – and with no mistakes – poetry, novels, or anything the audience
asked him to remember. One might desire such an ability, yet this feat did not come without
a price: the man began to face the intense pressure of his mind being clogged up with
unwanted memories. He wanted to forget what he didn’t need to remember anymore. After
trying various methods and reaching no avail, he tried writing the memories he did not want
anymore on a piece of paper, thinking that if writing things on paper to remember them
worked for normal people, then maybe the complete opposite would go for him. Alas, this
didn’t work, and he burned every single paper he had written (Luria, 1987). The
mneumonist’s example is a simple anecdote proving that in order to pursue a normal life,
one must be able to forget (Forty, 1999:1). But not only is an individual in need to
disregard certain memories in order to carry on with life, but society as a whole as well.
Societies worldwide, through cultures, traditions and norms, have determined what should
be remembered and what should be forgotten. This is the essence of collective memory.

Collective memory is an expression invented by Maurice Halbwachs, differentiating
greatly from the notion of individual memory. Contrary to individual memory which is the
memory that every individual holds on his or her own, collective memory is held by a
family, community, society or nation and is also constructed, shared and passed on by that
same large group. It can also be defined as a method of interaction between public memory
and private (individual) memory. Most importantly, it is considered the “process of
reconstructing the representation of the past in light of the present” (Teitel, 2000:71).
Nowadays, people have been focusing greatly on the notion of collective memory,
especially in nations that were overridden by wars and large injustices and that are currently
going through a changeover period where a lot has to be decided on what is to be
remembered and what is to be forgotten. In those societies, the notion of collective memory
tends to raise an extremely crucial question: after this hard period they have faced, how
should those societies construct their pasts in a history that is collectively accepted by all
and comprehended as true? This collective memory is created in structured frameworks and
enhanced by symbols, monuments, experiences and rituals, all differing from one society
and culture to another. These structured frameworks lie in the greater frame of transitional
justice, which I will cover later.

The definition of collective differs according to the field in which it is analyzed. But
in all cases, it is perceived as the transmission of a shared experience that has been retained
by a certain group that survives with each generation (Barash, 2007). When studying
collective memory, whether in sociology, anthropology or psychology, two key problems
tend to arise, which are particularly evident when tackling collective memory (or the lack
thereof) in Lebanon. The first problem concerns the idea of personal memory versus that of
the collective: how may a nation with so many sectarian and ethnic differences form a
collective memory under a principle of cohesion linking individual, personal memories
together? The second problem deals with the need for awareness that the memory of a
group such as that of the Druze or that of the Christians may differ greatly than the
collective memory the nation is aspiring towards (Barash, 2007). But how can we locate
collective memory in a society such as that in Lebanon?
Collective memory can be located at many distinct levels by the communicative power of symbols. Symbols allow the notion of memory to move past personal experiences in order to collectively evoke remembrance (Barash, 2007). In fact, it is the cultural symbols themselves that stir up the need for meaningful reminiscence. At the same time, it is the force that these symbols induce in society that permits collective memory to constitute the roots of continuity of each separate group’s and nation’s identity, which leads to the formation of tradition that in its turn reinforces collective memory even further.

Thus, the locus of collective memory can be found in the complex relationship between personal memory and the meaningful reminiscence evoked by symbols (Barash, 2007). In this sense, collective memory may be analyzed as a kind of fragmented memory, a memory that can be broken down into several personal experiences and recollections of a particular group in society. Thus, in no way can collective memory be reduced to a mere recollection of a series of personal memories having to do with an experienced event or to just the symbols themselves, but collective memory gravitates between these two nodes (Barash, 2007).

The French philosopher Paul Ricoeur has extensively written on the idea of collective memory and its relationship with collective identity. In fact, the title of Ricoeur’s book, *Oneself as Another*, speaks for itself: one of Ricoeur’s definitions of collective memory is the ability of any citizen of a nation to view themselves in the eyes of another fellow citizen, regardless of the differences that may divide them. Ricoeur also calls this “the cohesion of life in common” (Barash, 1999:13) – a configuration between the two extremes: the lives of individuals as individuals, and the life they all have in common which is welded by the individuals themselves. According to Ricoeur, the principle of
cohesion of life in common finds its sturdy ground in the nationwide consensus by citizens
concerning the primary value they strive for – democracy (Barash, 1999). This argument
finds its strength when brought forward in the analysis of societies that have experienced a
civil war. All parties and sects consider themselves to be having been the wronged,
victimized side of the Lebanese Civil War, and refuse to recognize their mistakes – an act
that obliterates the road towards collective memory. Moreover, each party and sect insists
that their recollection of the Lebanese Civil War is the correct one, enforcing their
collective memory of the events on their own group in society. Ricoeur did not favor this
idea of the “duty to remember” and rejected it, preferring instead, to focus on a process of
“working through” of the collective memory of past trauma. According to him, in order to
be able to remember as a collective unit and thus act as a collective unit any individual in
Lebanon should be able to place oneself in the position of the “victim” they have wronged.
In his book La memoire, l’histoire, l’oublié, Ricoeur stresses that in order for collective
memory to take hold in society, each group, sect and individual must recognize the need to
perceive and apprehend the other as analogous to oneself – sort of like taking a walk in the
other group’s shoes (Barash, 1999). This was a key focus of mine in my fieldwork: to see if
the Lebanese youth was able to place themselves in the shoes of the Palestinians in relation
to their situation during the war and today.

Ricoeur also defines collective memory as “an anthology of the traces left by events
which have affected the course of history of the groups concerned” (Barash, 1999:38). The
significance of a unified collective memory comes forward through the essential question
that Ricoeur poses: how can a nation formulate a principle of cohesion of plural existence?
For Ricoeur, it is the sole theme of collective memory that can bring a nation together.
Memory should be recognized as the source of the link between individual and plural identity. On this note, Ricoeur attempts to locate an intermediary zone between the idea of memory in relation to one’s individual identity and the notion of collective memory extended to a group identity – the extremities being the individuals and the state itself. Furthermore, Ricoeur’s conception of group identity draws in turn on the theory of collective reminiscence as an ideology forming the basis of the claim to the homogeneity of a nation (Barash, 1999).

D. War Memory and War Commemoration

“Whenever a shell fell the candle would be blown out. It was very frightening: so frightening that I thought I couldn’t go on. After a while you begin to feel sure that the next shell will get you, that you can’t possibly survive. You just hope it won’t be too painful. Then oblivion sets in. There’s a mechanism in the human mind, which obliterates terrible memories. I sometimes wonder now whether it really happened.” (Salibi, 1994, cited by Haugbolle, 2002:2)

To people like Salibi who were part of the generation who lived through the Lebanese Civil War, some painful experiences and tragedies are easily erased and put to the past, never remembered nor brought up ever again. For others, however, there lies a great importance in remembering what happened during those years of hardship – especially Recalling memories and incidents that occurred during the war is part of what is called war memory (Ashplant et al., 2000). The exact process of recalling memories through various domains including art, culture and personal experiences is deemed war commemoration (Ashplant et al., 2000). Both quite controversial, for the last two decades there has been an
increase in public interest about the different aspects of war memory and the different forms of war commemoration.

On a general level, the history of war memory can be explained through certain key features (Ashplant et al., 2000) that highlight this crucial issue touching many societies. Its first key feature is the emergence of the remembrance of the Holocaust. From the establishment of museums among several countries around the world to movies about the plight of Jews during World War II to documentaries about the Nazi rule, remembering the Holocaust was one main occurrence that brought war memory into light. Second, those that had undergone the suffering subjected to them in wars began demanding public recognition as victims or survivors and also began giving their testimonies to what had occurred, for example, to their grandchildren to allow their legacy to live on. Moreover, the survivors need for material compensation increased the public debate worldwide about war memory. The third factor which made war memory on the tips of the tongues of many around the globe is the increasing amount of commemorations and anniversaries marking the beginning and ending wars. These commemorations are of course of great importance to those living inside the nation celebrating, but the rest of the world would have never have gotten involved and the notion of war memory would not have been augmented to this greater level if it wasn’t for the media. Media coverage of American Civil War celebrations or of Holocaust remembrance celebrations has increased the interest of many in the process of how war is remembered. A fourth and seriously significant key element which made war memory crucial to be understood was the need to study past conflicts and wars, to see how that past and how remembering that past may lead to future conflicts – specifically, how
underlying enmities and prejudice that was expressed during precedent wars may lead to something more serious later on. All these elements have helped people around the world understand that maybe some things shouldn’t be forgotten. Furthermore, the abundance in the amount of academic research done that came with these developments is further proof of how much people are interested in the notion of war memory (Ashplant et al., 2000).

Memory in general can be studied over a vast number of fields, including psychology, sociology and even biology, with various methods and under several models, but war memory has been studied under two paradigms – one favoring politics, and the other favoring mourning (Ashplant et al., 2000).

War memory can be defined and studied under two models – the first model being the significance of war memory as political: as something bound to national identification, collective identity, and something needed in order to enhance the notion of national binding. This model tends to move towards the political and statewide aspect of remembrance. The second model builds the significance of war memory on psychological reasons, most importantly mourning, as a logical response to the pain that death and tragedies produce during the war period (Ashplant et al., 2000). In the first model, memory is seen as highly needed to analyze the needs of the nation-state, symbols, history, and the ideal of nationalism. According to this model, remembering an event that happened in the war, for example, a person who had died only expresses the sacrifice that man did for the sake of his own identity. According to the second model however, war memory is seen as something needed and required by the “universal human desire for psychological reparation of loss, in response to the traumatic impact of death in war” (Winter, 1995, cited by
Ashplant et al., 2000:8). These paradigms tend to explore two extremes: the first model prioritizing ways in which war memory shapes the nation state and everything that goes with it and the second prioritizing ways through which, psychologically, people can obtain closure from the hardships they unfortunately had to go through. Thus they are approaches that privilege either the state or civil society – as if both models are not inter-related whatsoever. People today, however, know that both paradigms have to engage together in order to fully comprehend the notion of war memory.

The dichotomies formed by these two models have caused problems for those who study war memory, for although many writers may argue for one paradigm against another, it is not that easy to separate between both models. In fact, the notion of identity and the nation always has to come with the feeling of mourning, and whenever people feel mourning, there is bound to be some sort of politics at work. With all this confusion of how to study war memory a third and less studied paradigm called the life-story paradigm may arise. This focuses on neither of the previous two, and simply spotlights the own words and stories of those who are willing to give their testimonies about the war – not including anything related to the state nor related to mourning – far from official state-recognized celebrations and national grieving days.

People may argue about how to study war memory, but to those that have endured the rough events of the war, what is most important is how to articulate those war memories into something the outside world can see. This is indeed the basis of collective memory (Ashplant et al., 2000).
As previously mentioned, the state holds a vital role in remembering wars. Political parties, governments and NGOs are all an embodiment of the national past and identity of societies that have or have not seen a war. The state is only one method through which memory is articulated. In fact, there are several characteristics of war memory articulation that all lead to one final aim: helping people to selectively remember or forget.

The first aspect of war memory articulation is narratives of articulation. Narratives of articulation refers to the “social range, political power and symbolic potency” (Ashplant et al., 2000) that is shown through narratives and testimonies of those groups or individuals of people seeking public recognition of what they had endured. These memories are translated and shown to the public when they are articulated into some form the public may view and analyze, such as art work, documentaries, or written works. The second aspect of war memory is arenas of articulation. This can be loosely translated into ‘spaces’, areas where people are able as groups such as families or communities to remember what had went on in the strife-full years of the war. This includes places such as memorial parks and museums. The third and last aspect of war memory articulation is agencies of articulation. This refers to the establishments through which “social actors seek to promote and secure recognition for their war memories” (Ashplant et al., 2000). This includes face-to-face gatherings, groupings of people either cooperating with or challenging the state, kinship, and any institution where people get together under the common interest of highlighting their plights during the war. Different agencies may all lead to advantageous consequences but the leading agency in all circumstances is, however, the state. The state should offer a wide range of institutions that allow the transmittance of memory such as museums, war
graves, libraries and archives. All these aspects truly define the way individual memory is transformed into common, cultural, shared, collective memory. For nations who have undergone conflicts and wars that have been with other nations, the articulation of war memory may seem easy. Yet when it comes to countries that have undergone a civil war, there is an increase in the amount of those who tend to forget or simply want to repress their memories and push them back into the past (Ashplant et al., 2000).

Despite the large presence of individuals who favor amnesia over remembering the war, civil society in Lebanon, in recent years, has begun trying open dialogue about what ensued in the horrifying years of the civil war. This did not happen swiftly however, but over a process of several phases. The first few years following the end of the war were full of numbness and outright rejection of any memory of the war. A few discussion groups were formed at the Theatre de Beyrouth, and an-Nahar tried to arouse the need for people to remember by publishing several articles about memory and the civil war, yet both of these methods were restricted to a certain group, the intellectuals. However, the 1996 barbaric Israeli bombardment of Cana7 was considered by the media and many civil rights movements to be a turning point for all Lebanese to get them out of their state of amnesia: it showed them that the ‘peace’ that was established at the end of the war was not indeed true and that public denial only made the current political situation worse. Thus, after 1996, projects aiming to allow the Lebanese to remember the war began emerging, especially in

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7 During the war Israel waged on Lebanon in the year 1996, Israeli warplanes bombardaded a UN compound in Cana where 106 Lebanese were seeking refuge. All 106 died and the Cana Massacre triggered outrage around the world.
the domains of art and culture. Of these artistically social projects was the infamous 1998 movie by Ziad Douiery called *West Beirut*, which allowed its audience to remember the war on a humorous level. Instead of portraying the Lebanese as those who were running the war, Doueiry portrayed them as victims of it, which allowed people to connect more to the film and allowed it to give two positive results (Haugbolle, 2005). The first advantage to the movie was that it allowed people to forget the sense of guilt they were all holding, and second, it laid the line for collective memory – for those who watched the movie were brought together under the same memory of the war. Then novels started to emerge, such as those of Elias Khoury and Tony Hanania. Although these told stories of sectarian divisions, murder, and sectarian hatred, it was a collective memory of the war that all who read the novels held. Other movies such as *In the Shadows of the City* and the plays by Jad al-Hage all added to the idea of remembering the Lebanese Civil War (Haugbolle, 2005). One of the most important cultural events that occurred was the colloquium entitled “Memory for the Future” that occurred in April 2001. This brought intellectuals from all around the world to Lebanon and compared the case of Lebanon to other cases – giving an outside comparison to the memory (or lack of it) in Lebanon, which was something that was previously not present. A significant move towards preserving the memory of the Lebanese Civil War was through the establishment of UMAM Documentation and Research, a non-profit civil association founded in 2004 that concentrates on themes of active memory by intentionally revisiting Lebanon’s violent past, to build the case that “closing the files” in Lebanon has obviously failed. These efforts and many more provoked the Lebanese to remember and help relate to what had happened to relationships with one another when the fifteen year conflict occurred. Moreover, the media and its launching of documentaries about the war
and political talk shows discussing the sectarian divisions that took place also permitted people to cope with what went on in the past. However, in the past few years, in the media, projects about the civil war, literature and the like, the Palestinians were either treated as the reason behind the civil war – the primary aggravators – or were simply overlooked, giving dominance to rebuilding relationships and forming a collective memory between the different Lebanese parties and not between the Lebanese and the Palestinians. Only recently have civil war remembrance initiatives included Palestinians. The year 2008 included some reconciliation and dialogue initiatives in which both sides, the Lebanese and the Palestinian, reached out to each other as a result of the PLO Declaration in Lebanon, which I will speak of shortly.

It is through collective memory that Lebanese youth born during the war or a little after it come to know about what occurred during those fifteen years. I do not believe we can speak of a collective memory in Lebanon when it comes to the generation of people who lived during the war and experienced it firsthand, but on the Lebanese youth level, I plan to show that it is more than possible.
CHAPTER III

THE PALESTINIAN FACTOR IN LEBANON

On April 18, 1948, several thousand Palestinians fled their homes and trickled out of Palestine into neighboring Lebanon seeking refuge, aid and support. However, they did not all find the warm welcome they were seeking for long. Sixty years later, the situation has only become worse. Lebanon has repeatedly proclaimed that it will never accept the permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and that their presence in the country is merely temporary (Amnesty International, 2004) – a statement that is perceived as quite fitting and handy, as it helps many political aims. Although the Palestinians in Lebanon have always spoken of their right to return to Palestine and have never explicitly mentioned that they desire any sort of implementation – in other words, tawtin – in Lebanon, has greatly hindered any chance for recognition and has long ruled out all discussion on the issue of Palestinian refugee rights (Frontiers Annual Report, 2006). In this chapter, I tackle the attitudes held by the Lebanese documented in the literature towards the Palestinian factor in Lebanon. These attitudes may vary greatly or slightly, yet are all linked by the one same idea: that the Palestinians are a marginalized, unaccepted group in Lebanon. I then describe the current situation of the Palestinians in Lebanon in relation to the concepts of bare life and the space of exception, both concepts which do justice to what the Palestinians endure day-by-day.
A. Attitudes towards Resettlement, Palestinian Rights as Refugees and the Case of Nahr al-Bared

Since the Nakba, the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has been marked by total marginalization and repression. Hilal Khashan (1994) stated that “From the start, the Palestinians were treated with little love by the Lebanese.” As the Nakba progressed and the large influx of Palestinian refugees into Lebanon exponentially increased, both the Lebanese government and society adopted, from the start, a particularly hostile position towards the Palestinian community. The Lebanese standpoint towards the Palestinian refugees was accurately described by Former President Emile Lahoud in 2000: “If Palestinian refugees in Lebanon were not given the right to return home, they will become a time bomb.”

For long, Lebanon has waged what some have considered a ‘war’ against the Palestinians: not a war characterized by use of ammunition, war tactics and battles, but through certain policies and laws “which are slowly choking the life from Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps.” And throughout all this, the Palestinians are fully aware of what the Lebanese think of them, yet fully unaware of their fate. “They might as well put us all in one huge container and get rid of us with one shove, instead of this slow death” states one elderly Palestinian woman living in Burj el-Barajneh (Kelani, 1999). Rosemary Sayigh (1995:43) claims that “an undeclared policy may be inferred [by the Lebanese]: encouraging Palestinian emigration through intensification of various pressures” – constraints on space and shelter, refusal of civic rights, obstacles to travel, reducing the


numbers of those with residence rights and the general Lebanese attitude towards the Palestinians.

Starting 1948, Palestinians were automatically considered a threat to Lebanon’s fragile confessional system, especially by the Christians, since 90% of the Palestinians were Sunni Muslims (Mackey, 1989:130). An increase in the amount of Sunni Muslims formed a direct hazard to the Christians, especially to the Maronites, who were considered to form the majority sect in Lebanon, thus giving reason and justification to their upper hand in politics, governmental representation and the power over the presidential throne. The Maronites believed that the Palestinian refugees would turn the Christian sect from a majority to a minority, posing an obstacle to the somewhat vulnerable 6:5 Christian Muslim ratio of parliamentary seats resulting from the 1943 National Pact. They thus feared that the consequences of the Nakba on Lebanon would lead to Muslims asking for more representation and increased political power, forming a danger to Christian supremacy. The Maronites grew increasingly wary of the Palestinians and the future role they appeared set to play and subsequently, the Palestinian refugees were housed in refugee camps – an area with defined space – where they could be easily monitored and placed under surveillance (Hanafi, 2007) as a precautionary move to avoid emphasizing the role Palestinian refugees might play in future conflicts. This echoes Michel Foucault’s (1993) idea that the concept of space is crucial in any exercise of power.

