

# How Refuge Creates Informality: Shelter Politics in Refugee Camps in Beirut

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This paper looks at how humanitarian policies of protection encourage the development of informality in refugee camps, particularly informal housing. I look at four urban camps in and around Beirut: Mar Elias, Burj al-Barajneh, Shatila, and Dbayeh. Through interviews with the early inhabitants of these places, I attempt to piece together a history of building shelter among the refugees. I argue for the application of the concept of “informality” to the study of refugee settlements by showing how political and economic conditions that humanitarian protection produces compel refugees to engage in informal practices much like the urban poor. These informal practices also become crucial to refugee identity and for surviving, as well as for negotiating forms of governmentality in ways that are both similar to and different from the urban poor.

It has been argued that urban informality is the generalized mode of metropolitan urbanization particularly in the developing world.<sup>1</sup> The question of “informals” and informality has become a pressing issue for urban theorists and activists as “the current era of global restructuring has greatly increased the number of such people, and it has led to an explosion in the range of their activities.”<sup>2</sup> The term informality has many definitions and is therefore rather messy. Over the years a number of scholars have attempted to provide definitions for it. Informality is largely associated that which is outside of regulations.<sup>3</sup> The informal sector, particularly as it relates to the economy was originally defined as comprising economic activities that escaped state regulation,<sup>4</sup> and has historically been associated with petty commerce, low income, family-owned enterprises, and precarious employment in

Third World cities. But informality extends beyond the economy to encompass a number of different issues including land and housing. Today, scholars argue that informality refers to forms of governance that create different spatial values especially in urban areas. Ananya Roy argues that informality, encompassing both the informal economy and informal housing, has been on the urban agenda for decades and arguably has made a comeback as an “‘organizing logic,’ a system of norms that governs the process of urban transformation itself.”<sup>5</sup> Rather than seeing it as the opposite of formality, it is argued that informality “is not a separate sector but rather a series of transactions that connect different economies and spaces to one another.”<sup>6</sup> Informality and formality are not opposites of each other, but are co-constitutive. The state has the capacity to suspend formal norms, and the power to determine when to enact the suspension, to determine what is informal and what is not and to determine what forms of informality will thrive and what will not.<sup>7</sup>

As we enter an urban century,<sup>8</sup> urbanization affects not only citizens and economic migrants, but forced migrants as well. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has already discussed an increasing trend in urban refugees and such a process requires a robust discussion not just of humanitarian assistance but also of the shape of urbanization itself. I argue that informality does not just take place on the rural/urban interface of cities in the developing world, but also at the interface of the state and non-state, at the site of the camp itself, particularly in conditions of protracted refugee situations (as in the case of Palestinian refugees), where there is a complex and ongoing negotiation between the needs of refugees and the geopolitics of donors and nation states. To discuss my argument in greater detail, I look at the early development of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon as a pattern of informal housing.

## **Squatting, Urbanization, and Palestinian Camps**

Informal housing has been the main form of shelter for the urban poor in the Global South for many decades. Many researchers working on Latin America, Africa, and Asia have discussed and debated the causes, implications, values, and costs of informal housing.<sup>9</sup> Such housing is often produced through self-help. They are built by the urban poor who are often compelled to build on illegally occupied land – labeled “squatting.” This illegal occupation of land has significant consequences for the urban poor who are unsure of their security of tenure and for whom the threat of demolition compels them to negotiate with the state and other actors for their investment in shelter. Worse yet, they often suffer from the lack of basic services such as clean water, sanitation, roads, electricity, medical care, schools, and so forth.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, because of high levels of poverty and insecurity, the urban poor also have to make decisions on how to invest their hard-earned savings and, hence, the houses are built gradually in a slow upgrading process. John Turner was one of the first to coin the phrase “housing as a verb” (as opposed to housing as a noun) to show housing as a process rather than a finished product for the poor. The “verb” aspect of housing illustrates the need for flexibility among the poor when building their homes and using their capital to invest in other things that may be more pressing at the

time.<sup>11</sup> But, the proliferation of informal housing and its incremental development is also indicative of the second-class citizenship to which the poor are subjected.

