Intersectional identities, space and security: Syrian refugee women in Amman and Beirut

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Abstract

Displaced by the Syrian civil war and seeking refuge in the cities of Amman and Beirut, Syrian refugee women face a multitude of complex legal, security, and cultural structures as they attempt to negotiate new lives for themselves. Typically, urban refugee women are overlooked or homogenised into wider descriptions of the situation of refugees. When they are considered as a separate group, they are hemmed into narratives of 'empowerment' through their changing gender roles or 'victims' of the wider structures of conflict, flight and refuge. As a result, there is a lack of insight into the complexity of these women's daily, lived experiences, their tactical agency in the face of the powerful structures which shape their lives, and in particular their perceptions and engagement with scalar issues of protection and security in their host cities. Foregrounding the lived experiences of participants through a range of qualitative methods, this thesis explores the relationship between identity, security and space in order to examine the realities of life in the city for Syrian refugee women.

This thesis uses a comparative case study approach, and a range of literatures, including critical realism, intersectionality, tactical agency and feminist geopolitics, in order to highlight how different structures interact with refugee women's identities to shape differing experiences of (in)security. Whilst policies pertaining to Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon are not gendered at the state level, in the micro day-to-day, the law shapes refugees' experience in differentiated and gendered ways and has gendered consequences. This results in refugee women occupying a landscape of permitted or prohibited spaces based on policies and legal documentation, which intersect with structural issues of gender and patriarchy. Women negotiate these permitted and prohibited spaces through a range of active and passive tactics, using their agency and the interaction of their various identities in considered ways in order to enhance their mobility, social positioning and wider security in their host cities.

Contents

Acknowledgments and thanks

Without the agreement of numerous refugee women to share their stories, this project wouldn't have taken shape. Their openness, trust and willingness to share their experiences and their time, made this research possible. My first thanks and acknowledgments belong to them. I hope I do your lives and realities justice.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

3RP: Regional refugee and resilience plan

FGD: Focus group discussion

GID: General Intelligence Department (Jordan)

GBV: Gender-based violence

ISIS: Islamic State in Iraq & Syria, also referred to as *Daesh*

IAF: Islamic Action Front. The political wing of Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood

ISF: Internal Security Forces (The Lebanese Police)

LAF: Lebanese Armed Forces (The Lebanese Army)

MOI: Ministry of Interior

MOU: Memoranda of Understanding

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council

PLO: Palestinian Liberation Organisation

PSD: Public Security Directorate (Jordan)

PSF: Public Security Force (Jordan)

RTC: Right to the City, a theoretical term introduced by French Philosopher Henri Lefebvre

SPS: Special Police Force (Jordan)

SRAD: Syrian Refugees Affairs Directorate (Jordan)

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNWRA: United Nations Relief and Works agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East

WFP: World Food Programme

YPG: Kurdish Peoples Protection Units

List of terms

Abaya: Long, shapeless, typically black cloak that covers a woman's neck to her face in order to provide modesty

Al Dahiye: The suburbs. Neighbourhood area in the south of Beirut with strong Hezbollah presence. Also referred to as the Southern Suburbs

Al Nakba: The catastrophe. Mass movement and expulsion of Palestinians following the 1947-9 Arab-Israeli war.

Aman: Secure

Azeez: Powerful, respected

Bayt: House

Gharib: Stranger/Outsider or Foreigner

Hijab: Modesty scarf that covers a woman's head and hair, leaving the face uncovered

Jabal: Hill

Kafala: Sponsor

Hawajez: Security blockade or checkpoint

Mufawadyn: Authorised, a term commonly employed to describe refugee papers or status

Mukhtar: A community level mayor, typically the lowest rung of local governance. Common in Syria & Lebanon for signing official documents (e.g birth certificates). There are usually one or two per neighbourhood

Mukhabarat: Intelligence Services, often referred to as the Secret Police

Nakba: Catastrophe

Qawiyye: Strength

Refoulement: the forcible return of refugees or asylum seekers to a country where they are liable to be subjected to persecution.

Shi'a: Branch of Islam

Sunni: Branch of Islam

Taghrib: Smuggled

Wasta: Influence or Connections

Za'im: Leader

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A note on Language and Arabic terms

Arabic terms in this thesis have been transliterated based on the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES) guide. Thus, words that have a common English translation (according to the Miriam-Webster Dictionary), the names of individuals, political parties and places are not italicised (for example 'hijab' or 'Ashrafyeh'). On occasion, terms have been adjusted to more accurately reflect dialetic pronunciation.

For ease of understanding to the non-Arabic speaking reader, Arabic plurals are indicating using a '*s*'.

Participants in this study expressed themselves using a combination of formal (*fush'a*) and colloquial (*ammiyyat*) Arabic, in the local dialects of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. These are all considered Levantine Arabic dialects and thus share very common similarities. Terms have been translated using a combination of Syrian, Lebanese and Jordanian speakers of both English and Arabic in order to provide a greater depth of understanding.

All transliterations are my own, checked over with an English-Arabic speaking Syrian translator. However, I take full responsibility for any errors.

Chapter One: Introduction

In early 2016, over a hostel dinner of lentil soup in the Getawi district of Beirut, I chatted with my friend Lus, who was working as an NGO volunteer with Syrian and Palestinian refugee families in the southern suburbs of Beirut. The conversation had turned from a focus on housing conditions and refugees' rights, to the topic of security and conflict in Beirut. In particular, the recent bombings in the Bourj El Barajneh neighbourhood, that had killed 89 people and injured hundreds. The terrorist group, *Daesh* (also known as the 'Islamic State of the Levant and Iraq': ISIS) had claimed responsibility and threatened further acts. Lus had spent the day working with Syrians who lived in this neighbourhood, and reflected on some of the comments a refugee family had made to her when she had asked them how safe they felt living in a neighbourhood where something so traumatic and violent had occurred: 'They said they weren't worried about the bombing. But they started talking about the home that they were living in. It felt like it was coming down on top of them, the whole neighbourhood feels structurally insecure. Can you believe it? I thought they would be worried about ISIS, but they are actually just scared that the house is going to fall apart'.

This conversation, and others, led me to pursue various avenues of thought about what constituted safety and security in such settings, about the scale of fear and insecurity and the ways in which this was perceived and experienced by those who were marginalised and living in structurally and socio-economically compromised situations and locations in the city. Whilst Lus and I assumed that wider threats of terrorism and the uneasy political networks and militias at work within Beirut would leave a refugee family feeling deeply insecure, they deflected these concerns, and instead pointed to the materiality of their living conditions in the city and their fears that their homes would collapse on top of them. Day to day fears regarding their lives in the city, appeared to dominate thoughts over concerns of terrorism and regional power struggles.

These discussions reflect some of the arguments from feminist geopolitical academics, who argue that ideas of (in)security[1] need to be considered and examined not only at the scale of the state, but at varying scales from the global to the intimate. This enables an understanding of the lived, daily experiences of (in)security and the way that this is deeply related and connected to wider structures and identities in shaping everyday life. This thesis brings these concerns together and examines refugee women's experiences of (in)security by considering the ways in which their various

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[1] Rather than focus on either security or insecurity as categories, this thesis is exploring the range in women's experiences, thus (in)security is used as a term throughout this thesis which allows for an encompassing expression of women's experiences of both security and insecurity simultaneously.

intersectional identities interact with legal, political and social structures to create lived experiences of (in)security.

This research was motivated by a desire to deepen understanding and highlight the position of marginalised urban refugees displaced by the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, and as of 2020, is ongoing. In the spring of 2014, I witnessed Syrian refugee women begging on the streets of Istanbul, often with their children, using their Syrian identity documents as a means of attracting attention. The war had entered its third year and felt largely forgotten by Western audiences[2]. The Turkish/Syrian border was hundreds of miles away, but the presence of these women demonstrated that refugees were making their way to the city, were living alongside the urban poor and desperately trying to make ends meet. The necessity of refugee women to beg on the street made me question the humanitarian and legal infrastructures in place and to consider the gendered effects of these, as women were clearly being exposed to insecure livelihood and negative coping mechanisms.

The visibility of these women on the street contrasts with their invisibility in research, academia and policy (Hyndman, 2010). Urban refugee research has only started to gather pace in the last couple of decades and, as the following chapters will examine, studies on urban refugee women are even less common. Initially, urban refugees were shown to be a predominantly young, male and mobile population, who sought opportunities of betterment in the city in order to send remittances and support back to their families who remained settled in camps or continued to live in home countries. However, the urban self-settlement of Syrian refugees has been characterised by a representation of different genders, ages and incomes. Women, as well as men, have sought refuge from the ongoing war in Syria, in cities not only in the Middle East, but also further afield. In 2016, just under 50% of Syrian refugees were women and young girls, predominantly living in urban areas (UNHCR 3RP, 2016).

Refugee women living in both urban areas and in camps are deeply marginalised. They face specific gender-based risks including endemic sexual and physical abuse, discrimination and challenges in accessing legal systems, work permits, health centres, schools and exclusion from peace processes (Ellerby, 2013; Pittaway, 2011). Refugee women have escaped extremely traumatic experiences, often living under a daily threat of death, injury or violence. Many have experienced the death of close family members, gender-based violence and the destruction and loss of their homes and belongings. Once in exile, many women are alienated from supportive kinship and family relations with many experiencing an increase in isolation, boredom and loneliness. Women in these contexts are vulnerable, not only in a traditional humanitarian sense of being 'vulnerable' to the compromise of

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[2] By the time I commenced my PhD in Sheffield in September 2015, the plight of Syrian refugees was dominating headlines over the world as thousands of refugees had made the journey across the Mediterranean into Europe.

their human security concerns and networks, but also a wider vulnerability in regard to their mental health and wellbeing which is affected by the interaction of individual relational, spatial and temporal factors. This is an important distinction to make. 'Vulnerability' in humanitarian and development contexts is often understood in through fixed and essentialist traits and categories (Clark, 2007). It has been criticised for encouraging refugee communities to 'perform powerlessness' in order to be categorised and thus receive much needed assistance (Turner, 2019). The understanding of vulnerability within this thesis encourages a widening of the term, to include and consider not only an individual's human security vulnerabilities (i.e. vulnerability of shelter, livelihood and so on) but also their wider relational, spatial and temporal vulnerability in their host contexts, all of which shape their mental wellbeing and has outcomes on their day to day lives. It encourages a holistic and individual view of 'vulnerability' that affects an individual in the everyday, rather than a fixation on categories and tick boxes which attempts to determine which individuals are 'worthy' of assistance.

Using this understanding of vulnerability, and thus acknowledging and highlighting it, does not make refugee women a homogenous group of faceless victims, suffering in their day to day life in adverse conditions and contexts. Rather, this thesis aims to highlight how refugee women are individuals of capacity, capability and agency who tactically (re)negotiate their livelihoods and security in oppressive circumstances. Various studies have shown how women's roles in conditions of flight and asylum are transformed, particularly in becoming the head of the family or the family's sole breadwinner (El-Masri, 2013). This is not necessarily a source of empowerment for women, as envisioned by humanitarian actors, but rather an encumbrance and a disruption to their preferred lives (Bangstad, 2011; Muhanna, 2013). By examining the ways in which women's agency operates in such contexts, this thesis explores ways of theorising and understanding acts of female agency in conditions of marginalisation and oppression in urban contexts of the peripheral world. Thus, it demonstrates a sensitivity to the reality of the vulnerability of women's situations whilst also exploring their agency.

A Research Project

This thesis is a structural and socio-spatial analysis of urban (in)security from the perspective of refugee women, which seeks to understand how refugee women's experiences and perceptions of (in)security in host cities of the Middle East is shaped by the relationship between categories of identity and structures of law, policy and societal norms. It is focused on answering the question: *How do the social, political and legal contexts of host countries interact with the identities of Syrian refugee women to produce multiple scales and forms of (in)security?* This question is driven by a set of additional, more detailed research questions:

- *In what ways do these structures affect Syrian refugee women's security of shelter and livelihoods within their host cities and how do women respond to these?*
- *In what ways do these structures shape experiences of public space and urban mobility for Syrian refugee women and how do women respond to these?*
- *How do Syrian refugee women engage with structures of formal and informal security and conflict resolution provision in their host cities?*
- *How do Syrian refugee women experience and respond to multiple scales of (in)security, and what tactics do they employ in order to negotiate these structures of power?*

Drawing on a feminist critical realist ontology, which considers the world to be both socially constructed and real, it foregrounds the voices and experiences of refugee women, whilst exploring issues of structural oppression or opportunity as they interact with categories of identity. Several academic disciplines, including refugee studies, urban and feminist studies, and a number of different thematic bodies of literature, including intersectionality, public/private space, tactical agency, feminist geopolitics and geolegality, undergird the thesis. The network of these texts builds a working framework which enables an examination and comparison of the negotiations of urban (in)security for Syrian refugee women who have self-settled in Amman and Beirut.

This is a complicated research project, which benefits from 'borrowing' from several schools of thought in order to theorise from different angles to aid understanding. Several of these theories are significantly interlinked with mutually conducive literatures, theories, ideas and constructs. For example, issues and theories of gender are examined across a broad spectrum of literature including gendered conceptions of space, structural issues of patriarchy, feminist geopolitics and geolegalities and gendered experiences of refugee-ness. This literature is examined and presented in a necessary linear format across three theoretical framework chapters. However, there are critical and productive relationships and connections between these bodies of literature, which are drawn upon to construct the theoretical framework of this thesis.

Through an engagement with intersectionality, women's differing identities are considered instrumental in understanding fluctuating experiences of space and security in such contexts. Considering the marginalised position of refugee women in such context, and in order to consider the ways in which refugee women exert their personal agency in complex, and often oppressive, conditions, de Certeau's (1984) theory of strategies and tactics is employed. This theory considers the ways in which individuals made tactical decisions which may go against the expected response, in order to protect themselves.

By focusing on the position and the knowledge held by urban refugee women, and prioritising their voices, this thesis echoes the calls of feminist geopolitics to dislodge notions of security from the monolithic and global, to the lived, everyday experiences of those living on the margins of the peripheral world (Hyndman, 2010, 2012). In order to understand the lived and individual experiences of refugees, it is important to use methods that allow for their perspectives and elevates their positions and voices, whilst also ensuring they are protected and not exploited or compromised. This research employs a range of qualitative methods that sought to prioritise participants as knowledge holders, emphasising the worth of their personal experiences and perspective. This included semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, solicited diary keeping and cognitive mapping.

This is a study that is focused on experiences of women. However, women do not exist in a vacuum, but are embedded in societal, political and cultural matrixes. Their position is deeply relational to those around them regardless of their age, gender or income. This study not only reflects on the experiences of women, but also those of men. In the same vein, this study, which is focused on experiences of Syrian refugees, also reflects on the relational networks with host communities and with other refugees. Thus, while centred on refugee women, (in)security and space, it has wider implications and knowledges about host communities, men and power.

This thesis refers to the primary participants as 'urban refugee women'. I am conscious of the politics of labelling a group in such a manner, particularly alongside theories of intersectionality which emphasise the individuality of experience. This term has been used for a number of reasons. Primarily this is because participants often defined themselves, and were defined by the wider humanitarian network in which they were embedded, as 'refugee women'. Within the context of Jordan and Lebanon, Syrian women presented themselves during interviews and focus groups as refugees, and expressed frustration at the lack of care and protection they received despite this labelling. For the women in this study this categorisation was an important aspect of drawing attention to their situation, and as such I have continued to use this terminology throughout the thesis.

Secondly, this thesis is focused on experiences of refugee-ness and the urban. The urban can be considered as built up areas of high density, which result in heterogenous mixing, new sites and forms of interaction, activities and association and thus new practices of social relationships (Sayer, 1984; Latham et al, 2009). It is a centre of both conflict and visible claim-making, an opportunity to stake out 'new politics' (Sanyal, 2014). 'Camp' and 'urban' refugees differ in how they are either visibly and geographically demarked from the host community in their settlement (camp) or living and working alongside them in the everyday (urban). The urban brings a unique set of challenges to understanding refugees and their encounter, settlement and resulting experiences with the urban and urban host

communities is of central interest to this thesis. As such, participants are referred to as 'urban, refugee women' to provide a shorthand framework in order to understand participants as self-identified women who have fled from Syria during the civil war and who have consequently self-settled in Amman or Beirut for protection and livelihood opportunities.

This thesis uses a comparison across two Middle Eastern cities in order to deepen understanding of how structures and identities shape experiences of insecurity within different contexts. Amman and Beirut are the capital cities of Jordan and Lebanon. Between them, they are hosting somewhere in the region of 400,000 Syrian refugees displaced from the Syrian civil war (UNHCR Operation Portal, 2020), although the numbers are in likelihood much higher than these official records show, due to the politicisation of refugee numbers and the complication of accounting for urban refugees. These two contexts share some similarities in their demographics and across their political and social histories (as explored in Chapter Four). However, they also have widely different political and security structures, with Lebanon broadly considered to be a 'weak state', with poor and compromised governance and sovereignty, while Jordan is considered a 'strong state', with centralised and authoritarian governance. Although this framing will be critiqued in this thesis, these states do operate in distinct ways and are influenced by several geopolitical and regional factors. These factors make the case for a compelling comparison in order to understand causal mechanisms of marginalised experiences of (in)security amongst refugee women. This thesis draws out thematic similarities and differences across these contexts whilst being conscious of the socio-political and cultural differences (and indeed, similarities) across these contexts (Chatty, 2007).

Furthermore, there is need for 'south-south' urban comparisons which illuminate the legal and social history of refuge in cities of the Global South, which are framed by legacies of post-colonialism and Orientalism (Sanyal, 2011). As peripheral, 'southern', nations host a disproportionate number of refugees and are also the site of rapidly urbanising populations, this is timely research that examines the effect of thousands of refugees pouring into developmentally compromised cities. Moreover, with most refugees now being 'self-settled' or urban rather than 'camp-based' (L. Landau, 2014) and with much of the existing urban research highlighting male experience, this research contributes to the slow-growing, but much needed, research on urban refugee communities, and especially the experiences of women in such contexts. Additionally, comparative, qualitative studies on refugee experiences are somewhat rare as often refugee scholars are reticent to compare across different socio-cultural sites, despite these studies providing valuable insights and contributions to knowledge across contexts (Chatty, 2007).

This opening section has provided an outline of the research project. The section that follows briefly delivers a contextual outline of the Syrian civil war and ensuing refugee crisis, as well as UNHCR definitions of a refugee that will be used in this thesis. A final section presents an outline of the chapters of this thesis.

The Syrian Civil War, the Ensuing refugee crisis and UNHCR

Ash-sha'b yurīd isqāṭ an-niẓām (The people want to topple the regime)

Scrawling this graffiti on the side of a school in Daraa in Southern Syria in early 2011, fourteen-year-old Mouawiya Syasneh unsuspectingly rolled the Syrian civil war into motion. He and a group of friends were swiftly arrested for their efforts in modelling the rhetoric of Arab uprisings in Egypt and Libya. They were imprisoned, tortured and, after much local protest resulting in the death of four citizens, released. Their discharge came too late and the provincial conflict exploded into country wide unrest (Al Jazeera, 2017; Diehl, 2012). Successive protests were brutally crushed by government forces. President al-Assad attempted to deter attention on the crackdown by insisting that Al Qaeda extremists were stirring up war within Syria, rather than his own citizens calling for a change in the political regime (Tamimi, 2016). This oppressive environment established fertile ground for recruitment of Syrian citizens by a number of anti-government factions with diverse objectives, most operating under the umbrella term of the 'Free Syrian Army'. The civil war also saw the emergence of some ultra-conservative and extremist forces such as Jahbat Al Nusra and *Daesh*. By early 2012 Syria was embedded in a confusing and multi-front civil war, with the regime fighting several anti-government groups with varying aims. Because of Syria's regional importance and its strong relationship with Iran and Russia, the conflict quickly saw involvement from several global players and regional powers. As a result, defining and understanding the conflict is challenging, and it has been positioned in various ways: competition for regional hegemony, a fight for democracy and reform or a sectarian feud between Sunni's and Shi'as (Hokayem, 2017). Before the crisis, Syria had been viewed as a 'fierce state', relatively immune to revolution, even in the wake of the Arab Spring protests. This is due to President al-Assad's established power and influence in Syria, achieved through a combination of personal popularity, co-optation and repression (Hokayem, 2017, p. 61). However, the conflict has continued for over nine years and the Syrian refugee crisis that has emerged from the conflict has transformed from a short-term emergency to a protracted and highly political development issue.

In March 2011 the first Syrian refugees fled to Lebanon. By July, refugees were arriving in Turkey and Jordan, and by May the next year Syrian refugees were being hosted in camps in Iraq and urban areas in Egypt. By December 2012, 500,000 Syrian refugees were being hosted by neighbouring countries.

This increased to 1 million by 2013, 2 million by that September and 4.2 million by the end of 2015 (UNHCR 3RP, 2016). As of 2017, UNHCR put the number of displaced Syrians at 5.3 million. Despite the predominance of the 'European refugee crisis' across the world's media, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey host the greatest number of Syrian refugees between them. But the 'crisis' in Europe emerges in a very different legal, political and institutional framework than the refugee crisis in the countries neighbouring Syria. Whilst European nations attempt to bypass their legal obligations enshrined in the membership of UNHCR, Lebanon and Jordan technically do not have to abide by these obligations as neither signed the 1951/67 UNHCR Refugee Convention. Thus, to a certain degree, they can respond to the crisis as they see fit. However, despite being non-signatories, UNHCR still operates in each country and supports refugee issues under Memoranda's of Understanding (MOU's).

The role of UNHCR is crucial to note, as it is considered the world leader on refugee issues and its 1951 classification of 'what' a refugee is continues to be the most widely employed definitional starting point used by policy makers and researchers. The organisation was created in 1950, mandated with assisting millions of Europeans displaced by the Second World War. It is tasked with the international protection of refugees and has played a crucial role in the development of law pertaining to refugees (Lewis, 2005). The constitution of the agency does not deny the existence of refugees pre-1950. However, it is a watershed moment where notions, ideas and labels of 'the refugee' become highly politicised and embedded in the greater global order. The 145 states that signed the convention agreed to a unique ethical obligation and commitment to protect refugees on a human rights basis and provided refugees with a means of making protection claims on the international community (Hathaway, 2007). By definition, refugees become subject to the laws of the state in which they have sought asylum and are guaranteed protection under international refugee law on *non-refoulement* i.e. the deliberate undertaking of a state not to return a refugee to a state where they are likely to face persecution, as defined by the Refugee Convention (Ludwig, 2016)[3]. The definition of a refugee, enshrined in the 1951 Convention, is as follows. An individual who:

> 'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself [sic] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it' (UNHCR, 1951).

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[3] From the 1951 UNHCR Convention on Refugees: "No Contracting State shall expel or return ("refouler") a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his [sic] life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." (UNHCR, 1951)

The geographical limitations of the definition, which were specifically attached to European refugees following WWII, were lifted in the 1967 Protocol to ensure global protection for those forced to flee their homes. However, very few nations in the Middle East, including Jordan and Lebanon, signed the convention or its protocol. As such, when the region is faced with refugee flows the UNHCR has operated in these countries on an ad hoc basis, often through gentlemen's agreements and MOU's (Ward, 2014). Thus, Jordan and Lebanon are positioned to respond to incoming Syrian refugees at their own discretion. Whilst they have admirably hosted over 2 million Syrian refugees between them (alongside thousands of displaced Iraqis and Palestinians), Syrian refugees in these two countries fall outside the protection of the UNHCR mandate. This policy context, whereby refugee protection for Syrians is 'ad hoc' and decided on by the state, is also a basis for this research focusing on the states of Jordan and Lebanon. Without the global protection measures of the UNHCR mandate, policies and protection measures will be dictated by a range of socio-economic and political factors, as well as the strength or fragility of the state itself. This will have repercussions on refugee women's sense of security within their host communities.
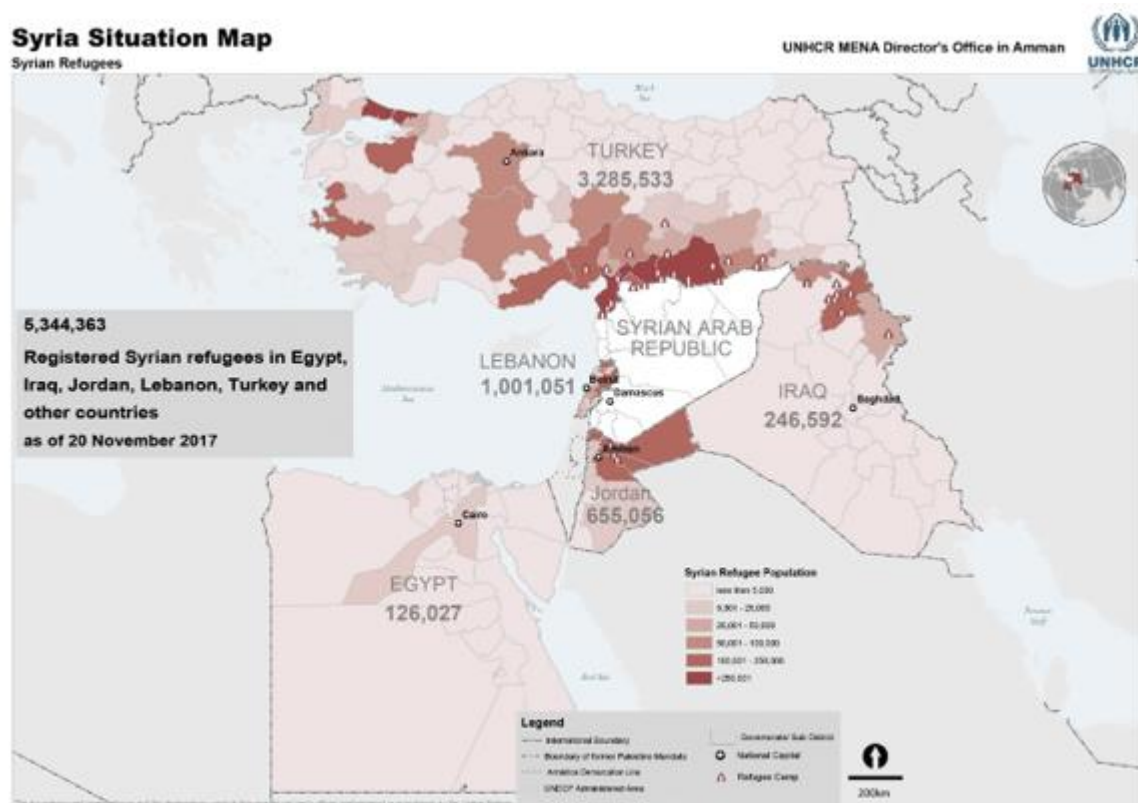
Figure 1: Syrian Situation Map, November 2017 (UNHCR, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/60859)

A note on Language and Terminology

For the purposes of this study, the 'Middle East' broadly refers to the region encompassed by the ex-Ottoman empire, including the Arabian Peninsula (Egypt, Palestine/Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq) and Turkey (Chatty, 2012). However, due to socio-religious and ethnic relationships with North African states, I also, very occasionally, define and refer to literatures based in these regions as 'Middle Eastern'.

Shorthand terms such as 'the North' and 'the South', the 'Metropole' and the 'Periphery' are used throughout this thesis. These terms are not purely related to distinct geographical areas, but rather to socio-political legacies and economies. In particular, 'the South' can be viewed as a 'dual situation of post-coloniality and particular political economy' (Mabin, 2014, p. 22). In this thesis, the North, or Metropole will be used interchangeably to refer to the 'developed' North-West states – namely Western Europe and the United States. Whilst the South, or 'the Periphery' refers to those regions often crassly considered to be the 'developing world', or post-colonial world: South America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Although this shorthand, and by default dualism, is not ideal, it ensures an easier means of navigating concepts and literature throughout the thesis.

I am conscious that in using these terms I risk bifurcating the world into 'The Occident' and 'The Orient', the terms outlined by Edward Said within his post-colonial critique *Orientalism,* which initiated post-colonial theory and an analysis of Western hegemonic thought (Katz & Smith, 2003). Orientalism can be understood as a style of thought, which engages in an epistemological and ontological distinction between the Orient and the Occident, and as an institution of domination utilised by the West to assert dominance and authority over the Orient, through conceptually dividing East and West (McCarthy, 2010, pp. 68-69). 'Othering' is employed in order to make a distinction between the Orient and the Occident ('The West' versus 'The Rest'). The Orient has been perceived and written about as a place of savagery, barbarism, ignorance and exoticism, particularly in colonial times (J. A. Massad, 2007; Meriwether & Tucker, 2018). Orientalism engages in universalizing and, in some instances, dehumanizing individuals by viewing their 'difference' as a shared, homogenous, characteristic. This results in individuals and communities being reduced to single, totalizing labels and perpetuates prejudice and xenophobia.

The twentieth century has seen numerous scholars from the periphery draw attention to the power-knowledge nexus and the ways in which this is heavily skewed to those whose work is produced in the West. Often this knowledge is presented as being 'universal, timeless and placeless', even though it is produced in a handful of Global North societies and exported and applied to the World's 'peripheries' (Carrington et al., 2016, pp. 1-2). Not only is research produced in the periphery frequently

underutilised or dismissed as having little relevance for the Metropole, the subjects of research in the Global South are often presented as a homogenised group. Furthermore, the peripheral world is often 'mined' for data for and by the metropole, resulting in a continuation of Western academic dominance (Connell, 2014).

Many fields of social science inquiry relevant to this project have been critiqued for their deferment to, and dominance of, northern academic hegemony in shaping core discourses (Chimni, 1998; Connell, 2014; Mohanty, 1984; Watson, 2009). I feel highly conscious of these debates as I outline my theoretical framework, with particular consideration to the language, expressions and literature I will be engaging with throughout this thesis, and indeed my positionality as a white, Western woman conducting research with and 'on' Syrian refugee women. This work attempts to keep these arguments at the forefront and has highlighted the academic material of theorists from the peripheral world as much as possible. I have consciously engaged with theoretical and methodological devices, such as intersectionality and positionality, in order to avoid slipping into homogenising research participants and to reflect on power imbalances within this research project.

With considered employment, theories from the North can help inform, illuminate and guide research and theory in the South and *vice versa.* A combination of both is necessary in order to engage with useful constructs, but also to show gaps in literature. Most importantly, engaging with literature from both the 'East' and West' one is able to better enter into argument and to knit positions and literatures into coherence instead of polemics (Connell, 2014; Mohanty, 2003).

Outline of Chapters

Having outlined the purpose and objectives of this thesis, this last section of the introduction provides a synopsis of the following chapters of the thesis. The thesis is broadly divided into two parts. The first section (Chapters Two – Five) provide a rationale for the research, combining theoretical and contextual material, to build a framework of understanding with which to analyse the empirical work which makes up the second section of the thesis (Chapters Six – Nine).

Chapter Two: explains the feminist critical realist approach that underpins this thesis and explores definitions of gender and patriarchy and their relationship with space. In exploring a critical realist approach to identity and intersectionality, it demonstrates how this approach allows for a means of analysing the personal experiences of marginalised groups as shaped by the relationship between wider causal mechanisms and identity. Drawing together literature on gender, agency and space, it considers the diverse ways in which Middle Eastern women exert and practice their agency, and considers how de Certeau's (1984) theory of 'strategy and tactics' provides a means of understanding the agentic capacity of refugee women in contexts of patriarchy and oppression. The chapter goes on

to explore the relationship between space and gender and the ways in which these concepts are socially (re)produced and deeply relational, by considering the associations of the dichotomies of public/private space with male/female.

Chapter Three: This Chapter analyses literature that explores the experiences of urban refugees and the ways in which their insecurity has been researched and theorised. Examining literatures that consider the security of refugee shelter, livelihoods, legal status and protection, conflict management and access to security and justice institutions, as well as research that explores host community and refugee relationships. In each of these literatures, where possible, contributions that have focused on gendered experiences have been highlighted. Having established the complexity of 'security' in such contexts, the chapter goes on to present theories of feminist geopolitics, feminist geolegality and human security as a means of theorising (in)security as 'lived experience'. Noting the ways in which international relations and geopolitics express security as a concern of the state, rather than an everyday concern of the individual, feminist geopolitics and geolegality resituate security with the individual, promoting an examination of the scalar and relational experiences of security, from the bottom-up, from the intimate to the global.

Chapter Four: considers the way states of the Middle East are theorised as 'strong' and 'weak' in international relations and geopolitical theory and the extent to which this aids understanding of the political and security framework in Jordan and Lebanon and their subsequent policies towards Syrian refugees. As such, it explores the recent socio-political history of these states and their security service infrastructures, as well as providing an outline of their Syrian refugee policies. It also provides a brief outline of the cities of Amman and Beirut, the factors that have shaped their development and their key public spaces.

Chapter Five: begins with the theoretical underpinning of the thesis, its critical realist feminist epistemological and ontological standpoint and its comparative methodology. It demonstrates how the theoretical framing and methodological underpinning shape the decision to undertake qualitative research in order to understand and forefront the experiences of urban refugee women. It explains the reasoning for focusing on Lebanon and Jordan, and Beirut and Amman as case study cities, and presents the four qualitative methods that this study engaged with: interviews, focus group discussions, cognitive mapping and solicited diaries. It concludes with a reflection on the specific ethical challenges regarding both refugee research and personal positionality in this context.

Chapter Six: examines how the structures of refugee policies in Lebanon and Jordan affect the gendered experiences of refugee self-settlement in the cities of Amman and Beirut. Examining refugee arrival, settlement, shelter and access to employment, and specifically considering the ways in which

shelter and livelihoods shape experiences of (in)security, it engages with feminist theories of geolegality and geopolitics to highlight the gendered realities of urban self-settlement. This chapter highlights the ways in which refugee policies interact with patriarchal structures to have gendered affects that are felt and experienced by urban refugee women in their day to day lives.

Chapter Seven: focuses on the ways in which refugee women experience and negotiate public space in their host cities. By investigating this through an examination of identity and structural mechanisms, this chapter demonstrates how refugee status, gender and ethnicity intersect with structures of patriarchy and citizenship to create perceptions and experiences in the urban outdoors. It notes how sexual, physical and verbal harassment shape the cityscape as unwelcoming and disrupt women's sense of a 'right to the city', building a strong sense of unwelcome and insecurity. It considers a range of tactics, including particular behaviours and dress, that women engage in, in order to negotiate the city and to enhance their wider sense of safety and protection when in the urban outdoors.

Chapter Eight: analyses refugee women's interactions and perceptions of state and non-state security services within their host cities. Highlighting the differences in state strength and the (in)formal security networks in place in Amman and Beirut, this chapter examines women's varying attitudes and experiences of formal and informal security, and the ways that this affects attitudes towards conflict resolution within host communities and a wider sense of security. It examines the extent to which women feel able to access and approach a range of (in)formal security services, the ways in which women negotiate and resolve conflict within their day to day lives, and the spatial implications of these impressions and relationships.

Chapter Nine: Reviews the thesis, demonstrating how a feminist critical realist approach to understanding identity and causal mechanisms allows for insight into refugee women's experiences in Amman and Beirut, and more broadly. Drawing together the findings from the empirical chapters, the conclusion answers the research questions posed in the Methodology Chapter and draws out four specific themes regarding security, space and tactics of refugee women, finishing with highlighting its contribution to knowledge and presenting areas for further research.

Chapter Two: Identity, Structure/Agency and Public/Private Space

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship between identity (particularly gendered identity), agency and space with a focus on these concepts within the context of the Middle East. The Middle East is home to a heterogeneous mix of women of different ethnicities who live in varied socio-political and economic conditions, who ascribe to different religions and beliefs, in contrasting geographies (Moghadam, 2003). Women in these contexts are influenced by, and in turn are influencers of, both localised and global powered and gendered structures that stretch across time and space, such as colonialism and patriarchy, which extend from the micro (intimate body; family) to the macro (state; regional and global power structures and institutions). Women's identities of sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality and class shape their encounters with these structures, which in turn shapes their quotidian experiences and negotiations of space (Valentine, 2007).

This chapter demonstrates the advantage of a feminist and critical realist approach to structure and agency, identity and intersectionality. This enables a consideration of categories of difference as both real and socially constructed, alongside a critical examination of how women utilise their agency within structurally confined conditions. As demonstrated within this chapter, and the empirical chapters that follow, this is a vital consideration for refugee women, who are often framed as faceless victims who lack capacity and have no control over their lives. This first section closes with an examination of de Certeau's theory of strategies and tactics, which theorises the agency of individuals in oppressive situations. The chapter goes on to examine the relationship and (re)production of gender and space within the Middle East, addressing popular dichotomies which associate public/private space with male/female genders respectively. Using the work of several Middle Eastern scholars, this section explores how space is both practical and material, and socially constructed, imbued with gendered associations and hierarchies. Rather than a strict dichotomy, there are shifting boundaries between public and private spaces and different genders occupy and access these spaces through a varied gradedness (Thompson, 2003). The section highlights gendered and spatial experiences of fear and women's resulting tactical decisions concerning dress and behaviour, particularly in public space, which continues to reproduce gendered and spatial identities. It finishes with a consideration of literature on space and gender in my two case study cities, Amman and Beirut.

The need for Feminist Research

In a review of literature on gender, feminist geography and the Middle East Fenster & Hamdan-Saliba (2013) discuss the significant gap in literature in regard to these topics. They lament that:

'The public sphere (in the Middle East) remains a space of male hegemony, while women are relegated to the sidelines in institutions and centres of economics, political, social and scientific knowledge. The social, economic and political hegemony of men has also led to their hegemony of knowledge and the production of knowledge' (p. 539).

As a result, knowledge is seen to lie in authoritarian discourse, which makes claims to an objective truth that is dismissive of individual, lived experiences. Feminist research is focused on unsettling and interrogating this positivist notion of an all-encompassing, scientific and objective knowledge of reality, and with putting an end to 'sexism, sexual exploitation, and oppression' (hooks, 2014, p. 1). This became necessary because of the tendency to neglect and misrepresent women's experiences in favour of the 'master subject' – typically white, heterosexual, bourgeois men (Scott, 2012). Feminist research seeks to highlight the influence of patriarchal and public institutions in shaping the daily lived experiences of (particularly) women and minorities. Therefore, it seeks to interrogate 'inequalities of power resulting from racism, patriarchy and class exploitation' (Valentine, 2007, p. 11). Thus, feminist research is called to address the 'god trick' at the centre of white, androcentric, science which contends to see 'everything from nowhere' (Haraway, 1988, p. 581). This so-called god trick is a useful short-hand analogy for addressing claims of universal knowledge and objective 'normative' reality.

As it is inherently interested in power, feminist research is highly political. It is frequently critiqued for being 'biased' in its knowledge production by positivist scientists, who argue that this partiality distorts opportunities to engage with it (Harding, 2004; Ramazanoglu & Hollland, 2002). However, Harding (2004, p. 2) has argued that the political heart of feminist work does not stunt the production of knowledge, but rather 'stimulates and guides it', opening up new understandings of our social world. Indeed, the purpose of feminist knowledge is to achieve 'theories that accurately represent women's activities', to give voice to women's lives and to 'uncover hidden knowledge contained within women's experiences and bring about women-solidarity and social change' (Brooks, 2012, pp. 53–54; Harding, 2004). This call is relevant to this thesis which seeks to foreground the voices and experiences of Syrian refugee women and their spatial experiences of (in)security. These women are often homogenised, overlooked, ignored or forgotten, and there are often broad assumptions made about their gender roles, opportunities and day to day lives. Thus, emerging from a feminist epistemology, this thesis determines to ensure their experiences are heard.