Furthermore, the Lebanese Civil War of 1975-1990 added to the general resentment alive in present Lebanese discourse. The Palestinians, who had greatly grown in number, in particular after the fighters had left Jordan in 1969, were not only considered a
demographic burden but also an economic burden to a country over its head in foreign
debts and just recovering from a cruel period of civil strife and destruction. This accusation
stemmed mostly from the role that the Palestinians played in the Lebanese Civil War.
During the 1975-1990 Lebanese Civil War, many Palestinians took to arms like members
of any other political party in Lebanon did, but the Ta’if did not address the future of the
Palestinians in Lebanon – leading to further marginalization of the entire Palestinian
population. Julie Peteet (1996:27) described this marginalization accurately by stating: “In
this context, marginalization takes a number of forms and is often linked to exclusion and
violence. There is the spatial dimension: confinement to well-demarcated, bounded and
surveilled camps. Institutional marginalization includes exclusion from public institutions
of social life and from the legal rights and protections the state affords its citizens.
Economic marginalization is accomplished by extremely restrictive options for
employment and the near-total absence of social welfare provisions, the latter problem
compounded by cuts in UNRWA resources and services. There is also an experiential
dimension marked by negativity, fear and apprehension and a generalized awareness of self
and community as the object of scorn and hostility. Finally, there is a discursive dimension
in which the generic Palestinian is cast as trouble-maker and the cause of Lebanon’s post-
war woes.”

Statistics concerning the number of Palestinians residing in Lebanon are more than
often politically loaded as a result of the sectarian and demographic sensitivities in Lebanon
(Suleiman, 1999:67). Although today there is an excess of almost 400,000 Palestinian
refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian
Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)\textsuperscript{10}, only about 200,000-250,000 refugees actually currently reside in Lebanon (Pedersen, 2003). Of those residing in Lebanon, up to two-thirds live either in refugee camps receiving help from the UNRWA, or in small communities adjacent to the camps where these Palestinians may have relatively easy access to UNRWA’s services as well as those of other NGOs. The remaining third reside elsewhere in Lebanon and are generally thought to be better off than the camp population, although there is no existing data to support this claim (Hanafi, 2007). Some of them have been naturalized and have thus been granted Lebanese citizenship\textsuperscript{11}. Moreover, around 100,000 Palestinians left Lebanon to seek refuge elsewhere, mostly to Europe – in particular to Scandinavian countries and Germany (Doraï, 2006). This forced migration occurred at its highest rates especially after the Israeli invasion and the War of the Camps in 1987. (Hanafi, 2007) where Palestinians where not only fleeing the conflict to save their lives but also fleeing the social exclusion and marginalization that they had began experiencing in their daily lives living alongside Lebanese.

After the end of the Lebanese Civil War, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon proved to be a subject of extremely controversial debate, with the media bringing forward concerns ranging from the fear that the Palestinian refugees may stay in the country indefinitely to the claim that terrorist cells and murderous criminals are harbored inside the Palestinian camps. These fears and claims reached their peak with the establishment of the

\textsuperscript{10} Please see: http://www.un.org/unrwa/publications/index.html (figures as of 31 March 2006).

\textsuperscript{11} Supposedly at least 25,000 Palestinians, the majority of them Christian, were naturalized and received the Lebanese citizenship in 1994 (Haddad, 2000: 85).
Oslo Accords in 1993, highlighting that an agreement must be initiated and pursued to settle the Palestinians in the current countries they reside in. Lebanon specifically responded to such a statement by using the Ta’if and the media – for not only is the permanent settlement of Palestinians in Lebanon officially rejected by political and religious leaders, but it is explicitly mentioned in the Ta’if agreement, placed at the end of a sentence under the first section entitled “General Principles and Reforms”: “H. Lebanon's soil is united and it belongs to all the Lebanese. Every Lebanese is entitled to live in and enjoy any part of the country under the supremacy of the law. The people may not be categorized on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever and there shall be no fragmentation, no partition, and no repatriation [of Palestinians in Lebanon].”

The beginning of Article H of the Ta’if agreement reaffirms what most Lebanese consider one of the largest threats to Lebanon today: repatriation and resettlement – generally referred to as tawtin. Reaffirming that Lebanon’s soil “belongs to all Lebanese” and then bringing up the Lebanese position towards tawtin, the Ta’if highlights how Lebanon feels towards Palestinians in Lebanon. Neither the Palestinians – who constantly raise awareness of their right to return to Palestine which is their ultimate aim – nor the Lebanese explicitly asked for resettlement. However, the notion of tawtin was only used as a political tactic to undermine the basic rights of the Palestinians as refugees, satisfying many in Lebanon. As a result of the imminent “dangers” of tawtin, not only has the presence of Palestinians in Lebanon been considered dangerous, but, to many, the sheer

12 Copy of Ta’if Agreement retrieved from Now Lebanon: http://www.nowlebanon.com (accessed March 5, 2008).
possibility that Palestinians may be granted Lebanese citizenship is far more than Lebanon can handle – socially, economically, and more significantly, politically. Nawaf Salam (1994: 23) analyzed the political prospects for Lebanon if, theoretically, resettlement occurred: “For the Lebanese, resettlement would create perhaps greater problems than it would in the other host countries. It is not simply a question of resettlement’s projected impact on the delicate sectarian balance in Lebanon; resettlement could also undermine the national reconciliation forged by the Lebanese through the Ta’if agreement of 1989 and endorsed by constitutional amendments of 1991 that explicitly rejected resettlement. Resettlement, were it to take place, would therefore open the door to challenges to the political reforms agreed to at Ta’if as a condition for ending the civil war. Such challenges could take the form of a call for renegotiating the Ta’if compromise on the basis of controversial alternatives, such as a federal system. […] Resettlement will undermine both Palestinian national identity and Lebanese national reconciliation.”

In addition, Palestinian refugee camps have constituted a very debatable issue in Lebanon in terms of seeing the camps as major security problems: as safe houses for criminals, the birthplace of terror and the basis of radical Islamic ideologies. Today, the camps in Lebanon not only represent a playground for many local and international actors but they also have been characterized as laboratories of both states-in-making and Islamist radicalism allowing several global actors to experiment with their political and social tactics (Hanafi, 2007). The 12 Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon which form the home of half of the Palestinians are, in Lebanese discourse, regarded as ultimate zones of lawlessness within sovereign Lebanese territory – “states within a state” (Hanafi, 2007)
where criminals run free and where no Lebanese laws apply. They are regularly described by politicians as the backbone of the terror structure in Lebanon, an accusation directly implicating the Palestinians for holding the role in destroying the overlying sheet of peace and calm covering the nation. However, anyone who has lived in Lebanon since the civil war, and especially since the murder of Former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, can claim that Lebanon cannot essentially be characterized as a “safe haven”. Moreover, the Palestinian camps are not the only parts of the country that have been involved in conflict, crime and disobedience of the law. Yet the general impression is here to stay (for the time being): that the Palestinians are to blame for any flare-up in the country, since Palestinian refugee camps are often regarded as beyond the reach of Lebanese law. According to Suleiman (1999:72), this perception is fueled by the many rumors Lebanon has heard throughout the years about the many criminals, terrorists and outlaws that seek refuge there. The Lebanese media are the primary feeders of this construct of lawlessness, calling the camps “security islands” on many an occasion and requesting the cancellation of the 1969 Cairo Accords. However, the charge that camps are immune to Lebanese law is not exactly true. Suleiman (1999:72) argues: “In actual fact, the charge that the camps are “security islands” beyond the law is false. The Lebanese Internal Security Forces do enter the camps in coordination with camp authorities to arrest suspects and carry out similar missions. They also have informers and other contacts inside the camps. But the Lebanese state appears unwilling for political reasons to base the police or army in the camps, preferring to leave internal policing to the various Palestinian factions operating in the camps. Thus, while the camps are not regularly policed by Lebanese law enforcement, they are not beyond the reach of Lebanese law.”
To add fuel to the fire, the rise of Islamist fundamentalists in Palestinian camps as documented by Bernard Rougier (2007) has led to widespread Lebanese dread and fright that many other dormant Islamic cells or radical Palestinian groups are silently being nurtured inside the Palestinian camps, concealed easily by the overwhelming chaos which characterizes the refugee camps’ living conditions. The fierce clashes between the Lebanese army and the radical Islamist fundamentalist group Fatah al-Islam, based in the Palestinian camp of Nahr al-Bared, further deepened the existing chasm between the Palestinians and Lebanese, despite the fact that the sweeping majority of the members of Fatah al-Islam were non-Palestinians. Many foreign news writers attempted to make it clear that Fatah al-Islam has only half a dozen Palestinian members – with the bulk of Fatah al-Islam’s members hailing from Syria, Saudi Arabia, in addition to Arab and Muslim jihadists from various other countries who had fought in Iraq as well as approximately 50 radical Lebanese Sunnis. However, many Lebanese citizens at the time of the fighting did not hesitate in placing the blame on the Palestinians: in particular, on the inhabitants of Nahr al-Bared, allegedly blaming them for not only allowing such terrorist cells to live and grow amongst them but also for providing support to these cells. The Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee played a major role in explaining to people what exactly was going on but many Lebanese formed a rush judgment against the citizens of Nahr al-Bared.

In addition, the “multiplicity of authority centers” inside the camps described by Julie Peteet (1987) has led to widespread chaos at the legal levels of the camp structure, in turn redefining the issue of lawlessness from the Lebanese point of view, giving the Palestinian community an even larger bad reputation. The camps are dominated by a plethora of parties and religious factions, all fighting for the upper hand in camp affairs, as well as competing for recognition as the “sole referential authority for the Palestinians in Lebanon” (Suleiman, 1999:77). All this has marginalized and isolated the camp-dwelling Palestinian community in Lebanon, attracting what Rosemary Sayigh (1994) describes as “too many enemies”, as well as fueling feelings of extreme dislike between both sides that began on that fateful April day in 1975.

Nowadays, Lebanese discourse has molded the Palestinian entity into an alien presence that threatens not only the fragile confessional system in Lebanon, but also the well-being of Lebanon and its citizens. Traboulsi (2007) carefully explains that if there is one issue on which both camps, the opposition and government (the camps of March 8 and March 14 respectively), seem to agree on, it is the strict refusal of the permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. El-Khazen (1997) reiterates this position, stating that “it is probably the only issue on which the views of the Lebanese – across ideological and confessional lines – agree.” Furthermore, in a speech to the UN General Assembly on September 28, 2007, former President Emile Lahoud confidently declared that “a permanent settling of Palestinian refugees will dangerously alter the delicate balance of Lebanon’s existence as a nation based on diversity and co-existence among a large number of its sects.”
The late Lebanese Member of Parliament and editorialist Gebran Tueini (2002) accurately described the perception that the majority of Lebanese society holds in favor of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon: that of chaos, terrorism, crime and danger: “How long will the state erect military checkpoints in residential areas, treating them as though they were camps sheltering wanted people and gunmen, while all the Palestinian camps, which shelter criminals and wanted people, enjoy freedom of movement, politically, militarily and in terms of security, as though they were security islands independent of Lebanon politically, militarily and in terms of security? (Khalidi and Riskedahl, 2007)”

This view has become increasingly familiar and popular among both Lebanese politicians and citizens alike since the end of the Lebanese Civil War. Although the late Tueini was one of the most prominent figures of the March 14 majority bloc, his perspective is surprisingly strongly shared by the current opposition, members of the March 8 Hezbollah-Aoun alliance camp. It seems that amongst the differences, there may be one consensus: one thing that all Lebanese political factions hold in common today is complete aversion for the Palestinians living in their midst.

These factors have led Lebanon to distinctively separate itself from the Palestinian community in Lebanon. The process in which Lebanon has come to distance itself from the Palestinian community may be explained through the concept of “sovereignty”: for the Lebanese sovereign has for long expressed its power and control over the Palestinian community in Lebanon, through the concepts of bio-power, the sovereign, bare life, and the state of exception. Palestinian refugees are reduced to a bare life in a state of exception by a
sovereign, Lebanon and its society, which utilizes bio-power in order to successfully control, supervise and manage the Palestinian population.

B. Palestinian Camps as an Exercise of Bio-power and as a Space of Exception

Bio-power, a term coined by Michel Foucault, first appeared in *The Will to Knowledge*, Foucault's first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (1976). Bio-power constitutes a technology of power, a manner of exercising various different practices into one technology of power. For Foucault (1994), what distinguishes this theory of power from others is that it allows for the control of entire groups of people and populations. It refers to the sovereign’s regulation of peoples through “an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations” (Foucault, 1998). Thus, bio-power can simply be explained as having power over the bodies of others. The individual becomes reduced to an object that is merely there to be administered and controlled: the sovereign’s power seizes the individual’s life itself.

Foucault’s conceptualization of the idea of bio-power allows us to understand the substantial shifts of the state from “the territorial state” to the “state of its population” (Hanafi, 2005). Thus, this state’s sovereignty is no longer represented with respect to its territory, land or borders but with respect to its proclaimed population. This logic of bio-power is rooted deeply in the various techniques Lebanon rolls into one single power strategy in order to control the lives of those living in the Palestinian camps. Subject to bio-power put into play by a sovereign – in this case, the Lebanese government – the
Palestinian camps in Lebanon have become a space of exception, where the bodies of Palestinian individuals have been reduced to bare life.

The concepts of bare life and state of exception were conceptualized by Giorgio Agamben. These concepts greatly aided the development of the concept of bio-politics. Conceived through a process of categorizing people and bodies in order to manage, control and survey them, reducing people to bare life thus reduces them to mere vegetative beings pushed away from society and denied the right to live with dignity. Agamben supports the concept of bare life by using the idea of the state of exception originally invented by Carl Schmitt.

The sovereign, according to Schmitt, is the one who may proclaim the state of exception. The sovereign is not characterized by the order that the sovereign institutes, but characterized by the suspension of this order on another population (Agamben, 1998). Sovereignty in this case moves far away from the idea of subjecting the law; it moves towards the ability of the sovereign to proclaim certain exceptions from the law. Agamben (1998) developed this idea of exception further, by theorizing that the laws formulated by the sovereign include a specified state of exception, with the laws determining who is allowed to participate in political and social life, and who is excluded. Thus, the notion of life is sacred until the state of exception is declared, and the body excluded from the sovereign is reduced to a bare life, living in a “no-man’s land” of exception. Agamben (2005:4) claims that “the state of exception is not a special kind of law (like the law of war); rather, insofar as it is a suspension of the juridical order itself, it defines law’s threshold or limit concept.” A “threshold of indeterminacy between democracy and
“absolutism” (Agamben, 2005), a state of exception refers to the expansion of the powers of the sovereign to a point that citizenship as well as political and individual rights of certain citizens are rejected or diminished. These politics of exception, bare life and bio power have been exercised against the Palestinians in Lebanon. The Palestinians are subject to Lebanese laws, yet denied most basic rights, such as their civil rights, which they have been banned of by a simple ministerial decree. Palestinians theoretically are foreigners but technically not considered as such, thus facing two-fold discrimination: first, Lebanese laws and regulations officially consider them as foreigners yet many of the advantages that foreigners in Lebanon benefit from do not even concern them. Therefore Palestinians in Lebanon are actually subjected to not only a legal void but also to a state of exception. On one hand, the sovereign is present by excluding Palestinians from socio-economic and basic rights by distinct laws, but on the other hand, such an exclusion has allowed the camps to be molded by its actors into areas without laws and regulations, only “falling at the mercy of the exclusive laws or suspension” (Hanafi, 2007). Palestinians thus do not have the right to work legally in Lebanon or to possess land or houses. This resulted in a large camp population which suffers from poverty, survives in extreme living conditions and is denied the basic right to live.

Lebanon has for decades differentiated between the idea of “foreigners” and the Palestinians, treating them differently and not providing them with legal rights. Lebanese circumstances have reduced the lives of the Palestinians to a bare life: a life that is to be sheltered and fed, nothing more. Not only have their civil and religious rights been disregarded, Palestinians have been reduced to “bare life” – when people are regarded as
simply “nothing”, as if they were in a vegetative state lying in a hospital. Palestinians are “separated from the particular attributes, the social, political and historical attributes that constitute individual subjectivity” (Hanafi, 2005).
CHAPTER IV

THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR: THE ESCALATION OF LEBANESE-PALESTINIAN TENSIONS

Samir Khalaf (2001) sums up the escalation and protraction of the Lebanese Civil War successfully in saying: “[this war] was everywhere and nowhere. It was everywhere because it could not be confined to one specific area… It was nowhere because it was not identified with or linked to one concrete cause” (Khalaf, 2001:204). Mayhem and chaos characterized this absurd and unfathomable war, with daily massacres and tragedies taking place, instilling fear into every single area of the nation. During this war, alliances were formed and broken, sides were joined then abandoned, and everything went haywire. Most importantly, the Lebanese Civil War can be considered as the escalation of Lebanese-Palestinian tensions, leading to a few of Lebanon’s bloodiest massacres in addition to strained relations between the two today.

Lebanon’s history has for long been ridden with conflict. With its border dilemmas, fragile confessional framework and community rivalries, it seemed to be a “natural battlefield” to be fought upon (Massoulié, 1999). It was not unexpected, though. Tensions between different sects and regions had increased over the years leading to that fateful day of April 13, 1975 – especially between the Palestinians and the Lebanese. Farid El-Khazen (2000) states: “For observers of the Lebanese-Palestinian scene in 1975, the customary pattern of confrontations between the PLO and the Lebanese Army since 1969, and the cycle of violence involving Israel and the Palestinians, became somewhat predictable.
These confrontations gained a certain degree of normality. They became, in a way, obsolete in terms of their impact on Lebanese public opinion, for the initial damage was done early on in 1969 (2002:285).”

The Lebanese Civil War was greatly influenced by Lebanon's fragile demographic and confessional structure, the Palestinian refugee influx between 1948 and 1982, Christian and Muslim inter-religious strife, and the involvement of external forces such as Syria, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Lebanese politics. This was not new to Lebanon’s history. However, what occurred on April 13, 1975 was, according to El-Khazen (2002), “an event of unprecedented scale” which divided the country along strict confessional lines (2002:285). On that day, no one knew that Lebanon would erupt into conflict and almost two decades of extreme bloodshed. Lebanon’s multifaceted war began with the “Bus Massacre”, when members of the Phalange party machine-gunned a bus carrying Palestinians passing through Beirut's eastern Christian suburb of Ain al-Rummaneh as retaliation for a drive-by shooting that occurred as they left a church in Beirut. Believed to be an assassination attempt on Pierre Gemayel’s life, the Phalangists blamed the attack on the Palestinians, which killed four. The Phalangists killed twenty-seven passengers on board and the violence began. This was the spark needed to set off the civil war. Indeed, the bus was the spark and not the cause of the Lebanese Civil War, although the opposite is perceived by the Lebanese majority.

As news of the murders spread throughout the nation, Palestinian militias such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) decided to rampage through Beirut, leading the Phalangists to take to arms and rush to the streets, with armed clashes
developing through the city, and later, throughout the country. Political talks, meetings and calls for ceasefire proved to be in vain.

What is interesting about the Lebanese civil war is the rapid shift of political alliances, sides and attitudes amongst leaders and citizens. This particularly became prominent after the escalation of massacres and crimes perpetrated against the Palestinians and Lebanese towards each other. For example, some nationalist Lebanese militias, such as the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) led by Kamal Jumblatt, stood by the Palestinians and their cause – since as Arabs, they felt they had a duty to do so – all throughout the Lebanese Civil War. However, as the fighting escalated between other Lebanese factions and the Palestinians, the LNM realized they could not in fact stand totally side by side with the Palestinians anymore. Stories of theft and violence perpetrated by the Palestinians in Druze towns angered them, thus leading to a few skirmishes, which were perceived as personal fights against the Palestinian presence in Lebanon – against a foreign entity that was harming Lebanon, according to the Druze. In addition, many anti-Palestinian Christian right-wing parties began to form, such as the Guardians of the Cedars, a very small, somewhat active fascist political formation in Lebanon, whose slogans included “No Palestinian will remain on Lebanese soil” and “A good Palestinian is a dead Palestinian” (Tucker, 1983).