The discussion of informal housing and informality more generally has been quite useful in urban studies, particularly in the ongoing discussions about governmentality, citizenship, and rights to the city. Recent research, particularly that coming out of South Asia, has shown how informality has come to constitute the domain not only of the poor, but also of the rich, as governments also bend laws to accommodate private developments to suit their economic needs.<sup>12</sup> Others have shown how planning itself has been informalized, and how the suspension of rules and laws enable governments and private developers to work together in tandem to urbanize areas in particular ways not previously envisioned by city master plans.<sup>13</sup> Such theorizations have helped us rethink state-private-society relations and the changing nature of politics and civil society.

It may be useful then to extend this discussion of informality to those spaces that are perhaps “exceptional” geographies, which fall outside of the law and politics – in this case, refugee camps or other refugee spaces. Doing so, illustrates the networks of power relations that produce, manage and contest the existence and conditions of refugee spaces. It also reveals the complexity of thinking about how citizenship is constructed in many states. Refugee camps and sites in many parts of the world are governed by humanitarian organizations and the host state in varying arrangements. As protracted refugee situations expand across the world, there are increasing concerns for the security and well-being of refugees who are stuck in a state of limbo for a long time. Palestinian refugees, who have been the exception, are arguably now the norm of such humanitarian conditions. Displaced for over sixty-five years, generations of Palestinians have had to contend with the conditions that come with humanitarian protection, but at the cost of social, political, and economic marginality.

The politics of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are useful to note here. UNRWA, in the process of being a dedicated UN agency to Palestinian refugees over the last six decades has become a surrogate state and the mirror of a welfare government.<sup>14</sup> It is well-known to scholars and activists working on Palestinian issues that UNRWA’s “works” aspect intended to bring development projects to Palestinian refugees, particularly in the earlier years of its operation. Proponents of these development schemes imagined that they would bring about self-sufficiency amongst refugees and help acclimatize them to their new homes such that the agency could be phased out.<sup>15</sup> Schiff points out that these projects included small-scale infrastructure projects, providing temporary employment that would lead to continued demand for agricultural labor.<sup>16</sup> Over time, however, UNRWA has had to abandon many of their “works” projects and focus instead on education, medical services, and relief. This has been a result of host governments’ resistance to “works” projects as well as Palestinian opposition to what they have perceived as attempts to resettle them instead of allowing them to return home.<sup>17</sup> Nell Gabiam points out that “development” has been part of the long and fraught history between the agency and the refugees,<sup>18</sup> but I would argue (in line with Schiff) that this extends to the relationship between the agency and the host countries as well as the agency seeks to work carefully with both.

But how does the functioning of UNRWA as a surrogate state affect the everyday lives of Palestinians, economically, politically or otherwise? This is particularly important to consider as both the agency and the refugees have complex relationships with the host states and societies and with each other.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, as aid has ebbed and flowed to different places and the Palestinian refugee population itself has increased, this has added further pressure to the finances of UNRWA.<sup>20</sup> I am interested in understanding how the limits of the surrogate state of UNRWA affects the practices and politics of shelter among Palestinian refugees and considering how the process of “squatting” and informal building in camps can be seen as political acts.

## Methods

A number of texts on the Palestinian camps have provided robust discussions of the history and politics of displacement in Lebanon, including questions of economic marginalization, gender, humanitarian policies, and politics.<sup>21</sup> However, the information in them was limited for the kind of housing and shelter analysis I was interested in pursuing.

In order to understand the evolution of the camp space, I interviewed first-generation refugees in four camps around Beirut – namely Burj al-Barajneh, Mar Elias, Dbayeh, and Shatila – in 2007. In total, I was able to conduct semi-structured interviews with sixty-five refugees, most of whom had come to the camps at their inception. Many of my respondents were of quite advanced age and memories were difficult to recall. Furthermore, I was acutely aware of the over-researched nature of the camps, particularly Shatila and Burj al-Barajneh, and the problems that may be created for refugees due to constant visits and studies by researchers, tourists, NGO workers, reporters, and so forth.<sup>22</sup> My questions were focused mainly on building practices of refugees in the early years of displacement. I hoped that the questions for this would be less problematic for my respondents, as I attempted through my interviews to avoid questions around “politics.” However, housing – whether we look at its construction, the policies developed around it, or its financing – is deeply political, and it may be impossible to engage in a discussion of housing without engaging with its politics.