Gender, Structure and Agency

The categorisation of 'gender' is understood as a social elaboration of the biological categorisation of sex which is performed and re-produced through everyday praxis (Butler, 1988; Eckert & McConnell-Ginnet, 2013). There is great interest in the construction and performance of gender because of the

vast implications it has had, and continues to have, for both the daily realities and identities of people, with regards to the distribution of power and the ordering of society. Patriarchy, the preference of men in socially, political and economic contexts, and thus the favoured distribution of power in men's favour, is symptomatic of this. Patriarchy, as a socio-cultural structure, shapes gendered experiences and has spatial repercussions in how both women and men perceive their positions within a given society. Harding (2008) highlights how notions of gendered behaviour have been influenced by a perception of our social world as a set of dualisms, for example 'rationale mind vs. irrational emotions' and 'public vs. private' and the linkage of men and masculinity with the former, and women and femininity with the latter term, in each binary. As such, societal ideas of femininity and masculinity propagate, extend and are absorbed and reproduced into everyday praxis, thus presented as gendered 'norms'. Whilst these labels have been relatively stable (or enduring) through social reproduction, categorisation of 'feminine' or 'masculine' behaviours, traits or roles, are not fixed, but are continually reproduced and reformed through social relations over space and time (Deutsch, 2007).

Thus, one is not born possessing a gendered 'female' or 'male' identity, but rather learns the ways in which to perform and exhibit culturally and contextually appropriate feminine and masculine traits, which are determined by one's sexual categorisation as female/male. West and Zimmerman (1987, 2009) emphasise the difference between sex, gender and sexual categorisation. They highlight how the relationship between sexual categorisation and gender is:

> 'the relationship between being a recognizable incumbent of a sex category…and being accountable to current cultural conceptions of conduct becoming to—or compatible with the "essential natures" of—a woman or a man. We conceptualized this as an ongoing situated process, a "doing" rather than a "being"' (West & Zimmerman, 2009, pp. 113–114).

Pioneering researchers such as Goffman [2004], West & Zimmerman [1987] and Butler [1988] have elaborated the ways in which gender is 'done' or 'performed' and thus socially produced and reproduced through behaviours, interactions and dress. Some of the critique that has emerged from the conceptualisation of the social construction and the 'doing' of gender, is that it obscures individual agency. Deutsch (2007), argues that feminist positions on performing gender which focus on internalisation and re-enactment, removes accounts of agency from individuals. West & Zimmerman (2009) have countered that focusing on the internalised and reproduced norms in historical and structural circumstances rather 'contextualises' agency (p 118). Thus, by highlighting historical, temporal, cultural and societal structures, agency can be understood as shifting, relational and

particular. These positions demonstrate some of the challenges in analysing the social construction of gender and its relationships with wider causal structures and individual agency.

Female agentic capacity is a central concern of this thesis, particularly as it is focused on refugee women, who are typically presented as voiceless and lacking agency. Sehlikoglu (2017), notes that is politically impossible for feminist scholars to avoid reflecting on agency, as women are required to manoeuvre through multiple social and patriarchal structures in their day to day lives. Individual and collective concepts and practices of agency are at the heart of all feminist political projects. Feminist academics seek to investigate and address structures of oppression that operate within women's lives, whilst acknowledging, celebrating and enhancing their individual agency (Clegg, 2006). Critical realist approaches to structure, agency and identity assist in negotiating the epistemic challenges of acknowledging structural constraints alongside agentic capacity. The following sections explore these concepts of structure and agency further, leading to a critical realist approach to identity and intersectionality.

Critical Realism and Structure and Agency

The conceptual issues of structure and agency weave themselves into the major themes of this thesis and are fundamental to theorising causation and capacity. This section outlines a critical realist approach to structure and agency, in order to sustain a dialectic between these two concepts which allows for a deeper exploration of causality and agency. Thus, it provides a methodology for understanding refugee women's behaviour and experiences, with a consideration of both their intersectional identities and the pre-existing structures of society that they encounter.

The debate between structure and agency is one that emerges from theorists exploring their ontological position on what society consists of: rational actors (individuals) who make independent decisions (i.e. through the use of their agency), or structures (constructed rules and norms) to which actors simply 'react' (Elder-Vass, 2010; O'Reilly, 2012). Theorists tend to plot an understanding of human behaviour across a spectrum of structure and agency, either attributing more 'power' to individuals' agentic capacity which shape and reproduce wider societal structures, or conversely towards the social structures that shape individuals' behaviour. Hay (2002) emphasises that the structure-agency debate is not so much a 'problem' but is in itself a 'language by which ontological difference between contending accounts might be registered…in a systematic and coherent manner' (p. 91). Thus, engaging in ideas and debates of structure and agency enables an analysis of how the world works and the extent to which causality shapes experiences.

For Critical Realists, issues of structure and agency are deeply related to understanding and analysing mechanisms of causality that operate within society, in order to understand how and why empirical

events occur (Vincent & O'Mahoney, 2018). Critical Realists' critique both positivist and interpretative approaches of the social world, arguing that these result in flat ontologies. For example, an empiricist would argue that only what can be observed can be known, e.g. X results in Y. However, this overlooks a multitude of unseen forces and mechanisms that are at play in the observed phenomena and is thus ontologically flat. Critical Realists argue that causality can best be understood through a stratified ontology, a relationship between the real, the actual and the empirical. The ontological relationship between these factors provides a compelling account of causation and the power of structures. (Jessop, 2005, pp. 41–42). The **empirical** are observable and measurable events, that which is experienced by individuals. The **actual** are events which result from causal mechanisms, which may or may not be experienced by individuals. The **real** are generative structures or causal mechanisms. These are the inherent properties in an object or structure that act as causal factors to produce events (Fletcher, 2017; Jessop, 2005; Parr, 2015). Vincent & O'Mahoney (2018) perceive this ontology as a 'stratified conception of causation' which facilitates an understanding of how material and social powers operate in different locations and or/at different hierarchal levels and the relationships between these (p.9). Fletcher (2017) emphasises that this is achieved through the explanation of social events by an examination of causal mechanisms (the real) and the effect that this has on the realms of the empirical and the actual.

Returning more explicitly to structure and agency, critical realism posits that structure and agency are not two elements of the same process, but two different phenomena that are deeply related (Carter & New, 2004; Danermark et al., 2019). Structures are relatively enduring social mechanisms, made up of a set of internally related objects, which may also be part of a greater structure and which possess causal mechanisms (Danermark et al., 2019; Fletcher, 2017, p. 186). They pre-exist individuals, are independent of individuals and therefore exist without them and existed before them. However, they are still dependent on the activities of the actors inhabiting the structure (Singh, 2018, p. 432). Human agency, which includes our values, meanings and ideas as well as our capacity, can reproduce or transform structures over time, both consciously and unconsciously (Fletcher, 2017, p. 186). Therefore, structures, within critical realism, can be understood as 'both the ever present condition and the continually reproduced outcome of human agency' (Bhaskar, 2010, pp. 71–72). Because of the 'ever present' condition of structures, individuals are always acting within a world of structural constructs and situations that they did not create. Therefore, agents can unintentionally reproduce systems and patterns of behaviour through their activities. This is a acutely relevant argument with regard to feminist research, as women can unintentionally reproduced patriarchal structures that continue to oppress themselves and other women (Kandiyoti, 1988).

As explored in more detail below, many women, particularly in the majority world, operate within extremely restrictive structures whereby they are forced to make tactical, agentic decisions in order to enhance and protect their intimate security, rather than engage in emancipatory efforts to address patriarchal oppression (this will be discussed in more detail below, alongside de Certeau's theory of strategy and tactics). This brings to the forefront other aspects of identity, beyond gender, such as ethnicity and nationality, that shape quotidian experiences. The following section will outline a feminist critical realist approach to identity and intersectionality which emphasises the socially constructed and real aspects of identity which shape the daily lives of marginalised women.

A Critical Realist Approach to Identity & Intersectionality

Identity, our 'sense of self', is crucial to understanding how we understand and see the world, and how it perceives and responds to us. Identity is socially constructed and embedded in specific social relations. It can be understood as 'social categories in which an individual claims membership as well as the personal meaning associated with these categories' (Shields, 2008, p. 301). This thesis adopts a critical theorist approach to identity and as such understands that we both project ourselves into various pre-given cultural identities, as well as internalize their meanings and values (Hall, 1996). Therefore, identities are both something we do and something that we are (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Identities are practised and reproduced, and thus are both fluid, and stable and continuous over time and space (Shields, 2008, p. 304). This means that identities have a relational and contextual nature: as they draw upon available social categories, identities are linked to a 'historical time, place and situation' which can mean that the same identity 'evokes very different associations in different places' (Moya, 2006, p. 99).

Emerging as a key theorist in critical realist identity theory, Moya (2000, 2006) uses the terminology of ascriptive (imposed) and subjective (adopted) identities. She emphasises that these are not analytically separate, but rather deeply relational and are thus in a dialectic: 'people are neither wholly determined by the social categories through which we are recognized, nor can we ever be free of them' (2006, p. 99). In this sense, she emphasises both the complexity and inescapability of categories of identity.

Ascribed identities emerge from society and are imposed, or typically understood as, 'social categories'. They are 'inescapably historical and collective', for example, categories of race or gender (Moya, 2006, p. 97). The power of ascriptive categories is important to recognise as these (typically, but not always) exterior identities significantly affect how others perceive and behave towards us. This in turn shapes an individual's perspectives and experience of their lived reality. Subjective identities are those that reflect our 'individual sense of self, our interior existence, our lived experience of being

a more-or-less coherent self across time' (Moya, 2006, p. 98). This includes not only our personal sense of self and our personal values, but also the way in which we understand or see ourselves in relation to others. These are not purely internal but are 'inescapably shaped by the experience of social recognition' (*ibid*, p. 98).

For example, categorisation as a 'refugee' is something that is very much imposed by external others. This can be understood as an ascriptive aspect of identity. However, many refugees do not perceive themselves as belonging to this categorisation. They consider a 'refugee' categorisation to be negatively associated with flight, war and dependency (Ludwig, 2016; Suerbaum, 2018), rejecting this labelling as it clashes with their subjective identity. The individual's subjective identity is not only formed by their deep sense of values and sense of self, but also continuous encounters with other agents and structures which deem them a 'refugee' or an 'outsider', and the various connotations and expectations this holds. However, despite their internal rejection of this refugee identity and its antagonism with an individual's subjective identity, state's and agencies (external others) will nonetheless recognise and categorise these individuals as 'refugees' based on their circumstances and indeed, their other ascriptive identities. This indicates the relationship between ascriptive and subjective identities. Even when rejecting an ascriptive label, engagement with this categorisation shapes part of an individual's subjective identity, and the inescapability of ascriptive identity requires continued engagement and negotiation of this categorisation.

Understanding identity through relational ascriptive and subjective identities provides a means of understanding identity as both socially constructed and real (Gilpin, 2006). As such, it is a tool to examine the complex nature of identity, rather than essentialising or deconstructing it. In essentialising identity, only ascriptive identities are considered, thus overlooking individuality, difference or heterogeneity within categories (*ibid).* In deconstructing identity altogether, postmodern proponents' risk 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater'. In arguing that there can be no known reality and categories only serve to subjugate individuals, they overlook important realities of how individuals are categorised and in turn disrupted or privileged in accessing particular resources (Moya, 2000). Instead, a critical realist approach both acknowledges the complexity and difference within a category of identity, whilst also being conscious of its external attributes. As such, identity categories are in themselves structures that pre-exist, and are independent of, individuals. Therefore, individuals are always shaped by the constraints associated with particular identities (for example, women's various constraints in the labour market because of perceptions that they are inherent caregivers or prone to emotion, see: Anthias, 2013). Identities are continually (re)produced, and therefore they will also be co-constituted and transformed over time and space.

Critical realist approaches to identity demonstrate the importance of social location and categories of identity. The relationships between different categories of identity and the experiences that this produces, require attention - particularly regarding those who are marginalised or oppressed. Categories of identity are imbued with power and have social, economic and political imperatives which affects how individuals are perceived (Gilpin, 2006, p. 13). Evaluating critical realism, Mohanty (2003) highlights how it provides an important model of understanding for the position of women on the margins and adds that this approach is important to the feminist solidarity pedagogy:

> 'Realist theorizations explicitly link a historical materialist understanding of social location to the theorization of epistemic privilege and the construction of social identity, thus suggesting the complexities of the narratives of marginalized peoples in terms of relationality rather than separation' (Mohanty, 2003, p. 524).

Examining the relational aspect between categories of identity is therefore a necessary means of analysing experiences of oppression and privilege. No single category can provide an explanation for the complexity of an individual's social experience or social situation (Shields, 2008, p. 304). Feminists thus seek to examine and highlight axes of oppression, including race, sexuality and imperialism (McDowell, 1999), as examining different categories of identity and the interactions between them is crucial to understanding the ways in which different individuals access goods, resources and opportunities (Gunnarsson, 2011; Moya, 2000).

However, this intention has not always been so explicit in their work. Earlier feminists were criticised for their privileging of white, western women's experiences which were universalised to other contexts, or positioned as 'enlightened'. Mohanty (2003, p. 63) argued that studies that examined gendered experiences in the 'third world' tended to analyse women's experiences alongside a 'monolithic notion of patriarchy or male dominance', which appears to oppress most, if not all, women in these contexts.

Feminist researchers and practitioners have also, on occasion, been guilty of attempting to enforce particular cultural concepts of agentic empowerment in different contexts. This has been notable in contexts of the peripheral world, where 'agency' and 'empowerment' is perceived, enacted, embodied and strategized against structural oppressions in different ways to Western, feminist discourses and expectations (Mernissi, 1975). For example, there is a tendency amongst Western Feminists to perceive agency in purely 'emancipatory' ways, overlooking other contextual and cultural exercises of agency (Bangstad, 2011). As Sadiqi & Ennaji (2013) argue:

'Agency is commonly defined as either the capacity to create a difference or the freedom to act otherwise. However, men and women do not self-elect circumstances; they make their own history, not only as they please but according to the norms regulating their culture, society, and general historical, economic, and socio-political context' (2013, p. 1)

Recognizing the predilection for even well-meaning feminist scholars to 'other' women from different cultural and racial contexts in their research, one can understand why theories of intersectionality have been heralded as one of the most important contributions to feminist scholarship in the past few decades (K. Davis, 2008).

Intersectionality emerges from the critiques of several Black feminists, notably Crenshaw, (1991), Hill-Collins, (1990) and (hooks, 1984), who highlighted the predominance of white women's experiences in academic theory. This includes the ways in which gender has been foregrounded as a single analytical category of identity, to the detriment of other, intersecting categories of oppression, thus treating women as a homogenous collective, overlooking key issues of oppression and marginalisation (McCall, 2005; Samuels & Ross-Sheriff, 2008):

'Gender differences are not the only "fault lines"; they operate within a larger matrix of other socially constructed distinctions, such as class, ethnicity, religion, and age, which give them their specific dynamics in a given time and place.' (Moghadam, 2003, p. 25)

Theories of intersectionality instead seek to understand an individual's lived experiences at the crossroads (or axes) where their various identities meet. For Crenshaw, intersectionality begins as an examination of race and gender in the lives of real people, which is then built upon with other hierarchal systems such as class and ethnicity (Crenshaw, 1989; MacKinnon, 2013). Hill-Collins defines intersectionality as the:

'critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but rather as **reciprocally constructed phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities'** (Hill Collins, 2015, p. 2).

It is not a theory of 'additions', where each oppression or identity is stacked one on top of the other, but a nuanced examination of how each identity can be individually oppressive, or conversely agentic or powerful, and the ways in which these identities interact to create individual experiences. As such, intersectionality conceptualises the 'relationships between systems of oppression which construct our multiple identities and our social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege' (Carastathis, 2014).

Thus, in order not to neglect 'difference' in research, one needs to attend to a participant's multiple identities and experiences of subordination (K. Davis, 2008, p. 68).

There is debate amongst intersectional scholars as to whether it is a method, a heuristic device or a theory (Cho et al., 2013). If one employs it as theoretical framework, as it is in this thesis, further to these discussions are questions over 'how' to study it, that is what methodologies it calls for (K. Davis, 2008; McCall, 2005). Indeed, intersectionality has received hefty criticism for being ambiguous and open-ended, without analytical scope and limited theoretical premises (Davis, 2008). There are also several different 'categorical' approaches taken to identity (McCall, 2005, see more below). Several critical realist scholars have argued that a critical realistic ontological positioning helps address some of these critiques.

In her large-scale summary of intersectionality research, McCall (2005) outlines three predominant approaches taken by intersectionality scholars in order to understand the relationship between categories of identity: Inter-categorical, Intra-categorical and anti-categorical. Martinez-Dy *et al* (2014) argue that these first two approaches dip into positivist assumptions because they contain assumptions that categories such as race and gender are fixed with measurable effects, whereas they are slippery, contested and fluid (p. 451). The anti-categorical approach (post-structuralism) attempts to deconstruct ideas of fixed identity and categories completely, making analysis deeply challenging (Walby et al., 2012, p. 227).

In response to these challenges within intersectionality, Martinez Dy *et al* (2014) argue for an approach to intersectionality that combines critical realism with positional approaches, building predominantly on the work of Anthias (2008, 2012a, 2013). This approach engages in the critical realist stance of transfactuality (the concept of structures as enduring, not ephemeral), thus building in notions of structures that shape day to day life and interact with identities to create experiences not only of oppression, but also of privilege (Martinez Dy et al., 2014; Nash, 2008). Thus, identities are not fixed, they are fluid and heterogenous, but are also categorised and shaped by both (seen and unseen) structural forces. Martinez Dy et al., (2014) note how transfactuality 'enables the conceptualization of causal mechanisms emerging from the level of society that in some cases are unactualized or unrecognized' yet are still held to function. In this example, they point to how structures of privilege or discrimination are perhaps not always obvious but exist despite our awareness of them – thus allowing for an ontological understanding of causality in a social world that exists independently of our knowledge of it (p. 455 - 457).

Anthias has extended the work of intersectionality and broadly reflects a critical realist approach to the concept, arguing for an intersectional framing approach [(2012a)]. She expresses concern that intersectionality's focus on identity has resulted in a 'retreat from issues of structure' stating that there is a tendency to 'treat it as a possessive attribute of individuals or groups, rather than a process' (Anthias, 2008, p. 7). As a result, she argues, intersectionality overlooks how processes of subordination and discrimination take place and urges for a focus on inequality created through the state and other institutions.

In response, Anthias has suggested a theory of translocational positionality. For Anthias, positionality is both social position (outcomes) and social positioning (processes) and is therefore the space at the intersection of structure and agency (2008, p. 15). When referring to translocation, Anthias refers to a 'social space which is produced within contextual, spatial, temporal and hierarchical relations around the 'intersections' of social divisions and identities of class, ethnicity and gender (amongst others)' (2008, p. 9). Thus, by focusing on translocationality, Anthias references the complexity of positionality for those who are located across different, fractured locations regarding social categories (2008, p. 15-16).

Anthias emphasises the multiple locations involved in time and space and the ways in which these are connected to the past, present and future. She points to the importance of approaches that use transnational dimensions of context and time in order to attend to the realities of identities in differing spaces (2012). For example, how an individual is perceived in one space and time (for example, a middle-class Syrian woman living in Damascus) in comparison to another (the same woman now living in Lebanon as a refugee). By focusing on social location and positionality, Anthias argues that we can examine the broader landscape of power which produces social division, as an examination of our social location is always embedded with relations of hierarchy (2013, p. 130). Thus, she encourages an examination of the broader social locations and processes that are context, meaning, and time-specific, explicitly located within social hierarchies, and tied to both material and cultural resource distribution (Anthias, 2012, p. 14; Martinez Dy et al., 2014, p. 448). Thus, she places a heavy emphasis on both social divisions (categories of identity) and structures.

Furthermore, Anthias emphasises how not all categories of difference occupy equivalent domains of power, nor are they salient all the time. Rather, the importance of a certain category will vary depending on the social arena, and the social forces at work at differing times and spaces. Thus, certain identities will be foregrounded or more manifest depending on the situation an individual is navigating (Anthias, 2013b). Additionally, she highlights the different social locations that individuals hold

simultaneously, whereby an individual is both subordinate and dominant depending on the various identities at work.

This consideration of differing positions within time and space, and indeed the complexity of social locations as both subordinate and dominant are highly relevant in conceptualising the experiences of Syrian refugee women. It allows for a means of understanding the varied positions of power and subordination that women hold in relation to both their categories of identity and the context in which they find themselves as they cross borders and negotiate uncertain legal status. How they may gain or lose power depending on their circumstances and identities and how these work out contextually. For example, whilst a typical assumption may be that a refugee women will be disadvantaged and oppressed when they cross a border seeking asylum, Ayoub (2017) found that wealthy Syrian refugee women in Cairo enjoyed a 'new emancipation' in their host city (see more below). In addition, Nasser-Eddin (2017) demonstrates how intersections of age and gender affects the integration and opportunities of Syrian refugee women in the UK, with those that are younger experiencing more freedom and power in comparison to older women, when comparing their typical roles and opportunities in Syria. Anthias has applied her theories with migrant women in order to conceptualise their changing social and economic roles as they move across borders, and indeed their fluctuating experiences of power and oppression as they gain and lose status depending on their new transnational positionalities. Her emphasis on both categories of difference and the wider social hierarchies and structures of power are deeply relevant to this thesis which seeks to understand how socially constructed identities interact with wider structures to shape women's experiences of insecurity.

Whilst there has been some significant work conducted in the field of social location, intersectionality and migration (Anthias, 2012; Bastia, 2014; Bürkner, 2012; Silvey, 2004), there has been significantly less research on the intersectionality and social location of refugee women, particularly those located in the peripheral world. Anthias's intersectional framing approaches, outlined above, have much to offer in understanding and conceptualising refugee women's experiences of flight, asylum and refugee-ness. Refugees are frequently categorised as a homogenous group, with little attention paid to their differentiated experiences. Whilst there has been growing stress on the distinct threats that women refugees face (J. Freedman, 2015; Hyndman, 2010), there is still little emphasis or research conducted on the other categories of difference that shape refugees' experiences. The Canadian journal 'Refuge' have recently produced a special issue on 'Intersectional feminist interventions in the Refugee Crisis' (2018). Noting the much-needed emphasis on intersectionality, the editor's state that:

'the majority of (forced) migration scholarship continues to approach the subject without attending to the simultaneity of experiences and co-implication of positionalities shaped by gendered, racialized, class, and sexuality-based power relations' (Carastathis et al., 2018)

Ayoub (2017, p. 78) agrees with this position, noting that intersectionality acts as a 'new approach' to understanding and theorising the experiences of marginalised refugee groups.

Intersectional approaches have much to offer in understanding the breadth of refugee experience. Whilst there is not a plethora of studies, and most are based on refugees now living in the majority world, some scholars have used intersectional approaches to highlight how identities of sexuality (Karimi, 2019; Lee & Brotman, 2011), disability (Pisani et al., 2016) and religious identity (Eghdamian, 2017), can shape refugee's experiences of displacement and have significant impacts on their wellbeing and protection. A small number of feminist and development researchers, who have conducted work with refugees, have emphasised the worth of employing intersectionality in order to understand a refugee's lived experience and to highlight and address oppressions. In particular, the research of Pittaway (2004; 2011) and Pittaway and Bartolomei (2001; 2003) investigated the ways in which racism and sexism intersect to compound refugee women's human rights violations. More recently, Ayoub (2017) demonstrated the importance of an intersectional approach in her study of Syrian refugee women living in Cairo. Through this approach, she found Syrian women's experience varied across the city of Cairo: Issues of class and education opened up avenues of employment and opportunity for wealthier more educated refugees, but poorer women expressed a far more confined existence and a very poor quality of life. These studies demonstrate the importance of examining different axes of oppression (and advantage) in order to gain a richer and more nuanced understanding of refugee experience.

Patriarchy, Gender and Society in the Middle East

Although the structures of patriarchy operate globally, it is important to highlight the specificities of this social construct throughout the MENA region, as it heavily shapes economic, social, political and religious spheres of life. Ideas of a ubiquitous 'Arab patriarchy', 'Arab family' or 'Islam' often dominate Western discourse on the Middle East. However, these are socially fluid constructs that change and morph in different contexts and circumstances, influenced by individual and collective agency. They are not static or constant, particularly in different contexts and should not be treated as thus (Cole, 1994; Kandiyoti, 1988). With this in mind, there are both challenges to homogenous labels and broad continuities across contexts, which allow for a consideration of what life looks like in the region, particularly with consideration to family, gender, kinship and the state (Joseph, 2000; Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2013). This section explores the way the ways in which Middle Eastern women express and act in

agentic ways in the socially, culturally and politically structured environments that they negotiate, highlighting the role of family and kinship and how these relationships permeate life and influence cultural norms from the state to the everyday, and their gendered effects.

Kinship, gender and the state in the Middle East

'The State' in the Middle East only emerged at the end of the colonial era of the Ottoman Empire, which governed the region for 400 years. Following the First World War, the region was divided into a number of successor states based on subgroups of Arab society, by Britain and France who ruled over them as Mandates under the Sykes-Picot Agreement (Owen, 2013). Thus, much of the geography of the modern Middle East has only been established over the past hundred years or so, and has suffered from the various legacies of colonialism, nationalism, independence, and entrance into global capital markets (Charrad, 2011). Before the creation of these states, the Middle East was primarily organised through 'tribal communities' who were the major actors in the region in regulating economic production and political conflict (Charrad, 2011b, p. 225; Mellon, 2002). Because of the longstanding tribal communities that operated in the region, there are deep tribal and kinship links that cross the created boundaries of states (J. Massad, 2001). Because of these kinship relationships, most modern, Middle Eastern States are based on patrimonial networks, a 'political entity, bound by shared conceptions of patrilineal kinship serving as a basis for solidarity and orientated towards the collective defence of itself as a group' (Charrad, 2011a, p. 53). These networks are built upon sharing of strategic resources and expectations of loyalty and obligation. Patrimonial networks influence not only the way in which the state operates, but also the wider dynamics of society and family.

The extended family has been the principal ordering unit for Middle Eastern society for millennia. Thus, it holds a privileged position that permeates all aspects of Arab society, from the social to the economic, religious and political (Abudi, 2011; Barakat, 1993). Family members are encouraged to co-operate in order to increase the family's stature and enhance its livelihood and survival and precedes the individual and their needs and desires (Joseph, 1999). The family plays an important role in socialising children and passing down cultural and religious norms and behaviours and often also mediates marriages, jobs and wider societal connections (Abudi, 2011). The importance and centrality of family life is reflected in the rich use of kinship terms in everyday language. Joseph notes how this idiomatic language (the use of kinship and relational terms such as 'sister', 'son of my brother') are utilized in order to 'bear the rules and morality of kinship', thus reminding individuals of appropriate behaviour and mores, and of existing relational hierarchies (Abudi, 2011; Joseph, 1999, p. 12). Typically, the father is the head of the family, and holds authority and responsibility. Females are encouraged to defer and submit to not only their fathers, but their grandfathers, brothers, male

cousins and uncles, which enhances and reproduces male power (Joseph & Slyomovics, 2001). Families are typically organised through patrilineal relations and men are favoured in inheritance and land ownership (El Sadaawi, 2015). Elder women are also deferred to by younger women. Thus, the structure of the family unit has consequences for the construction of both gender and power in the region. Therefore, Joseph notes that whilst defining patriarchy in this context it is important to include both males and elders into the definition. She defines patriarchy in the Arab world as:

> The privileging and prioritizing of males and elders (including elder women) and the mobilization of kinship structures, morality and idioms to legitimate and institutionalize gendered and aged domination (Joseph, 1999, p. 12; Joseph, 1996, p. 14).

The patriarchal structure of society has also placed women in a position of bearing the family honour, predominantly through their sexuality and pre-marital virginity, and an expectation on male family members to protect women (Charrad, 2011a; Nasser-Eddin, 2017). If a woman's sexuality is compromised, her family's honour is compromised. On occasion, the loss of this 'honour' in itself, is believed to only be regained through 'the blood' of an honour killing (El Sadaawi, 2015, pp. 54–55). These ideas are also prevalent in the notion of women as the bearers of national identity, whereby the nation is 'inscribed' into their embodiment (J. L. Fluri, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 1997a). As such, women are politically, and as a result often socially, connected to ideas of nationhood, family and honour, and are framed as requiring masculine protection.

Even though individuals are embedded in these relational, familiar matrices, these are 'shifting and situational' and therefore do not deny an individual of their 'distinctive initiative and agency' (Joseph, 1996, p. 11). Whilst collectivism is promoted above individualism which is aided through state and family laws, families reflect their own unique structures and gender dynamics. Women may go out to work and indeed be family breadwinners. Men may assist with housework and childcare (Droeber, 2005). There is also a strong pattern of migrant work in the Middle East, where homes are often headed and run by women, whilst men work abroad and send home remittances. However, across Middle Eastern society, there are deep structural norms embedded into the religious and cultural framework of both state and society which influence ideas and notions of femininity and masculinity, gender roles and power which are continually (re)produced. State law in the region, in particular regarding the family, disenfranchises and subordinates women (Charrad, 2011b; Kandiyoti, 2000). 'Family law', or 'personal status laws' in the Middle East inscribe gendered norms into policy justifying these on the grounds of custom which are in turn reinforced through institutions (Moghadam, 2005). These differ in severity and application across the region. These laws often situate women as

caregivers and men as breadwinners which creates a pervasive discourse of motherhood with women which influences and reproduces family structures (Moghadam, 2005, p. 11).

Orientalist writings tend to associate the construction of gender and the dominance of patriarchy in the Middle East with Islam, or indeed to argue that a woman's position in the region is dictated purely through her religious positioning. This is accentuated through family status laws in the region which are often based on and guided by Islamic Shari'a law (Kazemi, 2000). However, the patriarchal structure of the family predates the emergence of the religion in the region and is prevalent in other religions of the region (El Sadaawi, 2015; Munoz, 2006). Despite this distinction, some academics, such as Ahmed (1992) have noted the ways in which patriarchy has been absorbed into Islam in order to reproduce societal norms of male dominance and female submission. Thus, whilst Islam may not be inherently patriarchal, it has been utilised in some contexts by male elites to promote the subordination of women and to produce religiously condoned expectations of gendered behaviour and roles.

Additionally, in defence of the teachings of Islam, scholars such as Badran (2011) have argued that Islam improved the position of women in the Middle East, whilst Moghadam has argued that it is rather the intersection of other factors, such as tribalism, economic development, class, the state, and regional and global contexts that determines women's social positioning in the Middle East (Moghadam, 2003). Moghadam asserts that social class has greater bearing on a woman's personal autonomy and sexual segregation and reminds the reader that women throughout out the world suffer from gender asymmetry (p. 6- 8). However, it is important to understand the contextual variances of women's experiences. These debates indicate the necessity of looking further than one axis of identity or subordination, in order to understand women's positioning and experience.

There is little doubt that over the past few decades, women throughout the Middle East have been 'encroaching' into the public sphere, engendering this space and becoming increasingly visible as political actors, leading to democratisation and gendered legal reform, particularly following the Arab uprisings (Moghadam & Sadiqi, 2006; Shalaby, 2016). Alongside this, the centrality of the family has become increasingly challenged by the state and other social institutions (for example, through the state's provision of jobs and education which was once purely the remit of the family. However, despite these societal shifts and changes to traditional relationships, Barakat (2005) emphasises that there is still less isolation from the family then from other social and religious institutions. 'The family', he argues, still dominates the three patterns of Arab living (Bedouin, Rural and Urban) and is particularly prevalent amongst tribespeople, peasants and the urban poor. Thus, there is also an expectation that these sections of society, will reflect more traditional gendered roles and hierarchal

structures (Abudi, 2011). Furthermore, even though there has been a growth in 'democratization' of familial roles as woman have increasingly gained work outside the home, the family continues to be hierarchal in structure, reflecting patriarchal values. Thus, even though women gain opportunities they still negotiate gendered expectations around femininity and position (Droeber, 2005) and the family continues to be both economically and emotionally important, even to highly educated Middle Eastern Women (Moghadam, 2003).

Gender and Agency in the Middle East

Noting the shifting and structural influences of family, religion, society and culture that operate within the Middle East, issues of agency and capacity arise. Orientalist writing on Middle Eastern women has resulted in women, particularly those from Islamic backgrounds, being othered and homogenised into faceless, powerless subjects at the mercy of patriarchal structures who did not possess any personal capacities (for a critique of this, see: Abu-Lughod, 2002; Margot Badran, 2011; Graham-Brown, 2013; Lazreg, 2015; Meriwether & Tucker, 2018).

Various feminist scholars have corrected this by emphasising Middle Eastern women's agentive capacity through different conceptualisations and contextualisation's of agency. For example, Mahmood (2005) and Badran (2009) have conducted research on how women express agency within structures of public piety, through ethical self-making and religious agency, everyday-ness, and joy, desire and fun. Charrad (2011) and Singerman (1996) emphasise the ways in which Middle Eastern women exert agency in everyday settings, but particularly through societal and family networks. Shami's (1996) work on Palestinian communities living in Amman during slum upgrading programmes presents ways in which women transcended community and neighbourhood boundaries to advocate for their family and community, bringing the power of the 'domestic sphere to bear on the public', negotiating with government officials to protect family and social relations (p. 22-23). Yadav (2010) examines Yemini women's engagement in Islamic activism and the ways in which they advocate for rights within 'segmented publics' which have enhanced their capacity to be part of political decision-making bodies. Various scholars have examined the advocacy and political involvement of Middle Eastern women in the Arab Uprisings (whilst also lamenting the lack of much needed gendered reforms in the aftermath of protests see: Johansson-Nogués, 2013).

Additionally, Das (2006) and Sanyal (2014) argue that academics and activists frequently frame agency as an 'escape from the ordinary', or a 'grand act of rebellion' when in reality agency is frequently a 'descent into the ordinary'. For refugees in particular, this might mean the ability to practise of ordinary activities whilst they are living in a 'state of exception' (Sanyal, 2014, p. 570). Thus, for a refugee woman, the freedom to simply leave the house and take her children to school may be agentic

and empowering. Furthermore, many women operate and exist within shifting structural contexts where they do not possess social positions of power and influence (particularly refugee women). As such, they utilise their agency in tactical ways in order to enhance their position to the best of their capacity.

These literatures encourage an examination beyond typical Western feminist discourses on 'how' agency should look and operate, emphasising an analysis of the cultural contextuality in which agency is practised, which can enrichen and broaden understanding (Shalaby, 2016). Bangstad (2011) notes that feminists often struggle to recognise or conceptualise accounts of feminist agency unless recognised as agentic 'resistance'. As a result, 'female agency anchored in other understandings of freedom than those implied by secular feminism becomes void' (p.29). Mahmood's (2005) research on women in Islamic Movements pushes against the positioning that Bangstad describes. In her work, Mahmood condemns tacit assumptions that without the structures of the patriarchal family system, all Islamic women would 'throw off their veils' and conduct their lives in oppositional confrontation to cultural and religious norms. Rather, her work shows that women often express support for their existing position and role within their society, thus agency is also utilised in support of ongoing cultural and societal norms and structures, not only expressing or exercising an opposition to these. Muhanna (2013) joins these criticisms, arguing that in context of humanitarianism in the Middle East, both Western liberal feminists and humanitarian agencies overemphasise women's agency as embodied resistance to the active structures of patriarchy in their societies. Muhanna calls for researchers to locate human agency '*in situ* rather than by drawing upon normative, feminist politics' (p. 29), emphasising that agency is a complex process whereby women negotiate various discourses in a conscious manner in order to best respond to their personal desires (p. 32-33). Thus, women may react to various structures in a range of agentic responses, including their resistance towards, and maintenance of, existing structures.

Kandiyoti's (1988) work examines decisions by women in classically patriarchal societies to 'bargain with patriarchy'. She explores women's engagement with structures that re-emphasise patriarchal norms in society. In these incidences, women 'bargain' with patriarchy by engaging with the set rules and scripts regulating gender relations as these provide certain levels of protection and security (p. 286). As such, women re-produce patriarchal norms, frequently to the detriment of their own gender, in order to protect themselves individually. Kandiyoti considers the relevance of how older women in patriarchal societies can reproduce oppressive structures for younger women, as this benefits their own personal power. The only way that elderly women can gain more power and agency, she argues, is through manoeuvring and reproducing the existing patriarchal structures. Thus, women may be involved in 'tactical' decision making in order to enhance their agency (de Certeau, 1984).

The literature above has shown the diverse and contextual ways in which women engage their agency in forms of resistance against structures, but also how they may not only reproduce, but support and maintain existing structures that are perceived, or framed, as 'oppressive', by Western writers. These accounts demonstrate the complexity of individual agency. However, many women live in contexts where they do not 'start' in a position of power, or where structures operate in their favour (Cornwall, 2007). This is particularly the case for refugee women. The next section theorises the way in which agency can be understood and analysed in oppressive contexts by introducing de Certeau's theory of strategies and tactics.

Structure and agency and de Certeau's theory of tactics and strategy

As noted above, agency is expressed in individual ways, in response to structures, situations and identities. Noting the literature already discussed on patriarchy and intersectionality, and the chapter to come on refugee contexts, it is important to note that individuals may disengage from their preferred agentic responses, 'keep the peace', or indeed make incremental decisions, in order to enhance their personal security. Michel de Certeau's (1984) *The practice of everyday life,* which considers the differences between tactics and strategies, is a useful way of understanding agency and decision making for those in oppressive or marginalised contexts.

The distinction between a strategy and tactic is an issue of power. Strategies can be understood as 'a calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power...can be isolated' (de Certeau, 1984, pp. 35–36). Strategies can be considered to have a location, a function of place, that is both distinctly defined and possessed and can therefore act as a genuine challenge to other power structures (Buchanan, 2012; Frisina, 2010). Kelly & Mitchell (2012, p. 278) argue that strategies can be thought of as 'rationalising logics of power' that control and shape their external environment and manage external threats. They identify peace processes in Belfast, which act to control security, democracy and governance, as strategies. In this manner, state security frameworks, or even hybrid or alternative security frameworks, can be thought of as strategies (see Chapter Three and Four). Strategies can be considered as power practices, and thus have structuring influence. In contrast, 'tactics' have no location, they are incremental and reactive, 'off the cuff' decisions within oppressive structures and contexts. Tactics are the moments of opportunity that an individual grasps within a terrain that has been imposed on them (de Certeau, 1984; Kelly & Mitchell, 2012). This differentiating helps to theorise the way in which landscapes of power operate. Employing the notion of 'tactics' is particularly helpful when considering the position of marginalised groups, and the decision making, they engage in. In her research with Yoruba women in Nigeria, Andrea Cornwall reminds us that:

'strategic choices (are) dependent on having the power to realise them: power that many women in this as in other settings…are not in a position to fully exercise' (Cornwall, 2007b, p. 28).

Frisina (2010) emphasises that individuals using tactics should not be thought of as rational beings that plan out their activities. Rather, tactical opportunities and decisions that are spontaneously undertaken, are 'weighed against daily worries and pleasures' and do not have heavy consequence or fall out. She echoes Cornwall's position stating: 'only strong social actors, who can count on an abundance of resources, can attempt longer-term emancipatory strategies' (p. 560). Frisina and Cornwall both allude to wider structures of control that hinder agentic capacity, particularly the capacity of those in marginalised positions. However, both emphasise that individuals in these situations do possess agency, but that it is often engaged with in unexpected or incremental ways.

Tactics, Strategies and Space

Strategies of power have deeply felt spatial consequences that can particularly affect marginalised groups experiences of space and belonging. Noting above how strategies typically have a 'location' and a function of place, spatiality can be seen as a definitive component of their power. Strategies have spatial significance which require tactical negotiation by those that do not possess powerful social locations. For example, examining Arab communities living in Tel Aviv and Jaffa, Hamdan-Saliba & Fenster (2012) explore how the norms and values of Arab culture act as a strategy of power which influences women's spatial mobility and wider sense of belonging the city. They consider various ways in which these women respond to cultural, gendered, national and global strategies of power and note 'active' (such as finding alternative spaces of ownership) and 'non-active tactics' (such as reducing mobility) that women employ, in order to negotiate various power structures. They explain the ways in which engagement in non-active tactics directly affect women's wider sense of belonging and having a place within the city, demonstrating the relationship between agency and a wider sense of spatial empowerment and belonging.