The Lebanese Civil War was unfortunately full of cold-blooded massacres. Civilians were considered to be an easy target for all sides, with their deaths greatly influencing the actions of the militias. On January 18, 1976 thousands were killed by Christian forces in the Karantina, which was immediately followed by the Damour
massacre, a strike by Palestinian militias in retaliation for those killed in the Karantina. At this point, several Christians and Muslims who had allied with the LNM and the Palestinian cause dropped. As soon as Yasser Arafat brought Fatah and thus the PLO into the picture to fight alongside the LNM, feelings of hostility between the Palestinians and a part of the Lebanese grew further. These events and further escalating tension led to possibly the largest massacre of the civil war with a major help of the Israelis, the Sabra and Shatila massacre.

On September 18, 1982, many accounts state that for forty hours, members of the Israeli-allied Lebanese Phalangist militia aided by the Israeli Defense Forces “raped, killed, and injured a large number of unarmed civilians, mostly children, women and elderly people inside the encircled and sealed Sabra and Shatila camps. The estimate of victims varies between 700 (the official Israeli figure) to 3,500"14”

Thus, the feelings of hostility and hatred between the Palestinians and Lebanese, and especially between the Christians and the Palestinians, had grown exponentially. These events and the civil war in general have led many Lebanese, both scholars and historians alike, to speak of the large Palestinian hand in fueling the Lebanese Civil War.

Hilal Khashan (1994) explains that since the very start of the Lebanese Civil War, and especially after the June War and the signing of the Cairo Agreement of 1969, sentiments towards the Palestinian presence in Lebanon had dropped greatly – not only

amongst the Maronites, who rejected the Cairo Agreement, but also among the Shia community, especially during the climax of the PLO’s military operations against Israel from Lebanon. As a result, support for the Palestinians began to decrease amongst all Muslims in general (Khashan, 1994).

Khalaf (2002) highlights the crucial role the Palestinian refugees played in Lebanon, especially that of the PLO, in both developing and spreading the chaos of the civil war. Much of the blame for the violence preceding and during the civil war, according to Khalaf (2002), is blamed on the Palestinians, in particular the fueling of aggression and hostility which led to many other people to take to arms. He presents many anecdotes to highlight his position – accounts and examples which portray the Palestinian violence and anarchy which fueled the already-existent inter-communal violence that was lingering over Lebanon’s atmosphere. Khalaf (2002) emphasizes the Lebanese view of Palestinians and their role during the civil war. His theoretical stream of ideas clearly explains the internal and external factors which led to what he called a proxy war on Lebanon’s soil. To Khalaf (2002), it was bound to happen: Lebanon’s strategic geographical location, conflict-ridden history and sectarian balance made it a perfect, fertile ground for the wars of others to be fought – particularly the wars of Lebanon’s neighbors, pitted against one another. In particular, he marks the event of “Black September” and the expelling of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as a critical turning point in the pathway leading towards Lebanon’s civil conflict.

It may seem stunningly obvious that Lebanon, because of its geographically strategic location, its history, and the connections its people have with the outside world
through trade, commerce, intellectual life and more, that it would be used as a proxy for battles of the bigger players. Yet most significantly, Khalaf (2002) does not abstain from reviewing and assessing the Lebanese blame of this civil war. He does not refrain from pointing out where the Lebanese, in addition to the Palestinians, went wrong. Although external forces and interested did largely interfere and manipulate several parties in Lebanon, he proclaims that there are a certain number of Lebanese individuals that also stimulated violence and pushed the nation towards further civil strife.

Farid El-Khazen's (2000) ultimately agrees with Khalaf (2002) concerning his view shows how Lebanon’s fate was written by the actions of its neighbors, but consequently explains that he as well does not absolve from placing the blame on many Lebanese actors themselves. He sees the civil war not as actions of civil strife in the literal sense, but, like Khalaf (2002), El-Khazen speaks of the great influence of external forces in the confrontations. Furthermore, he stresses on the role of the PLO in Lebanon’s conflict, backing up Khalaf’s (2002) claim that the Palestinian existence was key to what he calls “the breakdown of the state”.

El-Khazen (2000) argues that it was the Arab-Israeli conflict was mainly the blame for the destruction of the Lebanese state. Concurring what Khalaf (2002) stated, after the events of “Black September” took place and the PLO was ejected from Jordan, the leadership had realized that Lebanon was possibly the last area capable of handling their fight for the liberation of Palestine and a perfect launching ground for attacks against Israel. Other Arab nations had banned the PLO from being present on their grounds, however, the 1969 Cairo agreement provided the means for the PLO to enter Lebanon and install in the
camps. Israel staunchly insisted on launching a massive offense against under the claim of stopping the activities of the PLO in Lebanon. These two factors divided Lebanon into parties with or against the Palestinians, brought along dangerous sectarian and state divisions, and brought on a long and bloody civil war, as a result of major conflicts of interest.

The Lebanese Civil War may have signaled the breakdown of Lebanese-Palestinian relations for many. However, the breakdown in the relationship happened way before. For the Palestinians, the deterioration of their relationship with the Lebanese occurred the moment they were governed by the 2ème Bureau, forbidden to work and lacking almost any human rights.
CHAPTER V

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE: LEBANON’S REDEEMER?

Lebanon’s recent history has been characterized by conflict, chaos and widespread violations of human rights, especially throughout the years of 1975 and 1990. However, one cannot easily say that Lebanon has overcome this horrendous past, as the recent events of civil strife in the month of May 2008 have demonstrated. This has led to a deep fragmentation of the social fabric of Lebanese society, fueling debates, deepening divisions, and opened the eyes of the Lebanese to believing in the possibility of yet another civil war. Many Lebanese still remain hesitant and fearful due to the ongoing, never-addressed tensions that arose from the long civil war. Furthermore, the 1991’s General Amnesty Law which acquitted those responsible for crimes committed before March the 28th, 1991 (with a few exceptions) did not permit citizens of Lebanon to come to terms with their bloody past15 – no official investigations were conducted, no war criminals were prosecuted, and no establishment of the truth whatsoever. One may say that Lebanon has been in limbo ever since the end of the civil war: an important period of its history disregarded and forgotten by its very own citizens. Lebanon’s citizens will not be able to face their fears unless we all openly acknowledge what went on during the civil war. This is one of the many issues the domain of transitional justice aims to tackle, which is why I believe transitional justice may

be crucial in helping Lebanon face its demons. More significantly, the domain of transitional justice blatantly opposes amnesties for perpetrators of human rights abuses – and thus, such a domain would not only aid Lebanese citizens in getting over the war, but it would bring perpetrators of some of the most horrifying massacres in Lebanon’s history to justice.

It has become quite clear that Lebanese civil society has not adequately addressed the central role that human relationships play in the context of a deeply fragmented society. Neither formal political institutions nor religious establishments have adequately addressed the need for Lebanon’s civil society to come together to fight this history of human rights violations and atrocities. However, in turn, the nation has witnessed a variety of social and political movements ranging from spontaneous street mobilizations to more structured, deliberate movements led by independent parties, NGOs, and unions to help aid in the struggle of overcoming these difficult times. These various mechanisms fall under the line of transitional justice. On this basis, I form my basic hypothesis: that Lebanon has not officially reached post-conflict democratic peace, but is rather in a state of transition between the years of violence and the probability of future peace, since officially and legally sanctioned amnesia has buried memories of the war and prohibited the Lebanese from drawing lessons from it. The General Amnesty Law acts as a main deterrent to widespread public discussion of the war and any possibility of constructive dialogue between the Lebanese themselves and between them and the Palestinians. The one discipline that is I believe is capable of offering a solution to this deadlock is transitional justice.
Heinous acts committed during the civil war, such as massacres, are not just ordinary crimes. They are by nature extraordinary, unique, and “special” and thus must be dealt with through “special” measures – at least “some element of special justice must be marshaled against them” (Ohlin, 2007:63). Normal, ordinary mechanisms of justice are developed to handle somewhat regular criminal behavior, not mass atrocities. Academics have failed to see the many parallels between transitional justice as ordinary justice and transitional justice as special justice, yet transitional institutions have not (Posner and Vermeule, 2004). Then exactly how is this justice achieved? To practitioners, it has become evident that justice is most efficiently achieved by a sequence of steps unifying the principles of both ordinary, individualistic justice and special, collective justice: “We achieve it [justice] by plucking individuals from the chaos, holding out their actions as worthy of public condemnation, and warranting individual criminal punishment. We achieve this justice by subjecting these unspeakable crimes, perpetrated by the most horrendous of maligned hears, to the most banal and pedestrian processes of our legal system: rules of evidence, procedure, penal statutes, and precedent” (Ohlin, 2007:65). This is truly an act of both ordinary and special justice coming face to face as a result of the paradox they initially provide, to combat heinous human rights abuses in an effort to wipe the slate clean and allow society to start back at zero. These parallels between ordinary and special justice have contributed to the successful transitions of many nations.

The origins of transitional justice can be traced back to Europe, post-World War II. The de-Nazification programs and the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg formed the framework to this domain which gained popularity in the past two decades or so with
the trials that took place in Greece and Argentina, where “domestic judicial systems
successfully tried the intellectual authors of past abuses for their crimes” (Bickford, 2004).

A. Genealogy of Transitional Justice

Michel Foucault (1994) often uses the term “genealogy” to refer to the union of
knowledge which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles, aiding us in the
use of this knowledge today. Genealogy presents the truth through an outlined conception
of history. I shall present a genealogy of transitional justice in order to clarify the history of
this trend in addition to providing my support for what this domain has to offer.

Transitional justice is a field which has unexpectedly, at a particularly early age,
achieved a successful career. Ruti Teitel (2003) divides the history of transitional justice
into three phases. The first is the postwar phase beginning in 1945. The post-World War II
phase was characterized by trials, tribunals, and sanctions. This phase is considered to be
the origin of transitional justice, traced back to the formation of the International Military
Tribunal at Nuremberg. The importance of this postwar period was that it “criminalized
state wrongdoing as part of a universal rights scheme” (Teitel, 2003:70). Not only were
victims demanding justice, they also demanded accountability from Germany, and pushed
towards the application of rough sanctions.

The second phase comes after the collapse of the Soviet Union and lasted right up
till the wave of democratization that swept the world during the late 1980s and early 1990s.
This phase was crucial, as it provided the discipline with the positive global feedback
advocates and practitioners had been hoping for, especially leaders of Western nations who
aimed at pushing several developing countries recovering from severe social trauma towards the establishment of a post-conflict democratic state. The citizens of nations confronting communist regimes and moving towards successor regimes began questioning the limits that the previous rule of law and judiciary systems had forcefully set for them. The changes the successor regimes portrayed through the application of democracy and nation-building such as modifying the rule of law to suit their new political system in addition to modifying laws that would charge previous leaders and give accountability to victims began giving transitional justice the fame it has attained today (Teitel, 2003).

The third phase is defined by Teitel (2003) as the “steady-state” transitional justice phase – transitional justice all the time (Teitel, 2003:89). The most recognized event of this phase is the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), which internationalized the concept of transitional jurisprudence. Furthermore, transitional justice gained further popularity as an academic concept in the wake of the collapse of the apartheid regime in South Africa. This caught the eye of many academic and policymaking institutions who, noticing the response of the global community towards this critically pro-democratic concept, swiftly took action, implementing significant measures incorporating the study of this sub-discipline into higher education – actions resulting in the wealth of academic literature covering transitional justice we now have at our fingertips today. In fact, by the 1992 publication of the three-part *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes* (Kritz, 1995) that compiled the most significant and early literature written that dealt with transitioning societies, transitional justice had already been established as both a concept and a discipline.
Truth-seeking efforts in Latin America – in particular, in Argentine and Chile – highlighted the possibilities of justice during transition. Furthermore, the trials in these two countries resulted in providing several forms of reparations to victims, all which contributed to the significance of establishing justice for victims whilst addressing the past. Transitional justice was increasingly being seen as a method to build and strengthen budding democracies and assert the need for human rights to prevail and for justice to be served. Eastern Europe soon followed, and in 1995, South Africa established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to deal with the past atrocities of the apartheid. Since then East Timor, Ghana, Peru, Sierra Leone, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Guatemala have all approached and dealt with past human rights abuses through the domain of transitional justice, leading to “increasing consensus among scholars and practitioners about the basic contents of the transitional justice framework, which accepts the general premise that national strategies to confront past human rights abuses, depending on the specifics of the local context, can contribute to accountability, an end to impunity, the reconstruction of state-citizen relationships, and the creation of democratic institutions” (Bickford, 2004). Transitional justice proposes that each nation consider its own national strategy in order to form a comprehensive approach to past abuses.

B. The Structure and Theory of Justice in Transitional Justice

Transitional justice is a comprehensive and holistic way to deal with the legacies of past human rights abuses through a non-legalistic approach to human rights: this is what marks its significance when compared to human rights. Transitional justice opens the sphere to non-legal means to deal with the violation of human rights, on a societal level.
However, transitional justice is in dialogue with human rights – not in contradiction. Through emphasizing balance and integration, transitional justice not only seeks for the punishment of those involved in human rights abuses and atrocities but also seeks to empower victims and rebuild trust relationships on a societal level. It is thus victim centric: such a domain does not find it sufficient that those who were the perpetrators of a cruel regime should be punished alone, but such a process must come hand in hand with the empowerment of victims. The classic human rights approach does not deal with this. Most importantly, it is pragmatic and context specific.

Major transitional justice strategies can be divided into two categories: retributive justice and restorative justice (Amstutz, 2005:18). Retributive justice places the focus on giving victims their rights through redressing past offenses, embodied through the mechanisms of reparations, purges and trials. Restorative justice, however, focuses on the healing of the nation through society, aiming towards the restoration of relationships. This occurs through forgiveness, truth-telling and reconciliation. However, not all transitional justice strategies apply in every case. In devising an appropriate transitional justice strategy and determining which one (or more) is suitable for a specific nation, Juan Mendez says a country should: “Determine which elements of truth, justice and clemency measures are compatible with one another, with the construction of democracy and peace, with emerging standards in international law, and with the search for reconciliation. The most appropriate
mix will depend on context, circumstances and the free and rational choices made by local actors.”

The previous statement brings to light an essential question anyone dealing with transitional justice faces. Is justice a motivation: simply the desire for justice to be done? Or is it a mold of several types of motivations? In this perspective, I shall offer an analysis of transitional justice through the empirical study of justice.

Elster (2004) explains that the empirical study of justice addresses three tasks: first, “the need to identify the conceptions of justice and fairness held by the agents we are considering”; second, “the need to identify the upstream causes of justice” and third, “the need to identify the downstream consequences of justice”, in other words, the impact on behavior (Elster, 2004:80). Elster (2004) calls this the “trichotomy of motivations” – that reason, interest and emotion fuel the need for justice in transitioning nations. This is significant to note because transitional justice aims to serve the community as a whole. In this community, the desire to see justice done is not the only motivation among those calling for it – many actors may be asking for justice for spite or revenge. It is important to study the reasons behind this demand for justice, since “in most societies, there is a normative hierarchy of motivations that induce meta-motivations over first-order motivations” (Elster, 2004:82). This means that a certain emotion or reason, because of its higher rank in the normative hierarchy, may influence individual’s decisions and transitional justice strategies. For instance, it is widely held that countries in transition after

periods of political upheaval may not be able to hear the mild voice of reason. The victims of such a loaded past may have an emotionally based desire for revenge, a feeling stronger than the desire to carry out fair justice. Thus, the normative conceptions of justice held by the agents of transitional justice can help in the explanation of the decisions they reach. These agents may include wrongdoers, victims, beneficiaries of wrongdoing, helpers, resisters, neutrals, promoters and wreckers (Elster, 2004).

The attempt to adhere to the rule of law during the periods following civil strife raises a dilemma: the tension between the rule of law during the transitional phase as both backward-looking and forward-looking (Teitel, 2000:11). Countries undergoing transition usually experience large disorder and instability in the legal system. The obstacle that such a nation must face in applying transitional justice is occurs through extracting the meaning of the rule of law to this nation. Does it consider the rule of law as static, and thus continue with the rule of law from the predecessor regime, or as dynamic, and consider law and justice subject to change?

In transformative periods, the value of legal continuity is severely tested. Postwar writings have made it clear that during periods of significant political flux, normative understandings of the rule of law are either diminished, disregarded or abandoned. Although the domain of transitional justice has offered generous definitions and anecdotes concerning the meaning of the rule of law, it is the context of the nation in transition that itself allows for the distinguishing of understandings of the rule of law during “ordinary” and “transitional” times. Furthermore, most theoretical work on transitional justice often relies on idealized models of the rule of law. The problem of these idealized accounts is
that they do not give the exceptional period of transition this period deserves (Teitel, 2000).
Thus the issue of the relation of the rule of law during transitions to that applied during ordinary periods is constantly raised. To what extent should a nation undergoing transition adhere to the laws of the previous regime? Should transitional nations be bound to the rule of law of the prior regime, or should a new rule of law be formulated in order to deal with the specific circumstances and injustices that citizens of the transitional nation faced? It is the nature of the injustices of the prior regime that should determine the content of the rule of law, according to most postwar transitional justice theorizing. I shall present a couple of cases that highlight the importance of forming a clear principle on the rule of law adapted after involving large human rights abuses. These cases deal with the prosecutions of Nazi collaborators in post-war Germany, which raised the question of whether to rely on the rule of law that was applicable during the Nazi regime: should transitional nations render the laws of the prior regime invalid, even though at the time the acts were committed, that was the reigning rule of law? If so, what is the proper method to bring a perpetrator to justice? These questions are tackled by the Hart-Fuller debate.

Hart, an advocate of legal positivism, argued that proper adherence to the rule of law includes the widespread recognition of the prior laws during the oppressor regime as valid. Previous written law, although considered immoral and unjust by the transitional nation, should be the sole reigning legal force that can be followed by courts to prosecute human rights abusers. In the positivist position advocated by Hart, the main supposition states that the principle of the rule of law should proceed – just as it would during “ordinary”, non-transitional times – with full continuity of the written law. Hart’s positivist
position rejects questioning the legitimacy of law under the predecessor and successor regimes, justifying this idea by claiming that the response to past tyranny is does not lie in the domain of law but in that of politics. In other words, a regime such as the Nazi regime lacked morality and thus could not be considered a valid legal regime, should be recognized as a set of “perversions in the administration of justice” (Teitel, 2000). On the other hand, in Fuller’s view – the natural law position – the need for a transformation in the rule of law to proceed to a more liberal regime is the main claim. The new rule of law breaks with the rule of law dominant during the Nazi regime in order to offer fair justice to victims and bring forth democratic change. Thus, in Fuller’s point of view, Nazi collaborators had to be prosecuted under the new legal regime, disregarding the idea of the continuity of the rule of law. Fuller’s opinion elaborates on the idea that during times of transition from vast abuses, there is no single rule of law – even those accepted as norms or values (Teitel, 2000) – that should be considered as totally immune to transformation into a rule of law that serves justice for the nation and allows citizens to move a step forward towards democracy. However, during times of transition there are certain legal constructions that must always be considered: first, the rule of law must be viewed as socially constructed and thus adaptable to change if circumstances require; second, that at many points, transitional rule may transcend domestic law and politics and third, that the rule of law may at one point limit the role of politics in serving justice (Teitel, 2000).

Institutionally, these legal constructs that determine the rule of law during transitional times may be dealt with through four forms: legal justice, including the writing of clear, comprehensible laws; separating the judicial system from the government and
hiring unbiased laws and jurors; administrative justice, including purges in the previous institutions of public administration and through political justice, when the executive branch of the new government unilaterally designates who the perpetrators are and subsequently decides what shall be done with them (Elster, 2004). These transitional justice processes involve actors at several levels: supranational institutions (such as the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal), nation-states, corporate actors (organizations and the like) and individuals on their own.