It should also be noted here that this project was part of a larger comparative study looking at refugees displaced between 1947 and 1948 in India and Palestine. The aim of the research was to study the spatial development social relationships particularly around issues of land and shelter, between refugees and the urban poor in cities of the Global South. Indians and Palestinians provide appropriate cases for such studies as these have been the longest and most contentious refugee displacements in the world, and both have been managed outside the norm of refugee crises (namely, the framework run by UNHCR). Instead, partition refugees from India received no international help, while Palestinian refugees were given their own refugee agency – UNRWA – with its specific humanitarian and protection mandate that was separate and distinct from the protections offered under the mandate of the UNHCR. As a result, refugees from these displacements provide unique perspectives into the politics of humanitarianism, particularly in the urban

areas where large numbers of them eventually settled. My intention has been to analyze the politics of refuge to contribute to urban politics, rather than focusing on refugee camps as sites of anthropological or philosophical inquiry. A careful study of urban refugees offers much in terms of understanding the politics of managing citizenship on the one hand and the politics of humanitarianism on the other.

## **Housing Refugees**

An important aspect of humanitarian response to refugee crises is the issue of housing refugees, yet the UNHCR handbook has limited references to it.<sup>23</sup> It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that housing provision for refugees becomes inadequate, particularly as they are displaced over a long period of time. But housing issues are not just about inadequacy, they can also be politically contentious, particularly in the Lebanese case where permanent structures took on a particular symbolism in a country that is deeply divided by confessional politics. Thus, the study of shelter upgrading in fact can be useful in revealing the everyday micropolitics of refugees of staking claims to space, but also to identity. Hence, in my research, I focused on the politics of housing and the attempts by refugees to build shelters that were sturdier. In most interviews, refugees told me how they were initially placed in camps.<sup>24</sup> This is easily corroborated by images from the UNRWA archives. However, as exile became prolonged, two things appeared to happen in tandem. First, movement of refugees became increasingly restricted and many, especially among the lower socio-economic strata, were compelled to seek shelter in refugee camps that were initially set up by the Red Cross and eventually taken over by UNRWA. Second, the growing pressure of refugees, particularly in urban areas, coupled with the increasingly difficult conditions of living in tents forced many in camps to attempt to modify their living spaces.

There were a number of problems with tents. These included the lack of sturdiness, lack of privacy, and lack of space. As families grew, they were crammed together and would have to expand out, often into spaces allotted to others, encroaching on whatever land there was available in the camp site. Many of my interviewees complained that the tents often collapsed in the rain and wind, particularly in winter, or that it would get wet or muddy inside. This made living very difficult for them. Many activities had to take place outside the tents, including cooking and washing. Therefore, many attempts to address a housing problem were the results of having poor quality shelter and not enough space for people in the first place.

Acts of constructing shelter were not, however, mundane or apolitical. Instead, in the deeply fractured sectarian environment of Lebanon, where Palestinians were increasingly viewed as threats, any sign of permanence, however rudimentary, was banned. Therefore, any building activities by refugees were severely penalized. As a result, refugees would have to engage in covert building practices. This included building walls out of stones, beating tins of food from their rations into straight metal strips and so forth under the

cover of their tents. Refugees were encouraged to spy on each other by the *maktab thani* (a branch of Lebanese internal security, also referred to as the Deuxième Bureau) and the *darak* (police) in order to protect their own informal constructions. The officers of the *maktab thani* and the *darak* who controlled and maintained surveillance over the camps would also be able to pocket bribes and use the refugees against themselves to tighten their control around these spaces. I have discussed this in greater detail elsewhere and referred to this as squatting in camps – as the act of building itself, like the act of squatting was illegal and yet treated with a degree of informal consent by the state.<sup>25</sup> All this also raises questions about the nature of “community” – itself an ambiguous term – within Palestinian camps in Lebanon. As Rebecca Roberts has pointed out, there are discernible differences between refugees within a single camp and between camps (and, I would add, between refugees within and outside camps) that develop as a result of the socio-economic differences that already existed when refugees arrived or because of the different ways refugees have coped with their displacement.<sup>26</sup> This, combined with constant negotiations with the Lebanese state, has arguably also created fissures between people, even as exile has brought them together in a shared space of exile. Other research on building in camps also points out its difficulties particularly in relationship to the development of durable structures. Rueff and Viaro for example note:

Throughout the 1950s, UNRWA replaced tents with more durable shelters. Each family was given a plot of 80–100 m<sup>2</sup> on which a “core unit” with one 12 m<sup>2</sup> room and sanitary services was built. The walls were made of bricks and cement with asbestos roofing. A family of four to five members received the “core unit” and a family of six to eight members received two rooms. Gradually, refugees extended their shelter with new rooms in mud or concrete to fit the needs of their growing families. Boundary fences started to appear, defining pathways between the “properties.” To underline the temporary character of the houses, no additional floors were allowed. When they had built on the whole plot, the occupants expanded it beyond the pathways, producing a spider network of narrow paths, dead-end alleys, and irregularly shaped houses. Ultimately, and even if formally prohibited by the local authorities, there was no choice but to opt for the vertical expansion of the camps. Extra floors began to be built on top of existing units, resulting in multi-level housing accommodating extended families.<sup>27</sup>

Lebanese state control over the refugee camps did not lift until the PLO came in 1968 and took them over. By then, as Julie Peteet notes, the camps, which had once been on the periphery of Beirut had become part of an expanding urban environment, particularly the slum belt that encircled the city.<sup>28</sup> The PLO’s arrival ushered in a number of changes, from providing greater freedom to Palestinian refugees to run their own affairs to the explosion of building activities in the camps themselves. Houses evolved from zinc to concrete and were expanded. Camp committees were set up to run the daily affairs including maintenance of camps, management of camp resources such as water and

sewage, and mediation of local disputes. The increased autonomy under the PLO was also liberating for many people.<sup>29</sup> However, the organization came to be seen as a state within a state and eventually their guerrilla warfare with Israel sparked the start of the civil war that went on for fifteen years.

Many of my interviewees had been displaced from Tal al-Za‘tar during the civil war and had moved to Shatila, sometimes directly and sometimes after having lived elsewhere in Beirut. Most had built and rebuilt their homes themselves through cycles of destruction and reconstruction, sometimes with the help of UNRWA or the PLO (which provided financial support or materials). While these structures were precarious, several stories standing on a small footprint, many took great pride in the fact that they had been able to build these spaces themselves. At the same time, the increasing spatial congestion has clear impacts on the residents. There is very little light between buildings, for example, which is a point that was repeatedly raised. The weight on the foundations, particularly on sandy soil (as in the case of Shatila) has also led to the sinking of some buildings. This is not helped by poor infrastructure and water logging that takes place during rains. Nevertheless, the vertical expansion of houses is almost necessary, sometimes to accommodate growing families and also as a source of income as they are rented out to migrant workers from other countries.

## **Humanitarianism and Informal Housing**

The discussion of housing in camps needs to be addressed in tandem with discussions on employment and income generation to understand how and why informality became the means by which refugee camps developed. I argue here that Palestinians have been offered a basic right to refuge- translated into minimal housing in exchange for the right to work and lead a decent life. Lebanon has pursued a policy of marginalizing Palestinian refugees for a very long time. As Knudsen – citing Lex Takkenberg and the UNHCR – notes:

In 1960, decree 319 termed Palestinian refugees “stateless foreigners” lacking “documents from their original countries and residing in Lebanon.” Deprived of the benefits of citizenship, the Palestinian refugees were not entitled to work, health care, higher education, or, of course, the right to vote. Having been deprived of “civic rights,” the refugees were barred from social and political rights beyond those secured by UNRWA. The marginalization of refugees continued when, in 1964, Law 17561 barred Palestinians from joining professional syndicates, a precondition for employment in a range of high-status professions (including medicine, engineering, and law).<sup>30</sup>