Looking to the specific experiences of refugee women, Freedman (2017) found that Syrian refugee women making the journey across Europe, frequently engaged in a range of tactical agentic responses to their circumstances. Freedman found that women utilised their framing as 'vulnerable' to their advantage, using this to advocate for protection and resources and to negotiate border crossings and security services. Despite the structural constraints of borders, security services and asylum procedures, women expressed clear decisions on how they intended to negotiate their movement across various countries in order to enhance their (and their family's) protection. This agentic and tactical use of femininity is also found amongst Palestinian refugee women. Muhanna's (2013)

research in Gaza found that in contexts of conflict or insecurity that often women may feel more empowered by enhancing their femininity (i.e. their role as a mother or caregiver) or enhancing their historic role of subordination in order to achieve desired outcomes (p. 36-37). These studies emphasise women's tactical decision making in deeply structured and oppressive environments, and the specific ways in which the use aspects of their identity in order to negotiate challenging situations.

Exploring the spatial practices of Kurdish women living in Istanbul, Secor (2004) describes citizenship as a strategy of power that draws boundaries of inside and outside against 'the Other'. Using strategies and tactics, Secor traces how Kurdish women disrupt ideas of citizenship through everyday practices, particularly their spatial mobility of the city whereby they engage in a range of tactics, such as anonymity, to negotiate the different neighbourhoods and spaces of the city in which they live. Secor notes that different spaces within Istanbul require 'different performances of ethnic identity and citizenship' (p. 361) which women engage in, in order to enhance their personal mobility. She emphasises that spatial stories, both those that trace tactics of anonymity or strategies of identity should be seen as political narratives operating through the streets of the city (p. 363). Therefore, examining an individual's identity, spatial mobility and indeed the tactics they employ, relate directly to understanding matrices and structures of societal power.

These studies emphasise the spatial relationship between strategies and tactics, particularly demonstrating the ways in which structural strategies shape experiences of mobility, spatiality and belonging amongst marginalised and oppressed identities. As such, they indicate the importance of examining quotidian spatial stories, in order to understand how structures and causal mechanisms shape everyday experiences in the city. The next section will explore ideas and theorisations of space in more detail in order to consider the ways in which it is both 'real' and socially constructed.

Public and Private Space

Space is a broad and challenging concept to define. It has been understood and theorised in a multitude of ways – most typically in its relationship to place (Agnew, 2011). This thesis is concerned with the sociology of space, that is the way in which social relations are produced spatially and how space (re)produces social behaviours. Therefore, it understands space to be socially constructed, produced and re-produced by citizens' and stakeholders' claims and uses of space, reflecting power asymmetries at work in these settings (Arjmand, 2016; McDowell, 1999). Urban space has a multidimensional nature, consisting of different material, social, symbolic, cultural and historic aspects (Madanipour, 2011). Space is not only a material location within a city, but also a site that reproduces and reflects social relations (Massey, 1994). This thesis engages with these socially constructivist understandings, acknowledging the detailed relationship that social relations have in

(re)producing space, and particularly gendered relations, but also acknowledging the material and physical location of these spaces (in particular, differentiating between inside/outside spaces, see: Madanipour, 2003). The section that follows refers to both the dichotomy of material public and private spaces (e.g. the physical home, the public square) and the ways in which (predominantly gendered) social relations map onto these material spaces to reproduce social constructions that create associations of space with particular genders, behaviours and groups.

Conceptually, space within cities is often reduced to a dichotomy as being either public or private. Mitchell (2003, p. 131) defines public space as a 'material location where social interactions and public activities of all members of the public occur', whilst Ceccato (2016, p. 71) considers it to be a 'shared environment that can be accessed by all individuals, usually at all times'. These definitions emerge from Western, normative understandings of public space as rooted in the Greek concept of *agora* and Jurgen Habermas's theorisation of 'the public sphere' (Qian, 2014). The *agora* was an open, central space in Greek cities, where citizens met, moved through, debated and expressed political positions. It is a location of 'intense social interaction' where different people and institutions make and withdraw claims to the space (Madanipour, 2009, p. 237) and a location where political messages can be conveyed to society at large (Shantz & Collins, 2009). Whilst noting its important political function, Gholamhosseini et al., (2019) also highlight the ways in which public space fulfils important health and entertainment function's for society as places of exercise and socialising. Thus, normative understandings of public space include 'movement' or physical, material spaces of interaction and also notions of political representation and communication. As such, one can recognise its vital importance to urban civic life.

Whereby the public is open and accessible, the private is its opposite: interior and secluded, the contrast between an 'individual's inner space of consciousness and the outer space of the world' (Ali Madanipour, 2003, p. 201). Furthermore, 'private space' is also considered separate from the public reach and intrusion of the state, a public institution (Shami, 1996). As such, private spaces are perceived to be the site of the family and the domestic. These definitions, which focus on the totality of public space welcoming 'all', and private space as being beyond the reach of the state, indicate an ideal that in reality is rarely, if ever, achieved.

For example, whilst the *agora* is conceptualised as the original public space, it has been critiqued for its exclusion of women, slaves and minorities (Benhabib, 1993). This influenced early associations of public space as 'masculine' and private space as feminine, shaping the continued exclusion of women and minorities from public spheres and spaces of the city. For example, refugees, migrants, women and those with disabilities are frequently excluded from fully accessing public spaces of the city.

Furthermore, state law often extends over the so-called boundary of public/private in several laws and policies (for example, family status laws, see: Arjmand, 2016). This suggest that whilst public/private are dichotomous terms, in reality the spaces that they refer to operate at a variety of scales of privacy and publicness that overlap and intersect. This creates a 'mosaic of spaces' with 'degrees of access' within cities (Gieseking, 2014).

Gender & Public/Private Space

Social construction of social spheres and spaces have been central to feminist analyses of patriarchy (Yuval-Davis, 1997b, p. 5). Traditionally, the private sphere is associated with domesticity and femininity whilst the public sphere is associated with power, status, mobility and masculinity and this has important connotations for how space is perceived and utilised (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2001). Arjmand (2016, p. 1-2) considers the associations of gender with particular public or private spaces, to be the 'foundation of spatial arrangements in the modern city' as the city embodies the 'historic division of labour by gender within a normative structure'. As such, these societal associations of each gender occupying and belonging to either public or private space are reproduced and reflected in the structural norms that shape societal and political life and continue to support the 'dominant regime of power' (*ibid*). This dichotomy has been critiqued by feminists since the 1970's, in order to explore the subordination of women to the private/domestic sphere (Abraham, 2010).

The analysis of space as bifurcated into different gendered spheres has been greatly critiqued. Working from the position that space itself is socially produced and reproduced, and constitutes social relations (Abraham, 2010; Lefebvre, 1991), societies are not strictly divided into public and private spaces which each gender strictly occupies. Rather, men and women negotiate, access and occupy different spaces in graded terms of mobility which differs over time and space and is contingent on a number of other factors, such as culture, class, race and ethnicity (Moghadam, 2003; Thompson, 2003). For example, a number of studies have examined how private, domesticated spaces are locations of gender-based violence for women, and how many women lack protection and power within the privacy of their own homes; whilst others have demonstrated that women who feel a sense of disempowerment at home may continue to experience this whilst negotiating the wider city, but conversely may also experience a sense of belonging and empowerment once out of the confinement of their homes (Fenster, 2005). Thus, women have varied experiences of empowerment, fear, discomfort and belonging in a range of both material public and private spaces in the city, which are greatly shaped by their identities and personal experiences. As such, the private cannot be treated strictly as 'indoors', female and safe, and the public as 'outdoors', male and dangerous (Ranade, 2007). These arguments point to the necessity of examining experiences and negotiations of space through

an intersectional lens, which enables for a wider discussion of how identities shape access and experiences of different spaces.

Thinking about issues of identity and of space in graded terms of mobility and seclusion aids in developing concepts of exclusion from and/or 'belonging' to particular spaces. Fenster's work (1999, 2005) which examines gender and Lefebvre's concept of 'the right to the city' (RTC), highlights how 'belonging' and exclusion in the city is linked to notions of citizenship, identity and fear. Fenster (2005), notes how the use of public space and the act of walking in the city streets, adds an 'everyday' sense of belonging to the city. Through walking practices, individuals have the potential to make sense of space, connect and interact with others and overcome feelings of alienation. Importantly she also notes the ways in which using public space creates 'informal claims' which enhance the sense of particular communities 'colonising' a space (p. 222-223). Without falling into the trap of labelling public space as static, Fenster highlights how cities have 'hegemonic communities', those who hold the greatest rights and 'citizenship' in a city, and how in turn that community will determine and affect others rights, access, and sense of belonging in spaces of the city (Fenster, 2005, p. 245). Thus there is a 'politics to belonging' (Yuval-Davis, 2011), which particularly affects those of different nationalities and ethnicities (Fenster, 2005, p. 225). This can result in a sense of space being 'forbidden' or 'permitted' dependent on identity. Fenster identifies two key reasons for women's inability to fulfil their 'right to the city': Fear of public space, and cultural and religious norms associated with gender that construct particular places as 'forbidden'. Here, Fenster identies a particularly important mechanism (fear) through which women's behaviour and experiences of space is shaped.

Gendered geographies of fear have direct relationship to how spaces are constituted and reconstituted as 'male' and 'female', and the gendering of space has direct relationship with an individual's experience and perception of fear (Koskela, 1997; Whitzman, 2007). Public space is continually reproduced as a location of hegemonic masculinity. Thus, when women access and negotiate the typically perceived 'public spaces' of their cities, they are in effect transgressing the boundaries of the socio-spatial order (Ranade, 2007). Women who negotiate public space are deeply conscious of both their embodied and located presence. This is constituted through the male gaze which imbues a deep sense of self-awareness upon women of being 'out of place' and 'taking up space' (de Koning, 2009). Thus, women have internalised a realisation that they are objectified, and when negotiating public space, they are viewed, judged and interpreted through a narrow, located vision (Clark, 2017, p. 2). As such, women in public space are continually negotiating the 'male gaze' within a hegemonically (re)produced masculine space.

Women are not only negotiating masculine spaces but are also negotiating a fear of male violence within the public sphere. Valentine [1989] and Pain [1997] note that even though women are more at risk of domesticated male violence, they fear the violence of strangers (and thus express greater fear in public space) because strangers are perceived as 'unregulated'. Public space is a concentrated area of strangers who we believe might pose a threat to us (Koskela, 1997).

Returning to theories of tactical agency explored above, women are found to self-regulate their behaviour and mobility in order to limit their encounters with (particularly male) strangers when in public space. This is achieved through gendered performance and tactics of dress, speech and behaviour, which are deemed culturally 'feminine', unthreatening and modest (see above, and West & Zimmerman, 1987, 2009). Women restrict their movements to specific times of day and utilise 'chaperones' in order to navigate space without the interruption of men. In particular, they restrict their mobility in the evening where visibility is compromised (See for example de Koning, 2009; Koskela, 1999; Ranade, 2007; Sur, 2012). Ranade (2007) considers these tactics to be a means of enhancing personal safety, and these behaviours to be both conscious and internalised:

> 'The production of safety through respectability is thus practised by women in their everyday movement through public spaces…Sometimes these actions are purposeful and conscious. At other times, they are the result of a subconscious self-policing resulting from an internalisation of hegemonic notions of femininity which determine what is proper and what is not' (Ranade, 2007, pp. 1523–1524).

These defensive behaviours reflect the spatial expression of patriarchy (R. H. Pain, 1997; Stanko, 1995), which in turn perpetuates and re-constitutes the conceptualisation of public/private space as masculine/feminine and directly influences gendered identities.

However, as noted above through Fenster's (2005) work, gendered identities are not the only category that enhances an individual's exclusion and marginalisation in public space. Public spaces of the city have also been analysed as exclusionary, towards ethnic minorities, those who are disabled or have special needs, LGBT and homeless people (Springer, 2009). Thus, those that are disenfranchised or othered can feel a heightened sense of vulnerability in public space (Day, 1999; Fox et al., 2009; Pain, 2001). Thus, examining intersectional identities and their interactions with the various structures and spaces of a society create deeper, and more individual, understandings of space, gender, agency and tactics.

There are cultural specificities and meanings regarding public and private spaces that enrich varied understandings of these terms and the ways in which the boundaries of the public/private overlap

and shift. How different genders negotiate space in different contexts can be widely different. From the literature examined above, it is clear that using terms such as 'public' or 'private' can lead to a tendency to view space in a dichotomy with gendered associations. However, there is a utility and usefulness to these terms, they provide an 'important language' to understand and navigate the spaces of the city and the ways in which space is socially constructed. Mills (2007) argues that public and private space 'remain important language for studies of the local and global contexts within which gender is constructed'. An awareness of the relationship between these terms, and the construction of gender, aids examination of how gendered identities experience, challenge, negotiate and reproduce urban spaces of the city. In this thesis therefore, these terms are engaged in order to refer to the materiality of spaces in the city (e.g. public: streets and squares; private: the home), and whilst not essentialsing gender to each of these spaces (i.e. women to private space, men to public space), is aware of the tendency to associate specific genders with particular spaces and the role that this then has in constructing spaces in particular ways and in reconstructing wider structures of patriarchy and gender.

Gender and Space in the Middle East

Examining how constructions of gender and space operate in the Middle East provides insight into the critiques of gender and space outlined above. Because of several factors, the Middle East is often thought of by Western scholars as societally ordered into gendered public and private spaces. This includes the strong representation of Islam, the exportation of Western academic concepts of the private and public domain, Orientalist academics fixation with women's 'prohibited spaces' and the urban planning of Arab cities themselves (Afsaruddin, 1999; Mills, 2007; Sawalha, 2014).

Cities in the Middle Eastern region were traditionally built on a pedestrian scale which resulted in a complex and dense city with mixed usage (Hassan et al., 2016; Kiet, 2011, p. 43). There was an emphasis on a division between the private and public sphere in order to protect modesty, as particularly in Islamic society, social relations are frequently based on social segregation between the sexes (Golkowska, 2017). However, an examination of the Middle Eastern city demonstrates how public and private spaces overlap and how boundaries shift continually. The privacy of the individual and the family was achieved in part through urban planning, whereby streets, leading off the main road, would gradually diminish in size, changing in character from public to semi-public to private. The use of dead ends (cul-de-sacs) was common in order to create these quasi private/public spaces of domestic life where those in the street could be easily observed (Hassan et al., 2016). Thus, some neighbourhood streets are even perceived as 'private space' (Mills, 2007; Mortada, 2003, pp. 83–85). Thus, although 'public spaces' of these cities does include streets, it is probably best associated with areas of the city whereby individuals have the greatest amount of social interaction with 'unknown

others': streets outsides of one's own neighbourhood, squares, mosques, cemeteries, the public garden and some of the city's social institutions (Ardalan, 1980; Kostof, 1992).

Traditionally, places of public gathering (the mosque) and the seat of government were 'symbolically placed at the centre of the city' or at the 'head of the town' in order for these places to be both orderly and self-supporting (Ardalan, 1980, p. 5). The Mosque has a two-fold, integrated purpose: religious and social. It was envisioned as a multi-purpose space, for prayers, congregation, study, rest and 'political decision making' (Mortada, 2003, p. 87). The main, open area of the city was typically outside the Mosque, a large urban courtyard or plaza referred to in some Middle Eastern cultures as a Maidan, which academics have argued that it was the original 'public space', the *agora* of Islamic society (Rabbat, 2012). The Mosque has received similar critique to the *agora* for its exclusion or side-lining of women. Women's position, access and involvement in the Mosque reflects the societal norm of a gendered dichotomy of public/private space. Mosques have been described as 'hegemonic, male dominated and patriarchal', as men are encouraged to join in congregational prayers, whilst women are encouraged to stay within the domestic sphere to pray. When women do use the mosque, participation within the building itself is also segregated, with different areas accessed by each gender (Mahmood, 2005, p. 2; Mazumdar & Mazumdar 2002, p. 166).

Whilst acknowledging these societal and religious 'preferences' for particular genders in particular spaces, Afsaruddin (1999) remarks that historicising the relationship between gender and space across the region shows that the private and public spheres in the Middle East have been 'anything but bipolar', and rather plotted along a continuum (p. 3). For example, returning to an examination of gender, space and the mosque, a number of scholars have tracked the rise of the Women's 'Mosque Movement' in the Middle East, and the growth of Islamic classes for women, by women, held within mosques (e.g. Badran, 2009). These studies have both highlighted women's agency, as well as their engagement and presence in the public sphere.

Several feminist and Islamic scholars have critiqued understandings of a dichotomy of gendered public/private space in the Middle East, tracking the relationship and overlap within these spheres. Nelson's [1974] pioneering work examining Bedouin tribes sought to address Orientialist assumptions of the public/private 'dichotomy' and its repercussions for examining ideas of power and authority in the region. In particular, she argued against the uncritical notion that there are 'dual and separate worlds for men and women (in the Arab world) in which the former world is public and the latter world is private' (p. 551). Her work has been echoed by other scholars in the region, who encourage an examination of space and gender as 'graded'.

For example, Thompson (2003) argues that ideas of public and private spaces are better reframed of in ideas of gendered boundaries and 'graded terms' of 'seclusion' and 'mobility'. As her work is in the discipline of history, it largely examines gendered boundaries in medieval and colonial times and examines how these shifted during state-making processes. Fenster (1999) advocates the thinking of space within Middle Eastern contexts in terms of 'forbidden' and 'permitted' spaces, as opposed to the Western dichotomy of public/private. In this theorisation she reflects the Islamic terms of *haram* (forbidden) and *halal* (permissible) which guide Islamic moral codes of behaviour. She examines the shifting boundaries of space in Bedouin culture whereby private spaces of the home are immediately perceived as 'public' when a stranger enters them. Thus, public space is perceived predominantly as a place where strangers are present (and private space the absence of strangers), not necessarily a material or fixed location or boundary (Valentine, 1989, p. 386). This blurring of what is considered a 'private space' is seen in Mazumdar & Mazumdar's (2001) work with Islamic communities in India and Iran. They explore how during the day, private spaces can extend into the traditionally perceived public realm. As men are expected to be at work during the day, the street and the market become a space of belonging and safety for women whilst they conduct daily errands, reverting to a masculine space in the evening. They argue for viewing spaces as 'inclusive' or 'exclusive' of particular genders, at particular times, rather than a strict dichotomy of private/public. These terms of seclusion/mobility; inclusive/exclusive and forbidden/permitted, which are all seen across a continuum of access and temporality, all aid in conceptualising the different ways in which space and gender interact, and the ways in which different structures act to restrict or open spaces to different genders.

Continuing this argument, there are a number of studies from the region that reflect a shifting and fluid boundary between public and private space, and the ways in which different genders access and occupy these spaces. Nooraddin (1998) considers the *al-fina* (in-between spaces) in the design of traditional Arabic cities. He notes how these spaces are interchangeably public and private, which are adjusted and negotiated between everyday users of these spaces, and on occasion, conferred by law. The work of Mills (2007), in *Mahalle* neighbourhood space in Istanbul, echoes this idea of interchangeably public and private spaces, noting how *Mahalle* spaces are perceived by users as a shifting space of privacy and publicness, particularly regarding issues of gender. Arjmand's (2016) examination of women-only urban parks in Iran further challenges the division of a public/private sphere. She discusses how both typically perceived private and public spaces become blurred as the legal scrutiny of the Islamic State extends into both public and private spheres to control male-female relationships and mobilities (p. 159).

Differing identity categories, such as those of ethnicity and class, also have a role in differentiated access to space. Examining gendered relations in coffee houses and funeral homes in pre and post-

war Beirut, Sawalha (2010) highlights identities of class and gender and the freedoms (or restrictions) that class brings to negotiating issues of space and gender, demonstrating how wealth and education allows some women access to spaces that are perceived as 'masculine'. Indeed, a number of studies have considered the ways in which gender and class interact to shape women's experiences of space in the Middle East region, allowing for greater access or restriction to public space depending on their wealth and education (de Koning, 2009; Hasso, 2017). Alizadeh (2007) examines historic and current conceptions of gender and public/private spaces in Kurdish cities in the Middle East. His work serves as a reminder of the heterogeneity of Arab society, noting the greater public mobility of Kurdish women in the region (in comparison to Muslim women), and within Kurdish categories of class. He also underscores the 'soft' boundary between public and private spaces in Kurdish cities, noting that Kurdish women's socio-political and economic contexts have a direct relationship into their public mobility.

Issues of space and gender are also deeply connected to identities, agentic capacity and tactical decisions about how and when to be 'mobile' and active in (public) space, how an individual represents themselves and how they are perceived (Silvey, 2004, 2006). For example, Deeb's (2006) work with 'pious' Shi'a women in the southern suburbs of Beirut examines how Muslim women establish their acceptance in public space through their strong Islamic identity and charitable work. The increase in women taking employment roles outside the home, especially in urban areas, has also led to changing dynamics of space and gender, where women assume new habits and mix with male colleagues, which leads to a growing dialectic between women, public and private spaces, in the region (Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2013).

Gender & Space in Amman and Beirut

The studies above demonstrate that there are generally gendered associations and norms, shaped by structural issues such as patriarchy, that result in a tendency for particular genders to occupy particular spaces (Newcomb, 2006). However, conceptualising space in strict and dichotomised public or private terms that each gender then occupies, is not an accurate reflection of the social and spatial dynamics and realities at work. Rather, the way in which the various genders access and negotiate space is better perceived through the terms introduced above, through the work of Fenster (1999), Mazumdar & Mazumdar (2001b) and Thompson (2003): graded positions of seclusion and mobility, forbidden and permitted, or inclusive and exclusive. These terms enable a means of theorising spaces as fluid and changing, not bounded and static, and the ways in which various genders access space as adjustable and dependent. Thus, layered onto material understandings of space as 'public' (outdoors)

and private (indoors), these terms provide a means of deeper theorisation of gender and mobility within Middle Eastern society.

Despite the valuable studies and theorising discussed above, overall it is notable, as Fenster & Hamdan-Saliba (2013) point out, that there is a gap on literature that focuses on gender, space and mobility in the Middle East. They argue that this gap is present because addressing patriarchal hegemony, women's bodies in space, equality and freedom are still considered largely taboo in the region (p. 539). Of particular relevance to this thesis is the lack of work on intersectionality, on the cities of Amman and Beirut, and the experiences and mobility of women refugees in these contexts.

Turning now to the cities that are the focus of my research, there are several continuities and differences in the research that has emerged from Beirut and Amman regarding gender, space and mobility. There is a lacuna on gendered experiences of public space in both cities. Amman in particular has been overlooked as a research site for decades, and Beirut is frequently examined in light of its complex history of civil conflict and sectarian politics. However, there have been a handful of studies that provide insight into the experiences of women in each city. The work of Aljafari (2014) in Amman and Fawaz *et al* (2017) in Beirut note the dynamics of migrant receiving neighbourhoods in both cities, highlighting how these typically male dominated neighbourhoods result in women feeling unsafe and unwelcome in public space. Studies such as Lara Deeb's (2006; Deeb & Harb, 2013) on the Shi'a neighbourhoods in the South of Beirut, and Kaya's (2010) research on Ammani women attending the University of Yarmouk both demonstrate the ways in which women negotiate the male gaze and how they navigate public space and social codes through behaviours and dress. Whilst both Amman and Beirut are considered diverse, heterogeneous cities that differ and vary in character from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, studies across both cities demonstrate the sexual harassment that women encounter in public space, and the ways in which that there are particular spaces and times where women are 'permitted' to be present (Ababsa, 2017; Fawaz et al., 2012; Kaya, 2010; Sawalha, 2010). However, it does appear that in Amman this is more greatly shaped by more conservative expectations around gender, behaviour and dress, whilst in Beirut it is heavily shaped by gendered security provision (Fawaz et al., 2012; Sawalha, 2010). Beirut is broadly considered one of the most liberal and cosmopolitan cities in the region (Sawalha, 2010). Despite this, its citizens and their mosaic of cultures and ethnicities all have varying expectations about appropriate behaviour, respectability and dress. Although not always explicitly discussed, issues of class, education and wealth are also emerge in much of this research and indicates how women's experiences and freedoms might differ across these social locations (see for example de Koning, 2009; Sawalha, 2010).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined a breadth of feminist literature that explores the relationship between the construction and interplay of identity and space, particularly within the Middle East. It has promoted a critical realist feminist approach to identity and intersectionality to provide an underpinning methodology for understanding refugee women's behaviour and experiences, specifically highlighting how pre-existing and (re)produced structures will intersect with women's categories of identity to shape particular experiences in the public and private sphere. For example, this chapter explored the ways in which patriarchal structures exist within Middle Eastern society and extend into public and private realms to shape expectations regarding gendered social dress, behaviour and presence.

Expressions of agency by Middle Eastern women often do not conform to the expectations of Western feminists. In such contexts, there are varied expressions and acts of agency, some which support and uphold existing societal structures, those which confront them and those which negotiate with them. Michel de Certeau's theory of strategies and tactics in particular provides a template for considering the ways in which women in oppressive circumstances will use their agency to enhance their personal protection and safety, whilst not directly addressing structures of oppression. This raises questions about the structuring experiences that refugee women may encounter in their host cities and the decisions and tactics they may engage in, in order to enhance their personal sense of security. It also raises questions about how empowering or disempowering these contexts may be for refugee women as their roles shift and change in different environments.

Social conceptualisations of gender and space are acutely related to each other. Gendered identities play out in spatial locations, reproducing and embedding space with gendered meaning, thus reproducing cultural and societal norms, resulting in associations of particular genders with particular spaces. Within the Middle East there is a societal preference for the segregation of the sexes, which has resulted in continued association of women with private space, to ensure their privacy and protection. This is not to say that women are 'forbidden' from entering public space or that they 'transgress' gendered norms when they are in public space. However, there are expectations on how women conduct themselves within these spaces, which are carried in socio-cultural expectations around behaviour, dress and interactions. These expectations vary across countries, across issues of class, wealth and religion. Thus, Fenster's perception that social constructions of public and private space are better conceived in graded terms of 'permitted' or 'forbidden' is relevant and useful. Rather than seeing space as flat and static, these terms ask questions of space and gender, of who is 'permitted' or 'forbidden', in what spaces, when and why. As such, they bring to the fore the necessity of asking about individual's various identities and the ways in which these shape experiences and degrees of access to space.

Chapter Three: Urban Refugees, Gender and (In)security

In the previous chapter I have provided a theoretical understanding of identity, structure and agency and space. This demonstrated how the employment of theories of intersectionality assist in providing a holistic view of refugee women and how highlighting causal mechanisms and structures provides insight into experiences of spatial marginality and oppression. This chapter shifts attention to urban refugees themselves, examining literature and theories that conceptualise urban refugee (in)security in the everyday, in order to understand lived experiences at the city scale.

This chapter begins with a discussion of urban refugees, exploring how this group has been defined and perceived by academics, global institutions and host governments. It identifies and outlines several overlapping and interacting issues of (in)security that urban refugees experience specifically focusing on livelihoods and shelter, legal status, access to security and justice institutions and host community relationships. Drawing on these themes, the chapter provides a review of urban refugee literature, highlighting, where possible, knowledge of gendered experiences. Noting several gaps in the existing urban refugee literature, the first section concludes with a broad analysis of works that have explored Syrian refugee women's experiences in their host cities.

The second part of the chapter draws together ideas from the sub-disciplines of geopolitics, human security and geolegality, in order to theorise urban insecurity regarding refugee communities. The usefulness of feminist perspectives of these theories is noted; as they shift attention to lived realities of security, rather than state preoccupations of security with a focus on borders and sovereignty. Whilst feminist geopolitics and human security emphasise the various scales at which a refugee may experience insecurity, geolegality assists in understanding the ways in which boundaries of legality are created for refugees and the ways in which this not only builds a sense of unbelonging within particular communities, but also shapes particular spaces and places as permitted or forbidden (Fenster, 1999). Thus, the state refuge policy frameworks can create landscapes of fear for refugees, opening them up to potential vulnerability and exploitation, particularly if these frameworks are not designed to protect refugee rights. Feminist geolegality promotes an examination of the ways in which legality has gendered spatial outcomes and encourages an examination of how the scale of the intimate and the everyday both produce and reproduce laws and policies. Thus, it reflects the feminist framing of this thesis which seeks to understand how refugee women experience and negotiate (in)securities in their day to day lives in their host cities.

Defining Urban Refugees

At the beginning of the 21st century, refugees were predominantly camp based. However, reflecting the increasingly urbanised population of the world, by 2006 the scales had tipped, and refugees were predominantly settling in urban areas. Of the approximately 26 million globally displaced refugees, current estimates place urban refugees at around 61% of this population (UNHCR, 2009, 2018b). Most Syrian refugees are considered 'urban' or self-settled: approximately 80% of Syrian refugees in Jordan and 71% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, live in urban or peri-urban areas (UNHCR 2018a; UNHCR et al., 2017).

Jacobsen (2005, p. 40) defines urban refugees as 'self-settled refugees – formally recognised or not – residing in urban areas'. In contrast to highly monitored and controlled camp populations, urban refugees are typically dispersed, unenumerated and unmanaged and thus perceived to stand outside a refugee regime (Marfleet 2007, p. 36-40). This is not strictly true of all urban refugees, but broadly refers to the norm in these contexts. However, in the Middle East, there is more of a history of urban refugees being recognised and assisted through agencies (for example Palestinians based in Lebanese and Jordanian cities supported by UNWRA). The residence aspect of urban refugees is what is important to note here. Whilst some refugees living in camps may leave its confines during the day to engage in work in the surrounding towns and cities, urban refugees are those that live and have their livelihoods in built up areas[4] and are focused on the particular opportunities that are provided through their presence in these areas.

For decades, the proliferation of urban refugees was what the 'eye refused to see' (Kibreab, 1996, p. 131). Very few governments, institutions and humanitarian organisation were actively engaging with urban refugee issues. De Vriese (2006) argues that the slow response of governments to address the issue of urban refugees stems from a fear of opening 'Pandora's box' – concerns that by providing explicit urban assistance to refugees would create an additional 'pull' towards the city which is 'an environment that is difficult to control' (p. 16). Indeed UNHCR (2009, p. 2) admitted that the growing costs in caring for urban refugee populations had largely shaped their policy on urban refugees in 1997. This policy criticised refugees for self-setting in cities, due to the challenges this brought to refugee care.

In contrast to cities, camps provide a visibility which allows for state control over refugee populations. Firstly, it allows for refugees to be 'visible' to the state itself. Camps provide a spatial segregation

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[4]UNHCR has noted the challenges in the global definition of the 'urban area'. For their 2009 policy on refugee protection and solutions in urban areas, they posit that 'urban' is taken to mean 'a built up area that accommodates large numbers of people living in close proximity to each other, and where the majority of people sustain themselves by means of formal and informal employment and the provisions of goods and services' (UNHCR, 2009, p. 2)

between refugees and host communities. They allow the state to monitor and control wider refugee movements and ensure easier repatriation of refugees once conflict has abated (Fábos & Kibreab, 2007). Secondly, it allows a state to make its refugee issue 'visible' to the wider world. For example, Jordan's decision to create numerous refugee camps for Syrian refugees, despite its largely urban refugee population, has been attributed to a strategic decision to enhance the visible presence of Syrian refugees on its territory. This allows for both the raising of funds and raising the profile of the crisis to a global audience (Turner, 2015, p. 387).

Urban refugees typically engage in anonymising tactics in the cities in which they self-settle. Their integration into the wider fabric of the city means that it is challenging for humanitarian organisations to access and assist them. Additionally, states struggle to highlight the challenges in providing resources to cities, which bear the brunt of incoming refugees (Chatelard & Morris, 2012).

UNHCR engagement with urban refugee issues in its 1997 *Protocol on Urban Refugees* was widely criticised for its approach. It promoted encampment policies as default and widely demonised and problematized urban refugee populations (Marfleet, 2007). The condemnation from researchers and the humanitarian community was swift, as the policy reflected common governmental rhetoric that quasi-criminalised urban refugees. It's replacement in 2009 by the *UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* is considered a significant improvement. It engages with the critical realities of urban refugees' predicaments, whilst also acknowledging that with increased globalisation, the issue of the 'urban refugee' will not disappear (UNHCR, 2009; Landau, 2014).

The 1997 report was also criticised for its broad assumption that urban refugees were predominantly young, single men. Rather, women and children make up a significant proportion (sometimes more than half) of urban refugees (Obi & Crisp, 2001). Despite this, a majority of urban refugee research has continued to reflect the assumption above. Most studies on urban refugees have focused on male experiences, or alternatively refer to 'refugees' broadly. There are a small number of research studies that focus specifically on women refugee's experiences in urban settings in the global south (see below). These emerge from diverse contexts and their findings show how different legal, cultural, socio-political and economic factors shape women's experiences specifically. It is vital to have studies that reflect urban refugee women's experiences, as these are distinctly different to men (Freedman, 2010, 2015).

Women are affected differently through war, flight and asylum. Characteristically, they are already in socially, economically and politically subordinate positions within their home countries. This is then exacerbated through the process of becoming stateless (J. Freedman, 2015; Indra, 1987). Refugee women are significantly vulnerable to gender-based violence, rape and assault. This is because of a

loss of protection mechanisms or because they are forced into negative coping situations where they have to trade sex for resources (Krause, 2015; E. Pittaway, 2011). Additionally, women can be pressured into early or forced marriages by their families in these contexts. This is perceived as a measure of protection by families, but often leaves refugee women and girls vulnerable, isolated and in danger of significant health risks (Swan, 2018). Refugee women experience a change in their regular social and family roles, frequently experiencing an increase or decrease in their personal mobility, either due to a need for family income or issues of safety and protection. Thus, women experience various forms and levels of vulnerability and opportunity when they become urban refugees, many of which can usefully be seen in terms of different kinds of (in)security.

The following section reviews urban refugee literature which considers how urban refugees experience insecurity. This is categorised into shelter and livelihoods, legal status, access to security and justice institutions and host community relationships. These are related and overlapping issues. For example, Pittaway (2011) deftly demonstrates how issues of shelter, privacy, livelihoods, education and access to other resources such as health services are interconnected in regard to the security of refugee women:

> 'safe and secure accommodation is critical to the protection of women and girls from sexual violence. It is crucial for the maintenance of good health, and important to enable an environment in which children and adults can study. Families struggle to maintain normal familial relationships if they are not afforded some level of privacy. Women who cannot find safe accommodation are more likely to seek work in unsafe places, which can provide some basic accommodation, but can result in high risk of rape….' (p.3)

However, whilst acknowledging this interrelatedness, for the sake of clarity this literature has been discussed in a categorised format. Where possible, gendered studies and experiences have been highlighted. Broadly, there is less literature that deals specifically with women's experiences of being urban refugees. However, wider urban refugee literature does assist in providing insight into broad experiences of insecurity for refugees in urban settings, which is also relevant to women. This section will conclude with an examination of literature on Syrian refugee women's experiences.

(In)security and Urban refugees
Shelter, Livelihoods and Changing Gender Roles
Refugees seek out urban areas either because of their own urban background, or because of the perceived opportunities (educational, employment, cultural) that a city offers. As such, urban refugees in the majority world represent a broad demographic of their home country. Some are wealthy elites who have managed to use their capital and connections to create new lives in their host cities and live

conspicuously, often with an acquired legal status (Marfleet, 2007; Sommers, 1995). However, the vast majority are disenfranchised and poor, and live anonymously in the informal areas of the city, alongside the urban poor. Here they use the city's scale and anonymity to both escape the refugee 'label' and to create new lives outside of camps (Malkki, 1995). Many urban refugee's desire to gain a 'foothold in the city' and their position vis-à-vis the state has parallels with many rural-urban migrants who seek better lives in the city (Agadjanian, 1998; Grabska, 2006; Pasquetti, 2015; Sanyal, 2012). However, there is an important distinction in that urban refugees face 'greater challenges than indigenous populations in reducing vulnerability' (O'Loghlen & McWilliams, 2017, p. 22).

Whilst living in informal areas of the city provides some anonymity, slum and informal housing particularly endangers women, as it exposes them to a significant risk of sexual violence. Rosenberg (2016) noted how compromised, permeable dwellings where urban refugees lived were targeted by locals, broken into and women assaulted and raped. Single women especially struggled with landlords and neighbours who demanded sex, who entered their homes without permission and who attempted to assault or burgle them. However, there are often few options at their disposal. A UN Women (2019) report has highlighted how Syrian refugee female-headed households in Lebanon are more likely than male headed households to live in slums and compromised dwellings, often being denied opportunities to rent because landlords are suspicious of their circumstances. Women's relative poverty often results in them being spatially confined to an extremely poverty stricken locality of the city which exacerbates their insecurity (Agadjanian, 1998).

Many refugees also seek out informal areas due to its proximity and connections to employment in the informal sector, where they can work without overt attention to their lack of status. The reality for many refugee women in these contexts is that livelihoods and protection are a trade-off. Refugee women that do find work often discover that this exposes them to exploitation, sexual harassment and non-payment of wages (Dale Buscher, 2012; De Vriese, 2006). Survival sex is also a common means of getting income and sometimes, shelter, for urban refugee women. This has been noted anecdotally amongst refugee communities in the Middle East, for example amongst displaced Iraqi women living in Amman (Chatelard et al., 2009).

In urban contexts, refugee women often fund greater success than men in securing work as they find opportunities in the domestic sector, restaurants and hotels (Buscher 2009). Additionally, men are often at higher risk of detainment, arrest and deportation and thus are likely to encourage women to work (UNHCR, 2009). Refugee women (and also children) are frequently perceived as vulnerable by host governments and host communities and their presence unthreatening (Kofman, 2019). Thus, women gain opportunities to work, or indeed can enjoy a greater mobility over men within their host

cities, as their presence can be overlooked by their host communities as benign. As such, many refugee women in urban settings find new roles in becoming the family breadwinner (El-Masri, 2013; Wachter et al., 2018). While this may lead to avenues of empowerment, the situation is often more complex, with women juggling caring and work responsibilities. It can also lead to increased gender-based violence (GBV), as men can resort to violence as they struggle to regain their identity and masculinity (De Regt, 2010). Most of the literature that does examine the experiences of refugee women highlight this multifaceted experience of changing roles, agency and empowerment. Despite the expectation that war and conflict will release women from what is perceived as restrictive, kinship ties and networks, women are rarely able to translate their new found independence into 'tangible sociable and material gains' (Agadjanian, 1998, p. 298; Tyler & Schmeidl, 2014). Indeed, Buscher (2009, p. 94-95) highlights how even well intentional skill-building programmes for displaced women in urban areas is typically poorly orientated to both their needs and the needs of local labour markets. Additionally, these programmes often overlook women's ongoing caring responsibilities. Thus, it is challenging for refugee women to enhance their economic position within their host communities and they often suffer under the burden of being both primary breadwinners and primary caregivers.

Urban Refugees Legal Status and Protection

It is still somewhat unclear of the role that documentation and legal status has on the day to day lives of urban refugees, and the extent to which this is context specific. Landau (2014, p. 143) argues that whilst documentation 'undeniably open(s) up space for refugees and displaced people to pursue livelihoods and access services' there is little evidence within the literature that shows that policies can affect such outcomes. There are few detailed studies regarding women refugees and the ways in which their legal status (or lack thereof) specifically shapes their experiences within their host communities. However, Pickering (2011) considers the correlation between compromised refugee status and gendered violence in host countries and states:

> 'An inability to gain (authorised) status in a safe environment and the lack of political clout
> that goes with the lack of status make possible forms of sexual and gendered violence that
> overwhelmingly go unchecked' (p.110- 111).