Transitional justice aims to encourage the state and civil society to work together to build a future where respect of human rights and law prevails. It aims at dealing with a heritage of latent violations through offering a comprehensive plan for looking at the past and at what can be done for the future. Like any other discipline, transitional justice faces many constraints in its application on post-conflict states. In the case of Lebanon, these troubling constraints tend to increase. Other than a lack in human and monetary resources, the presence of a corrupt judiciary system, lack of evidence for accountability, a large number of human rights violations, and the presence of a large number of victims, Lebanon has to deal with the General Amnesty Law that wiped the slate clean for many war criminals. Nevertheless, I am optimistic that this law is not hard to breach. Transitional justice and can be applied to everyone – impunity is not an excused process.

**C. Reconciliation**

When adopted after times of civil war, transitional justice has proven to be a constructive domain aiding in the mending and fortifying of relations between citizens of one nation. The active participation of civil society is needed for this success. One of the
mechanisms of transitional justice that aims at aiding the resettling of communities together after a civil war, which focuses largely on efforts conducted by the civil society, is reconciliation. Reconciliation is not restoring things to how they were before the conflict occurred, but concerns constructing relationships and ties between all parties so that everyone is able to move forward and look to the future together – in a collective manner. It is a lengthy process, involving a sequence of different strategies and practices that promotes mutual understanding and respect. Note that in this case, I shall be focusing on societal reconciliation and not national reconciliation (“the longer-term, more difficult process of community and individual reconciliation” and not the “political form of consensus and interaction among parties and leaders”) (Anderlini, Pampell Conaway & Kays, 2004).

Transitional justice paves the way for reconciliation by investigating the truth and the manners required to unveil it, as pointed out by the experts of this field: “the past must be addressed in order to reach the future. Reconciliation is the means to do that” (Bloomfield, Barnes & Huyse, 2005). When a civil war like that which Lebanon experiences ends, moving on after the conflict proves to be quite challenging, especially when neighbors and at times family members fought on opposite sides. Reconciliation is significant in Lebanon’s case, since it has the capability to tackle the complex relationship between Palestinians and Lebanese, emphasizing on the reconstruction of the broken relationships between these two groups. Reconciliation falls under restorative justice; it is a process through which all the parties involved in the civil war deal with the past in a just manner, analyzing what happened and facing the consequences collectively. But what makes the mechanism of reconciliation significant in Lebanon’s case is not only that it has
proven to be crucial for sustainable peace, but that it is targeted at the community-level, and not the leaders or instigators of repression. Reconciliation mechanisms “have been aimed at the lower ranks” (Anderlini et al., 2004).

Reconciliation is a delicate and complex process: it is not perfect peace, nor a matter of merely forgiving. This process involves “finding a way to live that permits a vision of the future; the (re)building of relationships; coming to terms with past acts and enemies; a society-wide, long-term process of deep change; a process of acknowledging, remembering, and learning from the past; and voluntary and cannot be imposed” (Barnes et al., 2005). In the words of Desmond Tutu (2007), “examining the painful past, acknowledging it and understanding it, and above all transcending it together, is the best way to guarantee that it does not – and cannot – happen again.” Thus reconciliation considered an act of burying the past “in a reconciliatory way” (Bloomfield et al., 2005).

Furthermore, reconciliation is “the restoration of trust in a relationship where trust has been violated, sometimes repeatedly” (Worthington Jr., 2004:166). In order for reconciliation to succeed and prevent the use of the past as grudge used towards renewed conflict, all parties that took part in Lebanon’s civil war must share a mutual acknowledgement of all the other parties’ emotions, viewpoints and needs. This requires patience and the skills of active listening and communication – skills essential to this process. A practice which falls under reconciliation that contributes largely to the rebuilding of trust and marks a cornerstone in transitional justice processes is the act of forgiveness – or lack thereof, in Lebanon’s case. Only a few figures have broken the silence of the civil war and publicly asked for forgiveness – until recently, only Assad Shaftari, the former second in command of the
right-wing Lebanese Forces party, who published an apology in the Lebanese daily *An-Nahar* on February 10, 2000. His apology, worthy of a first page story, was placed on the upper left column on page 5, as if it was of no significant importance.

Asaad Shaftari’s statement was considerably an extraordinary occurrence in a state where collective amnesia imposed by the state reigned supreme. In a simple and honest manner, he publicly asked for forgiveness, stating in a letter a letter addressed to his victims "both living and dead," he became the first high-level militia leader to apologize for the thousands of deaths that he and his Christian militia deaths committed during Lebanon’s civil war. “I apologize for the horror of war and what I did in this civil war in the name of ‘Lebanon’ or ‘the cause’ or ‘Christianity’,” he wrote. ”My hope is that my call be understood as the only way out of the Lebanese dilemma, the only way to purify the souls of those tormented by the pains of the past. You can't just put the blame on those in charge. We were all responsible: those holding the guns, those giving the orders, even the civilians applauding it." Surprisingly, this statement was not made public in mainstream media: no one created a fuss about it, no one brought it up, and it was only cited in a couple of online news sources.

Then, in January 2008, the Palestinians, represented by the PLO, publicized a stunning statement seeking not only forgiveness but also the renewal of Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue and inter-communal relations. This Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon was addressed “to the Lebanese state and people in all its sectors and political groups, in the hope for open

and deep dialogue that will help reinforce relations between the Palestinians and Lebanese, particularly between the Lebanese State and the Palestine Liberation Organization (the state of Palestine) on solid, just and legal bases”. The declaration carried on, stating that the Palestinians are moving this step forward “in search of justice for both victims and in order to be able to open the door for revaluation and to help ourselves to purify our memory. Thus, we do want to take the initiative to apologize to any damage we have caused to our dear Lebanon whether intentionally or not. And this apology is in no way conditioned by a counter apology.” In addition to declaring that arms should be controlled by the Lebanese state, this declaration was an open invitation to the Palestinian community’s “Lebanese brothers with no exceptions to overstep the past with all its mistakes and sins and open up honestly to a deep reconciliation.” The declaration also expressed the “great gratitude to the huge sacrifices the Lebanese people have made to the Palestinian cause throughout the past decades, on their own behalf and always on behalf of all the Arabs.”

Since then, the responses to the PLO’s Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon have been astonishing. Lederach (1997) claims that reconciliation fundamentally represents a particular space, a point of encounter where concerns about the past and the future intertwine: “reconciliation as a locus creates a space for encounter by the parties, a place where the diverse but connected energies and concerns driving the conflict can meet, including the paradoxes of truth and mercy, justice and peace”. Its primary goal and key contribution is to embrace a painful past and build a relationship between the antagonists. The process of reconciliation, creating trust and building understanding between former enemies is complex and time-consuming, yet an essential one to address. The Phalangists
were able to create this space for reconciliation. Not only have the Phalangists, who formerly considered the Palestinians their utmost enemy in Lebanon, accepted the Palestinian apology and offered one in return, but they also organized a joint Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue session entitled “A Meeting of Openness and Forgiveness” in March 2008 as an event commemorating the 33rd anniversary of the start of the Lebanese Civil War that falls on the 13th of March. Samir Geagea, leader of the Lebanese Forces, whose members are said to have committed the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, also followed suit and apologized to the Palestinians. In a phone interview with the Future News network, Geagea stated that “the security of Palestinian citizens in Lebanon could only be guaranteed the Lebanese state” and then extended an apology to the Palestinians in Lebanon for their suffering during the Lebanese civil war. “I apologize to the Palestinian people for the Lebanese abuse that occurred during the war,” Geagea said. Geagea continued, “There is no doubt that in every war excesses can occur, and we also apologize to our Palestinian brothers who suffered such abuses. We hope that this will be a lesson for the Palestinian and Lebanese people and all the people of the region so as not to enter war with one another.”

The idea of reconciliation is based on the “social recovery” of victims in society “with the purpose of reconstituting the national whole” (Humphrey, 2002). Social participation is mandatory for any movement towards reconciliation. In Lebanon, the normative definition of victim definitely cannot be used, for Lebanon is a country whose

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18 Geagea Apologizes to Palestinians for War Atrocities, April 19, 2008, Now Lebanon (accessed April 20, 2008).
civil war gave birth to not one set of victims, but a whole nation of people who view themselves as victims of the war, terrorized by their enemy parties. It has become apparent that the Palestinian community in Lebanon has seen themselves as the other, to speak like Paul Ricoeur. The Phalangists and the leader of the Lebanese Forces have both shown their intent to participate in transitional justice measures such as reconciliation in order to bring forth memories of the civil war, be open with one another, and hope these atrocities never occur again. We now have a general opinion as to how people who lived through the civil war think, which now makes it crucial to study the youth. It is imperative to see whether the Lebanese youth that was born during or close to the end of the Lebanese Civil War is bound by a collective memory of the civil war, to see how this age group perceives the Palestinian factor in Lebanon – in a manner different than their parents or not, based on extensive work by Simon Haddad – and whether they are ready and committed to engage in transitional justice mechanisms including reconciliation and forgiveness, since this generation will be responsible for inter-communal relations in the future.
The notion of war has constantly plagued me since childhood: as a child, while watching the news with my father every evening I could not imagine how countries would allow such atrocities to occur. I would frequently rush to my parents for answers – especially when it came to the Lebanese civil war, since although I am Lebanese I had never had the chance to visit my country of origin. I would relentlessly hammer them with questions, looking for answers that, as an innocent child, I desperately wanted to hear: Why is there war in Lebanon? Who is waging it? Why are so many people dying? Of the many details my parents told me, I can only remember one recurring notion, the one I found the most striking: that the blame of the civil war lies on every single citizen, Lebanese or not, that took part in the violent clashes. However, my years spent in Lebanon helped me realize that most of the Lebanese did not think in the same manner as I did – in particular, the members of my parents’ generation, those who had lived through the perils of the Lebanese Civil War. After reading most of the literature on this topic, I sensed that the attitudes of those who went through the civil war were covered in depth. Yet the viewpoints of people my age – those born during or a little after the civil war – were not almost entirely unheard of. After the years of fighting and hatred, where did that leave the attitudes of this important age group, in particular, university students just like me? Would they think like me, positively leaning towards justice and reconciliation, or would they hold the completely
opposite view? Thus, I decided I wanted to place my focus on the perceptions of the youth – how the Lebanese and Palestinian youth viewed each other, in relation to the notions of collective memory, transitional justice and reconciliation. At first, the thesis proposal submitted and approved by my committee dealt with this aspect, covering both the Lebanese and Palestinian youth. However, whilst conducting my fieldwork, and after completing the 30 in-depth interviews with the Lebanese students, I came to the conclusion that I needed to further narrow down my thesis topic. Furthermore, the political situation in Lebanon in addition to the many clashes that took place during the first half of 2008 impeded my chances to conduct fieldwork in the Burj el-Barajneh Palestinian camp. Not wanting to change my thesis topic entirely, after much deliberation I made the choice to take the perceptions of the Lebanese youth towards the Palestinians as a thesis topic on its own. This will help us to understand whether the Lebanese youth group is ready to let bygones be bygones and work towards reconciliation processes with the Palestinians, who have shown great intent in doing so.

A number of my Lebanese colleagues at AUB who inquired about my thesis topic bluntly asked me, “But why do you want to talk about the war? We all know the Palestinians carry the blame for that period.” Others claimed that I would amount to nothing and my efforts would be futile. Expectedly, a large group of students – Christian, Muslim and Druze – even questioned my status as a Christian, claiming that any effort to even write or mention the Palestinian community brings to surface an underlying sympathy towards them – which I, as a Christian living in Kesrwan, should never feel, since Palestinians form the “greatest threat towards Christianity in Lebanon”.

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Vast scholarship on the Palestinian issue in Lebanon has been written. From news reports to studies to books, most of this literature tends to be concerned with the Palestinian refugees’ legal, socio-economic and political standing (Haddad, 2003). Rarely does a study tackle the topic of the underlying feeling of the Lebanese towards the Palestinians – not that of the Lebanese politicians and party leaders which has become extremely evident – in order to discover the reasons behind such an enmity. Furthermore, according to Haddad (2003), there has been little research conducted where the individual is the unit of analysis, and there are very few investigations “that focus on the link between the social and political orientations of ordinary Lebanese citizens toward Palestinian presence [in Lebanon].” Haddad (2003) carries on by stating: “To these deficiencies may be added the dearth of information about both the relationship between social attitudes held by the Lebanese toward Palestinians and their indefinite settlement in Lebanon – an issue central to national politics and to the Middle East peace process.”

In light of recent events such as Nahr al-Bared and overwhelming loom of a possible forthcoming Lebanese Civil War, it is important to understand how Lebanese citizens view the Palestinians that have lived in their country for sixty years and, if an Arab-Israeli peace process does not fall through, how Lebanese citizens will handle the possibility of the Palestinians remaining in Lebanon for another sixty years to come or more. However, I was not interested in studying the perceptions of Lebanese citizens who had lived through the civil war. I was interested in measuring the attitudes of the Lebanese youth towards the Palestinian entity in Lebanon; a youth that did not entirely live through
the civil war or have any direct recollection of it, but who only acknowledges what happened in the war through collective memory.

As a student that has first-hand experience of the enduring Lebanese trauma of the Civil War, I wanted to see how this persisting trauma affected university students like me. Like most people in this country, I acknowledge the fact that I live in a nation with very many dedicated, competent people who dream of change in Lebanese society on many levels: most importantly, being able to openly and thoroughly discuss the effects of the Lebanese Civil War on all domains of society. Whilst conducting my literature review, I came into contact with a lot of mixed feelings of my own: reading about transitional justice and the need to confront our past in order to move successfully into the future was both enlightening and discouraging. It was enlightening because the various initiatives the scholars wrote of allowed for hope – if transitional justice proved worthwhile in several countries worldwide, couldn’t it be applied in Lebanon? It was discouraging because the generation that lived through the civil war has rejected far too many other initiatives that would lead to strengthening ties between the various sides in Lebanon. Since in my opinion, many members of my parents generation have failed miserably (even sometimes after starting out enthusiastically) in applying any initiatives to deal with our past, I believed it was imperative to see whether there is a keenness and fervor present in the youth to try and apply mechanisms of this domain to society.

Based on this context, my objective is to measure perceptions of the Palestinian factor in Lebanon through analyzing memories of the Lebanese Civil War that the Lebanese youth holds, to see what may hinder or push the transitional justice process
forward. My sample consists of the middle-class and upper-middle class Lebanese youth group aged 18 to 24, living inside and outside Beirut who attend the top private English-education universities in Lebanon. I tried as much as possible to avoid students who are extremely politically active and thus my sample reflects Lebanese youth who either favor a certain political party or do not pertain to one at all. The interviewees were selected with the help of friends and contacts. Surprisingly, at all three universities I was a big hit: on more than one occasion, after having conducted an interview with a student, the student would ask me if I needed more interviewees and drag me to meet their friends who insisted on being included in my thesis. The universities I limited my study to are: The American University of Beirut (AUB), The Lebanese American University (LAU – both campuses), and Notre Dame University. The sex distribution of the sample included 12 females and 18 males. I attempted to interview students of each major confessional group in Lebanon – Christianity (Maronites, Greek Orthodox and Catholics), Islam (Sunnis and Shiites) and Druze – but I placed a main focus on the Christians since, based on Simon Haddad’s (2003) work, my hypothesis at the beginning of my fieldwork claimed that there are more issues at stake that should be resolved between Christians and Palestinians than any other religious sect. After 15 interviews with the Christians (9 Maronites, 4 Greek Orthodox and 2 Catholics), however, my results soon proved me wrong. I did not want to divide the interviewees according to the breakdown of the Lebanese population as portrayed in the 1932 Lebanese census, since I wanted to fit my data findings to my hypotheses.

I had initially tried to include students of the Lebanese University (LU), Université Saint Joseph (USJ), and Université Saint Esprit de Kaslik (USEK) in my study – not to
limit my fieldwork to students of a particular social class who attend private universities, but to students of all economic classes – but I faced a number of dilemmas whilst I attempted to conduct fieldwork on students who attend these universities: the LU has too many campuses and with each campus political affiliations vary, making the findings of this university much harder to analyze; the language barrier (my French is quite rusty) proved to be quite a challenge at USJ and students at USEK refused to talk to me about the civil war and the Palestinians – after a day talking with students from USEK that I was put in contact with, I was only able to conduct one interview.

My research raises questions of remembrance and reconciliation to Lebanese youth in the framework of the transitional justice. On this basis, I opted for quantitative methodology. My methodology basically relied on the in-depth interview. The interview is divided into five parts: the student’s social background (age, religion, university and religious affiliation), the student’s social contact with Palestinians, memories of the civil war, perceptions of Palestinians and reconciling with the Palestinians. I attempted to tackle as many points as possible in the interview: from asking about tawtin to inquiring whether the students had heard of the Palestinian Declaration in Beirut. The interviews were held in an atmosphere of strict confidentiality at locations which the interviewees considered “comfortable” – either quiet locations on the three university campuses, in cafés, or over lunch. I assured the students that my findings would not be used anywhere other than my study, and the students were thus given the opportunity to be anonymous. Those whose

19 I would like to note that when using the word “Palestinians” with the interviewees, I would clarify to them that I meant the Palestinians residing inside the refugee camps and not those living outside the camps.
names appear in the study have provided me with written consent to have their names mentioned. In fact, a few of the students stressed on the importance that their name that their name appear in the study, out of a desire to have their attitudes heard. Furthermore, the interviewees were informed of the topic in detail and the questions to be covered in the interview were briefly discussed with the interviewees beforehand. I mainly conducted the interviews in English but translated some terms to Arabic to a few students. The fieldwork took longer than I expected – I started my fieldwork in early February 2008 and concluded it at the end of April 2008 – but in the end, despite the limitations of the sample used in this study, I believe that my results are of considerable strength, address a significant current issue and bring forth conceptions that the Lebanese youth hold towards the Palestinians – an age group which has rarely been covered, but whose ideas hold large implications for the future.

The significance of mentioning the religions of the students in this study is large. Although, as I will describe later, the students are not exactly all practicing members of their faiths, highlighting the religions of the students not only contradicts the pattern of responses Haddad (2000) obtained in his work on the perceptions that the Lebanese citizens over 18 in Lebanon hold, but also supports my hypothesis that sectarian affinity has no role in the attitudes these students hold towards the Palestinians in Lebanon. Haddad (2000) states: “There is little warmth toward the Palestinians, with the exception of Sunni and Druze respondents. […] Most Christians have always been hostile to the Palestinians, due mainly to Palestinian exploitation of the internal tensions of Lebanese society for their own ends. […] As for Shi’i hostility to the Palestinians, it resulted from the Syrian-backed Shi’i
militias having in 1985 launched “the war of the camps,” with devastating results for the Palestinians. […] Sunni and Druze respondents seem much more ready to interact with Palestinians.” The function of the religious groups in the responses of the students is greatly important in emphasizing that among this particular youth group, their attitudes toward this marginalized group in Lebanon cannot be defined neither by their general belonging to a certain religion nor to the perceptions each religion holds as a result of what happened in the Lebanese Civil War.

I had also aimed to conduct a focus group including Palestinian and Lebanese students as part of my fieldwork. Throughout this focus group, I had aimed to identify what it is that led to the conflict in the first place, analyze why Lebanese and Palestinian came to blows and why they resorted to arms. I wanted to address those causes in such a way of making avenues or institutions for communication. As a moderator, I had planned to initiate the discussion with questions and to feed it when it is necessary. However, organizing a focus group in Lebanon proved to be a difficult feat: classes and exam times clashed and some students worked on weekends, others on weekdays.