The Casablanca Protocol (1965), which calls for granting Palestinians the rights to work, travel, and gain residency, was ratified by Lebanon with several reservations, including the right to work and entry and exit from the country.<sup>31</sup> As a result, a 1971 survey found

camp workers were primarily employed in the service sector (35.8 per cent), followed by industry (25.4 per cent, mainly in construction) and agriculture (21.1 per cent). Over half (58.4 per cent) of camp workers were day-labourers; fewer than one-third enjoyed either long-term employment (14.2 per cent) or were self-employed (18.8 per cent). Lacking work permits and generally employed in small enterprises, most Palestinians laboured for low wages under poor working conditions and without access to Lebanon's underdeveloped social security system.<sup>32</sup>

Discrimination against Palestinians intensified after the end of the Lebanese civil war when they were barred from taking up employment in over 72 professions – a punishment for their alleged instigation of the civil war.<sup>33</sup> As a result, many were forced to work within camps for paltry wages or outside camps illegally, forming a deeply casualized, exploitable pool of labor. They were also denied the right to own or inherit property, a key means to achieve middle class status of any kind. Theirs became a form of enforced poverty. Palestinians in Lebanon now make up the highest number of special hardship cases in the Middle East and by many indicators, including health, education, and employment, lag behind other parts of the region where UNRWA operates.<sup>34</sup> While many of the restrictions on Palestinians in terms of their socio-economic rights have been eased more recently, this has yet to be translated into anything meaningful on the ground. A small fraction of Palestinians – 53,000 out of 120,000 – are employed, 81 percent continue to live in abject poverty, and Lebanon continues to carry the highest number of special hardship cases in the region (30 percent of the population).<sup>35</sup> Humanitarian relief is one of the few things that families depend on to survive, creating a sort of enforced dependency.

It is not uncommon to hear scholars talk about refugee camps in Lebanon as slums because, like slums in the developing world, they lack basic infrastructure and adequate housing and are subjected to overcrowding and poverty. As Gilbert points out, the term “slum” has become a shorthand to describe a complex combination of poor housing, inadequate utility connections, and lack of opportunity that works together with pathological depictions of the urban poor and short term, draconian, and simplistic responses to their pressing needs.<sup>36</sup> In the case of refugee camps, it is useful to consider the implications of using the word “slum” and how the politics of humanitarianism contributes to the production of unique forms of informality in refugee camps. Much of this is due to prolonged displacement and the limited options available to aid agencies and organizations in terms of addressing the needs of the refugees, particularly in the face of resistance from the host country and, in the case of UNRWA, funds that are often limited.

Thus, in a bizarre way, humanitarianism, which is supposed to embody the humanity and generosity of the international community toward the most vulnerable populations in the world, can ironically be blamed for creating conditions of enduring poverty, inequality, and expanding informality. This is mainly because in the Lebanese case, UNRWA is unable to meaningfully intervene in compelling governments to respect the human rights of refugees.

It is also important to remember that refugees themselves have not wanted many

of the development projects aimed at them for fear of their political implications. This parallels some of the discussions of “gray spacing” in Israel/Palestine, where Bedouin communities have resisted the attempts of the Israeli state to settle and manage them in particular ways, insisting instead on adhering to their own ways of living and demanding their rights within a hegemonic system.<sup>37</sup> Hence the agency of refugees themselves is also a key aspect to explain why informality is produced in camps. Refugee politics translated into a struggle against development projects funded by UNRWA. Yet reliance on humanitarian relief for generations also becomes an untenable option. As a result, one can argue that the only alternative for refugees is to engage in informal activities with regard to employment and housing in order to survive. The project of humanitarianism does protect them from being *refouled* or from suffering from material deprivation, but does little to help them actually break out of poverty itself.

In fact, it can be argued that humanitarianism produces a state of marginality because of the structure of the humanitarian assistance itself – to provide but not really be able to protect or create meaningful solutions. Humanitarianism spawns a situation, particularly in protracted refugee situations, where informality is the *only* way of life. This becomes particularly problematic in urban areas where differentiating between informality created by refugees and that produced by urban poverty is difficult. Yet the need to manage the distinctions between the two remain significant as they may become the cause of tensions between different groups of people, especially since refugees, in this case Palestinian refugees in Beirut, receive – at a very basic level – services and aid that some of the urban poor living around them may not.