Relating to security institutions, a lack of legal papers can make women a target for abuse and violence from not only their host community but from state security services (see below). Several studies on urban refugees point to the importance of these groups being given legal status and rights to work in order to enhance their personal protection within their host community or to enable their ability to integrate into, and contribute towards, their host community (Berti, 2015). Many refugees living in the majority world are routinely forbidden to leave refugee camps, shaping the places that they can

and cannot access, removing protection frameworks from them when they self-settle in the city, a 'forbidden' area. This places them at risk of exploitation, violence and xenophobia whilst living in the city (see for example: Campbell, 2006; Sommers, 2001). As explored in the previous section, urban refugee's decision to live in informal areas of the city and to engage in the informal economy is typically related to their lack of status. This lack of status and position makes them vulnerable to acts of violence perpetrated by the host community, and even humanitarian agencies tasked with protecting them. The removal of their normal everyday context, and their dependency on institutions and people in powerful positions makes them particularly susceptible to abuse (Buckley-Zistel & Krause, 2017). As a result, much of the literature examining urban refugees promotes and investigates the need for formal documentation and legal frameworks in order to enhance refugees' sense of security and the wider set of human rights they are eligible for.

The relationship between legal status and the ways that this enacts about urban refugee (in)security is an area for further empirical study. Specifically, insight into how refugees themselves perceive and understand their status (or lack thereof) and how these impact on their wider sense of security, belonging and opportunities within their host communities. As the literature demonstrates above, even if refugees do possess appropriate documentation, they are still targeted for exploitation, and therefore understanding their experiences and perceptions of their status allows for an insight into the importance of documentation and the extent to which policies and refugee status can provide protection. Furthermore, there is little literature that examines the gendered implications of compromised status or lack of identification papers.

Urban Refugees, Conflict Management and Access to Security and Justice Institutions

Security and justice institutions that operate within the state are an important aspect of maintaining order within a society. These institutions are charged with providing protection from harm, a means to resolve conflict and mechanisms of punishment in order to maintain law and order (Shearing & Johnston, 2003).

At the outset of this section, it is salient to consider what 'security' and 'justice' might mean in these contexts regarding refugees, and 'who' is responsible for providing or enhancing this. For example, much of the literature above has considered how refugee women are vulnerable to acts of harassment and violence because of their refugee status. Typically, it would be expected that formal state institutions and procedures (inscribed in law) such as police, prosecution, courts and custodial measures, would act as a means of securing an individual's safety. However, in contexts where, for example, individuals do not have full rights or legal status (such as refugees) or are living in post-

conflict or other unstable environments where state institutions are compromised, many individuals seek dispute resolution mechanisms that fall outside of the formal justice system (Wojkowska, 2006, p. 5). These alternative providers may be sought in order to avoid the gaze of the state, or indeed, to enhance capacity to negotiate with the state (Abel, 1982). This might include informal court and policing systems, customary courts, gangs, local mayors or esteemed cultural leaders or political parties and militias.

These avenues are often celebrated as a means of marginalised groups accessing 'quick, relatively inexpensive and culturally relevant remedies' in regard to disputes (Kerrignan et al., 2009). However, there may also be challenges and difficulties with these providers. For example, issues can arise over representation, force and validity, creating a patchwork service of uneven provision (Paasche & Sidaway, 2010). Alternative security providers, such as gangs, can also be deeply violent and problematic (Mutahi, 2011). Wojkowska (2006, p. 6) states that if there are no viable means (that is either formal or informal) of resolving societal disputes, or managing conflict, the alternatives are either violence or conflict avoidance (which, in itself, can lead to violence).

Urban refugee women living in the global south suffer from poor education levels. This, combined with strategies of anonymity, and typically a lack of shared language, means they struggle to have their voices heard in urban settings, where male elites often speak for them and claim to represent them (Sommers, 2001). As a result, they can struggle with both formal and informal security and justice institutions, especially if these are embedded with patriarchal norms. Looking beyond alternative security provision to justice institutions, observers have voiced concerns that informal justice provision often draws on the normative structures of the community in which it operates, accentuating existing gender hierarchies, and showing preferences to the norms of the community over the rights of the individual (Kerrignan *et. al* 2009). This is particularly relevant regarding gender, as studies have demonstrated that informal justice mechanisms can reflect patriarchal norms and that these are not always useful alternatives for women who lack access to appropriate security and justice institutions (Manganaro & Poland, 2012; Wojkowska, 2006).

Within refugee camps, it is not unusual to see informal justice and security frameworks developing within the refugee community itself (for example see Pasquetti, 2015; Sullivan & Tobin, 2014). However, these mechanisms are also in danger of replicating patriarchal norms of the dominant group. Crisp's work in refugee camps in Kenya found that women especially suffered under informal frameworks which were run by male elders. For example, women could be arrested for adultery and imprisoned without trial (Crisp, 2000). However, there is little literature on urban (i.e. non-camp) refugees' methods of resolving conflict or accessing security providers in their host communities,

particularly if they have uncertain, or illegal status. Most of the literature on refugees in the Global South show the ways in which refugees struggle with formal and state providers of security (such as army, police or border patrols) as demonstrated further below. Reports that explore urban refugee's experiences with state security providers broadly highlight how they are routinely at risk of arrest by police over their refugee status, and therefore cannot rely on these networks for assistance. For example, Pavenello (2010) found that urban Somali refugees battled to access services due to their tendency to keep a low profile in the city and were regularly harassed and bullied by police and security forces. Palmgren, (2014) examining refugees in Bangkok found that as Thailand is not a signatory to UNHCR's 1951 protocol, refugees have a precarious legal position, spending great amounts of effort in avoiding authorities and being forced to work in the informal sector, leading to greater insecurity and opportunities for exploitation. Self-settled Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh are vulnerable to violence, corruption and exploitation, some of which is perpetrated by police, because of their lack of documentation (O Driscoll, 2017). Even in situations where urban refugees do have legal status, they are often still harassed and forced to pay bribes, not only to local police but sometimes also to UNHCR staff in order to receive assistance (see: Campbell, 2006; Landau, 2010; Morris, 2010; Nyaoro, 2010). Pasquetti's (2013, 2015) work with Palestinian communities living under Israeli rule, highlights how mechanisms of law enforcement, including police informants and surveillance culture, creates emotional climates of fear, resulting in distrust of both neighbours and wider security services. As such, refugees are unlikely to use these formal sources of security provision in order to enhance their personal protection or in order to aid issues of conflict within their communities.

Examining a gendered angle regarding refugees and security institutions, Rosenberg (2016) notes how police are often a significant source of insecurity for urban refugee women. Her report highlights how police in various contexts put refugee women under pressure to engage in sexual acts when detained or imprisoned because of their lack of documentation.

Focusing on the experiences of Syrian refugees in their host communities, some studies that have noted their use of alternative security and justice provisions, due to discomfort in using state security services. Riach & James (2016) explored the use of alternative mechanisms (such as Syrian leaders within the camps) within Za'atari camp in Jordan, which operated because many refugees felt unable to access justice systems, lacked correct documentation and held strong suspicions of police. Whilst they agreed on the importance of these groups, their work also highlighted the poor representation of women, noting that the one women's group that did exist had very little authority. Sullivan & Tobin, (2014) also focused on Za'atari camp, examining the use of Syrian 'street mayors' that were utilised to resolve conflicts amongst refugees. However, they demonstrated how these roles were filled by

older men and were prone to corruption. In Lebanon, there have been a few studies that have considered refugees' use of informal mechanisms, such as political parties, in order to resolve conflict. For example, Carpi et al. (2016) examined Syrian refugees in three localities in Lebanon and highlighted refugees' preference for informal security providers due to their lack of legal status. Boustani et al. (2016) also considered refugee use of the existing 'hybrid security' framework in Lebanon as a means of accessing protection or resolving conflict in Beirut. However, these studies did not look at gendered experiences and perspectives of security provision, and the Jordanian examples are completely camp based. One urban based exception is Özaşçılar et al. (2019) who found positive use of police, security services and crime reporting amongst Syrian refugees in Istanbul.

There is a lacuna in the literature on how refugees' access security and justice provision, especially in non-camp environments, and indeed how they might resolve conflict in contexts where they may struggle to access these providers. Furthermore, there is little literature that examines how refugee status affects not only their impressions of security providers (which has been touched on in academic research) but also their interactions with them. Lastly, there is little information on how gender, and other identities, might affect these perspectives and interactions with security.

Host Community & Urban Refugee Relationships

Host community relationships are an important factor regarding sense of security and protection for refugees (Lyytinen, 2017). Reactions of host communities towards incoming urban refugees is often mixed and their responses to urban refugees has a significant effect on refugees' sense of security and belonging. In contrast to camp-based refugees, self-settled refugees have a 'direct impact on the host society's infrastructure, services and economy…(which) can lead to a lower standard of living for the host community' (Kelberer, 2017, p. 148). As a result, host communities can tend towards negative attitudes towards urban refugees. These can manifest in xenophobic attacks on refugee populations (Landau, 2010). Further, Fábos & Kibreab (2007) argue that by securitising the issue of refugees (i.e. indicating the heightened security risk putatively caused by refugee populations), governments breed paranoia and xenophobia amongst their populations towards refugees. Therefore, refugees can find themselves in an environment where they can be accused of anything from stealing 'local jobs', straining resources, people smuggling, increasing criminality to affecting political stability. Jacobsen et al. (2014) found Sudanese refugees in Cairo citing 'mistreatment by the local community' to be the factor that concerned and affected them the most, after concerns over lack of funds. Landau's (2005; 2010) extensive work with refugees and migrants in South Africa finds that many locals think that refugee communities are inherently criminal and a drain on public resources. Xenophobic attacks in the country are well documented, and these stereotypes fuel extortion, arbitrary arrest and detention

of non-nationals. Dryden-Peterson (2006) found that even in situations of positive refugee contributions towards a local community, xenophobia can still be present and can hinder or prevent empowering, self-reliant solutions for refugees. The literature examined above indicates that host populations incline toward negative perspectives of refugees, justifying their stance through arguments that refugees adversely affect local livelihoods and human security concerns. This demonstrates a general tendency to view incoming refugee populations in highly negative terms, understandably so, in resource-compromised communities.

Consequently, host communities can have a significant impact on how refugees perceive their personal safety and security and their wider sense of belonging. Regarding urban refugee women's experiences of host communities, studies that have examined the lives of internally displaced women and girls in contexts of the global south note that living in unfamiliar cities results in heightened seclusion, which exacerbates isolation and depression (Agadjanian, 1998). Jops et al. (2016) found that Chin refugee women in Delhi felt marginalised and discriminated against by their host community and as a result, had formed a strong insular community network that they all relied heavily upon in order to get by in their city of asylum.

Spotlighting communities that are hosting Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon, one can see the effects of the protracted crisis on livelihoods, natural resources, housing, medical care and education facilities (see for example: LCRP, 2015; Midgley & Eldebo, 2013; Zetter & Ruaudel, 2014). These communities have been widely praised for their support and hospitality towards Syrian refugees. However, most reports from humanitarian agencies in the last few years note the shortening of patience and growing frustration with the protraction of the crisis and the strain on resources in undeveloped areas (Davis & Taylor, 2013; Yıldız & Uzgören, 2016). Frequently, host communities echo their governments' rhetoric and prefer to emphasise the temporary nature of refugees, that they are 'guests' that need to return to Syria at the end of the conflict (Berti, 2015; Guay, 2016). Despite this, few reports of xenophobia have emerged, although high levels of verbal harassment regarding stealing jobs and resources is noted (UNHCR et al. 2017). Kinship links and some shared language, culture or religion alongside a long, regional history of displacement and mutual refugee hosting helps keep xenophobia in check (De Vriese, 2006; Dionigi, 2017). For example, Anubha & Seferis's (2014) work in Iraqi Kurdistan notes how shared language and religion have led to greater linkages between incoming Syrian refugees and Iraqi Kurds. Whilst there may be a building resentment or frustration, many individuals pride themselves on their humanitarian responsibility towards Syrians, and many have assisted Syrian families without any compensation or prompting (Mackreath, 2014; Thorleifsson, 2016).

Communities hosting Syrians have more recently become recipients of aid and assistance in order to address uneven care amongst refugees and host communities in deprived municipalities, and to address growing resentment over unbalanced distribution of assistance (UNHCR 3RP, 2016). Some research has suggested that relationships with host communities are key to assisting refugees in not only settling into their communities but also ensuring they have a network of assistance. For example, Onoma, (2013) found that when African refugees were not intermeshed within a community, they were more vulnerable to violence and demonization if state authorities expressed anti-refugee rhetoric or enforced anti-refugee legislation. However, if refugees had a high interaction with elites in the communities in which they lived, they were more likely to be protected. Although this might result in subjugation toward particular groups, it provides a measure of protection for refugees.

Syrian Refugee women in urban settings

The studies highlighted above show some of the complexities of refugee women's experiences in urban settings. Urban settings transform refugee women's lives in complex ways, occasionally benefiting women's independence, employment opportunities, empowerment and personal security, and other times compromising it. The breakdown of family kinship ties and community can place women at significant risk and gendered violence appears as one of the few 'knowns' about these women's experiences (Freccero, 2015). Echoing much of the literature above, Syrian refugee women are suffering from a range of exploitation, abuse, safety and security concerns. Research has highlighted how some Syrian women have engaged in survival sex on order to establish livelihoods. Child marriage has also been noted as a survival strategy (Save the Children, 2014). High rates of ongoing domestic violence against women have been presented (Al-Shdayfat, 2017). Various reports by UNWOMEN (2013, 2014, 2018) have noted the frequency of GBV amongst Syrian refugee populations, including verbal and sexual harassment and heightened experience of domestic abuse. These reports have also discussed the restricted mobility of Syrian women and their inability to access labour opportunities, and, in Lebanon, concerns of accessing police and security services in order to resolve issues of personal safety (UN Women, 2018). El-Masri's (2013) found that while some Syrian refugee women may be empowered by living in urban areas, gaining new mobility and opportunities, others may lose some of the freedom they possessed before, having their mobility restricted for their own protection, or gaining mobility to their detriment. On this last point, a study from Lebanon indicated that men fearing arrest may use women to collect humanitarian aid, as they perceive women at being at a lesser risk of being stopped, detained or deported (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). This literature presents a small picture of Syrian refugee women's experiences and shifting gender roles in exile. Whilst emphasising their particular gendered risks and vulnerabilities, it points to difficulties and challenges around mobility and issues of harassment and abuse both in the private and public realm.

This first section of Chapter Three has defined urban refugees and, examining literature across varied refugee contexts, considered the ways in which a range of insecurities are experienced and created by structural issues. It has highlighted, where possible, urban refugee women's experiences to demonstrate the ways in which gendered identities affect experiences of (in)security within cities. Whilst much of this literature provides insight into the realities of life for urban refugee communities, and particularly the ways in which these experiences are gendered, most of this research is under-theorised. As such, it doesn't provide a clear conceptual basis for exploring or analysing the issue that affect refugee insecurity more systematically. Having established some of the interconnecting and relational ways in which refugees experience insecurity, the following section will examine theoretical concepts of feminist geopolitics and feminist geolegality. These theories aid in situating security in the lived, everyday whilst drawing attention to the ways in which different scales and structures, as well as individual capabilities, shape these experiences. This provides a theoretical framework in which to consider refugee women's experiences of insecurity within their host cities.

Theorising urban refugees' experiences of (in)security

Feminist Geopolitical approaches to (in)security

Studies of security and space have been critiqued for their focus on the concerns of state sovereignty, borders, control and global issues, such as terrorism. Many of these studies have emerged from the disciplines of international relations and geopolitics and are perceived as 'normative' theories of security, typically focused on state-centric concerns of security, warfare and the framing of enemies (Williams & Massaro, 2013). As such, conceptualisations of security in this context have focused on an identity 'which needs protection from the danger posed by a different external other' (Sharp, 2007, p. 383). Refugees, particularly those from the peripheral world that have sought asylum in the Metropole, have been the subject of a number of geopolitical examinations, as their mobility, border crossings and presence is perceived as an outside 'threat' to the stability of nations (Chimni, 1998; Hyndman, 2012).

In a special issue of City and Society, Fawaz & Akar (2012) present a compellingly way of theorising (in)security. They emphasise that rather than purely a matter of 'national self-defence perpetrated in the name of a common good' security is better understood as a landscape of 'public, communal and individual responses to a set of constructed, contested and negotiated threats'. They note the performative power of security 'primarily as the generator of particular forms of spatialities that can extend beyond national territories' (p. 106). They conclude by noting that security is not 'imposed' but is rather

'continually negotiated, contested, defined, and redefined through the everyday practices of social agents who rarely agree on what constitutes a threat, to whom and how' (p. 107).

Fawaz and Akar extend ideas of security beyond a focus on monolithic security networks and borders, encouraging an examination from the bottom up, through examining individuals' lived experiences of security. By doing so, they highlight that security is not static, structurally imposed or purely institutional. Rather, it is fluid, embedded, embodied and material to individuals – security is a structure as much as it is a response. Thus (in)securities reproduce space just as space reproduces (in)securities.

Whilst not expressively 'feminist' in their approach, Fawaz & Akar pay homage to feminist theorists of human security and urban geopolitics. They do this through emphasising an understanding of security as lived, by an examination of the banal everyday processes, interactions and mobilities of city dwellers and a disorienting of security as a purely top-down, process and structure. Furthermore, they stress the spatiality of security and the specificity of the city scale in security. The following section builds on this conceptualisation through an examination of feminist geopolitical and human security theories of security. It also examines feminist geolegality literature, in order to consider the specific role that the structures of law can have in shaping refugee lives.

Feminist geopolitics seeks to ground geopolitical issues and reconfigure hierarchies of scale. It does this by drawing together concerns of power, identity and representation alongside the actualities of everyday life of individuals and communities in order to understand realities of security (Smith, 2012; Williams & Massaro, 2013, p. 569). Theoretically, it merges geopolitical concerns of security (typically focused on concerns of the state) and human security concerns (security concerns of the individual), in order to create a different territorial foundation upon which security is based (Hyndman, 2001, p. 214). Consequently, rather than a pure focus on 'normative' security, it emphasises the importance of looking at the scale of the body in order to attend to gendered, racialized, classed, sexualised spaces of the everyday and recognises the embodied and partial nature of knowledge production (Hyndman, 2004; Williams & Massaro, 2013). In turn, this focus on the micro scale of the body, daily practice and place aids understanding of the production of the macro scales of the nation and the international.

By focusing enquiry on varying political and geographical scales, feminist political geographers have intertwined the personal and the political and explore how private/public spheres and spaces are overlapping and mutually constitutive. By drawing this examination across both public and private spheres, it focuses attention on the relationships between the spatial, temporal and subjective scales and concentrates on the networks of power that shape public/private spaces as (in)secure (J. H. Clark, 2013, p. 851; Hyndman & Giles, 2011; Lemanski, 2012; Williams & Massaro, 2013, p. 570). As discussed

in Chapter Two, binarised divisions of space into private or public, female and male, are limiting. Rather, the ways in which different genders access space is better understood in graded terms of inclusion and exclusion, or forbidden and permitted (Fenster, 1999; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2001). Feminist geopolitics enrichens perspectives on the varying meanings of different spaces and the ways in which these spaces have scalar and political meaning (Sharp, 2007). Thus, feminist geographers continually present and analyse the interlinkages and relationship between domestic/private and public spaces. For example, they have highlighted the ways in which women use domesticated norms to confront wider state activities and how daily spatial negotiations have wider implications and relationships with national and global concerns and structures.

In decentring the state as the primary theoretical object, feminist geopolitics places marginalised groups who inordinately experience insecurity, such as refugees and migrants, as the critical unit of analysis (Torres, 2018). For a refugee, these concerns of the everyday might include a wide range of scalar and interconnected issues of state legality and refugee status. These feature alongside day to day worries of shelter, livelihood security and personal protection, which are often shaped by, and connected to, their legal status. Thus, in focusing on experiences of refugees, feminist geopolitics examines multiple scales of (in)security from the state to the refugee household (Hyndman, 2010, p. 170). It places theoretical focus on how individuals construct security within the everyday, emphasising the deeply political aspect of the intimate and the ways in which this is embedded into political life (Cassidy et al., 2018). Categories of identity, such as race and gender, are embedded in global, national and local structures and mechanisms and greatly shape experiences of security in the lived every day. Thus, attention to intersectional identities and the ways in which these different identities are constructed through relationships of power, adds further richness to this examination. Hyndman (2004) discusses the importance of utilising axes of difference (intersectionality) in order to understand how spatial mobility is influenced. In doing this, she considers the wider relationship, particularly for refugees, between mobility, spatiality and geopolitics. For example, refugees require mobility to access humanitarian aid points or UNHCR offices in their host cities in order to secure both immediate (for example, food security) and longer-term securities (such as asylum through UNHCR processes). These spatial mobilities are therefore linked to local and global scales and securities.

Looking at the experiences of Congolese refugees living in Kamapla, Lyytinen (2015a, 2015b, 2017) explores refugee experiences of (in)security, protection, space and the right to the city (RTC). She highlights different scales of insecurity that refugees experience, (micro: home and shelter; meso: relations with host community; and macro: the wider city) and the ways in which refugees attempt to enhance their sense of safety and protection within the city through the claiming of particular spaces and locations (2015a). She found that refugees held complex feelings of (in)security whereby 'security

and insecurity were highly related and at times inseparable issues' (Lyytinen, 2015a). For example, whilst Congolese refugees felt a sense of security from living in neighbourhoods where other Congolese refugees were present, this could also add to their insecurity as they were unsure of other refugee's identities and whose 'side' of the conflict they represented. There was a sense of security in being removed from the conflict from which they've fled, but also an insecurity in not having full rights and freedoms in their city of asylum. She found that the various micro, meso and macro scales of space and protection overlapped and influenced refugees' impressions of security and space, and that everyday encounters mattered demonstrably regarding a sense of protection and security [2015a]. The way in which Lyytinen explores the interrelated and scalar aspects of space and security, and the complexity of fluctuating (in)security in the lived every day, are relevant to this thesis. However, her work rarely touched on issues of city-present security providers (i.e. everyday policing), nor on the role of other structures such as the legal status of refugees (especially as materialised in their possession, or not, of 'papers') or of gender. Thus, whilst her work is extremely relevant, in its scalar examination of refugees, urban space, security and protection there is further conceptual work to be done, in particular the consideration of how the wider macro context affects refugee status and ideas of security.

Clark's (2013) research with Kurdish women is particularly helpful as her context closely mirrors my own research setting in Amman and Beirut. She examines the role of the development agenda in transforming the spatial mobilities of Kurdish migrant women in Istanbul. Her work maps the spaces that women access and interact with in order to examine how conditions of security are encountered and negotiated. Clark calls for research that provides accounts of the complexities of lived practice, which she achieves through a focus on both embodiment and space. Drawing on the work of feminist geopolitics and human security, she argues that security is 'embodied knowledge' and is best understood through an examination of 'intimate geographies of fear, violence and injustice' (p. 838). With an intimate, bodily focus, institutional security policies and practices (and indeed their failures) can be tracked and interrogated. Through an examination of space, Clark unpicks the horizontal scalar relationship between private spaces of domesticity and public spaces of the city and the ways these interrelate, influence and reproduce each other. Clark's view of human security as fundamentally emergent and spatial, emphasises the need to reframe security as foregrounding spatial and temporally different experiences of security (p. 851). Thus, she interprets human security as a relational, multi direction and cross-spatial (public/private) network through which various legal and state inconsistencies can be examined (p. 837; 851). Through this examination, she also reflects my position of public and private spaces as graded and overlapping and a consideration of how this shapes marginalised women's mobility.

Examining violence, gender and the war on terror in urban areas of Pakistan, Mustafa et al. (2019) highlight the linkages between the daily experiences of violence for marginalised groups living in slum conditions, and the ways in which this violence is shaped and linked by global issues of terrorism, and regional issues of ethnicity. In this study, urban dwellers are presented as experiencing a continuum of violence. This extends from the poor infrastructures of their homes, to their encounters and persecution by police and army. In this way, Mustafa *et al.* emphasis the different and relational scales of violence which affect the lives of marginalised groups and how this are interrelated and relevant. Whilst they do focus on issues and effects of scales of 'violence', I would argue that this very much overlaps, and can also be framed by, concepts of (in)security.

Looking at the specific ways in which security and geopolitical concerns are inscribed on the intimate bodies of female citizens, Smith (2012) examines the geopolitics at work in women in Kashmir, whereby reproductive bodies and babies become the focus of familial and religious concerns, which tie into wider regional and national issues over nation, ethnicity and statehood. Fluri (2011) examines the site of the gendered body in regard to Afghan women and humanitarian workers and the wider geopolitical networks represented in each. In this context she highlights the body as a 'geographic space that is a symbolic, material and at times violent agent of geopolitics' (p. 531). These studies indicate the ways in which the intimate bodies of women represent ideas of nation, thus showing the strong interlinkage between global, national, domestic and corporeal scales. Because of the ways in which ideas of 'nation' are inscribed onto women, their (in)security becomes salient, as they can be targeted or excluded because of these associations.

Feminist geopolitics aids in conceptualising how marginalised and oppressed groups experience and construct securities within their day to day lives. By focusing on the overlapping, scalar relationship of issues from the macro to the micro, it allows for a focus on the lived realities of individuals that are shaped by (and in turn shape) political and social realities and contexts. Thus 'security' becomes a complex, scalar, relational concern rather than a top down fixation of borders, sovereignty and external threats. Through such a framework, refugees can move beyond narratives that place them as a destabilising security threat. Rather, feminist geopolitics calls for a grounded, multi-angled examination of the ways in which refugees experience various (in)securities, embedded in the intimate to the global. By focusing on the everyday, feminist geopolitics demands an examination of space and mobility. Lastly, by emphasising the ways in which 'bodies are not inactive agents' (Cassidy, et al., 2018, p. 140), feminist geopolitical theorising is consistent with a critical realist approach, in their emphasis on how different structures interact with individuals capacity to shape and constitute experiences of (in)security.

Feminist geolegality

Whilst feminist geopolitical scholarship emphasises the multiple and overlapping macro and micro scales of (in)security, a crucial aspect which is underplayed is the significance of the legal: of borders and status. Whilst feminist geopolitics explores refugee's experiences of spatiality, mobility and security, feminist geolegality provides an addition avenue of theorising, in considering how macro issues of state law shape spatial experiences of the everyday. Refugees operate and exist within global, national and regional structures and institutions. Their legal status, that is, the way in which they are labelled and categorised by wider structures, has fundamental repercussions for their lives and their experiences of (in)security (Zetter, 2007; Brickell & Cuomo, 2019). Moreover, these repercussions are scaled, as laws that pertain to refugees legalise or illegalise their presence at varying spatial scales and shapes the spatially-bounded institutions and resources that they can access.

Legal geography focuses not only on the shaping and boundary creating relationship between the law and the individual, but the specific ways in which this is embedded in the spatial. Legal geography, also interchangeably referred to as geolegality, is not so much a field, but rather:

> 'braided lines of inquiry that have emerged out of the confluence of various intellectual interests… (it is) a stream of scholarship that makes the interconnections between law and spatiality, and especially their reciprocal construction into core objects of inquiry (Braverman et al., 2014, p. 1).

From a geolegal perspective, law is always grounded in the spatial, and space is inscribed with legal meaning. In these studies, space is foregrounded and serves as an organising principal (*ibid*, p1 -2). Legal Geographers examine the ways in which territories, and those within them, are inscribed by legal means and the ways in which legal rule localises people's rights and obligations in space (Von Benda-Beckmann & Von Benda-Beckmann, 2014). Delaney emphasises that the 'legal' is associated with statist organisations but includes other expressions of legality, such as customs and norms (Delaney, 2015, p. 97). As such, legal geography encompasses a broad range of rules, rights, laws, customs and norms that claim societal authority, can engage in consequential 'punishments' and is also broadly interested in ideas of social justice and the ways in which this is spatialised (Delaney, 2016). Within this thesis, many of the legal concerns related to refugees are rooted in policies, which are informed by law but are typically not inscribed 'laws' in themselves. For example, Lebanon has chosen not to govern the Syrian refugee crisis within its borders by law, but by 'government decisions' (Janmyr, 2016). Despite not being 'law', government decisions and policies have wide ranging legal, and therefore social, impacts and are backed by authoritative powers. Noting Delaney's broad definitions above, legal geography is not only concerned with law that is embedded and authorised

by statist organisations but wide and varied forms of legality that permeate and construct day to day lives.

Whilst much geolegal research investigates the ways in which space and law are mutually co-constitutive, it is the emphasis on social boundary drawing that geo-legality frequently highlights which is a helpful concept for this thesis. Delaney (2015, p. 99) emphasises the way in which law 'draws lines, constructs insides and outsides, assigns legal meanings to lines and attaches legal consequences to crossing them'. Frequently geo-legalists points to how refugees are prime examples of this in action, but thus far there appears to be little work that engages with refugee populations from an explicitly geolegal perspective. Refugees are frequently illegalised through the crossing of borders (boundaries) in a bid to find safety, or indeed, for leaving the boundaries and confines of refugee camps in order to seek livelihoods (for example see: Kiama & Likule, 2013; Pickering 2012). Law shapes the ways in which refugees can (or can't) access medical care, education and labour opportunities and live safely in host communities. For example, legal manoeuvring around defining an individual as a refugee allows Governments to justify the provision (or removal) of protection frameworks for individuals from particular nations (Zetter, 2007). Furthermore, it shapes the spaces that they are welcome in, and indeed, can shape host communities' attitudes towards them (Campbell, 2006). Many refugee scholars emphasise the challenge of refugees establishing livelihoods in contexts where they often lack legal status or rights to work (Grabska, 2006). This has a direct spatial effect. Refugees in these circumstances are compelled to live in socially marginalised areas of the city for their affordability and anonymity, which then further enhance their insecurity (Dominguez & Menjivar, 2014). Legislation that prevents their access to the labour market, results in refugees working in informal spaces, or private domestic spaces, which has particular gendered repercussions of exploitation and insecurity, as explored in the first section of this chapter (Buscher and Heller 2010). Thus, attention is required as to how law, legal documentation and other policies relating to refugees in host communities is constructed. This can assist in understanding refugees' restrictions and/or opportunities and insecurities and allows for opportunities to explore the spatiality of this relationship. Comparative work can be useful here, as analysing how laws operate in different contexts and how this shapes the ways refugees are policed, or how laws and policies provide them with particular rights and opportunities, will make it clearer how the law shapes social behaviours and networks rights to the micro, neighbourhood level.

Geolegal work on plural forms of law and their reciprocal relationships with space is also relevant. Legal pluralism can be understood as a concept which:

'draws attention to the possibility that law of various kinds, with different foundations of legitimacy, validity, power and authority, and with different degrees of institutionalisation and formalization, can coexist with the same social space, often at different scales (Von Benda-Beckmann & Von Benda-Beckmann, 2014, p. 34)

For example, within the same 'space' of a community, different scales of law can operate in tandem. Religious or customary laws can function (and compete for legitimacy), alongside global human rights laws and/or state law regarding issues such as marriage, domestic violence, land and property rights. State and religious courts can also operate in conjunction, or overlap, as can various providers of security and justice. As addressed earlier, refugee communities can often seek out alternative methods of security or justice provision, if they feel unable to access formal services due to the scrutiny they bring. As such, geolegality places a spotlight not only on the macro structures of state and international law, but also on alternative formal and informal structures and institutions who enact laws and policies and are grounded into communities.

Legal geography has been criticised by feminists for failing to acknowledge categories of difference in its analysis, and for its tendency to focus on wider transnational structures. For example, Meth *et al.'s* (2019) research has demonstrated the ways in which different legal structures at work in communities have gendered effects. They highlight how security in marginalised communities is shaped by both formal and informal mechanisms of law and influenced by gendered biases. This research demonstrates the importance of examining the intersectional impacts of geolegality on various identities. To address these issues, Brickell & Cuomo (2019) have offered a theory of feminist geolegality. This theory is presented as a grouping and overlapping of feminist geopolitics and legal geography, which emphasises embodied accounts of the effects of law, as well as methodologies of intersectionality (Brickell & Cuomo, 2019, p. 107). As such, feminist legal geography has moved critical attention:

'from the macro level of political analysis to more complex engagements between private and public spheres; to diffuse, multifaceted and relational understandings of power and empowerment; to social and cultural citizenship; and to political geographies that fluidly cut across gendered constructions of "formal" and "informal" (Statz & Pruitt, 2019, p. 1113).

Brickell & Cuomo (2019) point to the importance of engaging in feminist epistemology and thus employing an approach that demonstrates how power is enacted in everyday encounters. They echo calls in feminist geopolitics to ground investigation in lived experiences and to explore the ways in which law plays out in intimate life (and indeed how intimate life shapes law). State refugee laws and policies are typically worded in gender neutral ways, overlooking gendered differences in how women

and men experience refugee-ness (Freedman, 2015). Yet law has gendered and spatial effects. As such, feminist geolegality encourages attention to the ways in which law shape gendered experiences, particularly the spatial nature of these experiences.

Feminist geolegality is fairly embryonic, however it does usefully encourage a wider assessment of the relationship between scales of law and space, and how these in turn can have gendered affects and outcomes. Reflecting on the ways in which refugee's lives, opportunities and day to day experiences of security are widely shaped by law and the gendered vulnerabilities that this facilitates, refugee settings would benefit from the analysis of a feminist geolegal approach. This allows for a deeper consideration of the ways in which different laws and policies operate at different scales to shape spatial experiences of the everyday. Regarding this thesis, a feminist geolegal approach encourages an examination of how different scales of law play out in the everyday, spatial experiences of refugee women and how different laws and policies create spatial boundaries of the permitted and forbidden in host cities (Fenster, 1999).

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed refugee literature that explores the experiences of urban refugees living in cities of the majority world, and where possible, highlighted the gendered experiences of urban refugee women in these contexts. Specifically focusing on issues of shelter and livelihoods, legal status and protection, access to security and justice institutions and relationships with host communities, the first part of this chapter demonstrated the complex experiences of insecurity that urban refugees face and how these are often relational and overlapping. Current literature demonstrates that women do experience refugee-ness in differing ways to men. Indeed, these differences in experiences would be enriched using intersectional approaches, which rarely seem to be undertaken. Women experience a mixed and complex experience of new roles when they become refugees, which lead to varying experiences of both security and insecurity. Women are clearly at risk to gender based violence both within and outside their dwellings in their host communities. However, they also experience new roles and opportunities – some of which are empowering, and others very much the opposite. There are notable gaps in the literature and several questions emerge. For example, to what extent do gendered (and other) identities shape experiences of (in)security within host communities? As women are frequently highlighted as the victims of gender-based violence emerging from intimate partners to landlords and police, do they seek out formal methods of protection (such as police) or do they use informal avenues that are often critiqued for their patriarchal deference, and what are their impressions of these providers?

Considering the literature reviewed in this chapter, Fawaz & Akar's (2012) description of the contested, confusing and overlapping scales of (in)security at the city scale point to some of the realities that urban refugee communities face. Refugees are often perceived as a threat and a source of insecurity (Chimni, 1998) but in themselves negotiate a multitude of insecurities from the micro to the macro. Urban refugee literature is predominantly focused on the varying scales and aspects of insecurity that refugees experience, and thus feminist theories of geolegality, human security and geopolitics are particularly valuable in theorising and conceptualising these experiences. These theories ground ideas of law and security in the everyday and focus on how wider structures and scales affect the lived experiences of those most marginalised. A feminist geopolitical lens probes questions about the scalar and relational aspects of insecurity that refugee women might experience, whilst a feminist geolegal approach highlights the ways in which refugee policies and laws shape the spaces that refugee women are 'permitted' or 'forbidden' from accessing and the ways in which law draws boundaries that place refugee women in situations of vulnerability and exploitation (Fenster, 1999).

The last theoretical chapter will focus more specifically on the Syrian refugee crisis and the approach that Lebanon and Jordan have taken towards the incoming refugee populations.

Chapter Four: Jordan and Lebanon and their refugee policies

The previous two chapters have explored theoretical concepts of identity, agency, space and security, and the relationship between these, alongside literature that explores the experiences of urban refugees, in order to build a conceptual framework which underpins the empirical chapters of this thesis. This chapter changes direction to focus more specifically on the states, cities and refugee populations that are the object of this thesis's investigation. It introduces each of the case study contexts and assesses the state structure and security apparatus at work in each nation. Differences in state capacity and operations of security services are important structural elements to consider regarding refugee's quotidian experiences in their host cities. Noting how international relations theory has often labelled these states as either strong (Jordan) or weak (Lebanon), this chapter begins by exploring the usefulness of this paradigm alongside an examination of state and security structures within each country. Alongside this analysis, an exploration of each nation's capital city is presented. These cities are the economic epi-centres of both nations and are shaped by the same ongoing and historic socio-political issues which structure these states as 'strong' or 'weak'. The second part of the Chapter explores Lebanon and Jordan's policies regarding Syrian refugees from the beginning of the crisis in 2011 up until 2017 (when the fieldwork for this thesis was completed). It analyses the ways in which each state's complex history of hosting other refugee populations, social demographics and economic reliance on migrant workers shapes decisions towards Syrian refugees accordingly.

Theorising Strong and Weak States in the Arab World

International relations and geopolitical theory have frequently framed and analysed states in the Middle East as 'strong' or 'weak' (Fawcett, 2017). Analysing the strength of a state is achieved through scrutinising a state's ability to exert their capabilities and resources, penetrate their societies and maintain their sovereignty, their borders and their security (Migdal, 1988). State strength is often associated with issues of state security – the ability for a state to control its borders and manage internal and external threats and to hold a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force (Hazbun, 2016; Weber, 2004).

Jordan and Lebanon are typically framed and understood as 'strong' and 'weak' states respectively in this regard (e.g Atzili, 2010; Salloukh, 1996), although there has been critique of these terms (see below). The labelling of each of these states as 'strong' and 'weak' provides an important axis of comparison of refugee experiences in each of its capital cities. The extent to which a state can 'permeate' its society has important implications for refugee communities. This includes: how refugee policies are developed at state level and then enacted; how states 'control' their borders and manage

incoming refugee flows; how refugee settlement is managed (camps, cities); how refugees are assisted and integrated within a receiving state; how security and justice are provided within these states and how refugee communities can access these services; and the ways in which gendered (and other identities) are institutionalised in these processes and structures. As such, the strength of the state can have a marked effect on the day to day life of a refugee, shaping an individual's access to labour, shelter, protection and security. Comparing Amman and Beirut provides an important means of analysing the role of refugee policies created and enacted within a weak/strong state, the politics and dynamics of each state, the way that security services operate and the ways in which this affects women's lived experiences of (in)security.

Analysis of Arab States into categories of strong/weak has been criticised as an orientalising device used to 'other' Arab States from the Western 'norm'. Indeed, these labelling strategies are used by Western powers to intervene or capitalise, on the so-called fragility of weak states (Fawcett, 2017; Fregonese, 2012). In addition, viewing states as 'strong' or 'weak' places undue emphasis on the capacity of the state to implement security (Hazbun, 2016). Security in some contexts of the Middle East is multifaceted, on occasion hybrid, and experienced by a plethora of stakeholders who have varying attitudes and impressions of what 'security' may look like and how it is implemented (Fregonese, 2012; Hazbun, 2016). Equally, scholars have argued that understanding some states as 'strong' is problematic, as some are better conceptualised as 'fierce'. This can be understood as a state's focus on 'survival above all else', designating institutions within the state to support this aim, frequently resulting in a loss of accountability and transparency, thus giving rise to authoritarian regimes rather than 'strong states' (Heydemann, 2018). As such, the use of these shorthand labels has been criticised for overlooking the complexities of how states operate across various scales of fragility, weakness, ferocity and strength.

Conscious of this critique, this next section will consider the governments of Jordan and Lebanon, their national histories, social demographics, the dynamics and planning of its capital cities, and an exploration of how each state has dealt with the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis within its borders. Throughout this, it will weave analysis of how each of these states presents as 'strong' or 'weak'. In its conclusion, it will draw together an assessment of the strong/weak state paradigm and outline how these terms will be used in this thesis.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan emerged from colonial and imperialist histories of the Ottoman and British empires in the Middle East. The State was created in 1921 as a British protectorate following WW1 and the end of the Ottoman Empire, gaining full independence from Britain in 1946.

The Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy, ruled since 1921 by the Hashemite family (currently by King Abdullah II.) It borders Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria and the Palestinian territories. Its population (including Palestinian refugees) is approximately 10 million, of which the majority (92%) is Sunni Muslim (Ababsa, 2013). There is a small Christian population (3%) dispersed throughout the country, a small Shi'a Iraqi community in the Amman Governate and a small Druze community in the Azraq region, along with a number of other minority groups dotted throughout the country (De Bel-Air, 2013).

Jordan's population is frequently framed as consisting of two political-ethnic assemblages: 'East Bankers' (Trans-Jordanians) and 'West Bankers' (Jordanians of Palestinian origin), in reference to the opposite banks of the River Jordan (El Muhtaseb, 2013; Ryan, 2010). East Bankers are descended from the traditional, nomadic Bedouin tribes of the Trans-Jordan. These tribes were territorialized from the 1920's onward, curtailing their physical mobility and building them into the nation State (Massad, 2001, p. 56-59). Bedouins have strong links to the Hashemite Monarchy, recognising the Kings legitimacy to rule based on religious and tribal claims (*ibid*). As such, citizenship is connected to tribal and paternal ties, as the tribes provide the foundation on which the Jordanian government is grounded (Al Oudat & Alshboul, 2010). 'West Bankers' broadly describes Jordanians of Palestinian origin. In 1949, following the end of the Arab-Israeli War, what remained of Palestine (The West Bank and East Jerusalem) became part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (El Muhtaseb, 2013, p. 1). There were huge movements of Palestinians (voluntary and forced) from what was now Israeli territory into the West bank in what is referred to as *Al Nakba* (The Catastrophe). West Bankers encompasses not only these Palestinians, but also includes other Palestinian refugees who continued to arrive in the country as refugees following subsequent regional conflicts with Israel. With the loss of the territory of the West Bank to Israel in 1967, a significant number of Palestinians moved (or again, were forcibly moved) to the East Bank. Palestinians have rights to Jordanian citizenship, but there are layers of tension between each group of 'Bankers' which works across boundaries of class and wealth. Palestinians have been excluded from occupations in particular institutions (J. Massad, 2001) and each group tends to occupy different areas of the economy: West Bankers in the private sphere and East Bankers in the public/governmental sphere (Ababsa et al., 2016; Susser, 2011). Palestinian refugees have had a deep effect on the character of Jordan. Palestinians are estimated to consist of at least half of the Jordanian population (Ababsa et al., 2016). Many continue to live in refugee camps that were set up by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA) during the various refugee crises between 1948 and 1973. There are legacies of tensions over Black September in 1970 when Yasar Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), which operated out of established Palestinian refugee camps and represented a large majority of Jordanian-Palestinians, attempted to overthrow the Hashemite Monarchy. The legacy of Palestinian refugees

(and Iraqi refugees from the Gulf Wars) influences ongoing policies towards Syrian refugees (see more below). Tensions have somewhat abated between the two groups of 'Bankers' and both broadly support the Hashemite Monarchy.

Ryan [2014] considers external sources of economic aid, mostly from the USA and Saudi Arabia, are the bedrock of both the Kingdom's stability and its external security, alongside its internal support from East Bankers. Unlike its Gulf neighbours, the country is not resource rich. There are no great reserves of oil and it has extremely limited (and compromised) fresh-water resources (Schyns et al., 2015). Added to this, it is currently hosting the most refugees in the world (approximately 2.9 million [mostly] Iraqi, Syrian, Palestinian, Sudanese and Somali Refugees; Davis et al., 2016). The Kingdom is often perceived as a 'strong' and stable nation in a region that is particularly politically unstable and indeed it views itself 'as a bastion of moderation, stability (and) political reform' (Ryan, 2014, p. 152). Many of the institutions that make up the modern state were built from the support of Bedouin tribes alongside the expansion of the army (which consisted predominantly of Bedouins). However, analysts and academics are divided in their opinions, many viewing the nation as 'soft authoritarian' (Schwedler 2012) with questionable stability, potentially more 'fierce' then it is strong (Martínez, 2017). Wiktorowicz (2000) argues that the Jordanian State is a disciplinary power that operates through heavy monitoring and technologies of control of its population. This control is amplified through the State's prolific filtering into, and influence of, the development of civil society organisations. As such, civil society in the country is weak, and the State could best be thus framed as 'fierce' rather than 'strong'. Even though political parties have existed in Jordan since the establishment of the Kingdom, they have 'limited impact on political life in general and in parliamentary elections in particular' (Nahar, 2012, p. 121). The strongest alternative social force in the country outside of the monarchy is the Islamic political movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, and its political arm the Islamic Action Front (IAF) (G. E. Robinson, 1998). However, after many years of co-existence with the state, focusing on charitable work and democratic participation, relationships have deteriorated. The Muslim Brotherhood itself has had its offices shutdown on numerous occasions by the State and has suffered from internal schisms due to disagreeing political approaches post Arab-uprisings (Martínez, 2017b; Al Soudi, 2014).

Jordan, Syria and the Arab Uprisings

The Arab Uprisings, protests and demands for political and social reform that spread across several Middle Eastern countries in 2011, had minimal political impact on Jordan compared to other countries in the region. Whilst the uprisings oversaw regime changes in Egypt and Tunisia, and the onset of the ongoing civil war in Syria, the Jordanian government was not particularly affected. Leading up to the

Arab Uprisings, Jordan enjoyed relative internal stability with the notable exception of demonstrations for political reform in 1989. These demonstrations resulted from austerity measures from an IMF program and the ensuing protests resulted in some 'defensive' democratic reforms by the Hashemite Monarchy (Robinson, 1998; Ryan, 2010). This strategy was engaged again following protests in Jordan during the Arab Uprisings, with various political and legislative reforms offered which appeared to appease the monarchy-supporting Jordanian society (Martínez, 2017; Ryan, 2012, 2014). The strongest effect of the Arab Uprisings on Jordan has been felt through the Syrian civil war across its border, the influx of over 600,000 Syrian refugees and fears of the potential destabilisation influence of this on the country (Barnes-Darcy, 2013).

Before the civil war, Jordan had cordial relations with Syria, although there had been periods of tension (Ryan, 2006). There is a history of Syrian migrant workers from the South of Syria working in the North of Jordan, particularly around the Ramtha/Dara'a' region which allowed for some social links to particular regions, although nowhere close to the scale of Syrian migrant work in Lebanon. At the onset of the war, Jordan called for the removal of Bashar al-Assad. However, this was amended to a call for political reforms, with the expectation that al-Assad's position of power would continue as the civil war drew to a close (al Makahleh, 2017).

Security Framework in Jordan

Alongside its centralised political structure, the existing unitary security service infrastructure present in Jordan is also why the State is considered 'strong'. Jordan's security service is characterised by a top down structure where several security forces operate in tandem. Senior positions in the security services, including police and army, are predominantly held by 'East Bankers' and Palestinian-Jordanians have largely been excluded from the armed services (Massad, 2001). The Kingdom's security apparatus operates under the Ministry of Interior (MOI) as the Public Security Directorate (PSD). It is highly organised with strong organisational and structural links to the military through the appointment of high-ranking army personnel which further enhances state strength (Haysom & Pavenello, 2012; Massad, 2001; Ryan, 2012; Watkins, 2018). Day to day policing is over-seen by the Public Security Force (PSF) whilst counter terrorism and riot control is over seen by the Special Police Force (SPF) also known as the Gendarmerie or *Daraq* (MacIntyre, 2007). The Desert Police Force, which has evolved from a camel corps created in the 1920's by the British to police the desert areas of the Transjordan, acts as a separate section of the police force and consists solely of Bedouins that police the desert areas of Jordan (Al Oudat & Alshboul, 2010; Hubbard, 2014). An additional section of the police department called the '*Wafedin*', are responsible for checking work permits of 'foreign workers' (MOI, 2018). The General Intelligence Department (GID), the nation's intelligence

department, also known as the *Mukhabarat* (secret police) report directly to the King and bypass the MOI structure, and hold a revered and feared status amongst Jordanian citizens and refugees. Within the PSD is an additional department that is focused on providing security for Syrian refugee camps called the Syrian Refugees Affairs Directorate (SRAD).

'Policing' within the refugee camps was initially organised through Syrian street leaders (*Za'im*) (Sullivan & Tobin, 2014), but gradually community police programs have been developed through international partners and the Jordanian police force. These have been relatively successful; however they have been challenging to implement for refugees that live outside of camps (Watkins, 2018). It has been noted that refugees in urban areas are generally averse to engaging with police services, and that Jordan's tribal systems make 'community policing' challenging to implement as policing is often based on social capital and mediation (*ibid*). However, there is little known about refugee experiences and impressions of police services or their wider sense of security within their host communities, including how urban refugees might resolve conflict or difficulties. For example, between 2015-18, UNDP worked alongside security services in various locations in Jordan in order to enhance refugee's access to justice and security mechanisms within the State. The report noted several hinderances for refugees in accessing these mechanisms, including refugee women having difficulty in accessing justice for GBV and domestic abuse (UNDP, 2015), but did not include proposed solutions or alternative avenues that they may consider in regard to dispute resolution.

Urban Planning and Public Space in Amman

As discussed in earlier chapters, state policies, social structures and refugee identities are played out across real spaces. This section introduces the nature of these spaces within the city of Amman in more detail.

Amman is experiencing an ongoing spatial and a social identity crisis (Aljafari, 2014). It is not a traditionally planned Arab city, rivalling Cairo or Damascus. Rather, it is a modern city, suffering from intense growth spurts and, in recent decades, a sympathy towards Western-style planning which has hindered its potential to be planned appropriately (Hanania, 2014). Whilst the settlement of Philadelphia, which became Amman, has a rich and fascinating history, featuring Ammonites, Romans, Bedouins and Ottomans, it is only since the late 1870's that the city grew beyond a mere 2-3000 inhabitants. In particular, it has seen significant growth in the last century, when it was declared the capital of the new state of Trans-Jordan in 1921, transforming from a quiet backwater into a potential regional powerhouse (Potter et al., 2009). The significant influx of Palestinian refugees during *Al Nakba* had a marked effect on Amman's architectural appearance, through both effective beautification and modernist urban design projects and also high-rise flats and the growth of

population densities in poorer areas of the city (Hanania, 2014). Although urban planning regulations were in place, nepotism and opportunism meant these were often ignored. This 'disorganised' development, and penchant for rapid development projects has had a strong legacy on the city, resulting in a lack of green and 'traditional' public spaces (Hanania, 2014, pp. 466–468).

Negotiating uneven growth and in need of development, Amman has fallen victim to the region's penchant for privatisation. The city originally extended over seven hills (*jabals)* and centred around the traditional El Balad, the old city centre, also known as 'Downtown'. As the city has grown, the El Balad has been neglected by planners and wealthier residents in favour of the new city centre in Abdali, in the west of Amman. The Abdali project, launched in 2012, has sought to create a new 'downtown', attempting to refocus the city's centre with a project that is quite the opposite to its traditional centre (Al Rabady & Abu-Khafajah, 2015; Mango, 2014). The project takes priority in Amman, producing enclaves of elitism and pseudo public spaces, creating an increasingly divided city. This urban division is closely linked to economic and social divisions between the East and West of the city (Potter et al., 2009). The West of the city is associated with wealthier and more privileged elements of Ammani society, whilst the East of the city (including the neighbourhoods focused on in this study), is considered the poorer and 'informal' side of the city. It hosts migrant workers, refugees and poorer Jordanians and encompasses the Wihdat and Al Hussein Palestinian refugee camps which were created in the 1950's and 60's and were gradually absorbed by the rapid expansion of the city (Ababsa et al., 2016). Housing in this area of the city is typically informal and incrementally undertaken by residents. Over the years there have been projects to improve housing conditions and to formalise the slum-like conditions that Palestinians were living in (Shami, 1996). However, there is uneven development and social schisms in the city, further exacerbated by the arrival of low-income Syrian refugees in the past five years, a majority of whom have settled in the East of the city (Al-Tal & Ahmad Ghanem, 2019).

Amman generally lacks accessible, green open spaces and does not have a central, open square or plaza. Rather, it has been argued that the primary public space of Amman is Mecca Mall, a pseudo-public space of consumption located in the West of the city (Daher, 2008). Spontaneous protests take place typically on university campuses, refugee camps or outside King Hussein Mosque in El Balad (Schwedler, 2012). However, during the Arab Uprisings, citizens protested for reforms by closing one of the main transport networks at the Dakhliya Circle, closer to Parliament, Abdali and the more affluent areas of the city (Tobin, 2012). There are developments in place to further develop open spaces such as the Al Hussein Sports City park, the major open green park of the city. Many public spaces, or pseudo-public spaces (such as malls) are often not accessible to all citizens (Madbouly, 2009). Restrictions, usually implemented through private security firms and police, are often applied

to those that are visibly poor; single, young, working men and marginalised groups, such as refugees or migrant workers, who are perceived as 'trouble-makers' (Khawaja, 2015; Schwedler, 2012).

The Lebanese Republic

Lebanon's political and social history is complex. The region was governed by the Ottoman Empire for centuries, before the borders of modern-day Lebanon were outlined by the Sykes-Picot agreement when it was given to the French as a Mandate following World War I. It eventually gained its independence from France in 1943. It borders the states of Israel and Syria, and its population of approximately 6 million people (including roughly 1- 1.5 million Syrians and half a million Palestinians) is a highly heterogeneous ethnic mix, made more complex by the presence of seventeen different religious sects (Zahar, 2005). The demographic make-up of Lebanon is difficult to ascertain, as this is a deeply political issue and the last time a census took place was in 1932 (Maktabi, 1999). However, it is predominantly comprised of Maronite Christians (located in and around the Mount Beirut area) Sunni Muslims (predominantly located in the North), Shi'a Muslims (predominantly located in the South), and a notable population of other minority groups such as Druze and Bedouin (Faour, 2007). Lebanon, like Jordan, has a long history of hosting Palestinian refugees. However, Palestinians in Lebanon have different rights and opportunities to those in Jordan. Most of the Palestinian population in Lebanon are Sunni. They do not have Lebanese citizenship, are barred from specific occupations and are not allowed to own property. Over 50% of this population continue to live in refugee camps, many of which have been absorbed into the urban fabric of Lebanon's cities (Haddad & Jamali, 2003; Sanyal, 2011). As such, Palestinians are greatly disenfranchised and marginalised within Lebanon.

On gaining independence in 1943, a power sharing agreement was struck between the two dominant groups of the country, the Sunni Muslims and the Maronite Christians. The National Pact of 1943 provided for a confessional formula of governance, based upon the nation's demographic makeup, whereby government power was balanced between Christians and Muslims in a 6 to 5 ratio (Krayem, 1997). It dictated that the president should always be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of the chamber of deputies, a Shi'a Muslim. This arrangement has resulted in the Lebanese government reflecting and reinforcing 'traditional ethnic identities rather than supplanting them with political parties emphasising ideological interests' (Calame & Charlesworth, 2011, p. 42). This agreement, alongside several other local and regional issues, such as the Cold War, Arab-Israeli tensions, the rise of Pan Arabism, Lebanese confessional power allocation, and the influx of Palestinian refugees from Israel and Jordan into Lebanon, were the factors behind Lebanon's Civil War which lasted from 1975 – 1991. The 1989 Taif Agreement, which largely put an end to the conflict, came about due to the coinciding elements of internal reconciliation and favourable regional and

international developments (Krayem, 1997). The agreement oversaw both the reform of confessional governance in Lebanon, equalising representation between Maronite Christians, Sunnis and Shi'as and marked a general turn towards Syrian influence in the State (Zahar, 2005).

Syria had a pivotal role in the Lebanese civil conflict, with Syrian occupying forces arriving in Lebanon from the early onset of the war (around 1976). Syrian hegemony continued at the conclusion of the conflict and Syrian troops occupied Lebanon until the assassination of Rafik Hariri, Lebanon's Prime Minister, in 2005. The controversial assassination, which is attributed to Syrian interference, heralded the Cedar Revolution, which saw the withdrawal of Syrian troops and an end to occupation. This complex set of events created a new era in Lebanese politics through the creation of the March 8th and March 14th alliances: political associations that exist to the present and largely dictate existing power relations in Lebanon. The March 8th coalition represent forces that are sympathetic to Syrian/Iranian interests, and whose interests generally align with those of Syria, and are dominated by predominantly Shi'a parties such as Hezbollah. The March 14th Alliance consists of more pro-Saudi Arabian, anti-Syrian elements, and represents predominantly Sunni political parties such as the Future Movement.

The parties that make up these alliances are far more than 'political parties' but are in reality non-state governance actors with their own militias, administrations, welfare structures and international connections (Stel, 2014). Militias (formed during the civil war and continuing to function) and political parties have operated alongside and against the State since the Taif accord, and have resulted in a hybrid assemblage of security in Lebanon (Carpi, 2016).

Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings

As the Arab Uprisings spread through Lebanon, there were relatively few protests that occurred in Lebanese society. Those that did occur were in early 2011, predominantly calling for an end to the sectarian political system (Monterescu & Ali, 2016; Stel, 2014). Lebanon has been largely affected by the Arab Uprising through the State's close links and complex attitudes towards Syria. Because of the positioning of the two political blocs in Lebanon vis-a-vis the Syrian State, the ongoing civil war has served to deepen the divisions between the two (Smayra, 2013). Despite both power blocs initially insisting on remaining removed from the conflict, their involvement in the region has increased (Dionigi, 2016) and the conflict has spilled over into Lebanon on several occasions over the past 9 years, particularly in the region around Arsal and parts of the Beka'a Valley (Tholens, 2017).

Security Framework in Lebanon

Security provision within Lebanon is best described as 'plural', whereby multiple actors exert different levels of authority (Boustani et al., 2016). This structure is closely linked to the multiple state and non-state stakeholders that jostle for power – a situation Tholens (2017) refers to as 'hybrid security governance' - and is consequently strongly linked to sectarian affiliations. As a result, space and society is regulated by both state and non-state security providers, creating a very visible security presence in public space, particularly in areas of high tension or of political importance (Carpi, 2016, Fawaz et al., 2012). The increased public presence of security forces and providers in Beirut have been linked to the wave of assassinations and attempted assassinations between 2004 – 2006, the Cedar revolution and the withdrawal of Syrian occupying troops (Fawaz et al., 2012; Monroe, 2011, 2016). The Syrian civil war has deepened this plural security network in Lebanon, through an exacerbation of ongoing political polarisations, resulting in the increased militarisation and securitisation of state and non-state actors.

The principal bodies of state security are the police (Internal Security Forces, ISF) and the army (Lebanese Armed Forces, LAF). After Lebanese independence was achieved, these two institutions were tasked with working in tandem with each other to maintain both internal security and state borders (Saliba, 2012). Thus, they have a close working relationship that continues to this day. The primary intelligence body of Lebanon is the General Security Directorate (GSD) which is tasked with national security and the monitoring of visas and residencies permits for migrants and refugees and all individuals within Lebanon. The LAF falls under the Ministry of Defence, whilst the ISF and GSD fall under the Ministry of Interior. Broadly speaking, the LAF is widely respected and seen as a neutral body that is less prone to sectarian influence, however it struggles with a chain of command and effectiveness (Saliba, 2012). The ISF is perceived as compromised and corrupt to (particularly Sunni) sectarian influence, due to its longstanding financial support from Rafik Hariri and the Future Movement (Boustani et al., 2016; Tholens, 2017). As a result, most Lebanese have low opinions and trust regarding police (Geha, 2015). The head of the GSD must be a Shi'a Muslim according to the Lebanese Constitution and therefore it is associated with Hezbollah. However, these links are not 'straightforward', the organisation is well trained and formalised and there have been recent efforts to de-politicise it (Tholens, 2017, p. 878). Because of these sectarian influences, state security bodies are looked upon by Lebanese citizens in fluctuating measures of trust and suspicion (Geha, 2015). This sectarian influence, coupled with political parties that are deeply embedded into the social fabric of the country, is why many Lebanese citizens seek out alternative measures of security or conflict resolution. Alongside state security services lie a range of other means of mediating security, including neighbourhood committees, *Mukhtars* (street level mayors), religious organisations, tribal networks

and women's groups (Geha, 2015). The most prominent of these is the range of political parties representing various interests. Some parties are more influential than others and thus have greater power and capacity to resolve conflict or security issues. For example, Hezbollah is distinguished for its multi-level insertion into political and social life from parliamentary positions to local charitable work (Deeb & Harb, 2009). Therefore, it is unsurprising to note that Shi'a Lebanese are 30% more likely than other ethno-religious groups, to turn to a political party for assistance (Geha, 2015).

Some critics have argued that this complex sovereignty and security context, alongside reoccurring violent and political issues within the country (sometimes as a result of proxy geopolitical tensions and conflict), is predominantly why Lebanon is best categorised as a 'weak state' (B. F. Salloukh, 2013). In contrast, Fregonese (2012) has argued that there are different state and non-state actors within Lebanon which create a hybrid political order which forms the basis of its sovereignty. Thus, merely examining the 'state' results in an overlooking of other 'sovereign enactments', particularly those of political parties, whose power and position gradually dissolve the boundaries between binaries of state/non-state and legitimate/illegitimate (p. 670). Hazbun (2016b) echoes this position, examining how different actors balance varying concerns and interpretations of security to create an acting plural security network within the State. Despite these positions, Lebanon clearly suffers from a complex and sensitive security situation which is exacerbated by clientelism, and where no one institution operates a monopoly of power. Whilst acknowledging that a vast security network does operate within the country, Lebanon's porous and compromised borders and indeed the lack of a monopoly on security or power, by any institution, is why it is best understood as a 'weak state'.

Urban Planning and Public Space in Beirut

Lebanon's civil war, occupation by Syria, conflict with Israel and subsequent security arrangements have had a marked impact on the population and urban form of Beirut. During the war, the city found itself literally divided down the 'Green Line' into 'West Muslim' and 'East Christian', although similarly to the conflict, the division of the city was far more complex then this explanation encompasses (Calame & Charlesworth, 2011). Thus, the western side of Beirut is predominantly Sunni Muslim, the southern suburbs (*Al Dahiye*) Shi'a, and the north-eastern suburbs, Christian (Yassin, 2012).

The spatial legacy of the war, in which neighbourhoods were controlled and bounded by different confessional groups within Beirut, is still apparent today. Because of the ongoing political tensions and the confessional political and social structure of Lebanon, the city is highly securitised by both state and non-state actors. This results in 'frontiers' between neighbourhoods, which creates spaces of uncertainty wherein residents are unsure of power and allegiances operating between

neighbourhoods (Akar, 2012). These 'frontiers' are highly securitised by the presence of a myriad of both security providers (including militia's) and military paraphernalia (for example military tanks and checkpoints). Public space is highly politicised through visual reminders of different political factions, with flags, posters and pictures of political slogans, party colours and photos of slain martyrs strung over roads or plastered on walls to demark space as inherently 'belonging' to a confessional group (Monterescu & Ali, 2016). Residents must regularly negotiate checkpoints and various state and non-state security providers whilst in public space (Fawaz et al., 2012). This has resulted in public spaces that are devoid of citizens, heavily securitised and scrutinised.

The civil war and notable conflicts with Israel (1982 and 2006) have led to Beirut's city centre being rebuilt twice in the last three decades. The most recent rebuild has been highly controversial and distinctly privatised. Previous to civil war, Beirut's city centre was considered a symbol of coexistence in a highly heterogeneous state, drawing in Lebanese from all social classes and sectarian communities (Hourani, 2015). However, several private real estate companies have divided public opinion with their re-imaging of the city centre. These developments have been criticised for playing into the hands of the city's financial elite, creating elite shopping enclaves and an exclusive and commercialised city centre (Nagel, 2002; Mango 2014). These efforts are reflective of the Abdali developments in Amman which have received similar criticism for pandering to elite interests (see above).

In Beirut, the promenade Corniche that hugs the road around the coast, is the city's most well-known and loved public space. Throughout the day, and especially in the evening, the Corniche is alive with families, dating couples, cyclists, skateboarders and tourists. Except for its long linear format, it is the closest equivalent that Beirut has to a central square. Although the city still feels quite 'green' in parts thanks to boulevards of trees, what few parks do exist are normally repellent with concrete and dog faeces and are typically monitored by private or state security services. Horsh Beirut, the city's major central park, was closed to Lebanese citizens for decades, due to its positioning on the edge of three warring neighbourhoods during the civil war and its partial destruction during the war with Israel. Now open, thanks to the efforts of several NGOs, the park suffers from years of neglect and is only open at select times. Because of the history of sectarian conflict, security efforts are always focused on ensuring potential neighbourhood conflicts do not escalate and threaten the delicate community balance (Boustani, et al., 2016). As a result, neighbourhood amenities for public use, such as the stadiums or parks can be so over-securitised, they are hostile to public use.

Public space for congregating (protesting) is highly limited and controlled by the State. The obvious public spaces where citizens could congregate/protest is Nejmeh square, a large public square which is also the location of important religious places of worship and the House of Parliament. However,

this area was closed to members of the public, following a period of car bombings and culminating in the 'Rubbish Crisis' Protests in 2015 (BBC, 2015). This area is frequently closed off and barricaded by police and security services. Adjacent to the Parliamentary area is Martyrs Square. The square holds an important cultural and political role in the city. It is the key place of political protest, hosting thousands of citizens demonstrating against Syrian occupation during the Cedar Revolution in 2005, and even as recently as 2019, an important site of anti-corruption protests. However, its future development is in the hands of private development companies (Massena, 2018).

As with the provision of security, in some places other actors play a state-like role in urban planning and development. The past few decades have also seen the rise of 'state alternatives' to city planning in the form of the powerful Shi'a political party, Hezbollah, who control the poorer Southern Suburbs of Beirut. Despite their impressive efforts to rebuild the Haret Hreik neighbourhood in the Southern Suburbs following its abject destruction in 2006, their control of these neighbourhoods has overseen their move towards increased religious conservatism. This has included the removal of informal and social gathering spaces or shaping them as condoned locations of piety, and indeed has had influence on gendered roles within these communities (Deeb & Harb, 2013; Harb, 2010).

Summary: state and security structures of Jordan and Lebanon

Lebanon is perceived as a 'fragile' state, as the government predominantly serves as a 'forum for inter-communal bargaining and power-sharing more that an autonomous apparatus with interventionist powers in its own right' (Pearlman, 2014, p.37). Sectarian-confessional groups jockey and manoeuvre for control and real power 'lies not in shouldering the tasks of the state, but in extorting power from it or despite it' (*ibid*). In contrast, Jordan is perceived as a strong state because the Hashemite regime has successfully established a near monopoly on power and the ability to stifle dissent through successful socio-economic policies. These policies have promoted allegiance to the King and promoted a level of national integration amongst the different segments of Jordan's population, including Palestinian refugees, buffering the nation from outward influences (Salloukh, 1996, p. 54). The nation also benefits from a highly efficient and centralised security service which maintains internal law and order and border control.

However, state capacity is perhaps better understood in graded and fluctuating terms, rather than in blanket expressions of 'strong' or 'weak'. This allows for a consideration of the shifting geopolitical contexts in which these States are situated, and indeed, the changing cultural, and socio-economic contexts within them. However, these terms are still useful shorthand's for understanding how the state structure differs in each context, whereby Lebanon is fragmented and compromised (weak), and

Jordan is centralised and authoritarian (strong). As such, it provides a conceptual framework of understanding the varying state and security frameworks in place.

These differences prompt a several questions regarding the experiences of refugee women living in Amman and Beirut. The most pressing of these: how might differing contexts of state structures (i.e. weak vs strong) and security frameworks (i.e. unitary vs plural) affect the experiences of refugee communities within their host cities? With this in mind, the following section examines refugee policies that Jordan and Lebanon have developed for incoming Syrian refugees from 2011 up until 2017, when this fieldwork completed, in order to consider the relationship between state strength and ongoing refugee policies. In its conclusion, it will draw together ideas of the strong and weak state, differing security structures, the ways in which refugee policies have been applied towards Syrian refugees and the questions that this raises, regarding Syrian refugee women in their host cities.

Jordanian and Lebanese state policies towards Syrian refugees

Policies towards Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan are motivated and shaped by a range of national and regional issues. Neither Jordan nor Lebanon are signatories of UNHCR's 1951 *Convention on Refugees*, and UNHCR operates in both contexts under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed with each government: Jordan in 1998; Lebanon in 2003. These MOU's, between each State and UNHCR, are the basis under which UNHCR operates, and provides protection for refugees, in each country. Palestinian refugees are not covered by the MOU, instead they fall under the care of UNWRA. Whilst the Jordanian MOU has been updated and amended in recent years during the Syrian crisis, the Lebanese MOU has been widely criticised for its poor protection measures (Kelberer, 2017). This next section provides an outline of policies towards Syrian refugees in each context, particularly highlighting refugees' rights to work.

Jordanian State policy regarding Syrian Refugees

As of 2017, Jordan was hosting approximately 650,000 Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2017b). The Jordanian government has frequently argued that there are 1.26 million Syrian refugees living in its border's. However, this number encompasses Syrians who had been living in Jordan for some time and were not registered or receiving assistance from UNHCR (Lenner & Schmelter, 2016). Regardless, not all Syrian refugees displaced from the civil war would have registered with UNHCR. Thus, it is difficult to put an exact figure on the number of Syrian refugees living in Jordan, and the figures employed by different groups are highly political. Nevertheless, it is almost certainly between 600,000 and 1.2 million, and so very significant with respect to the total population of the country of some 10 million. Since 2016, there has been a full closure of the Syrian/Jordanian border in 2016 due to a bombing and conflict at the border (and additionally the movement of some Jordanians into Syria to join *Daesh*).

Initially, the Jordanian state had a relatively flexible approach to incoming Syrian refugees, allowing for their welcome and self-settlement in towns and cities, whilst maintaining close control over its borders and restricting refugees to certain crossings in order to monitor their arrival (Pasha, 2017). This altered in 2012, when the conflict escalated and refugee numbers increased exponentially (Kelberer, 2017). The response to the spike of incoming refugees was to build camps, in order to both control the incoming population and to 'make visible' the extent of Jordanian refugee hosting to the world and to humanitarian funders (Chatelard, 2009; Kelberer, 2017; Turner, 2015). Five refugee camps were built between early 2012 and 2014: Za'atari, Azraq, Cybercity, the Emirati-Jordanian Camp (also known as Mrajeeb Al Fhood) and King Abdullah Park (Achilli, 2015)[5]. The camps are estimated to only host approximately 10-20% of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan. Most Syrian refugees have eschewed camps in favour of self-settlement in urban areas. When the camps were initially constructed, they were relatively porous and there were flexible bail out procedures in place (see below). However, since late 2014, there have been greater restrictions, with attempts to confine those that are in camps, to the camps (Achilli, 2015).

Up to January 2015, Jordanian state law allowed for Syrian refugees to leave refugee camps if they were sponsored by a Jordanian citizen. This *kafala* sponsorship requires a Jordanian citizen to take responsibility for a Syrian family, vouching for their presence in the country. In this case, the sponsor should be an individual that is known or related to the family, over the age of 35, male, married and employed in a stable job (Achilli, 2015). In principal, the sponsor is supposed to provide for a refugee's livelihood and shelter needs, in order to ensure the refugee does not enter the labour market (Frochlich & Stevens, 2015). However, the bail out and kafala systems were open to significant bribery. Many Jordanians agreed to sponsor non-related Syrians in exchange for additional payment (Frochlich & Stevens, 2015). Very few *kafeel's* took responsibility for the family they had sponsored, and frequently charged between 350-600JD's (£350-600) per family, when the kafala fee should be 15JD (£15) per person (IHRC/NRC, 2016). Turner (2015) also found that single men from lower socio-economic backgrounds have often been confined to camps in order not to flood the Jordanian labour market and therefore struggled to gain *kafala* sponsorship.

If refugees were unable to leave the camp through bail out, they could pay to be smuggled out of the camp (Frochlich & Stevens, 2015). Refugees who left camps without an official *kafala* were still able to apply for an Asylum Seeker Certificate once outside the camp before July 2014 (those that left without authorisation after this date have restricted access to government services and humanitarian

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[5] There are two additional 'camps' in the no man's land between Jordan and Syria: Rukban and Hadalat. These camps emerged after Jordan closed its border crossing to incoming Syrian refugees. As these camps are not officially on Jordanian State land they are not included here (Pasha, 2017).

aid). Therefore, a family could pay to be smuggled out of the camp and still ensure they had legality if they registered with UNHCR for a certificate (IHRC/NRC, 2016).

The Jordanian State refers to Syrian refugees as 'guests'. It does promotes third country re-settlement of refugees and, in theory, adheres to a policy of *non-refoulement* in line with international refugee law (Al Kilani, 2014; ILO, 2015). However, refugees are frequently deported to Syria, typically for working without a legal permit. These are predominantly men, but deportations of women also occur. There was a spike of deportation and expulsions of Syrian refugees by Jordanian authorities in 2016 and 2017, alongside some voluntarily returns (HRW, 2017, n/p).

By 2015, the government changed tack from an 'emergency response' to the Jordan Response Plan 2015 which represented a paradigm shift from humanitarianism to long term developmental response (JRP, 2015). Under this, Syrian refugees are eligible to access education and healthcare facilities; however, these are under significant strain. The JRP stated that this shift was specifically made to assist vulnerable Jordanians alongside the refugee population and thus the JRP has focused on creating cohesive plans to support both Jordanians and Syrians in shelter, environment and education (*ibid*). In the same year, the Jordanian government introduced the Urban Verification Process. This was an ID card, issued by the MOI which included the capture of biometric data of refugees and the creation of a database (UNHCR, 2015b). This card is essential for those refugees that live outside of camps, as it provides them with legality to be in Jordan and to access services such as healthcare and education. Its issue included an amnesty for those Syrians that were living outside camps without any legal documentation and allows the holder to move freely throughout Jordan (IHRC/NRC, 2016). The intention was that from 2015 onward, the Jordanian government would hold information about all non-camp refugees. However, challenges in gaining access to the card, particularly for those Syrians who did not have Syrian identity documents, or children who did not have birth certificates, has been noted. As a result, in 2016 an estimated 150,000 Syrians were still not registered, raising concerns regarding gendered vulnerabilities in not having documentation (IHRC/NRC, 2016).

Rights & Labour opportunities for Self-Settled Syrian Refugees in Jordan

As of 2015, approximately 99% of Syrians engaged in labour were employed in the informal sector in Jordan, which is characterised by low and declining wages, long days and poor working conditions (ILO, 2015, p. 7; Stave & Hillesund, 2015). These workers are predominantly men as the ILO found that only 7% of Syrian women were engaged in work outside the home (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). If Syrian refugees want to engage in formal work, they are required to have a worker's permit which is based on an official contract, employee sponsorship and a permit fee. As most are unable to obtain this, work in the informal sector has continued (ILO, 2015).

The most significant development in Jordan in the past few years regarding refugees and the right to work has been the introduction of the Jordan Compact. The Compact, an agreement between the Kingdom of Jordan, several European countries and international donors, was introduced in January 2016. It sought to introduce work permit initiatives for Syrian refugees in Jordan in return for Jordan's favourable access to European markets (Barbalet et al., 2018). Whilst it has been praised as a breakthrough in refugee labour policy, several research papers have highlighted complexities and challenges with implementing these initiatives (Huang et al., 2018). For example, Lenner & Turner (2019) highlighted that many Syrians work for businesses that operate without their own legal permits. These businesses are often disinterested or unable to acquire these permits, and therefore will not 'regularize' Syrians workers permits (p. 21); whilst Kelberer [2017] found that, despite the permit, Syrian refugees stood to earn more working in the informal rather than formal sector. Both sets of research have both indicated that these work permits are often aimed at engaging Syrian refugee women into their host workforce, but due to various social and practical obstacles there has been little take up. Lenner & Turner's (2019) research also explains that the structural and cultural format of the Jordanian formal labour market have made the Compact ineffective.

Lebanese State policy regarding Syrian refugees

As of 2016, Lebanon was hosting somewhere in the region of 1.1 – 1.5 million Syrian refugees, which has had a significant effect on the political, social and economic fabric of the country. UNHCR stopped registering incoming Syrian refugees in March 2015, so accuracy regarding the scale of the crisis in the country is difficult to establish (UNHCR et al., 2017). Alongside the estimated 1.1 - 1.5 million Syrian refugees, an additional 300,000 - 1.5 million vulnerable Lebanese and 300,000 Palestinians have been identified as requiring food, shelter and protection assistance as well as improved access to basic public services (LCRP, 2015, p. 3-4). Unease regarding the pressing developmental needs of these populations, alongside balancing the needs of incoming Syrian refugees, in resource-compromised localities, are at the forefront of Lebanese government concerns.

The Lebanese government has declared the Syrian refugee crisis not to be governed by law, but by governmental decisions (Oxfam, 2015). It has applied ad hoc policies towards incoming Syrian refugees, which are largely shaped by security concerns (Jagarnathsingh, 2016; Janmyr, 2016). Theoretically, the 2003 MOU protects refugees from deportation and provided some much needed protection measures, although the principal of *non-refoulement* is not mentioned (Frangieh, 2016). The LCRP 2015-16 plan details that the 'preferred' durable solution to the refugee crisis is the repatriation of refugees back to Syria, while 'abiding by the principle of *non-refoulement'* (LCRP, 2015, p. 3). It also emphasises third country re-settlement for refugees after a period of 12 months (UNHCR, 2004).

The Government of Lebanon implements 'some provisions of the [UNHCR] Convention on a voluntary basis' and is quick to stress that 'Lebanon is neither a country of asylum, not a final destination for refugees, let alone a country of resettlement' (LCRP, 2015). As a result, the State is keen to emphasise the 'temporary' nature of hosting Syrian refugees, and they are referred to as 'visitors or 'de facto refugees'. Since the beginning of 2015, Lebanon focused on decreasing the number of Syrians within its borders, by obstructing their entrance into the country and encouraging return to Syria. Refugees have been 'reclassified' as economic migrants, eligible to pay for resident coupons, thus making day to day life in Lebanon deeply precarious (see below).

Because of the Lebanese government's initial refusal to develop a systematic policy towards incoming Syrians, UNHCR has predominantly led the response to the crisis (Janmyr, 2017; Lenner & Schmelter, 2016). At the beginning of the Syrian civil war, Lebanon operated a lenient open border policy, which was in place up to January 2015. The State refused to provide refugee camps and instead promoted a policy of self-settlement (ILO, 2014; Jagarnathsingh, 2016). Syrians who arrived via a legal border crossing with identification papers were granted an entry visa or coupon, for a stay of 6 months, free of charge. This required annual renewal, at a cost of US$200 per person, for everyone over the age of 15 (Janmyr, 2016; NRC, 2014). The cost of renewing the permit is simply unaffordable for refugees, many who are living below the poverty line, and many who are not receiving any assistance from UNHCR. Those Syrians who arrived prior to 2015 and wanted or required assistance from UNHCR, were provided with a two year registration certificate from UNHCR. However, they were generally subject to the same provision in domestic law that applied to other foreigners and had to apply for residency coupons as detailed above (Janmyr, 2016). Some Syrians, out of fear of being conscripted or turned away at the border (or who lacked identification papers), entered the country through illegal means, usually smuggled through the mountains (NCR, 2014). Those refugees who did not enter through an official General Security Office post at the Syrian/Lebanese border could subsequently apply for a 'Petition for Mercy' to legalise their stay (*ibid* p. 24).

Initially UNHCR registered Syrian refugees at reception centres, run by a combination of NGO partners and UNICEF. However, as numbers tipped over a million, in early 2015 the Lebanese government requested that UNHCR stop registering refugees and only record them (HRW, 2016; UNHCR, 2015a). The official reason for this halt in registration of refugees was to create a new mechanism for registration. However, this has not occurred, and critics argue suspension of registration was done in order to frame all incoming Syrians as migrant workers (Janmyr, 2017, 2018). After 2015, Syrians who wanted to enter Lebanon needed to produce valid identity documents and prove their stay fits into one of the approved entry categories. Most of these categories, which include tourism, studying and a 'pledge of responsibility', are open to refugees, but typically require finances and thus show

preference to wealthier Syrians (for example, to enter for tourism purposes an individual needs to show they have US$1000) (Janmyr, 2016).