When it came to my fieldwork, one major question I asked myself was whether the desire towards reconciliation is an individualistic decision or a collective one. Are my interviewees relying on their sectarian or community memories while thinking of reconciliation between the Lebanese and the Palestinians? This issue is not only related to the literature on reconciliation but also related to the nature of Lebanese and Arab society and the different modes of socialization.
Throughout my fieldwork, I established the idea that the will to reconciliation may occur through a communally oriented process, where community, religious and political leaders have the power to legitimize the process of reconciliation. The precedence of local history and custom – norms, values, and relationships between family groups – directly affects the language and process of reconciliation. I entered the field believing that the Christian and Shiite students were most likely to be less open to the idea of reconciliation, considering the environment they come from. However, based on the Giddens-Bourdieu framework I shall describe, my fieldwork acknowledged the importance of individual agency – with students neglecting most of the dispositions coming from history and structure of their sectarian and communal identities.

Anthony Giddens (1991:204) claims that rituals and collective involvement to, for example, religious groups are crucial not only an individual's emotional well-being but also to communal harmony and social integration – two focuses of transitional justice and reconciliation. He writes that: “Without ordered ritual and collective involvement, individuals are left without structured ways of coping with tensions and anxieties... Communal rites provide a focus for group solidarity at major transitions...[while] allocating definite tasks for those involved....Something profound is lost together with traditional forms of ritual....Traditional ritual...connected individual action to moral frameworks and to elemental questions about human existence. The loss of ritual is also the loss of such frameworks.” Rituals thus limit the applicability of Western-backed reconciliation efforts on a non-Western society: focus in the West is placed on the primacy of individual choice in the process. However for many scholars individuals in the Arab world are tied by
culture, norms and values but I think this fell short of noticing the process of individualization that the Arab world has undergone – the individualization reflected in my interviews.

Anthony Giddens (1984: 22) expresses that “any social agent has a high degree of knowledge which he invokes in the production and reproduction of daily social practices, but the greater part of this knowledge is practical rather than theoretical”. Echoing Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu’s habitus is very relevant, in regards to his focus on agency and the processes through which individuals contribute to the formation, production and reproduction of their surrounding social structures. Bourdieu defines habitus as “an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that reinforces or modifies its structures” (1992: 133). Through widening Mauss’s range of the term to include a person's beliefs and dispositions – an individual’s socio-cultural environment – Bourdieu explains that the agency of individuals is affected as they orient themselves within their culturally defined and structured environments. In his work, he focuses on agency and as being comprised of lasting, acquired dispositions of perception, thought and action, developed by the individual agent in response to structures (such as class and family) and external conditions they encounter.

Another limitation that arises concerns the applicability of Western suppositions of reconciliation and transitional justice, often quite simple, onto a complex entity such as Lebanon. Despite of the fact that transitional justice emerged from Latin America and South Africa before being developed in the West, the abundant literature on reconciliation comes particularly from the West (especially the United States). The concept of
reconciliation – *mosalaha* – is much embedded in Arab and Islamic culture, but one of the aspects of difference could be that most Arabs and particularly Lebanese do not place their ultimate trust in any kind of reconciliation process, claiming that sectarian and blood-based relationships shatter any move towards societal dialogue (Irani & Fink, 2000). Reconciliation must not only be a mechanical response to trauma, but should pay extreme attention to the distinct cultural setting. Other scholars consider that forgiveness, which is essential to the reconciliation process, is not embedded in cultures and religions. The teaching and practice of reconciliation in Lebanon is a “novel phenomenon” that has often been greeted with mistrust, as a “Western panacea, another program imposed from the outside and therefore insensitive to indigenous problems, needs and political processes” (Irani & Fink, 2000). The Western assumption of conflict is, in principle, that any conflict can be fully resolved, that conflict is natural, inevitably leading to dialogue and stronger societal relations. However, the Arab-Islamic culture holds a less optimistic standpoint regarding this matter (Salem, 1997). According to Salem (1997) and Irani et al. (2000), Arabs are characterized by a historic sense of victimization that has left them fearful of any kind of conflict and its imminent aftermath. Furthermore, communally-based societies make up the nations of the Arab world, where patriarchal authority is dominant. In this context, Irani et al. (2000:16) argue that “Arab states do not have ‘citizens’ in the ideal Western meaning of individuals bound to one another and the state by an agreed-upon interlocking system of rights and duties. What they have instead are individuals belonging to communities and abiding by their rules and rituals” directly affecting the possible communicative behavior that should take place while looking at the past.
More significantly, the Western and Arab-Islamic processes differ in their emphases on the instrumental dimensions of reconciliation. Western processes encourage “direct, step-by-step problem solving between disputants who ideally ‘separate the person from the problem’ and work to satisfy various individual shared interests and needs through a fair deal that is sealed by a formal, written agreement. In contrast, the Arab-Islamic process prioritizes relational issues, such as restoring harmony and solidarity and restoring the dignity and prestige of individuals and groups” (Irani et al., 2000:20). In light of my previous literature review on Arab-Islamic reconciliation processes, while conducting my fieldwork I was fully aware that ethics and morality spanning from various political and religious were probably in my results. Nevertheless, I was greatly determined to find out whether transitional justice and reconciliation are proper mechanisms to deal with the shaky Lebanese-Palestinian relationship.

In addition, as an extra exercise, at the end of each interview I gave each interviewee a set of texts: the first, an excerpt of the Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon; the second, a statement by Abu Arez, the leader of the Guardians of the Cedars, which states that the Lebanese Civil War was a Lebanese-Palestinian war par excellence; the third an excerpt of a Nawaf Salam article on the consequences of tawtin on Lebanon and the last text an excerpt on the importance of apology and forgiveness in Lebanon though the analysis of Assad Shaftari’s apology, and asked the students to comment honestly on what they have just read. The aim of this exercise was to reveal any underlying sentiments that the students had concerning the Palestinian apology: my hypothesis was that students would focus on the Palestinian apology and develop their ideas from what was stated in the
declaration. Not only did the students go beyond my expectations and fill a page and a half to two pages of comments, but they highlighted a significant fear of theirs – the fear of the Palestinian arms issue in Lebanon – that they felt would hinder any aim at reconciliation.
A. Youth Generation in Lebanon

Youth culture describes the cultural practice of members of the youth age group: their modes of behavior through which they express their identities and the manner in which they convey their sense of belonging to a certain group of people. The notion of youth culture dates back to the start of the 20th century. The development of youth movements in Germany in the early 20th century permitted the drawing of boundaries of this societal group which differed greatly than what was called the mainstream, adult group: their modes of behavior, societal orientations, opinions and viewpoints were conceived by many as symbols of authentic and autonomous group practices. The distinct mannerisms and the unique cultural articulation shown by members of this group of young people led to the coining of the term “youth culture” (Heaven & Tubridy, 2003). This self defined community of people who were characterized by a common, unique lifestyle shared and developed amongst their peers led to many debates in sociological thought. One of the basic theories on generation was identified by Karl Mannheim who depicted generations as “sources of opposition, challenging existing social norms and values and bringing social change through collective generational organization” (Edmunds & Turner, 2002).
Mannheim was influenced largely by Karl Marx and Max Weber and this is evident in most of his works: he sees the various social locations of ideas in relation to classes and status groups. Nevertheless, Mannheim was able to attribute a great deal of attention to the importance of generational differences in relation to the location of ideas. Mannheim criticized the Marxist tradition of class analysis and claimed that age groups were also able to act as agents of social change with the capability of changing the status quo without attributing to the concept of class. According to him, a person’s generation gives that individual a certain, defined location in both social and historical time and thus predisposes them to a particular mode of thought, which is usually similar to some extent amongst members of the same generation (Edmunds & Turner, 2002). Given the relative absence of direct social control by adults onto the youth, an age-wise homogeneous group such as that of the youth provides a social space in which self-directed and self-responsible action patterns may be learned and conveyed, leading to the development of a peer culture that could greatly contrast and oppose the norms and values of the adult world.

Mannheim claimed that the formation of a certain generation is most likely to take place during the life stage of adolescence. During these years, the various experiences, social circumstances and especially historical events will have deep and enduring effects on the decisions and actions of this generation. In fact, Mannheim claimed that an entire generation could be defined in terms of a collective response to a certain traumatic event – such as the catastrophe of a civil war. The individuals, while each replying to and undergoing this event on their own and as part of a larger group, would thus be united into a self-conscious age group.
In fact, Mannheim’s theory of generations will help me to formulate my hypothesis that the current youth generation in Lebanon is currently in opposition to that of their parents, as a result of their response towards growing up in the light of their parent’s traumatic experience of living in the Lebanese Civil War – which for the youth alone is considerably more than a disturbing encounter. I shall then show that as a result of their generational response to this traumatic experience, the youth greatly challenge the social norms that their parents have tried to place on them, showing that the youth is indeed open to any kind of social change which would bring about wellness to the society.

Mannheim was greatly attentive towards the anger and anguish the German youth faced throughout World War 1 – not only in response to the warfare, but also in response to the poverty, absence of human rights and a feeling of shame that society was actually going through such a tragic and destroying occurrence. Anger and anguish felt by the Lebanese youth towards the Lebanese Civil War and towards what people of their parents’ generation had done was greatly evident in the responses of the thirty students I had interviewed. As I brought up the topic of my thesis with my interviewees, I began to notice a variety of responses from the students as I told them about my study in depth, particularly noticing what their actions would be when I bring up the Lebanese Civil War. With body language and facial expressions ranging from large frowns to rude hand gestures, in addition to the use of swear words very frequently, it had become obvious that members of this generation have had enough with the consequences of the war. This was evident irrespective of what religions or political ideologies the students believed in. Two Christian students from NDU, Maya Kanaan, 21, a Maronite, and Farah Koussa, 21, a Greek Orthodox, both had
particularly violent responses whilst talking about their opinion of the civil war: although both wanted nothing to do with the topic and claimed that they knew almost nothing concerning the particular events and parties that fueled the Lebanese civil war, when the sheer topic of the war was brought up Maya threw her cigarette box across the table in anger, whereas Farah grabbed a pencil and started repeatedly jabbing the chair she sat in whilst repeatedly stating “This country is doomed. We’ll never be happy. We never will.” Kamil Chehab, a Sunni student from LAU Beirut, lost his appetite and pushed his food away whilst being interviewed and exclaimed, “How can I eat when I actually think of all the disgusting things that took place during the war?” Rasha Moghnieh, a 20 year old Shiite AUB student from what she called the “southern suburbs of Beirut”, could not sit still: she jumped up and down, moved around, and fidgeted while speaking of the civil war – it is clearly unmistakable that this topic hits a nerve with members of this generation.

The major limitation of Mannheim’s theory is that the mere location of a generation on its own is not sufficient for the formation of a generation as a tangible factor in society. Although the concept of the generation provides common access by its members to a specific, shared range of experiences and memories different than that of other generations, Mannheim acknowledges the possibility that groups of youths exposed to the same generation location will be able to ‘work up the interpretation and expression of their common experiences in different specific ways. Hence each generation may form separate generational units, under the umbrella of the generational group. Mannheim called these “articulate structures of knowledge or consciousness that express particular location” (Turner, 1992). Thus, even though each generation may include within itself a number of
different generation-units who may differ greatly with one another, they are all tied to each
other and belong to the same generation because of their orientation towards each other.
This is logical as my interviews have shown that although the answers of the students I
interviewed may differ slightly yet all demonstrate a general frustration with what occurred
in the past and the overwhelming need to deal with the past.

Thus, one of the main aims I had was to see whether the youth I had in mind
responded to my questions on the basis of their expressed identities as different of those of
their parents, and whether the answers they gave me could be directly tied together. My
preliminary questions to the students provided me with the adequate basis to continue using
this theory of generations.

To begin with, one of my fundamental questions was whether any of the students
had Palestinian roots or relatives. A few actually did, with members of their immediate
families who made their way from Palestine to Lebanon. Jean Mezher, a 20 year old
Maronite student from AUB, said that his uncle’s wife was Palestinian. However, his
answers did not portray any special sympathy towards the Palestinians stemming from his
relative’s association to Palestine. Emile Abou Chahla, a 23 year old Greek Orthodox
student from NDU, told me that his mother actually still holds an identity card marking her
as a Palestinian refugee in Syria. However, Emile strictly wishes the Palestinians would
leave Lebanon: “Let them go find their own other country. Or let them go back to their
country. Take them elsewhere – I really don’t care as long as they’re out of here.” A female
20 year old Shiite student from LAU Beirut told me her father was born in Palestine and he
then came to Lebanon by foot as a child. She was wary of giving her strict opinion about
the Palestinians in Lebanon, but she later told me, “Palestinians should not focus on one
country – not just on Lebanon. They should be spread over the all the Arab nation equally.”

Furthermore, out of the 30 students I interviewed, only 2 students admitted to
having the same level of religiosity as their parents. The rest of the students expressed their
discontent with their parents beliefs in religion, with many claiming that these were “new
times” and that “it made sense that their parents were religious, they lived in a much more
traditional time”. Most of the students, when asked about their level of religiosity, either
replied with “not practicing” or answers ranging from low to extremely low. Not to my
surprise, I encountered many who replied “Atheist”. Indeed, most of the students conveyed
large frustration with the role of religion in sparking and fueling Lebanon’s many conflicts
and disagreements. Patrick Harfouche, a 22 year old Maronite student studying at NDU,
said, “I am an atheist. My brother’s beliefs in Jesus and God are way below average.
However, my parents are still firm believers in Christianity. I don’t see what the church can
offer me. Anyways, this is best for me, since I believe religion is the major factor in all our
problems in Lebanon.” One student, Khalil Khraibani, a 21 year old Shiite student from
AUB, was one of only three students whose parents were not religious. He stated, “My
family and I are not religious. But even if I was, religion is something you keep to yourself.
I believe in the separation of religion from politics. If we did that in Lebanon, things would
be much better. Little chance of that happening, though.” Rudy Yasmine, a 20 year old
Greek Orthodox student from AUB, claimed that he doesn’t believe in religion “much”
because he “believes in happiness, and in Lebanon, religion and happiness are not
necessarily closely linked.” The students who claimed to be somewhat religious were two
Druze students. Both students gave me an explanation as to why they had to consider themselves somewhat involved in their faith. One of them, an AUB student, who preferred to stay anonymous, gave me his idea on this issue: “Like myself, I believe it is more of a culture thing. People use religion as a way to keep their roots, as I keep my Druze roots.” Abdallah Ghraizi, a 20 year old Druze student from AUB, called himself “culturally Druze” instead of religious. He stated, “I am very proud of my culture.” Two girls considered themselves to be very religious, Rania Shorbaji, a 23 year old Sunni student from LAU Beirut, and a 20 year old Shiite student from AUB. However, both girls rushed to exclaim that they were both very liberal and were nothing like their parents: that they were capable of separating their faith from their interactions in daily life with other people, and did not let their religiousness interfere with their perceptions of other people in society.

When it came to the students’ parents’ education, only around 5 of the students had parents who attended or completed college; the rest of the students’ parents either finished high school or completed some. However, this did not register as a large factor which affected the responses of the students. In fact, many of the upper-middle class students interviewed had parents who established their own companies without a college education, so education did not affect the responses of my interviewees, and more importantly, did not affect the social status or class status of the interviewees.

However, one of the few things that seemed to tie the students to their parents turned out to be the political ideologies of the students – as expected. Patrick Harfouche and his brother Karl Harfouche, a 20 year old student from AUB, had similar yet somewhat different views when it came to politics: Patrick Harfouche considered himself pro-March
14, just as a basis of their ideals of being against Syrian and Iranian intervention. Karl, however, identified more with the Lebanese Forces since he considered them the “strongest Christian force in Lebanon. Although I am not religious, I believe that the Christians in Lebanon need a force in Lebanon which reinforces the concept of Christianity and helps us as a minority in Lebanon. I tell you, I am not with the Lebanese Forces fully and I don’t agree with some of their ideas. I can tell you this with confidence since if Aoun was heading the strongest Christian force in Lebanon, I would definitely be with him!”

However, their parents tended to lean towards the Phalangist party. Antoine Akiki, a 20 year old Maronite student from NDU, claimed that his parents were Aounists but definitely not March 8, and he tended to lean towards these same ideals. Jad Bou Malhab, a 22 year old Maronite student from LAU Jbeil, expressed that his family tended to disagree greatly when it came to religion since he considered himself to be not practicing, and he sensed that one of the few things his family had in common is that they all agreed on being Pro-Aounist. A 19 year old Sunni student from LAU Beirut claimed that she hated politics, and didn’t really ever take a side – but she said that she has to say she is Pro-March 14, since she agrees with the anti-Syrian ideas they hold. Nevertheless, I ran into one exception: Rania Shorbaji, who lived in Tarik el Jdide all her life, but who could “never be with March 14. I’m with any kind of resistance. I am very Pro-Hezbollah. My grandmother tends to lean towards me. However, my mother and the rest of my immediate family think I’m insane.” Most of the students interviewed rushed to assure me that their political ideas were simply ideas they held and that they did not play a role in any decisions they made in society, since none of the students I interviewed were registered members or supporters of any of the parties in Lebanon.
Mannheim’s approach to generations provided me with two major theoretical contributions to my study. The first theoretical consideration is the conceptualization of generations in relation to both social processes and historical events as opposed to biological age boundaries. In this study, the different social environment the youth are subjected to, in addition to the historical event of the Lebanese Civil War that appeared to leave a great impact on all of them, allowed them to mold their own concepts about religion and politics – concepts differing greatly than that of their parents. The second consideration relates to differences in the ways in which young people within the same generation location cope with their common experiences and thus develop different cultural orientations and styles of behavior, yet all overarching at the same time, as their responses concerning religion and politics have shown.

B. Lebanese Youth and the Memory of the Civil War

When asked how the students remember the Lebanese Civil War knowing that they did not live through it, the plethora of answers I received overwhelmed me. From parents’ recollections, to oral history from older friends and immediate family members such as grandparents, to documentaries, websites and books, in addition to legacies and stories from their hometowns, the ways the students found out about the civil war varied greatly. A specific book, From Beirut to Jerusalem by Thomas Friedman, was brought up by two students. But the primary manner in which the students learned about the civil war was through their families.
Some students even told me detailed, evocative stories of violence they had heard, such as cut heads on the streets, coffins laid everywhere and cars on the roads driving rapidly with bodies dragging in the rear. Descriptions of checkpoints, identity checks, going to the South by boat, attempting to leave neighborhoods that had it rough during the war… Obviously, the stories of the war meant greatly to the students.

As different as their methods of discovering the history of the Lebanese Civil War were, many factors tied all 30 interviewees together: beginning with their uncertainty concerning the exact events of the civil war. When asked to give me their own narrative of how the civil war happened, all of them started their narrative with “I don’t know what happened” or “I don’t exactly know what took place back then”. Many would pause mid-sentence, gathering their ideas, not knowing what to state next. When I asked them why they had stopped, most of them replied that they had to work through the different scenarios they had heard of the civil war going through their brain.