## Conclusions

With the Syrian war now in its fourth year, thousands of refugees have been displaced from Syria to neighboring countries such as Lebanon and Jordan. It is not just Syrians who are displaced, but also Palestinian refugees from Syrian camps as well. The pressures exerted by refugees from Syria in Lebanon are once again creating an untenable situation of population pressure with limited employment and housing, alongside an increasingly imbalanced Lebanese political system. In this context we need to engage with questions of humanitarianism and informality more urgently. Housing provides one lens by which to engage with this issue, but it cannot be meaningfully disengaged from a study of economic conditions. Informal housing can become a way to analyze the governmentality of humanitarian organizations and that of host states against the practices of “gray spacing” from below by refugees. It provides us with an understanding of the agency of refugees, but also a possibility of understanding an emerging global framework of humanitarian informality (as compared with neoliberal informality).

As Aihwa Ong has pointed out, we are seeing the rise of a new global order in which there are a variety of different actors, such as refugees, who invoke not the rights of territorialized citizenship, but new post-national, biological, and flexible claims as grounds for resources, entitlements, and protection.<sup>38</sup> What would these entitlements and protection

entail and how would they work together with or against the rights and entitlements of citizens who may share similar socioeconomic conditions? As this discussion of refugees in Lebanon suggests, a study of informality in refugee spaces may offer some insights into this.

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#### Endnotes

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- 2 Nezar AlSayyad, "Urban Informality as a 'New' Way of Life," in *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*, ed. Ananya Roy and Nezar AlSayyad (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 9.
- 3 Bryan Roberts, "Informal Economy and Family Strategies," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 18, no. 1 (1994): 6–23.
- 4 Keith Hart, "Informal Economy," in *The Human Economy: A Citizen's Guide*, ed. Keith Hart, Jean-Louise Laville, and Antonio David Cattani (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), 142–153.
- 5 Roy, "Urban Informality," 148.
- 6 Roy, "Urban Informality," 148.
- 7 Roy, "Urban Informality," 149.
- 8 The twenty-first century is seen as the urban century. The United Nations points out for example that over half the world's population is now living in cities. Scholars and policy makers have thus begun to increasingly think about what constitutes "the urban" and how its challenges should be met.
- 9 Lisa Peattie, "Housing Policy in Developing Countries: Two Puzzles," *World Development* 7, nos. 11–12 (1979): 1017–22; Hernando De Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); Peter Ward, ed., *Self-help Housing: A Critique* (London: Mansell, 1982).
- 10 It is important to distinguish between illegal and informal, as they are not the same. Informality may refer to the ways in which settlements access services or even the morphology of settlements, including the lack of infrastructure or the lack of its regularization. This goes back to the point that the state can suspend norms, and laws may be bent, but what takes place, may not necessarily be illegal. Illegality, however, takes on board the issues of rights to property and the force of the law. Hence those who live in illegal settlements (which may also be informal) are subjected to particularly precarious forms of living, usually because they fear the threat of eviction. See Ayona Datta, *The Illegal City: Space, Law, and Gender in a Delhi Squatter Settlement* (London: Ashgate, 2012), 7.
- 11 John F. C. Turner, "Housing as a Verb," in *Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process*, ed. John F. C. Turner and Robert Fichter (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1972), 148–175.
- 12 Ananya Roy, "Why India Cannot Plan Its Cities: Informality, Insurgence, and the Idiom of Urbanization," *Planning Theory* 8, no. 1 (Feb. 2009): 76–87.
- 13 See, for example, the forthcoming work by Shubhra Gururani.
- 14 Randa Farah, "UNRWA: Through the Eyes of Its Refugee Employees in Jordan," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, nos. 2–3 (2009): 389–411; Nell Gabiam, "When 'Humanitarianism' Becomes 'Development': The Politics of International Aid in Syria's Palestinian Refugee Camps," *American Anthropologist* 114, no. 1 (Mar. 2012): 95–107.
- 15 Benjamin N. Schiff, "Between Occupier and Occupied: UNRWA in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 3 (Spring 1989): 60–75.
- 16 Benjamin N. Schiff, "Assisting the Palestinian Refugees: Progress in Human Rights?" in *Progress in Postwar International Relations*, ed. Emanuel Adler and Beverly Crawford (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 359–402.
- 17 Schiff, "Between Occupier and Occupied," 91; Gabiam, "When 'Humanitarianism' Becomes 'Development'."