The predominant entry category for a refugee family is having a *kafala* (Lebanese sponsor). Like in Jordan, a *kafala* is a Lebanese citizen who signs a pledge of responsibility for a migrant worker, vouching for them whilst they are in the country. This is problematic because it is challenging to secure a sponsor, which has resulted in a black market within Lebanon of providing *kafala* to Syrian refugees, some charging up to US$1000 (Oxfam, 2017). These policies ensured that Syrian refugees were placed in highly vulnerable positions and extensively opened them up to exploitation, abuse and limited mobility (as explored later in this thesis) (*ibid*). Whilst currently Lebanon does not have an active deportation policy regarding Syrians within its borders who are living without legal status, frequent army and security checks ensure a perpetual feeling of insecurity (Janmyr, 2017). Furthermore, some Syrians have been stripped of their refugee papers for moving between Syria and Lebanon during the time of the Syrian civil war (*ibid*).

As Lebanon's governance system is based on a delicate sectarian balance, as detailed above, integration of Syrians into Lebanese society is anathema to Lebanese political society (Betts & Collier, 2015). The overwhelming majority of Syrian refugees are Sunni Muslims, and the protracted nature of the conflict has vast implications for the governance of Lebanon as integration of refugees challenges the confessional government structure (Culbertson et al., 2016).

Most observers argue that Lebanon's refusal to provide camps for Syrian refugees, is due to the turbulent history of Palestinian refugee camps in the country, which played an important role in the Lebanese civil war (Lenner & Schmelter, 2016). Thus, Lebanese officials are anxious to ensure that encampment policies are not repeated. The free movement of Syrians within Lebanon is also essential to the Lebanese economy, thus it is economically important not to encamp or restrict the refugee population or to actively *refoule* Syrian refugees (Lewis Turner, 2015).

Despite the non-encampment policy, many of those refugees without existing labour links or connections in the country have ended up living in 'settlements' which act as informal refugee camps, which have predominantly proliferated in the Beka'a Valley and the North of the country where refugees are engaged in agricultural work (Sanyal, 2017). Those that have pre-established links in the country through family, or migrant labour, have tended to take advantage of those links first, thus heading to those areas for work opportunities (ILO, 2014). The crisis has also affected parts of the country more heavily. For example, the North of Lebanon, the Beka'a Valley and Beirut are hosting the greatest numbers of Syrian refugees (Fawaz *et al*., 2014; UNHCR 2015). Urban areas, particularly poorer, informal neighbourhoods that are perceived as refugee receiving, have experienced the brunt

of incoming refugee populations. Beirut itself struggles from poor infrastructure and planning, particularly in areas of informality in the city and in the southern suburbs where Hezbollah controls aid and development (Culbertson et al., 2016). Electricity and water shortages of a common aspect of day to day life, particularly affecting the most marginalised. The swell in population in Beirut has also had a marked effect on housing, with rising rents and many refugees forced to live in cramped and unsanitary conditions (Marwa Boustani et al., 2016).

Rights & Labour opportunities for Self-Settled Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Lebanon has a long history of hosting migrant workers from Syria, thus allowing Syrians displaced by the civil war to engage in work does buoy the Lebanese economy (Lewis Turner, 2015). However, as the crisis has continued the Lebanese economy and its infrastructure are now struggling under such a high and quick influx of a vulnerable population. 92% of Syrian refugees employed in Lebanon are working in the informal sector (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). Only 6% of Syrian refugee women are employed, and most women surveyed had not worked in either Lebanon or Syria before the outbreak of the conflict (ILO, 2014).

The State has deemed informal employment without a *kafala* 'illegal' in order to protect job security for the native population. Since 2015, those Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR (and therefore do not have a kafala) have been prompted to sign a 'pledge not to work', whereby they precisely agree not to work whilst living in Lebanon (HRW, 2016; Oxfam, 2017). For many, the signing of this document is simply cursory: an utter lack of financial support and high debts mean that many refugees will be forced to continue to seek informal work opportunities in order to support themselves and their families. Furthermore, many refugees registered with UNHCR have been told by the Lebanese state to find themselves a *kafala* regardless of their status (whether they are registered with the UNHCR or not) and have not been able to renew their registration status with UNHCR (HRW, 2016). This has led to a confusing landscape for refugees to navigate.

Conclusion

As of 2020, the states of Jordan and Lebanon host upward of 2 million Syrian refugees between them. This has had significant social, political and economic effects on both States, particularly as the refugee crisis has continued for over nine years. This chapter has provided contextual background, highlighting state structure and security frameworks, as well as recent political developments regarding the Syrian civil war and the Arab Uprisings. In doing so it has provided a framework for understanding each State's ensuing Syrian refugee policy. Whilst Jordan and Lebanon share several similarities (history of colonialism, conflict and refugees flows, shared religious and language influences), there are also clear distinctions in the governance, sovereignty and security structure operating in each of these nations.

States and security institutions are structures which shape daily lives and agentic capacity, particularly in regard to refugee communities. The labels of 'weak' and 'strong' are utilised in this context in order to provide a shorthand analysis for understanding state structure in Lebanon as fragmented and compromised (weak), and state structure in Jordan as centralised and authoritarian (strong). As such, it provides a conceptual framework of understanding the varying state and security frameworks in place.

These structural differences provide a relevant framework in which to situate the wider investigation of this thesis, that is, an understanding of structural influences upon identities and the ways in which these shape quotidian experiences of (in)security. These points will be revisited in the following Methodology Chapter which will outline the comparative framework in more detail.

This chapter draws to a close the first section of this thesis which provided a Theoretical Framework supporting the methodological and empirical basis of this thesis. In the Methodological Chapter which follows, these chapters will be drawn together to provide a clear theoretical grounding for the empirical chapters which make up the second half of the thesis.

Chapter 5: Methodology

Preceding this chapter, I have discussed theories and positions on gender, structure and agency, (in)security and space. The outset of this Methodology Chapter will draw these bodies of literature together to summarise and outline the theoretical framework that underpins the empirical chapters that follow. It will then revisit and detail the thesis research questions, which were initially outlined in Chapter One, that the empirical chapters will be addressing.

Having established the theoretical framework and research questions, the chapter will outline the details of this research project and how it was conducted. It will continue in three parts. Firstly, an examination of the qualitative methods used in this thesis. Secondly, an analysis of how I negotiated access to research participants and lastly an examination of the ethical challenges of my research project, including positionality, issues of consent and extractive research.

From the outset, I did not expect this to be an easy or straightforward research project. I was conscious that I, a middle-class white woman, would be working with a vulnerable population living in poor conditions, in complex environments. Owing to these realities, it was inevitable that several political factors influenced the shape of this research, directing its concentration towards particular individuals, states and conditions (Gough, 2012). These issues are raised and discussed throughout this chapter, but most prominently in this chapter's section on access and on positionality.

Theoretical Framing

This thesis examines the relationship between identity, space and security using a comparative case study of Syrian refugee women living in Beirut and Amman. It is primarily concerned with understanding and analysing the ways in which refugee women experience a range of scalar (in)securities in their host cities, and how they negotiate these (in)securities in turn. Several bodies of literature and theories are required in order to provide a theoretical underpinning to the complexity of refugee women's daily lives in two different host cities.

This thesis is grounded in feminist theory, particularly using feminist theories of intersectionality, in order to foreground the ways in which different identities interact with structures to shape experiences of (in)security for marginalised, refugee women. These feminist theories are guided by critical realist principles, which argue for an understanding of our social world as both real and socially constructed. Thus, it is influenced by both feminist and critical realist ontologies. Feminist research is driven and shaped by a two-fold agenda: a political commitment to advance progressive social change through research and a methodological commitment to prioritise participants' voices (Avishai et al.,

2013, p. 395). I believe this is best achieved through both approaches, as feminism prioritise the voices of the marginalized through a reliance on thick empirical data, whilst critical realism provides an analysis of causality and therefore a deeper capacity to generalise and talk back to social structures of oppression (see Fletcher, 2017, p. 182; also see section below on 'Comparison'). Critical realism aids the theorisation of structure, agency and causation in complex contexts where refugee women possess agency but must also negotiate significantly repressive structures. Furthermore, critical realist identity theories deepen and enrich understanding of intersectionality through its emphasis on the ways in which different ascriptive and subjective identities operate, and shape lived experiences. Additionally, it emphasises the relational, yet irreducible features of identity categories which allow for an insight into the specific experiences of an individual whilst enabling a wider understanding into the experiences of marginalised groups more broadly.

Identities of gender, race and class (amongst others, including refugee status) are enacted and reproduced spatially, and therefore space and identity have an intrinsic relationship. This is most often reflected in the common association of genders (male/female) with particular spaces (public/private). Whilst there are practical and material 'inside' and 'outside' spaces, space is also socially constructed, and spaces are embedded with social meanings. As such, particular identities are not purely confined or restricted to specific material spaces, but rather access such socially meaningful spaces in graded terms. This is perhaps best conceptualised in thinking of the boundary where identities and space meet and how these interactions create degrees of 'permitted' or 'forbidden' access for an individual, based on the intersection of their various identities (Fenster, 1999; Thompson, 2003). These terms enrich understandings of the urban spatial negotiations and experiences of marginalised or oppressed groups and directly indicate the relationship between identity, space and security.

Security is very much a lived concern of the everyday and is shaped by a range of structural forces and mechanisms operating at a range of scales. Incorporating feminist geopolitical and human security approaches, security in this thesis can be understood as concerns of personal embodied protection, alongside security of employment and livelihoods, residence, legal status and mobility. What it means to be secure is not static, but contested, confusing and very much shaped by identity. 'Who' someone is, and how they are identified or categorised will summarily deem them a 'friend' or a 'foe'. Furthermore, an individual's sense of security is deeply shaped by a multitude of scalar concerns which are concentrated in the everyday of lived experience. Security is therefore both a concern of identity and space.

Within this thesis, feminist theories of geopolitics and geolegality are used to conceptualise the relationship between space and security, and the ways in which security is experienced and lived in

the everyday spaces of the city. On the one hand, feminist geopolitics emphasises an examination of the perspectives of the marginalised, placing them at the forefront of knowledge and analysing the scalar nature of security that operates at different levels, but is felt in the lived every day. On the other, feminist geolegality emphasises the ways in which formal and informal laws operate spatially in order to create boundaries and borders of permissibility, acceptance and illegality. Thus, geolegality aids in a deeper reflection on the spatial terms described above of permitted/forbidden. By engaging these concepts, alongside spatial theories of permitted/forbidden and feminist theories of intersectionality, it is possible to explore the relationship between space, identity and security in complex contexts in order to highlight the experiences of Syrian refugee women in their host cities.

Given this theoretical approach, this thesis straddles both subjective and objective ontological standpoints, acknowledging the social construction of reality but emphasising the real social world that exists outside of our understanding or encounter with it (Fletcher, 2017; Parr, 2015). It takes an inductive epistemological approach. Thus, it prioritises participants' accounts and empirical evidence to build and develop theory, whilst acknowledging the guidance of some deductive reasoning through academic study and literature, as outlined in the preceding chapters, prior to entering the research field. It is vital to take the perspectives and accounts or groups and individuals (particularly if they are marginalised) as the starting point for understanding social realities, allowing these groups to express, reflect and make sense of their realities rather than imposing knowledge, hypothesis and expectations statically 'from above' (Ormstron et al., 2014). Through an inductive epistemological approach, it is understood that research cannot be value free, thus I maintained a reflexive perspective throughout my research, critically considering the construction of social realities and particularly reflecting on my positionality vis-à-vis participants, which is covered later in this chapter. This reflexivity is underpinned itself by a critical realist approach which acknowledges how the real world is socially constructed (Parr, 2015).

Research Aim and Questions

The theoretical framework above aids in conceptualising and analysing the experiences of Syrian refugee women living in Amman and Beirut. As explored in the opening chapters, refugee policies in Lebanon and Jordan are complex and shaped by both historic and ongoing political and social issues regionally and within each country. This thesis is focused on understanding how women's refugee identities encounter these structures spatially, and how this then shapes their perceptions and experiences of (in)security within their host cities. As such, the aim of this thesis is to understand the relationships between categories of identity and structures of law, policy and societal norms and how these shape experiences and perceptions of (in)security in day to day urban life for refugee women.

This aim will be realised through the answering of this **principal research question**:

How do the social, political and legal contexts of host countries interact with the identities of Syrian refugee women to produce multiple scales and forms of (in)security?

The **social, political and legal contexts** referenced in the question above refer to the structures of state policies and laws concerning refugees, as well their rights to employment etc., concerns of state structure and strength (as covered in Chapter Four) and formal and informal governance of security. It also includes social relations and cultural norms, particularly patriarchal aspects of Middle Eastern society. **Identity** is understood as multiple categories of identification, ascribed and objectively given by social location, and also subjectively experienced. This principal question is answered by addressing several more **detailed research questions:**

- *In what ways do these structures affect Syrian refugee women's security of shelter and livelihoods within their host cities and how do women respond to these?*
- *In what ways do these structures shape experiences of public space and urban mobility for Syrian refugee women and how do women respond to these?*
- *How do Syrian refugee women engage with structures of formal and informal security and conflict resolution provision in their host cities?*
- *How do Syrian refugee women experience and respond to multiple scales of (in)security, and what tactics do they employ in order to negotiate these structures of power?*

In order to understand the ways in which structures and identities interact to create and shape differing scales of (in)security, these questions are posed within two different, but related, city contexts of Amman and Beirut, in order to understand how these issues interact to create continuities and differences across refugee experience.

Comparison, specificity and generalising

This thesis is concerned with examining refugee (in)security across differing contexts in order to allow for a richer understanding of categories of identity and the ways in which different identities shape experiences through an interaction with wider structural mechanisms. 'When a researcher's experience is limited to a single place, there is much that is taken for granted and not queried' (Gough, 2012). As such, comparing across contexts allows for us not to think of refugee women responding in 'set ways' or thinking of issues of space or security as static and consistent. By drawing comparison across contexts, it demonstrates how space is constructed, bounded and perceived differently, and how structures operate differently and respond to the agency of individuals.

Whilst individual experience is not something that can be generalised, intersectionality has much to offer in the way of understanding how power and oppression operate, and how it is produced and reproduced, particularly through social institutions, which can offer understanding in different contexts (Cooper, 2016, p. 398). Gilpin (2006, p. 12) emphasises that in order to highlight the experiences of oppressed groups, researchers are required to look at issues as they apply to those groups. This becomes possible using a critical realist approach, whereby identity is understood as both socially constructed and real. Critical realist approaches, which focus on causal mechanisms and processes, allow for wider insight and thus the possibility of broader generalisation, to similar contexts where such structural mechanisms are also at work (Connelly, 2002). As such, the complexity of an individual's identities, as well as their categorisation and social location in particular groups, allow for both a specific insight into an individual's experience, alongside a wider insight into the experience of those in particular identity groups (Martinez Dy et al., 2014). This enables a means of wider theorising, whilst not reducing identity categories into homogenous essentialising. Using a critical realist approach to intersectionality thus allows for an insight into the specific experiences of an individual and enables intersectional approaches to achieve their goal of addressing uneven power structures and biases, whilst being respectful of unique experience and identity. Case study comparison is used in this thesis to draw thematic similarities and differences, not to reject or overlook heterogeneity. It is employed in order to provide specific insights into the experiences of Syrian women in these contexts, but also to provide comment on the wider experiences of marginalised refugee women in contexts where they do not enjoy full safety and protection from their host states.

Whilst there is much research on urban comparison, comparative research in refugee studies is much less common. Urban scholars argue that comparative studies are enriching and offer an opportunity to unsettle and destabilise knowledge and theory, to highlight issues that may be overlooked, showcase diversity and demonstrate how variables work differently in a range of settings. For example, Lancione & McFarlane, (2016) encourage an 'experimental comparison approach' which encourages the engagement of both the specificity and generalizability of comparative cases, arguing that this approach encourages an embracing of the heterogeneity of contexts and situations rather than an avoidance, or simplification of complicated urban issues. In this argument they echo the arguments of Robinson (2013, 2016) who advocates a 'comparative urbanism approach', which doesn't try and control for differences in contexts. Rather, this approach looks for patterns of repetition (the demi-regularities of critical realist theory, see Fletcher, 2017) and interconnectedness across cities, which aids in building theory across different urban contexts. Robinson encourages an openness to theory building, which is approachable to a 'revisability of concepts' and that is respectful of divergence and difference across cities (Robinson, 2016, p. 188).

Much urban comparative work tends to overlook the lives and experiences of urban inhabitants, rather focusing on urban processes, urban form and analysing cities at an abstract level (Gough, 2012). However, Gough, (2012) emphasises that the urban is space, place and ways of life, pointing to their interconnected nature and the importance of comparing these issues alongside each other in order to understand the realities of city life. As such, comparing the lives of urban residents is a useful starting point which can often highlight very different realities of the urban, shaped by processes, forms and policies.

In contrast, refugee scholars typically point to the unique socio-political and cultural contexts in which refugee communities are embedded, making them hesitant to compare, particularly when studies use qualitative methods (Chatty, 2007; Skran & Daughtry, 2007). Comparative studies are also embedded into wider debates as to whether findings are generalizable across further contexts, something which is relevant here, particularly as this study also draws on theories of intersectionality.

In answer to these critiques, Chatty [2007] found that comparison had much to offer. Reviewing her research with refugee youth across several different contexts, Chatty found thematic similarities emerged amongst refugee communities that would have been missed if studied in a single context. Thus, she argued, there is worth in conducting comparative, qualitative research amongst refugee communities. Sanyal, (2014) compared refugee settlements in Lebanon and India in a 'transnational comparison'. In her approach, she allowed each site to raise its own set of questions and issues rather than using predetermined criteria, emphasising some of the specificities and differences across both sites. As such, she drew conclusions on refugee spaces of displacement, politics and citizenship based on comparing insights in each context. Comparison has also been used across different contexts to explore how damaging or constructive refugee policies affect lived experiences in host communities (Valentine et al., 2009). These positions, which indicate the use and insight that comparison offer, whilst paying attention to some of the specifics of context and the nuances of refugee experiences, are echoed in this study.

Comparing Amman and Beirut

Shifting focus to the cities themselves, Amman and Beirut have been chosen as two case cities, as I anticipated that refugee experiences of insecurity would differ in different contexts. This expectation led from various reports and academic studies on refugee policies and experiences in Lebanon and Jordan up to 2015, as well as an understanding of the differing State dynamics, security systems and demographics in each country (see Chapter Four). These indicated that differing state structure and refugee policies would intersect with the various identities of refugee women thus shaping their lived experiences in each city.

Beirut might be perceived as an "extreme" case (Flyvbjerg, 2006) due to its history of urban civil war and confessional power-sharing government, and thus difficult to compare to other cities because of its unique socio-political history. However, rather than dismissing it as 'too complicated to compare', the arguments outlined above encourage an engagement with the relevant ways in which a city such as Beirut is both similar and different to other cities. For example, both Amman and Beirut are capital cities in the Middle East in countries that border Syria. They are both shaped by colonialism and the states (and their capital cities) have a long history of hosting Palestinian refugee populations which has left a complex socio-political legacy in both nations. Despite (and because of) their joint history of hosting large refugee populations, neither state is a signatory of UNHCR's 1951 or 1967 protocol on refugees. However, socially and politically, these two cities are quite different. As explored in detail in Chapter Four, Lebanon's recent history of civil conflict had a deep effect on Beirut, which is evident to this day. Its governance relies on a complicated confessional structure and security operates within a complex hybrid system of political parties, militias, private security firms and various layers of state security institutions. In contrast, Jordan is perceived as a stable, constitutional monarchy with strong central governance, and a top-down hierarchal security system which is deeply tied to the state. These cities' shared similarities and contrasting differences invite an analysis of how differing structural contexts and identities shape experiences of insecurity in the city, particularly amongst marginalised groups. This enables a further analysis of the ways in which identity or structure affects these experiences of security.

There were also very practical considerations which made these two cities an useful source of comparative case study (Gough, 2012). For example, I developed contacts in both cities, and I was (legally) permitted to conduct research in these locations. At the time that this fieldwork took place, it would not have been possible to conduct this research in Turkey or Iraq. I was seeking to work in with displaced Syrians in countries that neighboured Syria and where large numbers of Syrian refugees had fled. Israel, Iraq and Turkey were quickly ruled out because of several difficulties and challenges related to research concerning Syrian refugees in these contexts, or overall issues of access and safety. This left Jordan and Lebanon as the primary States of interest for this study.

Research Neighbourhoods

Field research was carried out in two visits, first to Beirut from September to November 2016, then to Amman from February 2017 – April 2017. These were preceded by a field visit to both cities in early 2016. Through this initial field visit, data checks with UNHCR and conversations with NGOs and other researchers, I chose to focus on two districts in each city which were typically perceived as refugee-receiving.

Beirut

I chose to focus on two districts of Beirut: Bourj Hammoud and Mazra'a. These neighbourhoods differed in significant characteristics, and as such I believed that focusing on Syrian women's experiences in each, would serve to highlight important differences around security, identity and space across the city. Their predominant difference emerges around political party presence and representation, and religious demography. Thus, by focusing on two districts, a broader insight into the structural influence of sectarian politics on refugee women's experiences emerges.

The Bourj Hammoud district is within the greater metropolitan area of Beirut. However, it is immersed and connected to the heart of the city. The neighbourhood was founded by Orthodox Armenian refugees fleeing Turkish oppression at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, its history is deeply connected to refugee issues and its population is predominantly Armenian Christian, although it is a mixed neighbourhood that includes migrant workers and refugees from throughout the Middle East (Habib et al., 2011). The Armenian Revolutionary Federation is the dominant political party. The district is made up of nine 'quarters' and includes a particularly deprived quarter called Na'ba; a highly heterogeneous, dense, refugee and migrant receiving neighbourhood. In contrast to the rest of the district, in Na'ba the Shi'a political party, Hezbollah, is the predominant political party (Fawaz, 2017; Nucho, 2016).

My second district, Mazra'a, is a large district of Beirut that encompassed several poorer, heterogenous quarters (or neighbourhoods) including Mala'ab and Tareek El Jdeede. The Palestinian refugee camp, Shatila, is within its borders. The Future Movement, a Sunni political party run by Saad Hariri had the strongest influence in this area of the city, predominantly representing Sunni Lebanese. As such, it provides interesting contrasts to Bourj Hammoud, and the neighbourhood of Na'ba, in its political, ethnic and religious leanings.

In both districts I established vital connections and links with NGOs and community contacts, which also shaped my decision to pursue research within their borders. Furthermore, I was not restricted by the British Foreign Office 'red zones' (i.e. forbidden to UK travellers) in these areas. However, as expressed above, I also felt the inherent differences, and the large influx of Syrian refugees in each district made Mazra'a and Bourj Hammoud relevant areas to focus on for this project.

Amman

In Amman, I also focused on two districts of the city. There was less information about where Syrian refugees had settled in Amman; however, during my field visit in early 2016, I was advised that many Syrians had settled in the South East area of the city, located near the El Balad. This is the older part of the city and is poorer, less developed and far more dense area of the city. It encompasses two

Palestinian refugee camps and is home to large migrant and refugee populations (Ababsa, 2013). Thus, I sought contacts and connections in this area.

I worked in three neighbourhoods in the districts of Basman and Al Yarmouk. In Basman, I worked in Hashmi Shamali and in Mahata. These neighbourhoods border each other (some don't make a distinction between them) and are high density, low income neighbourhoods which have a long history of being home to Palestinian refugee families and migrant workers. I built connections with NGOs and community contacts in both neighbourhoods which facilitated the opportunity to conduct research there. Mahata is considered a more close-knit and conservative neighbourhood than Hashmi and suffers somewhat more from crime and drug problems.

In the district of Al Yarmouk, I conducted interviews and focus groups from women who predominantly lived in the neighbourhood of Ashrafyeh. This neighbourhood shares similar features to Hashmi and Mahata in that it's a densely populated, poor, refugee receiving neighbourhood and it also borders one of the oldest Palestinian refugee camps in the city, Al Wihdat (Al Husseini, 2013).

My decision to focus on these neighbourhoods was shaped by both my intentional seeking out of organisations working in these areas, and in turn, by the agreement of these organisations to aid the research project and facilitate access.
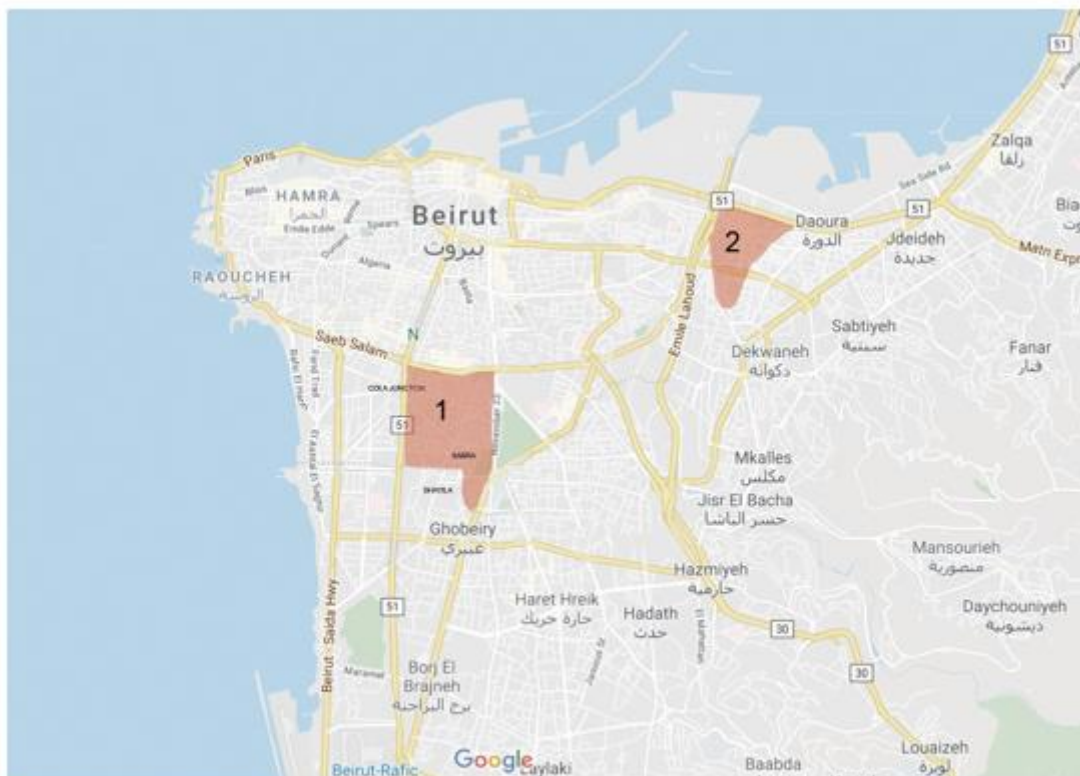
Figure 2: Map of Beirut with research neighbourhoods. 1) Mazra'a 2) Bourj Hammoud & Na'ba (Source: Google Maps https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@33.8769041,35.5070283,13z?hl=en)
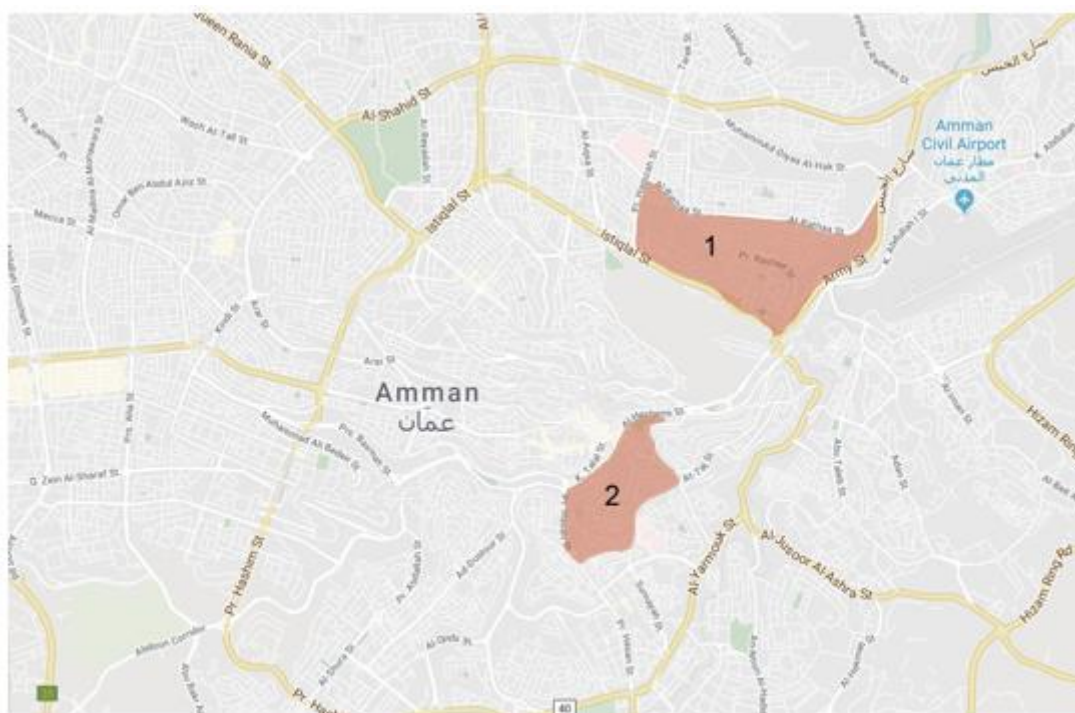
Figure 3: Map of Amman with research neighbourhoods 1) Basman - Hashmi Shamali & Mahata 2) Al Yarmouk – Ashrafyeh (Google Maps https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@31.9610504,35.949228,13z?hl=en)

Methods of data collection and analysis

Several qualitative methods were used for this study, including focus groups, interviews, solicited diaries and cognitive mapping. This next section will briefly examine the format and use of these methods, specifically noting some of the challenges that arose. Alongside these more 'formalised' means of data gathering, I also made field notes and observations of various contexts, encounters and experiences whilst conducting fieldwork, which also inform this thesis.

Participant Selection

I asked NGOs and community contacts to ensure where possible that participants were living in one of the three neighbourhoods that I had outlined in each city. I asked for Syrian, female participants who were over the age of eighteen (broadly considered adult) that had fled Syria since the onset of the civil war. I encouraged NGO's to include and invite participants from a range of ages, marital status, religious and class groups, including women who were infirm, elderly or disabled. This was in order to ensure I had a broad insight into women's experiences in these particular neighbourhoods. I anticipated that participants' experiences within these neighbourhoods may somewhat differ, depending on the interaction of some of these identities and factors. I presumed that most women living in these neighbourhoods would be from lower socio-economic backgrounds, however, I wanted to make certain where possible that I was getting a broad insight into a range of Syrian women's

experiences in the urban, informal areas of Beirut and Amman. This detailing was important, as my samples included women from impoverished, rural backgrounds and those from comfortably middle-class backgrounds who had struggled in their host cities and gradually migrated from where they had originally settled to more affordable and informal neighbourhoods.

Focus Group Discussions and Interviews

Participants were located through NGOs and local community contacts, both of whom were actively present and working within my research neighbourhoods. NGOs typically had a centre or drop-in service in these neighbourhoods. Refugees were connected to the centre through registration, accessing aid or classes. They were invited to participate in interviews and focus groups through a centre contact. Typically, these interviews and focus groups were then held on NGO premises and organised in advance. Community contacts were individuals such as activists or social, health or religious workers who were operating within the neighbourhoods. Some both lived and worked in the neighbourhoods and were well known and embedded into the local community. Interviews and focus groups organised by these contacts typically took place within participants' homes. These tended to be arranged in advance, but occasionally these contacts would encounter potential participants whilst we were in the neighbourhood and would ask them if they would like to be interviewed.

Interviews with refugee women lasted between twenty minutes to two hours and were always conducted in Arabic. They took a semi-structured format from an interview outline which was tweaked and developed as interesting and pertinent aspects of women's experiences emerged (see Appendix for interview schedule outline). For example, over time it emerged that many women had perspectives and experiences within their homes and private lives that shaped their experiences of belonging and isolation, and the relationship between public and private spaces. Thus, as interviews progressed, if appropriate, I asked participants questions regarding these topics, that were not touched on in as much detail in earlier interviews. As a result, some later interviews have more depth and richness of detail then earlier interviews. I believe that this is a natural aspect of interviewing in such a format and in such contexts. By remaining flexible and semi-structured in the interview format, participants are included in knowledge production as the interviewer remains sensitive and inclusive to their perspectives and insights (Skeggs, 1997). I took an ethnographic approach to interviews and focus groups, noting silence, gestures and tone, which assisted in forming an understanding of attitudes, conditions and experiences beyond shared verbal communication (Boswall & Akash, 2015).

Most interviews were digitally recorded, whilst I also took observational notes and noted important aspects of the interview. If there was any confusion following the interview, I would record a debrief with my translator so we could share both of our observations and feedback and clarify any confusions

from what had been shared. Focus groups followed a similar format. They were all conducted in Arabic and followed a semi-structured format of questioning. All focus groups were recorded and lasted between an hour to two and a half hours. Focus groups generally followed a schedule of questions (see Appendix) but I often found that I was required to be flexible to accommodate participants' tangents or to explore particular themes that emerged during the focus groups. I wanted to be respectful of participants, the concerns that were dominating their lives, and to also allow them space to ask me questions. (Typically in focus groups participants would ask questions regarding European asylum processes. I assisted with advice where possible.) Some NGO's were very flexible regarding permitted questions and did not ask to see my schedule. On other occasions, NGO's would look over my proposed questions and ask that I did not pose particular questions or pursue specific topics with participants (for example, regarding grassroots political party activism). This could be somewhat frustrating, as participants could be prevented from sharing relevant information by social workers (they would be interrupted if they began discussing a topic considered 'off-bounds' by the NGO.) Thus, on occasion I was alerted to the fact that certain issues were occurring but that participants were not able to discuss these. Again, where this is occurred or is relevant, I have noted it in the empirical chapters. On occasion, social workers or NGO workers would be present. Where possible, follow up interviews were conducted with NGO workers in order to clarify further details about participants, or issues that had arisen in the discussions.

Challenges relating to FGD's and Interviews

Ideally, interviews and focus groups would take place in safe, comfortable and neutral locations without distraction or interruption (Longhurst, 2010). This was often not the case. As interviews often occurred in women's homes, they were prone to interruption by children, visitors and other family members, who in some cases joined the interview itself.[6] Some of these interviews were multi-voice from the offset as other women (and occasionally men) were present when we arrived and wanted to take part in the interview. Male relatives and older female relatives tended to dominate interviews, answering questions that were directed to women. Their presence could make some topics difficult to negotiate, for example questions related to sexual harassment (Balcioglu, 2018, reported similar experiences). Hence, where possible, I sought to interview women by themselves. However, experiences and perspectives of male relatives were also pertinent to note and gave alternative views of gendered experiences.

Focus groups also presented several challenges, often related to the size of the groups. NGOs would frequently permit additional women who had arrived at the community centres to join the focus

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[6] Regarding gaining consent in these cases, where possible, we would momentarily pause the interview, explain the research and emphasise that the interview was being recorded and therefore if they spoke or joined the interview, their voice would be recorded.

groups or encouraged women to stay after they had attended a drop-in session. This was very challenging to manage as it felt impossible to ask women to leave, and when I asked for assistance from the NGOs themselves, they argued that it would lead to tension between women. Preferably, focus groups would be conducted with a maximum of 5 women, due to the need to interpret, but in these circumstances, there could be up to 12 participants. In these contexts, women could dominate others, and some participants could be frustrated by the limited opportunity to speak. This occurred on a few occasions in Lebanon, and as a result I had long conversations with NGO workers in Jordan about the importance of having smaller, controlled groups to allow women to be able to express themselves. Because of some of the challenges with participants talking over each other, when listening back to, and transcribing, recordings, where it was difficult to distinguish between different participants voice or arguments, I and the translator would consolidate what was being shared, akin to Hasso's (2017) approach.

I chose to introduce two additional methodologies with refugee participants: solicited diary keeping (Meth, 2003, 2004) and participatory cognitive mapping (Downs & Stea, 2011). I felt that these methods had much to offer: participatory mapping in allowing a deeper spatial engagement with the neighbourhood and solicited diaries in encouraging reflective and considered accounts of life within the neighbourhood. Both these methods are outlined below along with my reflections of their benefits, challenges and limitations. There is very little literature on either of these methods being employed in refugee research, and therefore this next section adds to the lacuna of literature and research in engaging with these methods in refugee settings.

Solicited Diaries

As a qualitative method, diaries are yet to reach the profile and employment of interviews and focus groups. Yet, they have much to offer in the way of richness of data and eliciting insight into challenging topics from participants which they are less inclined to divulge during interviews[7] (Mackenzie et al., 2007; Meth, 2003; Thomson, 2007). Diaries are considered a personal record of what an identifiable individual considers relevant and important. As such, it has great use in understanding an individual's lived experience, from their personal perspective (Alaszewski, 2011). I was enthusiastic about the potential of this method as I felt that diary keeping allowed a participant both to share what they feel is appropriate in a manageable way, over a scaled time. Thus, it should provide greater emotional protection for participants. I also felt this method would allow for a sense of ownership and empowerment over what was being shared (Meth, 2003, 2004). As a result, I anticipated a different set of data to emerge from the diaries. For example, I assumed participants might reveal issues or

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[7] Detailed practical and ethical consideration of the use of solicited diaries and cognitive mapping techniques was presented in a draft paper at the University of York Conference: *Ways of Telling: Methods, Narratives and Solidarities in Migration (May 2017)*

concerns that had not been raised during interviews and focus groups (e.g. personal difficulties within the neighbourhood that they wished to keep private or 'unpopular' opinions and viewpoints that can be difficult to express face to face, or when peers are listening). Diaries also provide the space and time for participants to provide more detail, and to address issues that are pertinent to them.

The main challenge in both Amman and Beirut was finding participants who were both literate and willing to keep a diary. It took some time to locate participants who were willing to engage in this aspect of the research. When asked if they wanted to be involved, a couple of participants said they couldn't bear to keep a diary. They expressed that it would be 'too hard' reflecting on painful or difficult experiences and expressed a desire to live in the moment and to move on. Another participant said that she would find diary keeping irritating and frustrating and was too impatient for the task (similar to participants in Jacelon & Imperio, 2005). Another participant was very nervous that her diary would be used to discredit her in her community and place her in a position of vulnerability (Alaszewski, 2011). She was extremely concerned that her written thoughts and feelings might 'fall into the wrong hands' and as such declined to participate.

Ten women were asked to keep diaries for 3-4 weeks, providing accounts of their experiences within their host cities, including experiences both in and outside their homes. Completed diaries were typically brief and short in length, and I did not receive diaries from three participants. Participants struggled to keep diaries updated, despite check in phone calls. Despite this, they revealed interesting data and insights into refugee experiences which were employed as data in the empirical chapters in this thesis.