Another similarity appeared in the answers they offered me: all of them brought up the Palestinians at the very start of their description – some bringing them up as a militia, a force just as any other that took part in the war, others explaining the role of the Palestinians as crucial to every event of the war. Patrick Harfouche paused for about 2 minutes before he gave me his answer. “I’m not sure, but I know it was Palestinians on one side and militias and Israel on the other who were literally screwing each other over.” Tony Akiki expressed his frustration with what happened during the war: “Although I’ve mostly heard stories from my parents, I consider myself to have lived through the war, since I was 3 years old before it ended. I have flashes of memory of me hiding in the shelter in
Ajaltoun, in the big shed. The only explanation I can offer you about what happened during the Lebanese Civil War is in this statement: ‘kids will never grow up’. The Lebanese nature is egocentric – don’t get me wrong, we are nice people – but we only think about ourselves. Maybe the war wouldn’t have started with the Palestinians themselves but let’s be honest: in the war, when each party had an opportunity to gain power they went and didn’t think of Lebanon as a country. My parents told me that when the Palestinians came to Lebanon, they had a camp, Tal al-Zaatar, where there was lots of tension between Palestinians and Lebanese. Then the Ain el-Remmeh bus incident occurred, and the killings started – but before that, there was great tension between the Lebanese and the Palestinians. Jean stated, “It all began with a stupid van, bus, whatever! It was the people against the Palestinians. It then became religious. It then became political.” Rasha proclaimed, “The Lebanese couldn’t agree on their enemies during the civil war. There was no understanding, no common friend or enemy. The Palestinians had the unfortunate chance of entering the fight, which caused an even larger difference of interests.” Saleem Baradhy, a 23 year old Maronite student from NDU, explained to me that the civil war was planned exclusively by non-Lebanese but executed strictly by Lebanese parties – including the Palestinians. Abbas Shaito, a 23 year old Shiite student from AUB, said that it was the “side-talks” and “mingling” he does with his fellow students that helped him gain insight on what happened during the civil war, but even so, he still does not know everything about it and prefers not to talk about it.

What was out of the ordinary while analyzing the students’ answers was the abundance of Christian students who had no interest in what happened in the civil war,
some blaming the actions of those who caused and fought in the civil war as a justified reason for not needing to find out the truth, others just not wanting to hear about it out of a complete lack of interest. Emile said, “The people who fought the war ruined the country. They’re a bunch of idiots. I never bothered to ask about it and I didn’t care. Maher Beaini, a 22 year old Maronite student from LAU Jbeil looked at me with indifference and said, “My parents told me nothing. I wasn’t even aware of it and didn’t necessarily want to be at one point.” Only one student, Karl, explained why he did not know anything about the civil war and why he does not desire to learn more: “It’s not my position to talk about the war since I wasn’t there. What I know always comes from a biased side since I wasn’t there.” Maya said: “I know nothing. My parents didn’t tell me anything and anyways I’m not interested.” Farah stated: “I don’t know and don’t want to know. I’ll never ask either. It’s just not affecting my personal life right now.”

Some students, like Tony, were not shy of hiding how they felt about those responsible for the war: “When the day is over, I, as a young Lebanese, have no desire but piss on everyone responsible [for the civil war] in addition to the politicians and to send them far away from this country where they can practice their favorite activity, acting. We need new blood in this country. My friends majoring in political science do not spend years studying their asses off to analyze the actions of stupid actors.”

What is stunning in the answers given by the students is what I perceived as the lack of collective memory amongst the students – except amongst the Druze students. The Druze students interviewed gave me answers that were extremely alike; all 3 students – Lana Salman, Abdallah and a third Druze student – brought up the role of Kamal Jumblatt
in the civil war and the decisions, pacts and allies he had made or broken. The rest of the students, for example, the Christians and the Shiites, did not form their memory of the civil war around a collective figure. This could be a result of the cultural strengths that the Druze, as a minority group in Lebanon, possesses. The Druze male, whose answer was extremely similar to that of Abdallah and Lana, told me: “It was a result of the confessionalism and it was just a snowball effect from there. Each person believed they would gain something from the war but in the end it was everyone’s loss.” All three students brought up the support that the Druze community in Lebanon offered back then to the Palestinian cause. In addition, all three students emphasized the responsibility their community had to take when they realized that a foreign force was threatening not only their towns and neighborhoods but also the entire country. On one hand, the decisions that Kamal Jumblatt and his followers had to take during the war, related to the skirmishes between the Druze and the Palestinians, were brought up and stressed upon, but on the other hand, it was imperative for all three students to show me that even throughout the civil war, the Druze community always stood by the Palestinian cause. Abdallah said: “The decisions that Kamal Jumblatt had to take during the war showed how much the war was a self-perpetuated descent into darkness. At the beginning, Kamal Jumblatt stood with the Palestinians, but later on, when things just became worse, he just had to change sides and fight them.” Abdallah further explained that these fights between the Druze and Palestinians were mostly “individual”, as a result of “crimes like theft” and “the mere idea that a foreign entity was trying to take over our own country.”
When asked “Who do you think won the civil war?” 26 of the students replied “no one”. There seemed to be a mutual agreement that the civil war was the loss of everyone living inside Lebanon. Other students, such as Tony and a Shiite girl from LAU, stated the felt that the outside forces were those who won the civil war. “You could say the Americans won, or the Syrians,” Tony stated. “They are not the winners. They’re like vultures, they waited for the moment when Lebanon our country was dead and they grasped the moment.” Jean claimed, “Israel and the people that came into power after the war won the war.” Rudy answered, “I want to answer the Palestinians, but I don’t think I really can. I believe the Syrian regime won.”

After being asked who the guilty party and the victims of the civil war were, most of the answers received from the students were ultimately the same. The majority of the students believed everyone who took part in the civil war was guilty, and everyone who was harmed, wronged or who even just lived through the civil war were the victims. In relation to the opinions documented by Haddad (2003), a few students deemed the Palestinians the guilty party and those wronged by them as the victims. However, they all rushed to clarify that the Palestinians weren’t the only guilty party alone – that many other people held the same guilt as well. Patrick answered: “I think all parties in Lebanon hold responsibility to the same degree. I believe the Palestinians hold MOST of the responsibility.” Abdallah stated: “In a way, you can say the blame should be placed on the Palestinian cause but it is not the entire reason. Lots of things led to the Palestinians being dragged into the civil war. Their situation just added more weight to it. They were not the main cause.” Another Druze student said: “The Palestinian demeanor was very forceful in
the sense that their actions slightly disrupted the very sensitive balance between the parties in Lebanon. They are not the instigator, but the spark, and that’s a big difference. I am not allocating all the blame on them nor am I saying they are the only guilty party, but their actions in Lebanon didn’t help at all. Lebanon inherently had problems for years, and the effect of the Palestinians led to the formation of a bomb just waiting to explode.” Saleem insisted on the idea of victimhood as ever-present, even until today: “All Palestinians and Lebanese were victims. Long-term victims, to this very day. My take on the guilty party in the civil war is that all parties who took part were guilty, including the Palestinians. They were dragged into the war just like the Lebanese. The Palestinians received disciplinary action which they carried out, like the Lebanese. I blame those who accepted to be the means to commit these actions.” Tony did not hide his discontent with what he considers the Palestinians did in Lebanon, but he realizes that they were one of many players on the ground. “They killed, they murdered, they destroyed the country. They were the first domino on the ground though, and we all know how that ends. Once one domino is pushed all the dominoes will quickly fall. Thus we all are to blame.”

One student, Jad, surprisingly called members of his own religion the guilty party and blamed them for the civil war: “It is the Christians and the orders of the Patriarch who I blame. As a Christian, I have to put the responsibility on the members of my own religion who were stupid enough to commit such atrocities.” It was Jad alone that thought a religious entity such as a leader and the religion’s followers were guilty of orchestrating and fueling the war.
These answers framed, in turn, the students’ responses to the question of how they remember the role of the Palestinians during the civil war. The majority of the students answered the Palestinians played a role just like any other party did in the Lebanese Civil War – although they emphasized that they played the most important part of the war. Karl said, “They were a very important part of the war. If it wasn’t for their role in the war then the war wouldn’t have started and then continued. But anyway, I don’t care about their role in the civil war. I don’t care about the past. I only care about the future and what they may or may not do in the future.” Farah stated, “I don’t know anything about the role of the Palestinians in the civil war – all I knew is that they played a part like everyone else. But what I do know is that if I must judge them as a community, I will do it from their actions over the past few years.” Rasha said, “I don’t believe that they had a major role, or the largest role at least. That doesn’t mean they had no role in the war though.” Khalil stated, “A role like any other, that is an unquestionable fact.” These results support Mannheim’s theory of generations in a significant manner: according to the literature, the majority of Lebanese blame the Palestinians largely for the entire civil war. The responses of the students show that the attitudes of the current youth generation in Lebanon concerning the role of the Palestinians in the Lebanese Civil War are currently in opposition to that of their parents. In their generational response to the traumatic experience of the war, these students greatly challenge the social norms and ideas that their parents’ generation has tried to place on them – that the Palestinians are the scapegoat for most, if not all, the evil in Lebanon – showing that the youth is indeed open to the idea of everyone in Lebanon accepting the blame for the civil war.
C. Lebanese Youth Perceptions of the Palestinians in Lebanon

Karl Deutch (1961) classifies a “sense of community” through the process of analyzing the positions of one group towards the other groups within the country. In times of conflict, this sense of community tends to enlarge, leading to feelings of fear faced by each separate community from those in the other communities. In the words of Lewis Coser (1956), as conflict between the different groups in a country increases, in turn group members begin to call attention to the major underlying disparities between the groups instead of focusing on what these groups may have in common. Consequently comes the formation of bias from the “in-group” directed towards the “out-group”: as the conflict progresses, members of one certain group develop the tendency to favor members and ideals concerning the “in-group” whilst grow progressively more intolerable and unfavorable of the “out-group” and its bi-products (members, culture, traditions, and so on). This sense of the “other” does not magically disappear when the conflict is over – and is expected to be transmitted onto the future generations. This theory, however, does not hold in this study. My results have shown that the formation of the Palestinians as the “out-group”, the “other”, comes as a result of the living conditions that the Palestinians in Lebanon face.

When asked whether the students have ever met a Palestinian refugee or if they have any friends residing in the camps, 28 of the students answered “no” to both questions. Only two students, Tony and Lana, answered “yes” to having met a refugee – but they both stated that they were not friends, just acquaintances, and that they had met the refugees when they were working abroad in Jordan over the summer. Many students explained to me
that they do not avoid the Palestinian refugees intentionally – it’s just that they never have had any personal interaction with them in their daily lives with them living in the camps either in North Lebanon, South Lebanon or the suburbs of Beirut where most of them do not go. Even the Shiites who live in the Southern suburbs and the students who live in neighborhoods near the Palestinian refugee camps said that they had not met any Palestinian refugee in their lives. Here, the issue of class becomes very important: the social standing of these students, middle class and upper-middle class, does not allow for daily interaction of these students with the refugees.

When asked whether the experiences of the civil war directly affected the students’ perceptions of the Palestinians and in turn affected their chances of having Palestinian friends, mixed responses were recorded. The majority of the students said they wouldn’t mind having friends who were Palestinian refugees. However, a group of the students had one reservation: if their Palestinian friend spent all their time preaching their cause and their right to return to everyone, then they wouldn’t be able to handle them. Furthermore, many stated they wouldn’t be able to handle what they called “Palestinian fanatics” – a stereotypic Palestinian that grows a beard, carries a weapon and fights against the Zionist cause. One Sunni student from LAU Beirut stated: “I would definitely mind being friends with Palestinian activists only since I think it’s [the cause] is stupid. They’ll never be able to go back home, what with Israel around.” Only two students explicitly expressed that they could never become friends with Palestinians, blaming it on an issue of trust. Rudy said that “When I think of them, it makes me mad. The country would’ve been screwed up either way by something else but they screwed things up for us anyways. I was raised in Metn
with no exposure to Palestinians as a people and we grew up to the idea that Palestinians are the cause of everything bad. So if I ever meet a Palestinian, it’ll probably take me a lot of time to become friends with him, let alone trust him.” A Shiite student from AUB, on the other hand, told me she wouldn’t mind having Palestinian acquaintances but nothing else. “I wouldn’t let them be close friends. I don’t trust them enough. I used to have a Palestinian friend and she caused me too much strife in my life. I know that sounds stupid but I have to be honest.”

When the students were asked what they think of the situation of the Palestinians in Lebanon nowadays, I expected answers far more hostile than those I received. The words _haram_ and _maa’tarin_ were brought up in almost every interview. All the students were aware of the socio-economics the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon face. Nadim Nassar, a 23 year old Maronite from NDU, stated: “_Maa’tarin, for sure maa’tarin!_ I know that the situation of the camps during and after the civil war has been horrible for them.” Maya said: “They’re a poor bunch of people. If they lived here more peacefully, I’d have no problem, the Lebanese would have no problem, and I’m sure that their situation in Lebanon would be much better.” Kamil said: “I take pity on the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and on their situation. I don’t like when people suffer from the actions of the politicians such as citizens of Rwanda, North Korea and Kosovo. I believe that the Palestinians in Lebanon suffered from the faulty decisions made by their leaders. I know their situation in Lebanon is horrible because of them. For this, from a humanitarian point of view, I feel with these people.” Rasha told me, “Really, _haram_. They lost their country. Can we really try to put ourselves in their shoes? In Lebanon, everything is so horribly sectarian and political. If it
wasn’t for these two factors all of Lebanon would be able to see the light and sympathize with the Palestinians.” Even Rudy, who expressed distrust towards the Palestinians as a group, said: “It’s miserable. It’s just too miserable, what they have to go through every day. As much as any Lebanese may hate the Palestinians, it is hard to deny that their situation is really nasty.” Saleem called the Palestinians “the most heavily victimized people of the Middle East by far.”

As a result, the majority of the students reacted positively towards the notion of offering the Palestinians some sort of rights in Lebanon – but with many reservations. The number one issue that should be resolved before the Palestinians are given any rights, according to the students, is the issue of the arms. One Sunni student from LAU Beirut said: “As long as they have arms, they can’t be given any rights.” The number two reservation that the students had is that they shouldn’t be treated in any special manner since they are Palestinians – they should be treated like any other foreigner in Lebanon. A Druze student told me: “I feel that the Palestinians should be given rights to work and live and prosper economically but at the end of the day they are not Lebanese citizens. They have the right to be treated like any other foreigner in Lebanon. They do not deserve the camps. I wouldn’t base my judgment on pity, but on universal human rights. At the end of the day, every person is entitled to do what they want. If the Palestinians in Lebanon have good intentions, then why not let them work? You see Palestinians in other countries treated like normal citizens, don’t you?” Saleem said: “Right to possess work? Sure, why not? Right to possess land? Aha, that’s where I have to kind of put my foot down. Even so, the Palestinians in Lebanon should have the same rights as any other foreigner in Lebanon.
We should not treat them in a special way since special rights will only contradict their course – the right of return – and what they as a people work towards.” Patrick said: “I’m aware of all their hardship, *haram*. They should be treated like any other foreigner in Lebanon. Why do Americans have the right to own a car here but Palestinians don’t? But I think there should be a selection – not everyone should get the right to ownership or work. We still have the problems of the arms inside the camps, and the problem is that the arms are in the hands of Muslim fundamentalists. We should set up a type of surveillance for 2-3 years after Palestinians are given the right to work. If they were given rights, in my opinion, the threat level would go down. They wouldn’t want to fight anyone.” Surprisingly enough, the aspect of the burden giving the Palestinians rights would create on the economy was only brought up by 3 students. According to Haddad (2003)’s study, one of the main reasons why the Lebanese do not want to give the Palestinians the right to work in Lebanon is the economic burden this would place on Lebanon – whose economy is already considerably “down the drain”. However, my results contest this statement.

Even though the students seemed to understand the difficult situation the Palestinians were facing, what was particularly very shocking were the answers they gave when asked what they think is a justified solution for their situation. Some students believed that giving them some rights and asking for more humanitarian aid would help, but some students’ answers were downright ridiculous – especially that 10 students believed that sending them to remote places such as the desert and Alaska would be an adequate, final solution to their problem.
The answers differed largely even amongst different family members. While Patrick believed that the Lebanese government should work on the enhancement of the Palestinian camps in conjunction with giving the Palestinians their rights, his brother Karl exclaimed: “Their number should be marginally reduced by sending them to other countries. That is, if they continued to act in the same way they are acting nowadays. I’m sure many Lebanese, if they had the choice, would kill them. We surely can’t send them back to Israel!” Tony answered: “The world is not 100% full yet – we should build houses in the desert for them!” Jean answered: “I think they should be somewhere where they’re welcome. A big ass piece of desert can fit them pretty well and I don’t see why a small country like ours should bear them.” Jad said: “Let’s take them to the USA! They can live in the desert there! Oh and then there’s Saudi Arabia! The Saudis would just love to have them. They have enough money, they can handle these people.” Maya answered: “Let them leave Lebanon at some point and go find an island to live on. Or we could sit and wait for the real solution – peace with Israel – but that surely will never happen.” Farah answered: “Put them on a plane and just ship them anywhere.”

Some students asked for the Palestinians to be kicked out of the country – politely, by offering the Palestinian “burden”, as some called it, to other Arab countries, or by force. Rudy answered: “Kick them out.” Cyril Mosleh, a 20 year old Catholic student from AUB, whose own grandmother is Palestinian, stated: “They should be sent out of Lebanon or disarmed. That is the only solution.” Another Shiite female from AUB said: “The Palestinians should not focus on only one country. They should be divided amongst all the countries of the Arab world.” This is the only final solution for their situation.” Emile,
whose mother is Palestinian, said: “Take them elsewhere. I don’t really care, as long as at
some point in the future, they’re out of here. As long as they’re not here forever, I’m fine
with it for now.” Rasha, who had earlier expressed her feelings of sympathy towards the
Palestinians, said: “Giving them rights is not a logical solution. If things get better for them,
they’d want to stay here – what about Lebanon? I’m saying this as a Lebanese.” A Sunni
girl from LAU Beirut said: “If they want to stay here, they need to play by our own rules.”
Some students were downright pessimistic about a solution. Maya Makki, a 21 year old
Shiite from AUB, stated: “There really is no solution until they leave. Don’t you think that
if there actually was a solution, we would have reached it by now?” With the responses of
these students, Mannheim’s theory of generations falters somewhat. When it comes to the
idea of a probably solution for the Palestinians in Lebanon, the students responses are very
much in touch with the ideas of many of Lebanon’s politicians and the majority of the
Lebanese population (Haddad, 2003): that at some point in time, they should leave, at any
cost.

There were some exceptions, of course. Kamil, whose mother is Polish, was one of
the few students who gave me a concrete answer: “We should work on building areas for
them to live in like in Poland, areas which are specifically made for the ghettos. This would
offer a better situation for them to live in. In the end, this should be taken from a
humanitarian point of view. We must enhance their living conditions! Saleem gave me a
logical answer as well: “It’s a bit idealistic but the only real solution is for them to go back
home. This is easier said than done, I know.” A male Druze gave me a detailed analysis of
what he thinks is a proper solution for the Palestinians: “The Palestinians built Jordan as it
is today. Since sending them back is not possible, and instead of looking at the Palestinians as a problem, we should view them as a resource – as an asset. How can we make something out of it despite all the socio-economic problems related to them? This is what we must ask ourselves.” Abdallah echoed this idea by stating: “Put them in the agricultural fields in Lebanon where they can actually help the economy.”

Coming to the whole Fatah al-Islam drama, the students had different answers as to the question of who should be blamed for the issue. However, their answers were mostly the same – focused on foreign actors, not the Palestinians themselves. Many students blamed al-Qaeda, Syria, others blamed the United States and in particular, Bush’s foreign policy, and some even blamed Israel. Only three students, two Shiite and one Christian, blamed 14 March and Saudi Arabia for the fighting in Nahr al-Bared. Those who chose to blame the Palestinians emphasized that they blame the Palestinians of Nahr al-Bared for not keeping an open eye on the new people entering the camp. They stated that the Palestinians did not play a direct role in the whole Fatah al-Islam incident, and explained that most of them were not even Palestinian. Patrick summarized this thought excellently: “Haram, the Palestinians had almost nothing to do with it! Most were not even Palestinian! I just have to put a little blame on them, that they weren’t properly watching their camp and who comes in and out. I’m not saying it’s their fault but they need to be aware and work together to fix the chaos in the camps. It’s just not right.”