- 18 Gabiam, "When 'Humanitarianism' Becomes 'Development'."
- 19 Randa Farah, "UNRWA: Through the Eyes of its Refugee Employees in Jordan."
- 20 Note that UNRWA employees in the West Bank have also been going on strike more recently due to disputes over wages. See, for example, Dalia Hatuqa, "UN Strike Paralyzes West Bank Refugee Camps," *al-Jazeera*, online at [www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/01/un-strike-paralyzes-west-bank-refugee-camps-201411412367671648.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/01/un-strike-paralyzes-west-bank-refugee-camps-201411412367671648.html). Accessed 26 February 2014.
- 21 See, for example: Robert Bowker, *Palestinian Refugees: Mythology, Identity, and the Search for Peace* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003); Rex Brynen, "The Politics of Exile: The Palestinians in Lebanon," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 3, no. 3 (1990): 204–227; Simon Haddad, "Sectarian Attitudes as a Function of the Palestinian Presence in Lebanon," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (2000): 81–100; Julie M. Peteet, *Gender in Crisis: Women and the Palestinian Resistance Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Julie M. Peteet, *Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Rosemary Sayigh, *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries* (London: Zed Books, 1978); and Rosemary Sayigh, *Too Many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon* (London: Zed Books, 1994).
- 22 Maysoun Sukarieh and Stuart Tannock, "On the Problem of Over-researched Communities: The Case of the Shatila Palestinian Refugee Camp in Lebanon," *Sociology* 47, no. 3 (2012): 494–508.
- 23 For example, the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies (2007) has only one chapter (twelve) that talks about the specifics of housing and shelter in refugee camps and this is interspersed with discussions around infrastructure and the planning of camps themselves. The Handbook is available at [www.unhcr.org/472af2972.html](http://www.unhcr.org/472af2972.html).
- 24 Note that not everyone came first to camps. Some rented private accommodations as long as they could before they were compelled to move to the camps in order to survive. Also, there was migration between camps, particularly as some interviewees talked about moving from more rural areas to Beirut in search of work and the complications that created in terms of getting rations at their new residences.
- 25 Romola Sanyal, "Squatting in Camps: Building and Insurgency in Spaces of Refuge," *Urban Studies* 48, no. 5 (2011): 877–890.
- 26 Rebecca Roberts, *Palestinians in Lebanon: Refugees Living with Long Term Displacement* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2010).
- 27 Henri Rueff and Alain Viaro, "Palestinian Refugee Camps: From Shelter to Habitat," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, nos. 2–3 (2010): 345.
- 28 Peteet, *Gender in Crisis*, 25.
- 29 Peteet, *Gender in Crisis*, 101–3.
- 30 Are Knudsen, "Widening the Protection Gap: The 'Politics of Citizenship' for Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, 1948–2008," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 22, no. 1 (2009): 51–73.
- 31 Knudsen, "Widening the Protection Gap."
- 32 Brynen, "Politics of Exile," 206. For statistics, Brynen cites Bassem Sirhan, "Palestinian Refugee Camp Life in Lebanon," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 4, no. 2 (Winter 1975): 101.
- 33 In discussing the adverse reactions of Lebanese toward *tawtin* (permanent implantation) of Palestinians, Fida Nasrallah notes that due to the fact that the Lebanese have been "stripped of their ability to negotiate over the future of their own country, and having lost much if not most of their freedom for political manoeuvre, the future of the Palestinians in Lebanon is one issue on which the Lebanese are allowed to express themselves freely." This then translates into a demonization of Palestinians and their marginalization within Lebanon. Fida Nasrallah, "Lebanese Perceptions of the Palestinians in Lebanon: Case Studies," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 10, no. 3 (1997): 349–359.
- 34 Zeina Ghazi Halabi, "Exclusion and Identity in Lebanon's Palestinian Refugee Camps: A Story of Sustained Conflict," *Environment and Urbanization* 16, no. 2 (2004): 39–48; David Schenker, "Palestinian Refugees Languish in Lebanon," *Middle East Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (2012): 67–74.
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