Participatory Cognitive Mapping

Cognitive mapping can be understood as a sketched map of an individual's internal cognitive thought processes concerning their wayfinding around the city. It allows for a participant to externally represent their internal thought processes, decisions and mobility concerning their spatial environment (Downs & Stea, 2011; Upham & García Pérez, 2015). Mapping activities allow for a better understanding of spatial dynamics of a neighbourhood and has potential for empowerment of participants as it situates participants as knowledge holders (Vertesi, 2008). It focuses on the micro-politics and everyday realities of spatial negotiation (Campos-Delgado, 2018) and relates not only to how we store and recall information but also how an individual thinks and feels about a geographical environment (Jacobsen, 1998). It is an inclusive, visual methodology, where one doesn't need to be literate to participate (Liebermann & Coulson, 2004). I had wanted to use cognitive mapping as a means of encouraging women to engage with their neighbourhoods spatially, and to 'break the ice' and get talking during interviews and focus groups. Thus, it would act as a 'mediatory practice, a ruse

for speaking about difficult journeys and personal stories' (Awan, 2017, p. 31). However, this method was poorly received by participants. I believe there are several reasons for this, including cultural differences, concerns over literacy and confusion and concern over the method and its purpose. A handful of participants did engage in mapping some of the areas that they used in their neighbourhoods; however, they were very reticent to do so, and their efforts were fairly disengaged and half hearted.

I quickly discerned that this method was alienating participants rather than drawing them into conversation about issues of security and space. As a result, I quickly phased it out in order to avoid adding any discomfort to participants. Having spoken with other researchers that have engaged mapping techniques amongst Middle Eastern migrants and refugees, I am aware that there are cultural differences in the description and orientation of a spatial environment. Additionally, some studies have noted that women can struggle with their personal confidence when taking part in cognitive mapping tasks (O'Laughlin & Brubaker, 1998). I feel that this method does have potential, however it is probably best employed on a second or third meeting with a participant, when greater rapport and relationship is established, rather than being a means of *building* rapport, or as a means to break down barriers and encourage conversation about spatial mobility and security.

Additional Interviews

This research is supported by additional interviews with representatives from political parties, police, community activists, researchers and *Mukhtars*. These interviews provided vital insight into how different institutions and individuals perceived incoming refugee communities and responded to ongoing issues within host communities. Interviews with NGOs operating in Amman and Beirut were vital in framing understanding of both contexts and allowed for an insight into how the host communities were managing the significant influx of Syrian refugees. Whilst interviews with NGO and community contacts were relatively easy and straightforward, gaining access to interviews with community figures of authority, for example, police representatives or political party leaders, and attempting to organise these, was frequently challenging, time consuming and fruitless.

In Lebanon, the sheer abundance of political parties and security services operating in Beirut, alongside their penetration into everyday life meant that there were more avenues through which to attempt to secure these interviews. W*asta* (influence) went a long way in securing access to political party interviews, or to individuals who held power. Recording these interviews was rarely permitted.

These interviews were near impossible to replicate in Jordan. Here, police were only willing to talk at length and on record if I had permission from the Ministry of Interior, indicating the strength and extent of the State. Political party activism was weak and trying to gain access to interviews with civil

society institutions was fruitless. Meetings were often rearranged, or contacts went cold. It was difficult to discern whether this was related to my positionality, the questions I was asking, or simply the availability of these individuals. *Mukhtars* are more unusual in Jordan and are traditionally attached to families instead of communities (see Chapter Eight). The strength of the state, as well as the obvious presence of the *Mukhabarat* and my lack of attachment to a local academic institution in Jordan, made me that little more cautious and nervous about pursuing these interviews in this context

LEBANON - REFUGEE PARTICIPANTS (Fieldwork conducted September - November 2016)		
Access to Participants	**Resulting Interviews & Focus Groups**	**Resulting Solicited Diaries**
Community Contact (Na'ba /Bourj Hammoud)	Interviews with 16 participants and 3 focus groups with 15 participants	5 solicited diaries from interview participants
Community Contact (Mazra'a/ Tareek El Jdeede)	Interviews with 6 participants	
NGO 1 (Bourj Hammoud)	3 focus groups with 22 participants	
NGO 2 (Mazra'a/Tareek El Jdeede)	2 focus groups with 18 participants	
JORDAN - REFUGEE PARTICIPANTS (Fieldwork conducted: February - April 2017)		
Access to Participants	**Resulting Interviews & Focus Groups**	**Resulting Solicited Diaries**
Community Contact (Mahata/Hashmi Shamali)	Interviews with 9 participants	1 solicited diary from interview participant
NGO 1 (Hashmi Shamali)	Interviews with 10 participants	
NGO 2 (El Balad/Ashrahfey)	Interviews with 6 participants and 4 focus groups with 20 participants	2 solicited siaries from 2 interview participants

Table 1: List of Interview Participants

Coding and Analysis

All interviews, focus groups and solicited diaries from refugee participants were typically translated during interviews and then transcribed and coded using a combination of NVivo software and manual coding. Interviews with police and political parties were rarely, if ever, recorded and therefore I only had detailed notes to code following interviews, which was done manually. Initially, I had only intended to use coding software. However, during the write up process I found that it created a sense

of detachment from the data and from participants. NVivo was undoubtedly a helpful means of ordering data, but I also benefitted from frequently revisiting and rereading full transcripts and fieldnotes on interviews and focus groups and adding further coding to these.

Whilst coding was influenced by the theory that underpins this thesis and did not occur within an 'epistemological vacuum', it was primarily inductive (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 83–84). As codes were inductive and emerged from the research material, data from Amman and from Beirut was analysed separately and different descriptive codes materialised through analysis (Guest *et al*., 2014). Coding the data, alongside reference to fieldnotes which provided further contextual detail, assisted in analysing emerging themes and both implicit and explicit meaning from interviews which assisted in making sense of participant's narratives.

Codes were initially descriptive: for example, 'Camp'; 'Papers'; 'Smuggling'; 'Host community Interaction'; 'Violent encounter'. Whist descriptive categories did somewhat differ across the two contexts and certain descriptive codes were unique to each context (for example, issues of camp settlement in Jordan, but not in Lebanon), I still found that they broadly related to the primary thematic issues that emerged across both contexts, although different issues concerning these themes became salient. This will have been in part influenced by my interview and focus group format and the questions posed to participants. These descriptive codes were developed into broad themes that emerged across both contexts predominantly concerning the topics of 'Identity', 'Space' and 'Security', which form the primary crux of this thesis. I found that data in both contexts was deeply related and interconnected across these themes and often sorted into a number of these categories. This reflects some of the challenges in sorting and presenting the empirical data into a linear format.

Access

As an outsider to both contexts, I relied heavily on the support of NGOs, community contacts, academic institutions and interpreters to gain access to participants. These gatekeepers were clearly not 'static' or neutral figures (Edwards, 2013; Mandel, 2003; Miller, 2004) and my reliance on them was strong and their influence pronounced. As such, they significantly affected my access, relationship and consent process with participants. I was mindful of how using particular individuals and institutions within communities might 'legitimise' roles that these gatekeepers hold (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003). In the sections below I discuss how I accounted for these issues whilst carrying out and analysing my field research.

Working with Interpreters

In both contexts I worked with local female students, Farah & Akilah[8], who acted as my interpreter-cum-research assistants. Both were in their young twenties, students, residents of the country[9], fluent in English and Arabic, compassionate and conscious of refugee and gender issues and flexible to cancelled appointments and hastily organised last-minute interviews. They had both worked with refugees and marginalised groups, were briefed about the project beforehand, given an outline of research questions in advance and agreed to a code of conduct. I was conscious that we wouldn't always be working in particularly 'safe'[10] or 'nice' environments and that sometimes the content of the interviews would be troubling. As such, choosing appropriate trustworthy interpreters who were well briefed and resilient was essential to the success of the project (Liamputtong, 2010; Vargas, 1998).

My relationships with Akilah and Farah were the cornerstone of my research. These two young women were essential in aiding not only my deficiencies in Arabic, but also my negotiation of cultural and social contexts that were different to my own. As such they acted as interpreters as well as analysts and cultural brokers (Temple & Young, 2004). Therefore, reflecting on these relationships is critical as they dictated my understanding of the context, my participants and my access to key contacts in the field (Edwards, 1998).

During interviews and focus groups, I would typically introduce myself and my background in Arabic. I would explain that I only spoke a small amount of Arabic and would then introduce my interpreter, who would greet participants and take over interpreting as I spoke in English. We would begin by outlining the research project followed by chatting through issues of consent and whether participants were happy recording the interviews. The translator would interpret as the interview progressed so that the interview was more conversational, and I could ask questions related to the content of what participants were sharing rather than reel off a set of questions (as suggested by Taylor et al., 2015). Occasionally, during focus groups, we would just let the women continue talking if they were in the flow of conversation (and then translate the recording of the focus group at a later point).

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[8] These are pseudonyms. Both interpreters were comfortable with me using their names, but due to the political nature of the work they assisted me with, I expressed to them both that I preferred the use of pseudonyms.

[9] Jacobsen & Landau (2003) warn that utilising research assistants from the same country as refugee participants risks 'transgressing political, social and economic fault-lines' (p. 193). Additionally, I was confused about the legality of 'employing' a Syrian refugee as an interpreter and endangering their position within their community.

[10] This is not to say that the locations were inherently dangerous, but I was conscious that there would be risks. As these were neighbourhoods of lower socio-economic status, and we were clearly outsiders, we could be targeted for petty theft or harassment. I was also aware that the participant refugee women would be living in 'informal' housing and that this could be structurally unsafe (i.e. with exposed electricity wires, unfinished buildings, lack of paving/roads etc.).

I am conscious that working with interpreters meant that at best I was receiving an 'an approximation of (participants') statements (as) words and meanings are often not interchangeable between languages' (Tribe, 2005, p. 570). Both interpreters had an excellent standard of written and spoken English. The occasional challenge arose over participants' use of Syrian colloquialisms and slang, which would stump my interpreters. In these incidences, we would ask the participant to provide more detail or write down the closet approximation of what was being said. If I had concerns or required additional clarification, recordings were checked over with Farah or Akilah, or with a Syrian interpreter based in Sheffield.[11] When interviews were not recorded, where possible the interpreter in question and myself would record a post interview discussion of the content of the interview in order for recollection, clarification and agreement on detail.

I am aware that this was not verbatim translation and that on occasion my interpreters would be making assumptions about meanings to the best of their abilities (Temple & Young, 2004, p. 171). Whilst verbatim translation would have been necessary if I was conducted discourse analysis, as I intended to code and analyse data through thematic analysis, a close interpretation and understanding of refugee contributions was sufficient for the needs of this study, in order to draw understanding and themes from participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Non-Government Organisations and Charities

I was strongly encouraged, by both other researchers and my own University, to work with NGOs where possible. This was for several reasons. Urban refugees are a difficult group to access as they frequently lack legality to live in the city and therefore try to live anonymously (Sanyal, 2014). Additionally, women refugees are even more challenging to access as they often experience restricted mobility. There were also protection and security concerns, as well as sample validity, that necessitated the importance of working with NGOs where possible. Through their role as gatekeepers, NGOs also provide an additional buffer of accountability and protection for refugees from unscrupulous (or simply, unthinking) researchers. From an organisational point of view, NGOs and community organisations often have the resources and capacity to organise focus groups and interviews with ease. More importantly, they know enough of the background of participants to ensure they have the mental and emotional robustness to negotiate an interview concerning the research topic. It was encouraging to meet with many organisations and see how strongly they promoted ideals of informed consent, ethical access and reciprocity.

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[11] This translator was herself a Syrian refugee from Homs who had been in the UK since 2015, is a native Arabic speaker and speaks fluent English.

I worked with several NGOs in Jordan and Lebanon, who were essential to the research. NGOs are ultimately gatekeepers, and controlled access to participants throughout the fieldwork. This meant managing expectations regarding the research remit, time limitations, interview content and reciprocity. They provided insight into the humanitarian community and the complex and pressing issues facing refugee and host communities. Many staff members spent time with me explaining how their organisation functioned, their perspective on ongoing refugee issues within the community and introduced me to key figures. Some took time out of busy schedules to help set up focus groups or sit in on interviews. That is not to say that negotiating or establishing these relationships were easy or straightforward. These relationships took time, effort and energy, and I had to approach well over twenty NGOs, both in the UK and in the Middle East before finding organisations to work with.

Community Contacts

Working through community contacts was a rich and insightful experience. I was conscious that working with such contacts would in likelihood reinforce their position within the community, potentially increasing their power and position (Jacobsen and Landau 2003, p. 194). Thus, I spoke with or interviewed community contacts in advance to understand more about who they were, the work they conducted and their links in the community. I worked with 3 contacts, all women, who were working or living (or both) in the communities in which I was researching. I was referred to two of them through NGOs who had worked with these women in the past and felt that they would be best suited to assisting my research, whilst the other was a contact of a work colleague. All the women appeared to be respected and liked by the communities in which they worked. They understood the dynamics of the neighbourhoods, could explain the socio-political undercurrents, as well as reflect on the changes that the communities had experienced with incoming Syrian refugees.

There were some difficulties working with the community contacts. They undoubtedly held their own biases and were gatekeepers who decided which potential participants I should meet. Some had preferential contacts in the communities in which they worked, and a desire for certain voices and viewpoints to be heard. They were also frequently present during interviews and could on occasion interrupt participants to add an additional layer of explanation, start questioning participants about scenarios that were being described during the interview, or provide advice on where to go for help and assistance. This both disrupted interviews and enriched them. On occasion, community contacts could ask probing questions which opened different avenues of insight. However, their interruptions could also disrupt the flow of conversation and confuse the participant about why the interview was taking place. I am also conscious that participants may have tempered their contributions, particularly any that might be critical of the community contact's inner circle of contacts, whilst these contacts were present.

Ethics & Positionality

Researchers have obligations to ensure that their research is not harmful to participants, and where possible, reciprocal in nature. The University ethics procedure provides training, guidance and peer review to ensure that researchers do not enter the field unprepared, or with proposed projects that would be to the detriment of communities. Before beginning the fieldwork stage of my research, I provided an ethics review to my department, which was examined and passed, alongside two risk assessments for fieldwork in Lebanon and Jordan. My proposed research was ethically sensitive, particularly because of the focus on refugees and the contexts in which I was working. Thus, I was required to engage critically with philosophical, ethical and practical concerns related to informed consent, extractive research and participant protection.

Research conducted on and with refugee communities is 'fraught with ethical issues' (Mackenzie et al., 2007). This includes concerns over refugees' safety, protection and anonymity, their vulnerability to re-traumatisation during prying interviews, and the extent to which they can consent in an informed manner when they are in a politically, socially and economically fragile position (Block et al., 2013; Kabranian-Melkonian, 2015; Pittaway et al., 2010). Researchers are called to maintain a balance between acknowledging refugees' vulnerability, and their own personal responsibility to 'do no harm' alongside an awareness and promotion of a refugee's individual agency and autonomy involving them where possible in research projects that directly affect their lives (Hugman et al., 2011). This, I believe is achieved through emphasising and examining the power imbalances at play between a researcher and NGOs, who hold significant power, opportunity and resources and a refugee, who still has agency, but whose social, political and economic capital is significantly depleted.

Being reflexive of one's positionality is a key aspect of feminist, qualitative research. By focusing on positionality, that is, the intersection of the researcher's various identities and the interaction of these identities within the research environment, a researcher intends to address potential subjective biases. A researcher engages in this through reflexivity, which can be understood as a 'process of internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome' (Berger, 2015, p. 220). Considering and reflecting on positionality is essential for not only highlighting potential bias but also for addressing the ways in which identity affects the ethics of the field research. Reflexivity requires not only an acknowledgement of the landscape of power, and one's identity and position within it, but also an acknowledgement of gaps in knowledge production between researcher and researched (Rose, 1997). Thus, reflexivity was an important aspect of this research project, and an activity that I engaged in frequently through fieldnotes and conversations

with supervisors and other researchers, both in and outside of the research field. This is discussed in more detail over the following sections.

Consent

From the offset I knew that it would be challenging to gain written consent from participants. Hugman et al., (2011) warn that as refugees are a vulnerable and at-risk population, that many will be suspicious of written consent forms that require their name and signature, particularly in contexts where they are trying to maintain anonymity. As such, introducing such forms can scare off participants before research has commenced. Additionally, there may be difficulties around literacy which prevent participants from being able to read and understand the consent form they are signing, even if translated into a language they are competent in speaking, which can result in alienation, fear and confusion. Recently conducting research with Syrian refugees in Jordan, Turner (2018) detailed his struggles in gaining both written and verbal consent from refugee participants who were willing to assist his research but deeply nervous of committing a signature to a form, or being recorded.

Whilst I prepared written consent forms and outlines of the research project, these were not used in the field. The concerns raised by Hugman, et al. (2011), and realities outlined by Turner (2018) were relevant during my fieldwork. Very few of my participants were literate, and I was advised against using such forms by Syrian refugees themselves, and by NGO workers, who felt they would intimidate potential participants. Instead, I spoke at length at the beginning of the interview with participants about who I was, the research project, and how I would use what they shared with me in my thesis, future publications and with NGOs working in their neighbourhoods. My contact details were provided (including my phone number in Arabic script) so that participants could contact me. I would ask if I could record the interview. If participants agreed, I attempted where possible to record their verbal consent, or noted it in my fieldnotes. I took great efforts to emphasise that I would not be using anything identifying about the women, and I took no pictures of any of them, or their relatives. Women were given the opportunity to ask questions or to withdraw from the interview or focus group at any point.

Positionality and Ethical Concerns in the Field[12]

This research presents the perspectives of women from the peripheral world and is thus inherently political and requires critical reflection on representation and bias. In order to reflect on relations of power in the field, I employed a feminist, reflexive approach in order to consider the knowledge that

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[12] Reflexive positionality and ethical issues and concerns related to field research have been presented on a number of occasions, including the Wits-Sheffield Newton Fellowship Workshop 2016 & 2017 and the University of Sheffield UREC Funded Workshop: *Understanding the ethics of interdisciplinary research with refugee communities* (June, 2018).

was produced between myself and participants (Mullings, 1999). Feminist researchers have stressed the importance of reflecting on the privilege of the researcher, as I will determine the questions that are asked, whose voices to include and how to interpret what is being shared (Parr, 2015; Rose, 1997; Skeggs, 1997). I am conscious that my own positionality within the research process will have shaped the knowledge production that took place. Participants' responses were, to a certain extent, shaped by their perspective of my positionality within wider, global, structures of class, race and gender, and embedded within histories of colonialism. Rose's (1997) encouragement to examine positionality not only in regard to mine and my participants identities, but also regarding gaps and limitations in knowledge is pertinent in my context, particularly as I worked alongside interpreters and I was clearly an outsider. These reflections are considered in more detail below.

Most of my participants were Syrian refugee women, from a mixture of age groups, religious creeds, classes and standards of education. In contrast, I am a 'foreign', white, Christian, well-educated woman who clearly has means and opportunity, and a citizenship which allows me to move around freely. Although I was born and raised in South Africa, I have spent the past fourteen years in the United Kingdom and most people who I meet and interact with consider me to be English.

I was a notable outsider in my fieldwork contexts. From my general appearance, it was plain that I was not local, and whilst I dressed conservatively when working (covered shoulders and legs, baggy clothing). I did not cover my head unless asked to (e.g. when entering a mosque), which also led to assumptions about my cultural and religious leanings. Many of my participants assumed I was a Christian, both because I was Western and because of my more relaxed appearance. This made some of the participants very self-conscious of their criticism of Christian churches, who frequently provided food parcels in return for church attendance, as they were concerned about 'insulting me'. If issues of religion or Christianity were explicitly discussed, I would identify myself as a Christian but emphasise that I was offended on their behalf as I didn't believe this was an appropriate way to care for refugees (and endangers many of them). Despite my best efforts, I only speak basic Arabic, so could greet people in the community and have a general chat. Language also clearly played a role in establishing my outsider status. However, my efforts went a long way in building rapport. Being able to greet others, introduce myself, or do part of the introduction of the interview meant that participants could see my efforts with their culture and language. My basic understanding of Arabic, and on occasion, some of the participants' ability to communicate in English (this was rare) aided my capacity to follow the thread and content of interviews.

I am conscious that my position, as a feminist, will have led me to interpret participants' responses in specific ways and that this would have also shaped the questions that I posed in interviews and focus

groups (Skeggs, 1997). However, I made efforts wherever possible to continue to ask questions, even if they appeared naïve or repetitive, in order to ensure I was gaining an accurate perspective from participants. I also made efforts not to ask biased questions, even if I did not necessarily agree with participants positions on particular matters, but rather to let participants reveal their reasons or decisions for their actions. For example, I did not presume that all women wore the hijab or suppose their reasons for doing so if they did. I did not presume that my participants were 'oppressed' or 'forced' into wearing the hijab but would rather be wearing it for a multitude of social, cultural, religious or protective reasons, all of which I felt were relevant to understanding gendered structures, agency and security in such contexts. Almost all participants were asked about this individually, and many expressed surprise about this topic. However, their varied responses and reasons provided insight into power, gender, dress and protection.

My power in the research field was in itself intersectional, shaped particularly by my gender in accessing women participants. My gender exclusively enabled me to conduct research with women, in the privacy of their own homes, something that men (especially foreign 'outsider' men) would not be permitted to do. I also felt that some of the male interviewees (particularly those in positions of power) considered my gender less of a threat and were inclined to assist me.

On occasion however, when 'researching up' with stakeholders with more power or position, I found that both access and interview content could be challenging to negotiate. For example, one male interviewee in a respected and powerful position in the community, frequently dismissed my questions, ended the interview prematurely and kept diverting conversation to ask when my translator and I would go out dancing with him and his friends. On other occasions, it was difficult to access particular stakeholders or individuals that held power and position within the community. Additionally, during some interviews with key stakeholders (such as political parties) it was clear that the wider landscape of power, and the individual's position within it, was determining their 'careful' responses to my questions.

Thus, on occasion, the intersection of my nationality, gender and race ensured some doors were opened to me. On others, these intersections resulted in participants that were reticent or nervous to elaborate on their perspectives or to facilitate wider access to other potential participants (see Mullings, 1999). In field notes, I commented on occasions where interviews were uncomfortable and challenging, with silences, confusion and evasion. In the empirical chapters that follow, I have attempted to make these gaps and challenges clear when I felt that I was receiving a partial or distorted perspective of the context specifically due to my positionality.

Not only was I an outsider to this context, but I also held power. Although it was often challenging to build relationships with NGOs, and I frequently felt powerless and obstructed, from the perspective of my participants, I seemed very well connected and informed. I moved around neighbourhoods unhindered and clearly had signs of wealth (I frequently had a laptop and recorder on me). My relationships with NGOs, and my racial identity, meant that my status could often be misinterpreted. Particularly in Lebanon I found that many participants thought I either worked for a humanitarian agency or for UNHCR. I assumed this was in part because of my racial identity and language but also because of how I was introduced. This meant that I was regularly asked for help, specifically with UNHCR. As such, it was clear that this misinterpretation of my status was to a certain extent paving the way for interviews, as participants are unlikely to turn down the opportunity to meet with an 'official' as their circumstances were so desperate. I would correct this immediately, but it would leave me feeling very guilty and compromised. It was often difficult to extract myself from these associations with NGO's and UNHCR, despite my efforts to situate myself as a researcher and a student. Like Faria & Mollett (2016) I found these associations stressful and was concerned that I was inadvertently exploiting participants through the confusion of my positionality. Taking their suggestion, I found it best to lean into, and reflect upon, these anxieties, acknowledging that despite efforts to the contrary, on occasion confusions over identity and position are difficult to remedy.

For example, the confusion regarding my identity meant that some of the content of interviews and focus groups could be skewed. During one focus group a participant frequently interrupted others who were talking about issues they had experienced, insisting that as a group they needed to provide a consistent narrative about high rents so that 'when I returned to UNHCR it would be my key finding'. We had to stop the focus group, reiterate the research remit and explain my role again, emphasising that I wasn't trying to trick anyone about who I was. It was clear that these misunderstandings about identity occurred far more in focus groups then in interviews. I believe this was often because my focus groups were organised through NGO offices, where UNHCR officials would visit. My connection with NGOs would have also encouraged involvement in the project as these organisations loom large in the life of refugees, and participants may have assumed that refusal to be involved may have had repercussions on their access to aid (Hugman et al., 2011; Zwi et al., 2006). Because of my positionality, women may have felt reticent to trust me, downplayed or over-emphasised experiences, particularly owing to my positionality in the wider geopolitical humanitarian framework. Longer time in the field, in order to establish further relationship with refugee communities and to follow up on conversations and clarify points would have been preferable, but owing to personal circumstances, not possible.

I primarily interacted with women refugees' independently of their families, although husbands, children and other relatives were present from time to time. Despite this, my contact details provided

after each focus group and interview led to numerous pictures, phone calls and messages from the women's husbands, most of whom I had never met or interacted with. These ranged from desperate calls and messages for help for their families, to inappropriate late-night phone calls and pictures of hearts, declarations of love and the men topless and sprawling on beds or straddling motorbikes. Here, my gender morphed me from 'professional researcher' into potential sex object, whilst my ethnicity further confused my identity as 'humanitarian' and potential lifeline for assistance. This experience is not uncommon for foreign researchers in the Middle East (or other contexts and has repercussions on the issue of consent – see Mackenzie *et al.,* 2007). Indeed, Clark's (2006) survey on American researchers in the region noted requests for money, medical assistance and favours, whilst Schwedler (2006, p. 427) notes the dynamics of negotiating environments where female Western researchers are perceived as 'promiscuous'. Operating within an existing culture of *wasta* it is unsurprising that many respondents wanted to make the most of the connection I had with them. However, I found this deeply uncomfortable. It was distressing turning down people's request for assistance, especially when I knew how vulnerable some of the families were and it was deeply uncomfortable to be occasionally propositioned by the husbands of women I had spent all day with. There wasn't always an obvious way to deal with these interactions, however I attempted to be clear, consistent and polite as much as possible when communicating with participants and their relations to ensure there was no misunderstanding or preference given.

My interpreters held various identities and positionalities, both in relation to myself, and the research participants. Both interpreters had to negotiate different social dynamics regarding their positions and identities to both the refugee and host community, and their positionalities in turn affected how we were treated or provided access, in particular environments. I was conscious that just as I would leave behind research participants, I would also be leaving behind my interpreters, both of whom had relationships and responsibilities in their home countries. As such, I felt a strong responsibility regarding their position and reputation in their communities and did my upmost to emphasise and educate on personal protection and boundaries in the research field.

Both women were moved by the plight of refugee families and their living conditions, and were stirred to donate money, provide favours, drop off clothes and food and connect and signpost refugees to humanitarian services. Whilst I had extensively engaged in the University ethics procedure, these women did not recognise the remit of a foreign, Western institution dictating what 'appropriate' behaviour was for them within their own cities. My greatest discomfort with this assistance was that it was uneven. My interpreters had personal preferences in assisting specific women and families. I was deeply conscious that these women were in turn embedded in wider community networks and that these efforts would not go unnoticed. Furthermore, as my interpreters lived and worked in these

cities, I was on occasion concerned that they were opening themselves up to further requests for assistance and money, which I myself was experiencing. Whilst I spent a lot of time discussing and outlining these issues, both were confident and assured that their approach was far more ethical then mine. Raising some of these issues at conferences with other researchers, I was assured that this tension between local interpreters and foreign researcher approaches of how to care for participants was not uncommon.

Participants were not paid for their involvement in focus groups and interviews. However, those that kept diaries were paid, as they were spending a length of time and effort in the research project. Those that helped the research project through introductions to other participants or 'tours' of the neighbourhood were also paid or tipped. This was done on the guidance of senior NGO staff who advised that as an outsider, I would be assisted on the grounds of hospitality, but that I should insist on offering payment as it was appropriate to pay people for their time and effort. Some of the NGOs also provided a payment in kind to participants, for example a packed lunch, or a sanitary pack, in exchange for taking part in focus groups or interviews. I also gave donations to Community Contacts to pay them for their time and assistance. The NGOs I worked with did not ask for payment, but they did request that I sent a summary of my findings to them on completion of my research so they could use this to inform their work further.

Whilst I very much agree that research should not be extractive or exploitative, I also found it tricky to consider how I could realistically 'give back' to the communities in which I was working. It was clear they everyone I interviewed needed income, advocates and protection – all of which I was poorly placed to provide. Refugee populations are also in constant flux, often moving locations depending on their altering circumstances, thus following up with participants is not always realistic. Reflecting on his work with refugees in conflict zones, Goodhand (2000, p. 14) notes that: 'It is vital to keep a sense of proportion about the potential for researchers to have positive impacts beyond the immediate objectives of the research aims itself.' Zwi et al. (2006) echo this sentiment, reflecting on the unstable conditions in which many migrant and refugee groups find themselves in, and the difficulties of disseminating research amongst populations that are constantly in flux.

Through the consent process, I emphasised that the research would be disseminated to raise awareness of the women's plight and most participants expressed a willingness to be involved for the predominant reason that my work would be seen by others and their situation would be highlighted further afield. Many of the women thanked me for engaging them in the research and said that they had found the experience cathartic or expressed thanks for having someone to talk to frankly about their lives. During interviews, women would frequently show me their ID papers to emphasise their

official registration as a legitimate refugee, or alternatively asked if I believed their account of their situation. When I emphasised that I did, they would explain that many people had dismissed them as liars when they shared their stories. An NGO worker emphasised that they heard similar stories repeatedly from refugees, resulting in their workers quickly experiencing fatigue and indifference to the accounts they were told, leading to dismissive or unsympathetic behaviour. As such, it was clear that having an opportunity to share experiences, openly and in their own time in an empathetic context, was important for the women that participated (other researchers also find this, see: Hunt, 2008).

Faria & Mollett (2016) have reflected on the structural role of 'whiteness' and racialised power in the field, and how it can elicit different responses from different stakeholders, including awe, disdain, trust and suspicion. I identify with some of these responses, as I felt that my racial identity, a clear marker of my 'outsider status', played into some of the occasions where the research process and my positionality within it made me uncomfortable and I felt like an outsider or extractor.

For example, staff members at a café where we had held a day of focus groups expressed their own research fatigue at the stream of European researchers and NGO representatives having meetings in the café with various members of the community when 'nothing changed'. I felt significantly discouraged, naïve and fraudulent considering this exchange. This was not my only critique. When meeting a well-respected Lebanese academic, I situated within wider colonial frameworks and was accused of swanning in to steal research data from the Orient to publish 'in English' back in the West in order to get promoted, whilst Middle Eastern academics were left out in the cold. These were not easy conversations to navigate but served as deep and vital reminders of the power imbalances at play, of privilege, positionality and of research responsibility.

The discussion points in interviews and focus groups are also an area of concern. Women were asked questions about incidences of harassment or difficulty in their host communities, as well as experiences of insecurity and fear. These are tempered with questions that include positive queries about agency and empowerment as well as general queries about day to day activities. Discussions around fear heighten anxiety (Moser, 2004), and on occasion I was conscious (particularly in focus groups) that some participants shared accounts that were cathartic for them, but shocked or frightened others. At these times I was deeply grateful for the presence of support workers and counsellors, who had viewed my questions beforehand and provided support, and indeed for the largely compassionate nature of other participants towards each other.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes the first section of this thesis, which has built a theoretical and methodological framework which underpins the thesis and guides the empirical chapters and analysis. The three empirical chapters that follow all contribute to answering different, yet related, aspects of the predominant research question. Issues of security, space and identity are complex, overlapping and linked and feature across all three empirical chapters. Discussing and analysing such concerns in a linear, detached structure is challenging. I have chosen to structure the empirical chapters in the following way in order to make it accessible and to highlight specific themes that emerged through data coding. The first empirical chapter relates to the first research sub-question above and details refugees' arrivals into Lebanon and Jordan, decisions to settle in Amman and Beirut and issues of (in)security related to housing and employment influenced by refugee policies and identity. This chapter particularly highlights the relationship between the macro structure of refugee policies and the effect this has on human security issues of shelter and livelihood. The second empirical chapter addresses the second sub-question and explores refugee women's negotiations of public and private spaces within Beirut and Amman, including a deeper analysis of tactical agency within insecure environments. This chapter especially demonstrates the role of socio-cultural gendered norms and how these interact with refugee identities to shape insecurities of space. The third empirical chapter addresses the third research sub-question and compares women's encounters and access to formal and informal security provision in Beirut and Amman, and the various ways in which they resolve conflict and difficulties within their host cities. This chapter foregrounds how structures of security provision shape gendered experiences of space and security. The fourth sub-question related to gendered tactics and agency is covered across all three chapters. Thus, each chapter explores numerous aspects of security, space and identity, but specific themes are more prominent in particular chapters.

Chapter Six: Gendered (in)securities of shelter and livelihoods

This chapter utilises a feminist geopolitical and geolegal lens to compare how legal, policy and spatial structures of borders, refugee policies and patriarchy shape the intimate scale of everyday shelter and livelihoods of refugee women living in host cities. It tracks and compares refugees' decisions on where to seek asylum, the decision to settle in Amman or Beirut, and the ways in which refugee policies shape the material, everyday conditions of livelihoods, shelter and security in host cities. These issues have direct implications for the intimate and embodied lives of women, and as such, it examines how issues of (in)security are lived in the everyday. In this chapter, 'security' is very much based upon the human security needs of the individual: security of shelter, financial and economic security and a wider pervading concern of personal protection – that is, as security from threat. It is predominantly focused on the first research question posed in the Methodology Chapter: *In what ways do these structures affect Syrian refugee women's security of shelter and livelihoods within their host cities and how do women respond to these?*

And thus, through an examination of everyday 'micro' concerns and preoccupations of refugees, it contributes to the primary research question: *How do the social, political and legal contexts of host countries interact with the identities of Syrian refugee women to produce multiple scales and forms of (in)security?*

Using feminist geopolitics and feminist geolegality to demonstrate the various scales at which security operates and is experienced, as well as the influence of legal structures of policy in shaping lived experiences of security, this chapter also considers the role of the strong and weak state in how policies and security structures differ and are enacted at the state level but experienced in the everyday. It also engages with theories of tactical agency in order to consider the ways in which women respond to the structures that shape their lives in their host communities. Thus, this chapter contributes to understanding gendered urban refugee livelihoods, host relationships and experiences of shelter in host communities and draws distinct linkages between the shaping influences of macro structures, such as refugee policies, in the daily, lived (in)securities of life in the city at the intimate scale.

This chapter begins with an examination of refugee decision-making on where to self-settle once leaving Syria and traces decisions and differences in self-settlement in Amman and Beirut. Detailing the interconnection between participants legal status, their livelihoods and dwellings, it goes onto consider how material and financial insecurities intersect to create homes as a site of insecurity. This

section also contributes to understandings of public/private space as overlapping and relational, issues which are explored in more depth in the next chapter.

The section that follows considers refugees' attempts to establish livelihoods, predominantly through finding informal work opportunities. It demonstrates how policy landscapes related to refugee status and rights to work, create opportunities for refugees to be exploited by opportunistic employers. This landscape also allows for gendered exploitation and harassment of women.

The wider legal framework in place in Jordan and Lebanon is thus demonstrated to shape the spaces, places, work opportunities and exploitation of Syrian refugees, which plays out in gendered ways. Through a comparative analysis, the final section of the chapter demonstrates some of the gendered ways that geopolitical structures affect the intimate lives of refugees, through family breakdown, polygamy, and separation (in order to seek asylum in Europe) in both contexts. Thus, it demonstrates the gendered repercussions of refugee law on everyday life, and everyday insecurity for urban refugees.
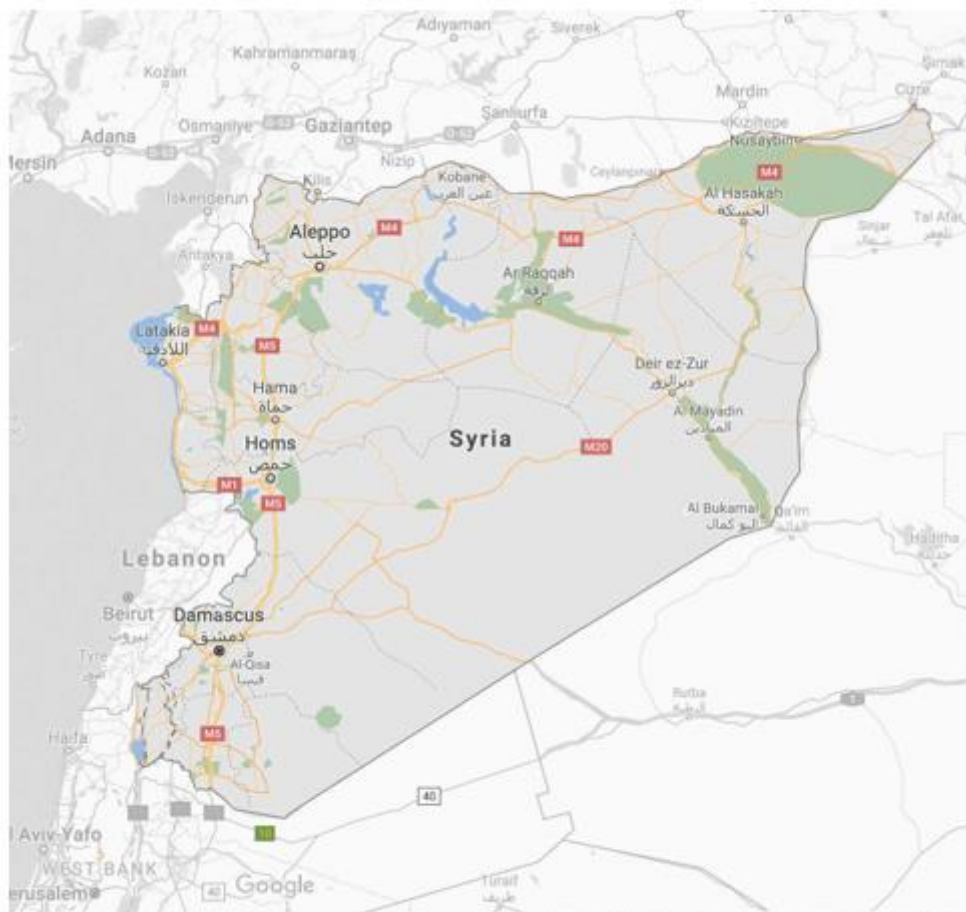
Figure 4: Map of Syria, indicating some of the main cities and settlements (Google Maps, https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@34.8945237,38.5035493,7z?hl=en)

Refugee tactics and decisions on where to seek asylum

Most interviews and focus groups conducted during this fieldwork opened with questions related to participant's flight from Syria, their initial arrival and settlement in Jordan and Lebanon, their legal status and their adjustment into their host communities. This assisted in providing an outline of the factors that had shaped decisions to seek refuge in either Lebanon or Jordan and then to self-settle in Amman and Beirut and helped establish relationship with participants (Boswall & Akash, 2015). This first section examines the factors that influenced refugees' decisions to settle in a particular state, city or neighbourhood, and some of the considerations that shaped these decisions. It examines the ways in which refugee policies in each of these countries, which shape refugees' rights to enter, seek refuge and remain in each state, are experienced by refugees, notably regarding *kafala* sponsorship, and the ways this is enacted spatially. This section considers the ways in which refugee policies shape the borders, places and spaces that refugees cross, access and inhabit and the ways in which this is gendered.