Wrapping up the section about the Palestinians in Lebanon, I asked the students a touchy question: what does the word tawtin mean to you? Not one single student out of the 30 answered me differently: all of the students mentioned the word “threat”. This idea was
expanded by many of the students who explained that *tawtin*, to them, is an embodiment of a large number of harms to Lebanon: in the opinions of the students, *tawtin* will: “destroy the balance of power in Lebanon”, “permit the Palestinians to ask for representation in the government which will surely lead us to World War III”, “kick me out of Lebanon if it ever happens. I’ll pack my bags and leave on the spot.”, “constitute a farewell to Lebanon as we know it” and “give rights to the Palestinians that they do not deserve”. Only one student answered that although he considered *tawtin* a threat, he wouldn’t mind unless the make-up of the political structure in Lebanon doesn’t change. Rudy said: “As long as they don’t ask for representation in the government, then I really don’t mind.” In this case, Mannheim’s theory of generations does not hold: the answers given by these students mirror those given by those of the generation who lived through the civil war. The answers given by the students firmly support Haddad (2003)’s theory that *tawtin* is one of the great fears that the Lebanese hold. However, as I will show later on, the students do not consider *tawtin* as the main threat that the students face from the Palestinians: the presence of the arms in the camps is what worries them the most.

D. Lebanese Attitudes towards Transitional Justice and the Prospect of Reconciliation

The significance of looking at the past and remembering in-depth what occurred during the civil war is something the majority of the Lebanese youth in this study desire and wish to have in Lebanon. As I mentioned earlier, confronting the past is the imperative, first step in applying transitional justice to Lebanon. In this case, according to the answers of the students, the youth would not mind applying mechanisms of collective memory,
remembrance and memorialization on Lebanon – not only to keep the past as a live
reminder to the mistakes of the past, but also to serve justice to those who were wronged.

The fact that the majority of the students have a strong yearning to look at the past
is quite striking. In addition, what made my results so interesting was the familiarity that
most of the students had towards the different mechanisms of transitional justice. Although
throughout the interviews I had not explained to them what transitional justice means, nor
what mechanisms the domain encompasses, the students replied with great confidence
about the different ways in which Lebanon’s past may be remembered – not knowing that
these fall under the heading of transitional justice. Such a factor would make the
application of transitional justice in Lebanon much easier than expected.

Some of the students’ opinions may actually form the basis of applying transitional
justice to solve Lebanon’s war-loaded memory problem in the future. Patrick hoped that the
guilty would be charged with their crimes: “We should look back at the past to judge the
guilty, not give them positions in the government instead!” Jean said: “We should never
forget anything. It’s what got us here anyway.” Khalil expressed with anger: “It’s become
so easy for anyone in Lebanon to become a saint – people are pardoned left and right. So it
is a must that we look back at the war and see who the guilty people are so we can learn
from our parents’ mistakes!” Kamil explained with excitement his views on remembrance,
while relying on the efforts done in Europe after World War II: We have to look back at
everything that happened and analyze every event. We should not ignore the factors and
learn from our mistakes. We should sit on a round table and discuss our mistakes together.
Most importantly, we must start building more public monuments and museums in
Lebanon that relate to Lebanon’s war memory – just like those throughout Europe
commemorating World War II – to keep our memories alive and to help us remember what
happened before.” Saleem, when asked this question, screamed: “ACCOUNTABILITY! I
don’t believe in turning the page since we need to review the past intricately to give
accountability to everyone that deserves it! Although my idea is very idealistic, I still think
there’s a big chance this could happen. Look at the Nazis – Germany made them
accountable for what they did. We should learn from this model.” Lana spoke of the
importance of remembering the past for her own generation: “Of course we should look
back at the war. We should create archives and put them for everyone to see. The past is not
alterable by the present. The past is the past and it will not change. We should start building
an archive of the civil war by gathering individual memories and building this for our
generation and for all future generations, so we can show the world that we are much better
than our parents’ generation. Remembering the past and keeping it alive is the only way
you can teach the future generation the tough lesson that our parents’ generation went
through, but don’t seem to understand. We are at step zero of the ladder because of them.
Also, looking at the past does not mean forcing one view of the past – actually, looking at
the past will help us create a consensus, a collective memory: something absent in
Lebanon! This past is not just any past, it’s the past of a political entity, a nation state. We
are not playing games here!” One Druze student from AUB told me with great frustration:
“We should definitely look at our past. All I ask is for our parents’ generation to seriously
consider the implications of what they are doing to our country – directly or indirectly. All
those students who are still indifferent about the past should go sit in the corner. Haven’t
you heard of the atrocities that took place in the civil war, you idiots? Do you want to experience another civil war? I dare you.”

However, a few of the students believed we should turn the page as soon as possible – whether that included remembering the past or not. Cyril claimed that we should turn the page as fast as we can but in the process we should definitely not forget our history. “If our parents didn’t learn from their mistakes, we must learn from theirs, but we should turn the page as soon as possible in order to avoid even more problems in Lebanon. As if we need any more problems in Lebanon!” Rudy stated: “There are some things we should look back on. We should turn the page but never forget. As a result of our work on remembrance, we should struggle to work for a neutral judicial system to help us to judge the guilty parties – those that are currently in the system surely are affiliated and not neutral! Also, I believe that independent investigations should be conducted by outside investigators with the cooperation of the Lebanese themselves. I do not think truth-telling, such as what was done in South Africa, is logical since it is very time consuming.”

Sahar Yaacoub, a 22 year old Sunni student from AUB, does not want to look at the past at all. She claims that the only reason why we should turn the page is because “everyone is responsible. All parties started the war, they’re all guilty. Why should we even bring up the issue of accountability? If we look at the past, we will have to send everyone to trial. This is not feasible in Lebanon! I thought of the South African experience a million times on my own – their successes at conducting the truth and reconciliation commission – but it will never work here. But I will always dream of it, and hopefully in the future someone will attempt to link their experience to ours, and try to adopt something of the
same nature in Lebanon.” Karl stood in opposition to what his brother replied: “We must turn the page. Screw the past, it will only harm us”. Rasha reverberated Karl’s idea by saying: “We have no other choice but to turn the page. Imagine what would happen in Lebanon if we actually looked back at the war!”

As expected, the students who believed we should look back at the war all agreed that the past is highly likely to be repeated in the future if we do not look at it thoroughly, as a result of all the unresolved conflicts, grudges and hostile sentiments buried deep inside the Lebanese. One student, Jean, explained to me that if we do not look at the past, not only will it be repeated, but it will only get worse. On the other hand, the rest of the students who believed in turning the page claimed that the act of looking at the past itself presents a higher probability of the past being repeated. Moreover, these same students believed that reconciliation can take place without looking at the past, through simple acts of “forgiving and forgetting”.

When asked if Lebanon has reached the highest level of reconciliation, 29 out of 30 students said no. Only one student said yes. Karl explained to me the reason behind his unique answer: “Yes, we have reached the highest level of reconciliation indeed. I don’t think we are capable of reconciling anymore than this. No way! What we have in Lebanon with all the skirmishes and the party conflicts is the closest to reconciliation that we will ever get. Everyone is against everyone and even so, we still do our best to keep on digging more dirt so that we have more reasons to be against everyone else. That is due to our nature as Lebanese. Thus we have reached the highest level of reconciliation because there is nothing that comes after this.” As for the other 29 students, the mere fact that we have
not reached the highest level of reconciliation in Lebanon seemed to be enough of a push to make them interested in participating in any reconciliation initiatives that would be held between the students and the Palestinians in the future. Out of these 29 students, 20 would love to attend reconciliation sessions, workshops or conferences with the Palestinian youth. The 9 remaining students had their reservations, the most common being that they really didn’t care about reconciling with the Palestinian youth since they didn’t have as much issues as our parents’ generation did with the refugees. These results are important, since it is imperative for Lebanon’s future to examine whether the Lebanese youth group is ready to back mechanisms of reconciliation, the establishment of inter-communal relations – or at least, form a somewhat closer relationship with the Palestinians living in their country than the one they have today. It is especially significant since these responses underline the youth’s will to reconcile with the Palestinians in Lebanon. To speak like Mannheim, the students’ answers portray a generational response to the traumatic experience of the Lebanese Civil War: a need to fix what went wrong in the past, what Lebanese citizens older than them seem reluctant to do.

E. Results of the Exercise: Mixed Feelings Concerning the Power of Apology

In April 2008, marking the occasion of the 33rd anniversary of the start of the Lebanese Civil War, Naam Lil Hiwar, an NGO emphasizing on the importance of constructive dialogue and communication between the different communities and parties of Lebanon, organized an informal lecture in Gemmayze with guest speakers Assad Shaftari and Wadad Halwani. Working on the idea that dialogue, communication and in this case, apologies, should occur on the micro level – in cafes, between streets, and so on – in order
to being Lebanese society closer, Naam Lil Hiwar hoped to bring together youth of all ages and backgrounds to discuss the topic of the recent Palestinian apology and the past apology of Assad Shaftari. I was surprised to find out that lots of young people filled the room, with the crowd flowing out of the door onto the road. I had not expected so many people my age to be interested in what both sides had to say concerning the power of apology.

What was interesting to note about the circumstances of this informal gathering was that in the past, Halwani had publicly proclaimed that she could not accept the apology of Shaftari. However, Halwani seemed to have accepted Shaftari’s apology with time. Although the arrest and kidnapping of her husband (who has not been heard of since then) caused her a lot of distress and agony, she revealed that the apology meant a lot to her now, since the act of asking for forgiveness and expressing regret lays the pathway for trust. Halwani stated: “We should not only reconcile with each other, we should reconcile with the past. My opinion is that we need to reconcile with both and admit our mistakes without hurling accusations at every side in Lebanon. We can only do so by facing the past.” Since we cannot trust the politicians of the past to lead us to the future, it is a must to establish trust among the youth in this manner, she stated.

When it was Shaftari’s turn to talk, he expressed regret about feelings he had towards the other, and stated that it was up to the youth to take their own stand, since he began feeling emotions of hatred and disgust about the other (in this case, the Muslims and the Palestinians) as a result of what he heard as a child from members of his parents generation and what his friends at school had heard from their own parents. As a child, he had heard that the “others” were dirty, rude, and poor, deserving all the hardships they
could get. This in turn led to feelings of hatred, fear and revenge form his end. After telling us stories of torture and horror he and his fellow Lebanese Forces members had committed during the war, he stressed on the importance of the current generation as distancing itself from the ideas the previous generations have held. Shaftari exclaimed with emotion, “People should change to change the world. I discovered the ‘real’ other later on: they had families, like me. They needed to work to survive, like me. Why should we overlook that? I felt that history was repeating itself. I saw the danger perpetrated by us, members of our own generation, by being quiet – dangers that would not harm us, but harm the generation of our children. We had placed an imaginary wall between us and the “others” that stopped us from discovering the truth about each other. I felt that I had an obligation towards Lebanon, and thus wrote an open letter to everyone asking for forgiveness. I am telling you all this so that YOUR generation does not repeat it. Our generation, those who took part in the Lebanese Civil War, did not know how to live in a country called Lebanon. Learn from us, let us help make the road shorter for you. Go discover the other, don’t be prejudiced, and most importantly, don’t be brainwashed by the politicians of today – those who took part in the civil war and are trying to hide their ugly past from all of us. Everyone who did not live during the civil war, such as people your age, must learn about it in-depth.”

Shaftari carried on by expressing how happy he was to speak with the PLO after they issued the Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon and exclaim that he accepted their apology, whilst issuing a counter apology – although the PLO did not ask for it. Then, Shaftari stunned me by introducing the topic of transitional justice and the need for its application in Lebanon: “The other day, I attended a meeting with Alex Boraine. He told us how transitional justice helped other countries to deal with their past. In order to get over their
past, people had to admit their wrongdoings in front of those they had hurt, publicly. We can’t just sweep the dust under the carpet like the politicians in Lebanon want us to do! We need to try and rebuild Lebanon and this won’t happen if Lebanon stays as it is right now. We need to deal with ourselves to be true to each other. I hope Lebanon doesn’t just turn the page and keep everything as is: right now, we NEED to focus on forgiving. This was my responsibility and role towards you, the youth, and this is what all those who participated in the civil war should do for you – admit what they have done and ask for forgiveness.”

Throughout the gathering, I heard snippets of conversation here and there, which made me feel overjoyed. All the people sitting in the room were talking about the importance of looking into the war, the “silliness” of the General Amnesty Law, and the dire need to reconcile with the past. Most importantly, the notion that amnesia is very dangerous was brought up more than once, to the satisfaction of both Shaftari and Halwani. Transitional justice and the act of forgiveness seemed to attract the curiosity and attention of everyone in the room. However, the opinions of the students in the room that night differed from the opinions of the students in this study which appeared in the comments they wrote after finishing the text-reading exercise I had offered them. Although the exercise included 4 different texts, including an excerpt of the Palestinian apology, a paragraph on resettlement, a quote by Abu Arez and an article about Shaftari and Halwani, all students commented solely on the issue of forgiveness and the idea of apology, and in particular, whether they could accept the Palestinian apology or not.
Before offering the students the exercise, I asked them one simple question: “What do you think of the PLO’s Palestinian Declaration in Beirut?” Out of 30 students, only one student, Lana Salman, knew what I was talking about. The rest looked at me dumb-founded after hearing these words for the first time. After explaining to them very briefly what the declaration entailed, the students seemed intrigued and most of them began asking me questions such as, “The Palestinians apologized? Are you serious?” and “Why the hell am I hearing about this just now?”

Quite a few students expressed gratitude towards the step the Palestinians took, and many were shocked that both apologies – that of the PLO and that of Shaftari – were not given the proper value and importance as soon as they were issued. It was quite refreshing – and particularly unexpected – to see the students frustrated by the fact that they had not heard about it. Most of them linked this to poor coverage by the media. They believed that if the apology was given more importance by any type of news medium, then more people would have seen these actions as a significant step to solving many of the problems resulting from the civil war. Jean Mezher wrote: “Apologizing for something so evil is like throwing a bottle of water on a burning tower. It does nothing. But personally, I have to show respect to the two “sides” that apologized. The PLO’s apology to the Lebanese people is the least possible thing to do. Accepting it is also the least thing to do. But we are very grateful. […] About Shaftari’s apology, I think it is very well written. But again, too late… Both apologies were very well quieted by I DON’T KNOW WHO! Yet again, we have to go back to the effort done by both sides to show their apologies truly. When you apologize to someone, you try to make sure they know you are apologizing. It doesn’t really count.
when you apologize and no one hears you.” Patrick Harfouche described how surprised he was to find out about the apology: “I think that the Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon is a great step forward towards solving our problems as a country because it solves both our past problems and our future problems. It will help the Lebanese get over the war and learn to live better with the Palestinians in the future. What surprised me about the declaration is that I did not know about it. I am simply shocked because no one made a big deal about this because it is something that the Lebanese people have been hoping for for so long. What also caught my attention is that Assad Shaftari’s apology was also not given any importance. Why would they not give these apologies a big deal?" Tony Akiki expressed: “I was very stunned by the Palestinian apology, and even touched. The action of apologizing on its own displays a certain sense of maturity.” Kamil Chehab wrote: “I never heard about both apologies by the Palestinians and by Shaftari. But it’s a first step which requires courage so it’s a good thing. This can eventually lead to a national reconciliation with Lebanon and with the Palestinians. Hopefully the people hurt will have the courage to forgive too! There has to be a dialogue full of honesty (not accusations and attacks).” Lana Salman noted: “I respect the PLO’s declaration and I encourage such declarations among all parties involved in the war. What I like most about this apology is that it is by no way conditioned by a counter apology, which is very important as a concept of forgiveness. [...] What she [Wadad Halwani] shouldn’t do is lay this broken heart and soul in pain on the younger generation and the generation who did not live through the war. She should not leave us a legacy of violence and pain and we should not inherit from our parents a culture of violence.” Saleem Baradhy wrote: “The PLO addressed their declaration in the hope for OPEN and DEEP dialogue on SOLID, JUST and LEGAL bases. I salute and applaud this
much needed declaration, but equally demand it being complemented with this dialogue in its criteria and bases highlighted above. Additionally, the declaration is “in search of justice for both victims”; but for justice to be served to both victims, a counter apology needs to be issued on the behalf of the Lebanese sides involved in Palestinian atrocities. Such an apology was attempted by Shaftari, but a more official source, analogous to the PLO, ought to issue such a formal apology. I disagree with the declaration’s invitation to “overstep” the past; I believe that accountability – not overstepping – is a more effective way of truly resolving this issue.” Rania Shorbaji stated: “The PLO’s Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon is, in my opinion, a very big step made by the Palestinians which will be regarded very deeply by many Lebanese. Even though not all of the Lebanese consider Palestinians responsible for the war, the apology is the “smart” thing to do, in a place so aggressively tensioned and at a very critical time.” A Sunni student from LAU Beirut wrote: “The first thing that caught my attention was the 2 apologies that were made and no one heard of. Both apologized for thousands of dead, family scattered, houses destroyed, etc. but none of them did anything to show this apology in reality.”

There seemed to be a general agreement amongst all the students that the Palestinian declaration and apology is good in principle. However, it was greatly noted that we must wait for the future to determine whether it is doable and, most importantly, whether all Palestinian parties agree to it to pursue it – most importantly, by the Palestinians laying down their arms. It was through this exercise that the fears the students held towards the Palestinian issue became evident: the arms in the camps threatened them more than the issue of tawtin on a whole. Most students remarked that they have not seen
any changes since the apology was made. According to them, talk is talk, but apologizing is
an action – and no such concrete action has been made for the Palestinians to lay down
their arms in their opinion. Even the students who had applauded the Palestinian apology
had their reservations when it came to the arms issue. Jean wrote: “Personally, I accept the
PLO’s apology but do not believe it’s sincere since I don’t think they are willing to take
any of the actions they said they would in it. If they were serious about their apology, they
would have shown it in their actions, not only in words.” Kamil continued: “The arms have
to be controlled by Lebanese legitimate authorities.” Saleem stressed on the implementation
of laying down the arms: “I agree with the declaration’s cell for Lebanese control over
Palestinian arms; but a concrete implementation is mandatory to complement the verbal
contract.” The Sunni girl (above) proclaimed: “Palestinians are still a major threat to all as
long as they still carry their arms and weapons. If their apology was true then they would
have given in their arms to the government willingly. […] Even if their apology is from the
heart, the Lebanese cannot live with the Palestinians in their current status. Either they live
according to our rules and only as temporary refugees or they seek refuge in another
country. The past can’t be put to rest unless every person admits to what they did and
apologizes with sincerity, vouching never to let it happen again.”

A small group of the students felt strongly that they could not believe the
Palestinians unless their words were not put into action. Although the high amount of
hostility towards the Palestinians portrayed by Haddad (2003) did not materialize whilst I
interviewed most of these students, it was through reading the apology that the deep
sentiments they held towards this community became apparent. Here, I noted many
similarities between the resentment Haddad (2003) claims that most Lebanese hold towards the Palestinians coming as a direct result from what the Lebanese see as a security threat the Palestinians pose on Lebanon and the bitterness apparent in the comments of the students. Maya Makki wrote: “The PLO’s Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon is very much appreciated; however it will not make a difference to my personal perceptions of Palestinians unless any of what they claim is put to action. It is pointless throwing apologies left and right, without actually fulfilling them.” Rudy Yasmine stated: “Don’t apologize, adhere first.” Maya Kanaan noted: “I think that this apology is full of crap. The apology is only a set of words to make Lebanese people feel good but there was no action taken – no weapons taken away from the Palestinians! If and only if the weapons are given away we can see what we can do. Only the army has the right to own weapons. And the Lebanese should unite together to make sure there are no more weapons all over the place.” Emile Abou Chahla – whose mother is Palestinian, as previously mentioned – wrote: “I have nothing to say about the other texts, but what I want to comment about is the PLO’s Declaration in Lebanon. If they really mean what they say, writing has no meaning. They should surrender their arms without writing nonsense. They should follow the rules of the country without writing crap. So my opinion is that this is all useless, they should at instead of writing sorry letters like little children. If they really mean what they say, writing has no meaning. They should surrender their arms without thinking.” Abdallah Ghraizi stated: “I believe that the Palestinian declaration is not legitimate because they have not handed in their arms yet. The camps are still lawless and have in a major way contributed to the political instability in Lebanon.” Jad Bou Malhab only had a few words for me: “We don’t give a shit. Apology not accepted.”
What I found to be astonishing and definitely unforeseen is that even though I had offered the students a paragraph on tawtin and the problems it causes for Lebanon, the students insisted on commenting on the issue of the arms in Lebanon. This leads me to say that for these students, the main fear is not tawtin, or else it would have been expressed in writing. Their main fear is posed by the presence of the arms in the camps. What I also did not predict was the absence of intense anti-Palestinian sentiments that I had been expecting from the Christian and Shiite students in relation to what the Palestinians did in the past which was documented in detail by Haddad (2003). What the Palestinians did in the past did not seem to matter greatly to the youth – what matters to them are current events and their implication on their futures in Lebanon. Thus concrete answers using the Palestinians as a scapegoat to blame them for everything, as documented in the literature, were considerably absent in this case. No one brought up the issue of the apology with regard to the acts committed by the Palestinians in the Lebanese Civil War. The students expressed their worry about here and now: the main issue at stake which they claim harms their safety is the presence of arms alone. Neither sectarian affinity nor the role the Palestinians had in the Lebanese Civil War formed any crucial function in the positions the students held towards the Palestinians in Lebanon.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Rosemary Sayegh (2001) claims that Lebanese positions towards the Palestinians in Lebanon can be divided into three main groups: the first group, quite small, which is notably very anti-Palestinian; the second group, forming the majority of Lebanese individuals who are indifferent to the Palestinian issue unless asked or aroused by the issue of sectarianism and the third group, a minority that supports the plight of the refugees in Lebanon positively. However, the students in my study cannot be divided into these groups, as their answers are not so predictable, and not so easy to classify into groups with clear borders. Even if I attempted to divide the students into groups, the boundaries between them would be blurred: most students do support the plight of the refugees, but are somewhat attributing the problem of the civil war to the Palestinians. Furthermore, in this study, sectarianism and religious affiliations are not significant predictors of attitudes towards the Palestinians.

Keeping in mind that the nature of the group I have chosen may at some point curb my attempts to generalize my results, even so my overall findings bring forth a great number of implications for the issues raised on the current debate over the Palestinians in Lebanon. To begin with, the great fears the Lebanese hold towards the Palestinians documented by Haddad (2003) do not seem to be quite genuine when it comes to the students in question. Furthermore, the notion of “otherness” that the students hold towards
the Palestinians is not in relation to their sectarian groups, as was documented by Haddad (2003). The Christian and Shiite students did not express increased hatred or hostility towards the Palestinians, as the literature argues. On the other hand, the Sunnis were not entirely compassionate with the Palestinian issue either, as many wouldn’t have expected. Instead, there is an overarching theme of a mutual agreement between students of all sectarian groups that the issue of the “others”, the Palestinians, must be solved sooner or later, since it is the presence of this “other”. Thus, the results of this study are indeed striking. Furthermore, my study has shown that talk of permanently settling refugees in Lebanon amongst the Lebanese youth does not trigger as much wide public opposition as documented by Haddad (2003) amongst the 18 and over age category. Although tawtin has been widely assumed as posing a large threat to Lebanon’s security and political stability, the issue at stake here concerns the presence of arms in the Palestinian camps and the threat this phenomenon creates in case more civil strife is to take place. The presence of the Palestinian arms in the camps, particularly the concept of the easy flow of arms into the camps, whilst thinking about the potential of future fighting in Lebanon forms a large security issue which appears to worry the students greatly. Although part of my findings is to be expected, such as most of the students placing some of the blame of the civil war on the Palestinians, those related to the situation of Palestinians in Lebanon, transitional justice and future hopes for reconciliation are both surprising and fascinating. It is remarkable to note that the word haram is brought up 63 times in all my interviews, indicating that these students are fully aware of the hardships the Palestinians endure daily.
In addition, both the literature and the results support the notion of transitional justice and its main aim of creating sustainable peace – not just something that lasts for 3-4 months then plunges us into even deeper darkness – which, when used properly, is a must for Lebanon. Transitional justice has proven to be necessary in a country such as ours, whose history is covered with a cloak of deceit and characterized by a lack of transparency. The collective memory resulting from the different transitional justice practices has to include all of the narratives of the past: most importantly, it should form a common memory based on truth, not on partial remembrance twisted to our needs and interests, as the Lebanese have done towards the Palestinians through placing the major blame of the Lebanese Civil War on them. Creating a climate where remembrance and forgiveness become a necessity is the first step we should work on. However, any individual taking part in such transitional justice practices must acknowledge that it is time costly and requires a great amount of energy and commitment. Lebanon is in transition, and a transition is a journey: more than often time-consuming and precarious. A passing from one condition to another with a past like ours will be neither trouble-free nor painless, but I am confident that this transition will result in the ability to compromise – a compromise that the Palestinians have already offered with the PLO’s Palestinian declaration in Beirut. The ability to compromise is highlighted in the work towards fair and equitable rights for everyone, which is what Lebanon should do now in the case of the Palestinians. Offering this marginalized group a certain amount of rights, as the students agreed to, such as the ability to work in Lebanon or at least live with dignity, will not automatically mean tawtīn is looming on the horizon!
The ball is in our court now. The duty of Lebanon after the issuing of the PLO Declaration in Lebanon is to do the same – or at least the same. Although, as I stated earlier, many Lebanese political parties accepted the apology and offered an apology in return, there must be greater media coverage of these efforts which will hopefully, later on, lead to a formal apology from those in the state. The power of apology is large, and when it is done by people in power, it shall resonate greatly; all will remember. Australia’s recent apology to the years of colonization and torture committed towards the Aborigines, in addition to Germany’s infamous apology to Poland, both occurred on behalf of the state for cruel actions committed by the perpetrators – even after many, many long years, when many of the guilty were already buried deep under the ground. These examples show the epitome of being open and honest with one another in order to tolerate our past and then accept our fellow citizens. These countries aimed to heal the wound in their national soul – even after many long years – and realized that such a cruel past cannot be ignored, for the main fear that it will come back to haunt them. An apology lays the pathway towards the act of reconciliation, which Lebanese have been appealing for, for many years, but have apparently not succeeded in obtaining. For reconciliation to take place, accepting accountability of one’s actions is extremely important to those who suffered. However, this act is not enough – public acknowledgment is what it takes.

The main limitation of reconciliation is that it is an ideal type, Weberian at its best and is thus so often misunderstood. We may never fully realize it, but we aim towards it. Yet it is imperative that we aspire towards reconciliation in all cases, in order that we rebuild the bridges linking the Lebanese to the Palestinians. If not, all we’ll end up with is
increased suspicion, hatred and mistrust, and if we continue in this manner, the chasm between the two groups will only deepen further. Thus reconciliation is an attempt to bridge the gap in society between members of society themselves, institutions, organizations and the like. That takes an enormous amount of time.

In 2008, two of my fellow colleagues at the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at AUB, attended a workshop entitled What is to be Done? Lebanon's War-Loaded Memory. Organized by UMAM in correspondence with the International Court of Transitional justice, this workshop was considered to be quite a meaningful initiative towards tackling the issue of Lebanon’s war memory. Although the workshop produced only a few tangible results, it was recognized as a successful brainstorming session - bearing in mind that openly discussing such a topic was almost unheard of several years ago.

According to my colleagues, after two days of discussion on this extremely complex and tortuous topic, the workshop couldn’t be called anything less than a great achievement. However, both students noticed many limitations in the implication of transitional justice in Lebanon, particularly concerning what they called the “temporarily useful stage of deliberation that Lebanese NGOs seem to drown in when it comes to the discussion of practical implementation”. The predominant narrative amongst NGOs in Lebanon in addition to possibly all of the Lebanese population is the mutual agreement that Lebanon must be a peaceful country, that the Lebanese citizens should work together in order to live in harmony – making us appear as if we are all fervent supporters of peace and harmony. In Lebanon, we all chant the same slogans to make ourselves heard, but when it comes to
implicating our ideals, this is where we get lost: which initiative to adopt, how to make that happen and what is to later emerge as a result are questions that progressively breed complications and lead the most ardent supporters of peace and harmony into states of confusion between mixed loyalties.

After the workshop ended, everyone seemed to reach the mutual decision that there needs to be some sort of truth commission in Lebanon if transitional justice was to transpire and Lebanon was to be “mended”. Importantly, the hope was that, in this truth commission, the truth about Lebanon’s Civil War could be revealed, allowing us to properly deal with our past. There was also an acknowledgement that apologies would be one successful form of dealing with the past so that people could move on. It was accepted that the issues of the civil war should be dealt with so that people could put the tensions of the war behind them. Lebanon’s healing process begins with this intricate step, resulting in a shared narrative of the civil war that would be spread in an effort to promote Lebanese nationality as a ‘first loyalty’; as a consequence of the collective memory shared by the Lebanese, people could define themselves as Lebanese first, and ‘Lebanese’ would be an identity defined in the same way by people of all confessions.

A main concern which arose in the workshop and contradicts the findings of this study was the limited enthusiasm in the youth taking part. There were side remarks about the students’ positions, but the general view on the role and possible functions of today’s youth in the generation of a healthy Lebanon were not only limited but misinterpreted. At the workshop, the normative type of Lebanese university students was unfortunately represented: the general idea of members of this generation is that they are usually the ones
that march behind, or in opposition to, Lebanese leaders at protests, the ones that dedicate a majority of their day to discussing political issues and planning their moves, that shun their dissenting peers, and can shout their loyalties without the fear of losing an income the family depends on. Over more than five years, I have witnessed students such as these at universities who identify themselves by their belonging to political groups. Before conducting my field work, what was extremely frustrating to me was the looming feeling I had that the majority of the youth unalteringly fall into their parents’ loyalties. However, with the et to discover whether these factors were true about the Lebanese youth.

Those who took part in the war, who form our parents’ generation and older, owe it to us to know the truth, however hard it is. In this study, I have shown that the youth want to understand exactly what happened in those past 15 years, even though it could turn into a long, arduous project. Lebanon is a country with a very dark past and we need to come to terms with this past in order to deal with our future. As I mentioned earlier, it is important to remember and recall what occurred in the past, however, one limitation is that you cannot dwell in the past or else you become a prisoner of it. This can only be resolved through memory. Everyone has a responsibility to forget at some point but it is in the act of true collective memory that we can forget not what occurred but forget in the sake of not holding the Lebanese Civil War against anyone or any certain group forever.

The international community has, on more than one occasion, asked Lebanon to take a definitive step towards the Palestinian refugee issue. Whether it occurs through easing restrictions on this group or through constructive dialogue between the two sides, it is clear that finding a real solution for this longstanding issue will not come without the
mutual understanding of the difficulties that both sides face while confronting the problems the refugee factor has posed on Lebanon. As exposed by this study, the younger generation welcomes granting Palestinians some form of civil rights, such as the right to work—a move which would both alleviate the socio-economic problems of the Palestinians and, contrary to popular belief, would aid in resolving Lebanon’s economic problems.

According to Haddad (2003:146-147): “Palestinians would be able to assume the standing [in Lebanon] of a community in the diaspora, like any other Arab community in Lebanon, and the government would be able to correct the anomalous situation of the Palestinians, with its corresponding restrictions, without considering this step a move toward indirect resettlement.

A primary goal of this study has been to evaluate the impact of social variables on Lebanese youth perceptions of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The results are both obvious and unfailing. If the youth generation and the previous generations have a desire to make mends with the past, at least some sort of communication between the two different groups is needed. “In order to promote refugee integration into Lebanon’s social system, communication with this group [the Palestinians] should be improved. This variable should be taken seriously by Lebanese politicians and policy-makers if the integration of refugees is a possible alternative,” states Haddad (2003:126). If the actual perceptions of the Lebanese youth hold as these students develop into active members of society, then, with a bit of luck, Lebanon may have a chance to avoid future inter-communal conflict, building on a stronger social cohesion of Lebanon’s society.
APPENDIX I

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

American University of Beirut

M.A. Thesis In-Depth Interview

Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

The following interview is intended strictly for academic purposes. The identity of participants who choose to be anonymous will not be revealed at any point in time.
- Name
- Age
- Indicators of social class: parent work and level of income
- Parents’ education
- Location of residence
- University
- Religious Affiliation
- Level of one’s religiosity
- Level of family’s religiosity
- Family
  - Any Palestinian roots?
  - Any Palestinian relatives?
- Political Affiliation/Political Ideology
  - Their own affiliation and ideology
  - Their family’s affiliation and ideology
- Friends and Society
  - Have you ever met a Palestinian?
  - Any Palestinian friends? Perceptions you hold of them?
  - If not, do you have a problem with having Palestinian friends? Why or why not?
- Memory of Civil War:
  - How do you remember the civil war knowing that you did not live through it? Parents’ recollections, oral history, older friends and family, legacies and stories from your hometown, etc?
  - Who do you think won the civil war? Who is the guilty party? Who are the victims?
  - How do you remember the role of the Palestinians during the civil war? How do you feel about it?
Do these experiences of the civil war directly affect your perceptions of Palestinians your own age?

Do you blame the Palestinians for the civil war?

- **Perceptions of Palestinians**
  
  What do you think of their situation in Lebanon today?
  
  What kind of rights should the Palestinians have here [possession, right to work …]?
  
  On whom should the responsibility of Fatah al-Islam be laid?
  
  What the word *tawteen* mean to you?
  
  What kind of solution could be envisioned for the Palestinians in Lebanon?
  
  What do you think is a solution for their situation?

- **Transitional Justice: Reconciliation**
  
  Do you believe we should look back at the war or we should turn the page?
  
  Do you think the past will be repeated if we do not look at it thoroughly?
  
  Do you believe we have reached the highest level of reconciliation?
  
  What do you think if I told you that there can be no reconciliation without looking at the past?
  
  Would you be interested in participating in any reconciliation initiatives between you and the Palestinians?
  
  What do you think of the PLO Declaration “Palestinian Declaration in Beirut”?
The following exercise is intended strictly for academic purposes. The identity of participants who choose to be anonymous will not be revealed at any point in time.
I- PLO’s Palestinian Declaration in Lebanon (2008):

We address this declaration to the Lebanese state and people in all its sectors and political groups, in the hope for open and deep dialogue that will help reinforce relations between the Palestinians and Lebanese, particularly between the Lebanese State and the Palestine Liberation Organization (the state of Palestine) on solid, just and legal bases.

This is not being said to disclaim responsibility or to attribute the events that took place back then to the "conspiracy theory", but we say this in search of justice for both victims and in order to be able to open the door for revaluation and to help ourselves to purify our memory. Thus, we do want to take the initiative to apologize to any damage we have caused to our dear Lebanon whether intentionally or not. And this apology is in no way conditioned by a counter apology.

Since the May 15th 2006, the PLO has hoped for the reestablishment of official relations with the Lebanese state, and we take this opportunity to state the good intentions the Lebanese government has recently shown on numerous occasions which pave the way to tackle any pending problems in a just manner.

Based on the above, we pronounce the following:

First: We invite ourselves and our Lebanese brothers with no exceptions to overstep the past with all its mistakes and sins and open up honestly to a deep reconciliation. We also feel great gratitude to the huge sacrifices the Lebanese people have made to the Palestinian cause throughout the past decades, on their own behalf and always on behalf of all the Arabs.

Fourth: We declare that Palestinian arms in Lebanon have to be controlled by the Lebanese state and abide by all laws in accordance with the requirements of the Lebanese national security which is overseen by the legitimate authorities. Accordingly, we announce our complete and immediate willingness to reach an understanding with the Lebanese government on the basis of the security of the Palestinian individual in Lebanon as part of the security of the Lebanese. In this context, the Palestinian stance in regards to the Lebanese Dialogue Conference was a solid proof of our statements and honest intentions.

Fifth: We announce our adherence to our principle rights as Palestinian refugees unwillingly residing in Lebanon and as part of the Palestinian people fighting for its freedom and independence on its land. Those rights are not stipulated by the Palestinian arms issue and we don’t foresee any solution on the basis of exchange.

Sixth: We declare adherence to our right to continue our democratic and peaceful struggle on all levels within the operational Lebanese legislations. Needless to say that our struggle requires the support of all forces and religious leaders in Lebanon regardless of any bias or alignment since the main criterion remains to be the position towards the Palestinian cause.
II- Etienne Sakr “Abu Arez” (1983):

It's been said that the war was between left and right-that's not true. Between Lebanese and Lebanese-that's not true. If you go to the heart of the problem, the war was between Lebanese and Palestinians-that is, between Lebanese and non-Lebanese.

III- Nawaf Salam (1994):

For the Lebanese, resettlement would create perhaps greater problems than it would in the other host countries. It is not simply a question of resettlement's projected impact on the delicate sectarian balance in Lebanon; resettlement could also undermine the national reconciliation forged by the Lebanese through the Ta'if agreement of 1989 and endorsed by constitutional amendments of 1991 that explicitly rejected resettlement. Resettlement, were it to take place, would therefore open the door to challenges to the political reforms agreed to at Ta'if as a condition for ending the civil war. Such challenges could take the form of a call for renegotiating the Ta'if compromise on the basis of controversial alternatives, such as a federal system.

IV- Charles M. Sennott (2000):

In the decade since Lebanon's civil war ended, this country has tried to rebuild from the ruins by forgetting the brutality of the past. To many Lebanese, it seemed the only way out of a conflict in which all sides committed unspeakable atrocities.

But Asaad Shaftari, 44, who rose to second in command of the right-wing Lebanese Forces during the 15-year civil war, stunned Lebanon this month with a statement extraordinary in its simplicity and honesty. He publicly asked for forgiveness.

In a letter addressed to his victims "both living and dead," he became the first high-level militia leader to apologize for the thousands that he and his Christian militia contributed to the 70,000 deaths in Lebanon’s agony of war.

"I apologize for the horror of war and what I did in this civil war in the name of 'Lebanon' or 'the cause' or 'Christianity,'" he wrote. "My hope is that my call be understood as the only way out of the Lebanese dilemma, the only way to purify the souls of those tormented by the pains of the past. You can't just put the blame on those in charge. We were all responsible: those holding the guns, those giving the orders, even the civilians applauding it."

Simon Karam said, "The danger is the problems will inevitably push to the surface again. The past cannot be buried. We can't simply tear down the bombed out buildings and move on."
Some of this collective amnesia, as Karam points out, is not only personal pain but a public policy endorsed by a government made up of many of those who committed atrocities in the war. A 1991 amnesty law granted immunity to those involved in the violence. These warlords-turned-politicians are too fearful of their political futures, critics say, to publicly confront their role in the war, leading to state-sponsored amnesia.

Wadad Helwani, 48, founder of the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared, hopes her husband, Adnan, is still alive. Adnan Helwani was not a member of a militia, his wife said, but he was an activist in a left-wing political party that provided social services to war-torn Muslim West Beirut. On Sept. 24, 1982, he was taken from their home. It was the height of the Israeli invasion, and he was taken by two plainclothes men carrying guns and ID cards from the Lebanese Army's intelligence services. It was not clear whether the two were in fact acting as members of the Army or agents of the Lebanese Forces.

When asked about Shaftari's search for forgiveness, she stiffened. She responded sharply, "It isn't enough to apologize just like that out of thin air. He has to be forgiven by the individuals he hurt."

Please comment on what you have read above.

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APPENDIX III

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION OF THE NIH WEB-BASED COURSE

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Rima Rassi successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 03/04/2008

Certification Number: 2739
BIBLIOGRAPHY