Participants in Beirut had chosen Lebanon over other locations to seek asylum predominantly because of their economic prospects and pre-existing linkages to the country. Many participants had a male family member who had worked in Lebanon previously, and as a result, returned to the country in order to make the most of their economic and social networks in order to provide livelihoods for their families:

> *'My husband had been here [Beirut] before. He's a [migrant] worker so he's not settled in one area of Lebanon, he would travel depending on the jobs. We got married and I directly came here with him. We wouldn't go to Jordan or some other places because my husband has work over here' (Shahar, Na'ba).*

Work opportunities and previous knowledge of Lebanon appeared to have stronger consideration then geographical proximity to participants' locations within Syria. Participants came from a wide range of places within Syria, including Kurdish regions in the North East of the country, rural countryside and urban centres such as Damascus, Aleppo and Homs (see Appendix). However, even though countries such as Turkey were closer, economic potential held greater weight. Zulima explained that her husband's economic links to Beirut had held the greatest influence when deciding where to go, even if that meant being apart from extended family:

> *'My husband used to work here [Na'ba] before the war. He would work here for a few months, then spend 2 months at home in Syria. Our family is from Aleppo. We don't have any relatives here. My husband's family went to Turkey, but because of my husband's work and his*

> *connections here and the fact that he doesn't know the Turkish language…he decided it would*
> *be better to bring the family here' (Zulima, Na'ba).*

As Lebanon's refugee policy towards Syrian refugees is based upon its immigration laws (see Chapter Four), there are no official refugee 'camps' for Syrians to be housed. Equally, there are no explicit restrictions as to where a refugee may self-settle. Around half of participants had arrived at legitimate border crossings, with their Syrian identification papers, received the free six-month entry coupon to reside in Lebanon legally and entered the country. Extending this stay 'legally', that is, paying for a renewal, was very unusual amongst participants as it was unaffordable for marginalised families (see below). Other participants, usually those from poorer or more rural backgrounds who did not possess legal documentation attesting to their identity, had been smuggled into the country through the mountains that border Syria and Lebanon. Typically, these participants had lived awhile in the Syrian refugee settlements in the Beka'a Valley, a region of the country that has very strong links with Syria (van Vliet & Hourani, 2014). These families would then make their way onward to Beirut when life in the Beka'a had become too difficult because of poor livelihood opportunities and shelter conditions. Research on Syrian refugees living in Lebanon has highlighted the regional differences in income, livelihoods and opportunities for Syrian refugees, emphasising the harsh environmental conditions, poor accommodation in tented shelters and fluctuating work opportunities and pay in the Beka'a (*ibid*). Ulima explained that she and her husband had spent two and a half years living in the Beka'a Valley after they arrived in Lebanon from the countryside near Aleppo. Their poor financial position, compromised shelter and difficulties living in the area, encouraged them to seek better opportunities in the city for their family. However, this had not benefitted them:

> *'When we lived in Beka'a we lived in a wooden shed thing, it was very cold…there are no job*
> *opportunities [there]….we were not comfortable there, but there is not much work here so it*
> *is not much different' (Ulima, Na'ba).*

Ulima's family did not have strong links to Lebanon and struggled to establish themselves both in the rural landscape of the Beka'a Valley and in Beirut. They expressed difficulty in understanding the dynamics of the neighbourhood and felt highly insecure regarding their position, expressing anxiety and fear about political parties, police and the 'strangers' they were living amongst. Her family's lack of knowledge of Beirut contrasted with many others whose previous migrant links to Lebanon were a predominant reason for their presence in the city.

In strong contrast, none of the refugees interviewed in Amman had pre-existing labour links in the region. There are fewer cross-border migrant links between Syria and Jordan (Turner, 2015), and it is likely that those Syrians that did have labour links were probably based in the North of Jordan near

Ramtha, where prior to the civil war, workers from Dara'a (in Southern Syrian) travelled across the border to work and then return to Syria. Therefore, decisions shaping refugee settlement in Jordan covered a variety of factors, including kinship links, proximity and refugee policy and care.

Turkey was frequently dismissed by participants as a viable option either because of its distant borders, or, more importantly, the lack of shared language. Some participants considered Turkey to be 'more difficult to get into'. One participant simply put it down to geography, her family went where it was practical, where they could get through. Others explained that they had made efforts to avoid *Daesh* controlled areas and that had resulted in Jordan being their best option for asylum.

For refugees in Jordan, the intersection of Lebanon's refugee policies, sectarian politics and conflicts, influenced families' decisions to avoid the country. Many participants had family or friends that lived in Lebanon but had heard that conditions were extremely poor. Additionally, many stated that access or support from UNHCR was non-existent:

> *'Some of our relatives are in Lebanon…. we heard that the situation [there] was really bad, so we decided to come here' (Rania, Hashmi-Shamali).*

When discussing security and protection, women's opinions would become more political, referencing creed, politics and power as a decision to avoid Lebanon. Many broadly referred to Jordan as ethnically and religiously homogenous:

> *'It is [different here] because Lebanon is with the [Syrian] regime, so they treat refugees as a threat…It's terrifying…I didn't even think about going to Lebanon [laughs]…all Syrians that I know that are in Lebanon are not comfortable or happy at all. So, I am very happy to be here. It's very comfortable here in Jordan because you only have [Sunni] Muslims and Christians, you don't have anything in-between...but in Syria there were lots of ethnic religions, political groups, you had the Shi'a, the Alawites…lots of groups. The same thing is in Lebanon. This is what makes Syria such a bad place as well as Lebanon, so that is why I am so comfortable and happy here, because I doesn't have to worry about [regarding religion and politics]. You are either a Muslim or a Christian' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali).*

Nailah went onto to discuss the Syrian occupation of Lebanon and what she perceived as a legacy of distrust towards Syrians:

> *'What adds to the difficulties in Lebanon is that Lebanese people in general don't like Syrian people, because back in the day when [Hafez al-] Assad was in power, he had the Syrian army in Lebanon. They were mistreated by the Syrian army, so Lebanese people in general do not like Syrian people, even though Syrian people love Lebanese people' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali)*

These two comments show different perspectives of the complex socio-political relationship between Lebanon and Syria, and the ways in which participants continually place countries within wider geopolitical histories, thus making decisions based on political relationships and histories.

There were also multiple concerns about the spill-over of the Syrian civil war into Lebanon and fears regarding the involvement of Lebanese groups in the conflict. Participants highlighted links between the large Shi'a Muslim population in Lebanon, Hezbollah, its wider links to Bashar al-Assad and the danger this then posed to Syrians in exile:

> *'There are a lot of Shi'a in Lebanon…. and Hezbollah find the Syrians in Lebanon and give them back to Syria. [We know this] because we had Hezbollah [militia] in Homs. In Jordan they are more sympathetic [to refugees] than they are in Lebanon' (Ishtar & Sabeen, Ashrafyeh).*

Sunni participants emphasised that Hezbollah was 'very bad' and Lebanon wasn't safe to live in, expressing sympathy for those that were trapped there. The involvement of these groups in the conflict dictated a strong desire for most Syrians living in Jordan to avoid Lebanon, and for that matter, to avoid politics (see Chapter Eight). These comments are also early indicators of levels of discomfort and fear regarding Shi'a and Alawite communities from Sunni participants. Throughout the interviews, there would be occasional comments about Shi'a and Alawite, usually in negative and accusatory terms.

These opinions, held by participants in Jordan, were in marked contrast to those in Lebanon. Some participants in Lebanon referenced the help and assistance offered to them by Hezbollah operatives, particularly when negotiating security checkpoints and arrests, despite a range of Kurdish and Sunni backgrounds (this is discussed in further detail in Chapter Eight). A small number of participants had initially crossed the border into Lebanon and had briefly stayed with relatives in order to then make their way to Jordan (usually by flying). These women highlighted poor living conditions within Lebanon and expressed a desire to leave as soon as possible. It was clear that many participants feared ill treatment in Lebanon as a refugee and felt that they had greater protection and better treatment in Jordan. Even though neither country is a signatory of the UNHCR 1951 Refugee Convention, this appeared to matter little to the women. It was word of mouth reputation that influenced women's impressions of whether a country was fair. The idea that Jordan was a more compassionate and supportive location for refugees, appeared to develop predominantly from shared accounts and from wider impressions of homogeneity.

Here, complex factors influenced decisions to avoid Lebanon and seek asylum in Jordan. The poorly executed refugee policy, lack of humanitarian support and political tensions of Lebanon intersected with the identities of refugees to influence their decision to seek refuge in Jordan. Participants

associated their Syrian ethnicity and refugee status as a source of danger for them in Lebanon and feared ill treatment because of Syria's past and ongoing history with Lebanon. Concerns over potential ill-treatment and apprehensions related to sectarian politics and religious plurality resulted in some refugees avoiding Lebanon in favour of the perceived socio-political stability of Jordan. This was despite pre-existing family networks and connections in Lebanon.

Negotiating arrival and refugee status

This section examines the relationships and intersections of refugee policies across each context, using feminist geolegality and feminist geopolitics it considers how policies (il)legalise refugees' presence in each state and how they shape the places that refugees settle in. This is a theme that will be returned to across this and subsequent chapters. At this juncture, these policies are examined by considering women's arrival and settlement in host cities.

Lebanon's refugee policies and kafala

Roughly half of participants in Lebanon had initially entered the country legally, gaining a (free) entry coupon for six months. However, as their time in Lebanon had continued, most participants found it financially impossible to renew these permits at a cost of US$200 per person. This was one of the key differences between participants in Jordan and Lebanon. Although participants in Jordan did have to negotiate camp bail out processes, even if this was done outside of the formal channels, refugees were still offered the opportunity to legalise their status. However, refugees in Lebanon were forced to continually pay to renew their documentation, which is also linked to their ability to access the labour market.

Almost all participants did not have the correct legal permit to remain in Lebanon. Those that had gained papers at the border legally upon arriving into Lebanon stated that their papers had expired and that their status in the country was not *mufawadyn* (authorised). Many participants expressed their inability to find a *kafala* (see Chapter Four) who would sign their papers and vouch for them. The State's insistence on viewing Syrian refugees as 'guests' or migrant workers meant that the right to work and the right to remain in Lebanon were closely linked. Except for one or two participants, all women expressed their frustration at the US$200 annual fee for the worker permit, arguing that the permit was not even 'an official paper', i.e. not refugee status (FGD 4, Bourj Hammoud). Refugee women also expressed that their lack of appropriate legal status meant they were unable to register their children for schools and were hindered from engaging with other services.

The necessity of securing a *kafala* opened refugees to exploitation. Alyas, a mother of four from Raqaa explained how she and her husband had been defrauded out of US$300 by an Egyptian man in their

neighbourhood. He had posed as a Lebanese citizen who could act as their *kafala* in order to legitimise their status:

> '*He claimed…he had a Lebanese passport and that he would give us kafala. He would take care of our papers to renew our stay here…He wanted $800 in total, but we gave him $300….He actually took us to the General Security[13], he took my husband there, but it was all a fraud…[we found out] he's done this before, with other people*' (Alyas, Na'ba).

UNHCR appeared to be of little assistance for refugees in Lebanon. All participants had had some interaction with the organisation, either being registered or recorded with them. Typically, however, participants were confused regarding their status with the organisation and the papers they held. UNHCR had been instructed not to register any Syrian refugee that arrived in the country after January 2015, only to record them. Many participants were waiting on meetings with UNHCR and were then contacted to be told this was rescheduled for 18 months to two years' time. This was a source of confusion and distress for participants, who had been anticipating assistance and advice from UNHCR regarding their legality, work opportunities, food vouchers, medical care, shelter options and importantly, an opportunity for third country re-settlement. Many had been counting down the days to their UNHCR meeting, assuming that once they met with the organisation, their position within Lebanon would change. I was frequently asked in interviews by participants if I could find out why UNHCR had rescheduled their interview and why refugees were not eligible for assistance and help. With UNHCR seemingly out of touch for most participants, women stated that the only way to establish legitimacy in Lebanon was to pay the US$200 permit fee and find a *kafala* every twelve months. This was a completely unrealistic and unsustainable option for vulnerable families.

Because of the poor access to the UNHCR, many participants were suspicious of the organisation, and suspicious of those that received help. There was significant confusion and poor communication about how to access UNHCR, and as such rumours were rife about *wasta* (personal connections and influence), sexual favours, bribery and opportunism. Stevens (2016) has noted prolific use of *wasta* in the Syrian refugee community in Jordan, whereby connections secured assistance from UNHCR and other NGOs to the benefit of particular families and the exclusion of others. Therefore, although it was rarely referenced in my interviews in Jordan, it is clear that *wasta* operates and is widespread amongst the refugee-humanitarian relationship in these contexts. Many women were exasperated and mistrustful of the UNHCR and other aid agencies, saying that they 'knew' the international community was providing Lebanon with aid and donations, but that they weren't receiving any

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[13] General Security is responsible for borders, immigration papers etc. See Chapter Four.

support, that Lebanon was pocketing donations and the state should be held to account. Several participants detailed hostile and unpleasant encounters with charities and NGOs, and deep confusion over the support that was being offered. Participants would live off community rumours of assistance from different NGOs and recounted their efforts to visit their offices, only to be turned away. Participants expressed frustration at the little support they received and how 'rude' staff were. One focus group participant recalled refusing to leave the UNHCR offices when they had declined to assist her family. Her refusal escalated into a direct conflict, whereby her feet were kicked from under her so that security guards could physically manhandle and drag her from the building.

Women also viewed assistance provided by UNHCR and other aid agencies as based on class and manipulated by gender. Participants talked of other women receiving assistance from UNHCR as having 'gold up to their elbows'. This was a common shorthand expression to explain wealth and influence. As many of the women had sold what gold jewellery they did possess to escape Syria, to pay bribes, or to simply live in Lebanon, those women that still wore visible gold jewellery were seen to have *wasta*, opportunity and resources at their disposal. Women would verbally compare themselves, asking rhetorically why these gold-bangled women, so clearly wealthy and unaffected by being a refugee, were outside of UNHCR waiting for assistance. Participants insisted that these were the women that received appointments and were offered third country resettlement because of their *wasta*. Some expressed opinions that women were exploiting their sexuality in order to access UNHCR. Participants would insist that other Syrian women wore 'sexy underwear' to UNHCR for when they were searched by security and offered sexual favours to guards in order to get appointments or access. It is unclear as to whether these were 'urban rumours' that emerged from the frustration of the refugee community, or if these were genuine accounts whereby women were being exploited in order to gain access to support. However, participants often readily engaged in this narrative, expressing their frustration and anger at these women for 'exploiting themselves' and therefore 'jumping the queue' whilst the legal framework and institutions at work had created these conditions whereby women felt it necessary to exchange sexual favours for assistance.

During interviews with NGO workers it became apparent that some refugees, particularly those who were middle-class and educated, understood how best to utilise the humanitarian infrastructure in place. These women benefitted from being the first to access classes and resources and often went from one drop in session to the next, thus excluding others from accessing help. NGO workers explained that these women were often bored and looking for a way to spend their day, rather than in need. These workers also expressed their own reflections on verbal altercations, stating that refugees frequently made derogatory remarks towards them saying they were only employed because of the ongoing refugee crisis and that NGO employees 'worked' for them. Thus, relationships between

both groups were overlain by intersecting power relations, which could often become strained and misunderstood under conditions of stress and precarity.

A few participants who were from more middle-class backgrounds had shunned assistance from UNHCR when they had initially arrived in the country as they had the means to support themselves. However, as the war had continued, they found they were in increasingly precarious positions:

> 'When we first arrived in the country, my husband didn't want us to be greedy, so we didn't go to the UN. Now things are different, you need to be very cautious' (FGD 5, Bourj Hammoud).

In these cases, participants considered UNHCR to be associated with emergency poverty relief and not with legality and status within Lebanon. The length of the Syrian conflict had meant that early expectations of returning home after the conflict had been replaced with a concerned understanding that Lebanon was 'home' for a potentially long period of time. Personal resources had dwindled, and their social position had shifted from how they perceived themselves as 'migrant workers' or 'guests' to refugees. This meant that gaining access to UNHCR, and indeed to any possibility of third country resettlement, was a strong focus for many participants.

Jordanian refugee policies and kafala

Syrian refugees who arrived into Jordan faced a different legal framework. Border crossings were closed much earlier to refugees coming over the Syrian/Jordanian border, and unlike Syrians in Lebanon, arriving refugees were funnelled towards refugee camps following registration. However, the bail out system in place, described in Chapter Four, allowed refugees the flexibility of leaving the camps and seeking self-settlement throughout Jordan, whilst still providing them with the legal right to be in the country.

Camps were perceived very poorly by participants and acted as a motivating factor to self-settle in urban areas. Women highlighted how camp conditions were utterly unsuitable for their children, unsanitary, and open to the elements. Many expressed concerns about their children's educational opportunities. Some participants related their decision to leave for the city directly to their children falling sick in the camp and the danger that camp conditions posed to them. In contrast to others, one focus group participant expressed a desire to stay because the camp had 'everything that you need'. However, she nevertheless felt compelled to move:

> 'I have daughters with me, and I feared for them. I didn't have a man with me. So, I took a risk and left' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).

The amount of time spent in a camp varied between participants from a few hours to a few months. As many had been in Jordan for a prolonged period, they struggled to define which refugee camp they had stayed in. Most participants had arrived in 2012-2013 and camps were not organised, or fully constructed. This meant that security measures were laxer and there were easier opportunities to leave the camp. One Focus Group participant explained that one night the holding camp in which they were placed was flooded, and in response security personal simply opened the gates and let them leave. Furthermore, prior to 2015, 'bail out' from the camps was far more flexible (Achilli, 2015) and thus movement between the camps and the city was far more fluid.

Many participants used *kafala/kafeel* and *taghrib* (smuggled) interchangeably throughout interviews. It was often unclear how refugees had left the camps and whether this had been through a formal bail out procedure or through smuggling or bribery. Women were vague about how they had organised leaving the camp. This may have been related to nervousness regarding their perceived illegality if they had been smuggled, or simply because they had no direct knowledge because their exit had been arranged by others (typically, male relatives). A report by the NRC estimated that 45% of refugees living outside of camps in Jordan did not go through the formal bail out process (IHRC/NRC, 2016). Therefore, a large proportion of self-settled refugees did not engage with this process. Very few participants described pre-existing family or labour connections in Jordan from before the onset of the civil war, and therefore it is likely that most of these participants paid for a smuggler. Participants reported paying significantly more than the 15JD fee per person for a *kafeel*. A family of four reported paying 150JD (approximately £150) in order to leave the camp, whilst others had paid up to 500JD (£500) for a family of ten, and others 100JD (£100) per person.

These payments usually consumed what meagre savings the refugees possessed. One participant explained that she worked in a sweatshop in Amman for three months to pay the *kafala* fee, whilst another family explained that their *kafeel* extorted them when they arrived in Amman, demanding more money whilst threatening to return them to the camp and eventually leaving with most of the possessions they owned in order to 'cover his costs'.

The legal systems in place when a majority of refugees arrived in Jordan opened refugees to high levels of financial exploitation. Despite the predominance of Refugee Asylum Certificates and other formal registration processes through UNHCR, which gave refugees a sense of legality and access to support, the bail out process in place was harmful to refugees' security. Since 2015, bail out has been significantly tightened, and leaving the camps is a far more complex exercise (Achilli, 2015; IHRC/NRC, 2016).

Other than registering with UNHCR, participants in Jordan appeared to have little to no interaction with the organisation. Women made a brief reference to encountering the organisation upon their arrival in Jordan and there was some discussion about requesting third country re-settlement through UNHCR. However, the organisation seemed largely detached from the lives of urban refugees in Amman, and few participants mentioned using it directly for assistance and aid, unlike those in Lebanon.

Self-Settling in the City: Shelter, Livelihoods and Employment

As established above, the lack of official refugee camps meant that refugees arriving in Lebanon could self-settle in locations of their 'choice', although this was shaped by previous knowledge of the region, kinship links and economic circumstances. This contrasted with refugees arriving in Jordan, who typically first needed to negotiate registration at refugee camps and their subsequent bail out before settling in urban areas. This section examines the neighbourhoods of the city in which refugees settle, and the subsequent relationship to shelter, employment and livelihoods.

Once arriving in Beirut, most participants headed towards areas of the city known for hosting migrant and refugee populations. These areas have long histories of homing refugee populations as they had either been Palestinian refugee camps (e.g. Shatila, Sabra), or areas of the city allocated by the state to incoming refugee populations (e.g. Bourj Hammoud for Armenian Christian refugees). Currently, these neighbourhoods are characterised by a diverse host of nationalities, including Armenians, Palestinians, Ethiopians, South Asians, Iraqis and Syrians. Indeed, many of these neighbourhoods are described as de facto urban refugee camps by academics, because refugees outnumber other community groups and because of the subcultures that have developed within them (Fawaz, 2017). These informal areas of the city become important bases for more socio-economically deprived groups, in order to make inroads into the opportunities available in the city. Since the onset of the Syrian civil war they have become vital hubs of economic opportunity and shelter for incoming, and returning, Syrian refugees, particularly those from more socio-economically deprived backgrounds.

Typically, migrant workers with links to Lebanon had previously lived in these more informal areas of the city, which were more heterogeneous and affordable. Additionally, there were opportunities for flexible and informal work which allowed them the opportunity of returning home to Syria for a few months or weeks at a time. Thus, these neighbourhoods have established reputations as places where refugees can self-settle and find work. In these areas, economic opportunities for informal work coupled with more affordable housing and shelter:

> '[We are in Sabra] because it is cheaper. That's the most important thing…because my husband wasn't finding work and we needed to find money' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).

'We are living in Mar Elias [Palestinian refugee camp] because my husband is working there, so we live there because of proximity to his work' (Sara, Mazra'a).

Some participants gradually migrated to more affordable areas, pursuing work, or hearing of cheaper accommodation through word of mouth. One of the key places mentioned in many refugee's journey to Beirut was Cola Junction, a large traffic junction in the heart of the city from where numerous transport links are connected. Refugees would arrive by bus into the centre of the city, settle in 'Cola' (the area in and around the junction) for a short amount of time, before heading for more affordable areas.

Family networks and kinship links played an important role in providing support and shelter for some participants, thus establishing them in Beirut. Participants would join existing family members, who were either settled in the city due to their own economic migrant links, or because they had fled Syria earlier. Often, this led to sharing a home until the newly arrived family could establish themselves.

Settling in Amman was mostly described as a strategic, family-based decision because it was 'the best Governorate'. The Amman governorate represents the concentration of the Jordanian economy and is thus wealthier and presents better labour opportunities. Participants had headed for the neighbourhoods of Ashrafyeh, Hashmi Shamali or Mahata for a number of reasons, but typically because extended family, displaced from the Syrian conflict, had already settled in these areas. Occasionally, participants also had distant relatives linked to these areas. These neighbourhoods, in the more traditional, South-Eastern side of the city, have histories of being 'refugee receiving' and are commonly known to be more affordable and have greater access to informal work opportunities. Those refugees who did not have kinship or economic links to Amman explained that their *kafala* had simply dropped them off in these neighbourhoods upon arrival into Amman, probably because of their reputation for being affordable and because of the large presence of migrant workers and refugees. When I asked Yesenia why her family had chosen Amman over Irbid or Mafraq, the major settlements in the North closer to the border and to the camps, she explained that her husband's family were already living in the neighbourhood and therefore it made sense to head to Amman over staying in one of the Northern cities. Despite a number of studies in the Irbid and Mafraq Governorates which have highlighted tensions between the overwhelmed host community and Syrian refugees (REACH, 2014), no participants expressed over-crowding or hostility in the Northern Governorate as a reason for their migration towards Amman, which I had anticipated being a factor in their decision making.

Most families made their way from the north of the country either by bus or in a private vehicle (usually arranged by *kafala* or smuggler). One family described how they arrived with a large influx of Syrian refugees, getting off the buses in Mahata, where there is a large intra-country bus station. The

family lived on the streets for several days, alongside other refugee families until a Palestinian family showed them a dwelling in Mahata which had been described as 'a dump'. They were told if they could make it into a home, they were welcome to rent it. Another participant described being left in Ashrafyeh by the camp smuggler and becoming 'trapped' in the area because other areas of the city were so unaffordable, she could never move. Participants explained that when their *kafala* dropped them off in a neighbourhood of Amman, they assumed they would be based in the area for a short time before establishing themselves in the city. One participant ruefully commented that 'a temporary home became a permanent home' over time and it became difficult to move to other parts of the city (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh). This was the case particularly for female-headed households. These women tended to struggle significantly with a lack of financial resources, practical assistance and social networks, and expressed high levels of social isolation, which is explored further in Chapter Eight. Thus, opportunities to move away from refugee receiving neighbourhoods were lower for these women.

Shelter Conditions in Refugee-receiving neighbourhoods

I observed that living standards and housing conditions in the informal, refugee-receiving neighbourhoods of Amman and Beirut were poor. This was confirmed by the participants. All participants in Beirut and Amman rented their homes from local landlords. Numerous interviews took place in participants' homes, where I could personally witness housing conditions and participants regularly described their deficient housing environment. There were exceptions. Occasionally, I would interview a participant at home and discover a clean and organised interior, sometimes even a sofa. However, most of the participants that we visited lived in sub-standard, overly crowded accommodation with compromised hygiene and privacy.

The neighbourhoods in which participants were living were typical refugee and migrant receiving localities of the city and featured highly informal housing standards. Although affordable housing is easier to acquire in these neighbourhoods, the dwelling conditions in these areas are exceedingly poor and, in some areas, akin to slum like conditions. This is due to years of informal construction either due to strict building regulations for 'non-citizens[14]' (Fawaz, 2017; Sanyal, 2011, 2014), or a complete lack of building regulation (Ababsa & Daher, 2011). They are also highly politicised spaces (particularly in Beirut) with higher petty crime rates and anti-social behaviour such as drug dealing, which can be challenging to negotiate physically and socially.

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[14] This refers to the restrictions placed upon Palestinians who resided in refugee camps. In order to prevent their long-term presence, successive Lebanese governments have implemented laws that prevent their rights to 'construct' on the land that they live on. As such, Palestinians in camps have constructed in ad-hoc ways and means resulting in informal planning practices (See Sanyal, 2011; Pasquetti, 2015).

In both Amman and Beirut, following local building trends, homes in these neighbourhoods tend to be stacked apartments, made of concrete. These buildings are created with flat roofs so that homeowners can extend their home vertically when have the financial means. This design also allows for a family unit's consolidation under 'one' roof. These homes are constructed out of a base of concrete, which allow the house to remain cool during the heat of the Middle Eastern Summer, but which can be bitterly cold in the winter. They are rarely heated, save for those who can afford a portable gas heater (and the required gas). Most dwellings consisted of a small bathroom, a kitchen and one or two rooms in which sometimes up to 15 family members lived with no interior doors, no beds and no running water.

Figure 5: Refugee participant's home in Mahata, with cooking and cleaning facilities side by side (Author)

Several participants explained that their dwellings had been completely abandoned and uninhabited prior to them moving in. They were in extremely poor condition, covered in mould, damp and dirt and families explained how they paid high rent for this substandard accommodation. They then painstakingly cleaned out the rooms, slowly procured mattresses (to sit and sleep on) and other necessities, usually from NGOs, rubbish dumps or sympathetic neighbours, in order to live. Some families used ad hoc spaces (e.g. under stairwells) within apartment blocks that were converted into dwellings when refugee families arrived in the neighbourhoods.

These are high density neighbourhoods, with individuals living in close proximity to each other. Participants expressed tensions and discomfort within their homes, particularly over noise, anti-social and intrusive behaviours. Husnieya spoke of how her neighbours would shout abuse at her family and throw rubbish onto the balcony of their apartment. Countless women said they were yelled at through walls to 'keep the baby quiet!'. Dwellings often had a permeable quality that left participants fearful of the possibility of burglary and forced entry. Several participants in both contexts experienced attempts by opportunistic burglar forcing entry into their homes. Furthermore, refugees often shared these spaces with other families, which had gendered repercussions for personal privacy. For example, women discussed the challenges of trying to maintain dignity and privacy when negotiating private spaces with other (sometimes unrelated) men within wider cultural-religious norms of modesty and sex segregation.

Discussions of shelter often intersected with ideas of stability, security and home. In Arabic, the word *bayt* is used to described one's house, or home, but also has connotations of belonging and safety linked to one's community, or even a larger city (Abdelmonem, 2012). Thus, some women made distinctions between their dwellings in Amman or Beirut and their wider sense of home and belonging in Syria. Fenster (2005) has also explored the linkages between the private spaces of home and public spaces of the city and a wider sense of belonging and rights. Both these themes emerged in women's reflections of their homes in Amman and Beirut.

Shelter & Housing in Beirut

In Beirut, rents varied significantly from participant to participant. Some reported paying US$300 a month for a two roomed dwelling, whilst others were charged US$500 for a similar property. Rents were inconsistent and according to participants, subject to frequent increase by landlords anxious to make a profit. Discussions of rents dominated frustrated conversations with women who highlighted their exploitation:

> *'My rent is US$400 [a month], because I am Syrian. It used to be US$200, but because I'm Syrian they increased the prices…We have tensions and psychological problems [from the war]. We come here and the Lebanese people just want to strangle us with rent and high prices' (FGD 4, Bourj Hammoud).*

The vulnerability of Syrian refugee families to high rents in their host communities has been widely documented by NGOs and other researchers (Carrion, 2015; Guay, 2016; REACH, 2014), and has led to a deterioration of relationships between host communities and Syrian refugees, as locals are frequently dislodged from their dwellings in favour of Syrian families. Participants highlighted how

Lebanese landlords were taking advantage of the situation, rapidly increasing rents and forcing them to pay double the prices of Lebanese residents. Many women expressed high levels of stress and insecurity over the thought that they might be evicted at any moment, particularly as they often did not have money to pay for rent. Thus, tensions developed between both refugees and hosts through the emerging housing crisis in the city. Resources and services in such high-density neighbourhoods were also an area of tension. Women shared incidences of conflict over irregular water supply in their neighbourhoods, explaining how apartment blocks would have one water source but that as 'outsiders' they would be frequently denied its use:

'Our neighbour in the building, cut the electricity wires of the water motor, and said: "You Syrians will pump water when we are finished, and if we don't finish, then it's forbidden [for you to get water]"' (Najat, diary excerpt, Na'ba).
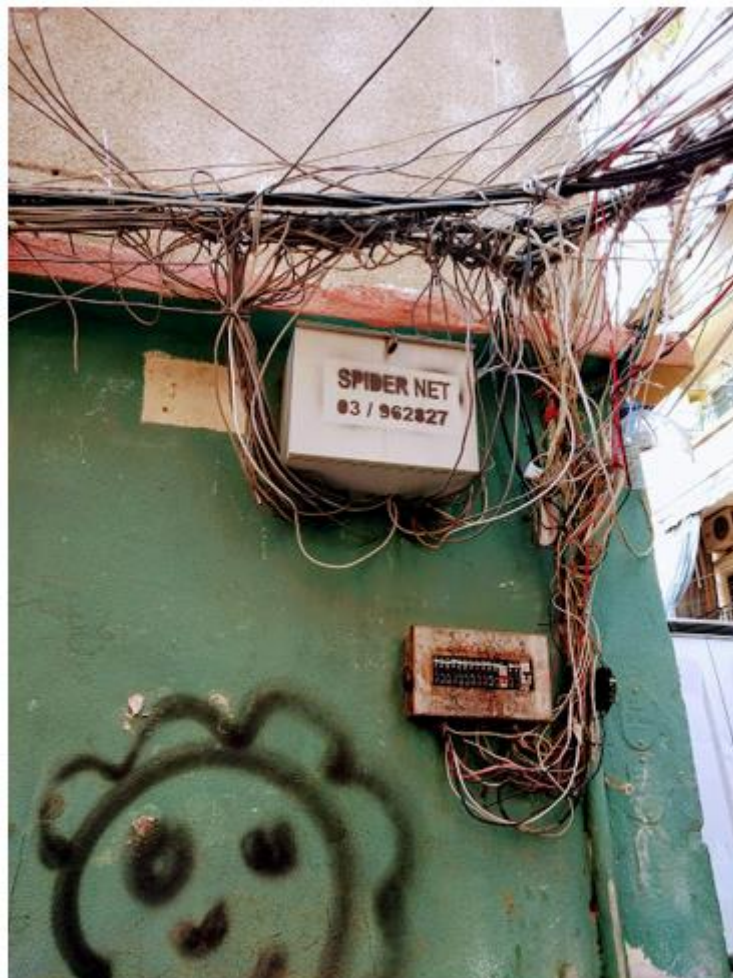
Figure 6: Ad hoc electricity wiring in the neighbourhood of Na'ba (Author)

Conditions in many of the dwellings led to stress and concern amongst participants, particularly as most felt the homes were structurally unsafe. In Mazra'a, many of the participants were living in the Palestinian refugee camps Shatila and Sabra, which are notorious for their poor design because of the building restrictions levied on these neighbourhoods (Sanyal, 2011). Some spoke of how the area wasn't safe or 'clean', and how children had died from being electrocuted on exposed wires. There were open drains, sewers and a proliferation of rats:

'The roof and the plumbing are disgusting; we can smell the sewage. There are rats and huge spiders. My daughter's asthma is exacerbated...I'm always alert, I can't sleep at night' (FGD 8, Mazra'a).

In the previous year, Lebanon suffered from a chronic rubbish crisis in which piles of refuse polluted the streets as a result of strike action (BBC, 2015), This would have exacerbated experiences in poorer neighbourhoods, where overcrowding and existing compromised facilities would have generated highly unpleasant living conditions. During this fieldwork, there were occasional issues with services, and rubbish would quickly pile up on the sides of the road throughout the city, leading to diminished living standards and compromised sanitation.

Rent arrears and debt were frequently referenced in interviews. Whilst some women described patient and generous landlords who had forgiven months of overdue rent, others talked of immediate pressure to pay the rent, fear of eviction and the insecurity this created:

'When we lived in Syria, we lived well actually. But now we are in a lot of debt. Our back is broken, we can't pay the rent, and we can't pay our expenses' (Husniya, Na'ba).

'(The landlord's) a good guy. We haven't paid our rent for three months. But we are in debt to other people too. Our friends, we would borrow money from them in order to meet our expenses....and we have debt from the grocery store that we would buy things from...In total we are in debt about two thousand dollars right now' (Alyas, Na'ba).

Despite her positive discussion of her landlord being understanding, Alyas also explained that her landlord commented that if they found the rents too high, they could leave as a 'thousand (others) would take your place'. This comment indicates the hugely unequal balance of power in host communities and the poor bargaining position of refugees in the face of spiralling costs. There was also a sense of being watched and observed by landlords and property owners that lived within the

community, particularly when it came to money and expenditure. One participant described her distress at trying to buy food other than vegetables for her children only to encounter the owner of the property that she rented:

> *'At some point I would have money to buy my children grilled chicken….and then the [owner] would say: 'Ah, so you have money, you are Syrians with money.' And I would say: 'No, I don't. I bought it instead of buying coffee and things.' And she would say: "I don't care, money comes first". She is very materialistic. And she wants to increase the rent every single time, we are not able to live appropriately' (Wajida, Na'ba).*

This was a significant source of distress and frustration for Wajida, who was a single mother and lived in a one room, windowless dwelling with her three sons. Her observation was that she was not able to 'live appropriately' in her current circumstances. She felt undignified and desperate because, whilst trying to feed her children, she also had to justify that she was poor to her landlady. Other women highlighted how they disliked taking their children to the shops as they would cry and beg for food and treats that the women couldn't afford. Whilst this might be regular child-like behaviour, the lack of ability to be able to provide for children was a source of distress and embarrassment for the women and a constant reminder of their poverty and position. Women expressed a sense of being under a hegemonic gaze within the neighbourhood, by those who had more power and position and judged their behaviours and decisions accordingly. This led to an oppressive, stifling and uncomfortable environment where women felt unable to live 'appropriately' and fuelled a wider sense of unbelonging and precariousness in their host cities.

Shelter & Housing in Amman

Dwelling conditions in Amman were similarly poor to those in Beirut. Hashmi Shamali and Ashrafyeh have significantly high population densities, with approximately 20,000 people per square kilometre (Ababsa, 2013). These neighbourhoods also border Palestinian refugee camps which have equally high densities and significant incidence of socio-economic deprivation (Tiltnes & Zhang, 2013). Many participants reported extensive damp and mould, flooding from the street, leaking roofs which participants likened to being rained on, and suffocating living conditions where extended families lived in crowded conditions. Many homes did not have front doors or glass in their windows. Families used blankets over doorways to help keep the elements out and described how winter was particularly harsh, with low temperatures and occasional snow, as there was no heating, and gas bottles and heaters were expensive. From the perspective of NGOs, this is not considered 'substandard' urban accommodation. For example, about 20% of urban refugees in Jordan are sheltered in garages,

chicken houses and tented settlements (Achilli, 2015). As such, those that are living in a two-room dwelling would be considered exceptionally fortunate, despite the accommodation's questionable infrastructure and health-compromising conditions (Verme et al., 2015). However, despite the so-called privilege of living in one of these dwellings, women still experience high levels of precarity and insecurity. Mouna described her family's horror when part of their roof collapsed and explained that her landlord had never repaired it. So, they had to negotiate around exposed metal rods, wiring and concrete in their home. Rabiah associated the poor condition of her family's home to a wider sense of insecurity in Amman:

> *'The condition of the house doesn't make us feel settled, because it's always falling apart'*
> *(Rabiah, Hashmi Shamali).*

Figure 7: Refugee participant's home in Mazra'a made of an assemblage of materials (Author)

Zarifa honestly admitted that some of the challenges in Amman were related to how she had lived life previously:

> *'I miss home. It was so fresh and clean. It's been hard to adjust, even till now I have not adjusted' (Zarifa, Hashmi Shamali).*

The conditions of dwellings coupled with refugees' wider sense of not belonging, made their situation within Jordan feel unstable and temporary. Keila commented that whilst she felt safe in Jordan regarding protection from war, she felt unsettled in a place that was not her home:

> *''When it comes to my [dwelling], I don't feel like it's my own...Bayti [my house] is somewhere where I feel safe, so it's [shelter] it's not home' (Keila, Hashmi Shamali).*

Keila's comments were echoed in other interviews where participants distinguished between having a roof over their heads and a wider sense of *bayt* [home]. They emphasised that to have a sense of home, you needed a sense of belonging, and that many felt that they did not 'belong' in their host communities. Brun & Fábos (2015) consider the process of 'making home' for refugee communities in flux, noting that it is often a process through which 'people try to gain control over their lives'. In such conditions, many women expressed an inability to feel in control because of the precarious nature of their dwellings, their undetermined status within their host communities and their pervading sense of insecurity.

Rents also varied, and there was concern expressed about rent payments and their unaffordability. However, there were far fewer accounts from participants in Jordan of feeling taken advantage of by their host communities. A report by Errighi & Griesse (2016) noted that whilst there was an acceleration in housing costs in Jordan at the onset of the Syrian crisis around 2013, this was short lived and since 2015 there has been less than a 1.5% increase overall. Participants paid anything from 100 JD (£100) to 250 JD (£250) per month excluding utilities. If participants were married, accommodation was almost always organised through their husband, and they would frequently allude to how they found out about possible accommodation through word of mouth and local connections, or simply by being approached, or approaching others, in the street.

Whilst women in Beirut would almost immediately highlight issues regarding outstanding rent, debts and rent increases for refugees, participants in Amman would discuss rents but appeared, for the most part, to feel that landlords were fair, despite their difficulties in keeping up with payments because of their status. Indeed, many participants, particularly those living in Mahata, described friendships and support from their landlords who often lived side by side with them in the neighbourhood:

'My neighbour is my landlord and she is very understanding. She is Palestinian. I would feel safe with her, I would even give her the key to my house [to watch my kids] (Derifa, Mahata).

'The landlord is very good. Our neighbours got evicted...but our landlord said we could stay as long as we want, its ok. I got everything [in my home] from the landlord. When we got here, we had absolutely nothing, but he got us food and blankets and pillows' (Fariha, Mahata).

Whilst these positive and supporting accounts were not reflective of all women's experiences, they do reflect varying experiences and responses by the host community towards incoming refugees. Contrasting experiences may well be because of the differing housing contexts between Beirut and Amman. The precarity and pricing of housing in Beirut may have led to an additional layer of tension between host communities and refugees which didn't appear to be as present in Amman.

An examination of issues of shelter and 'home' clearly show a range of insecurities experienced by refugee women in both contexts. Refugee policies inhibit access to the labour market, particularly for marginalised groups that cannot afford permits (see further below). This shapes the places and spaces that refugees inhabit, pushing them towards poorer, marginalised areas of the city with poorly planned infrastructure and housing stock. This builds a sense of compromised security and an unstable urban environment in which refugees are constantly re-negotiating. It also indicates the various scales at which (in)security operates. The macro scale of policy and a fixation on state security shapes the spaces and places that refugees can inhabit. In turn, women, particularly those in Beirut, see issues of rent and poor housing conditions to be geopolitical issues. Women insisted that the UNHCR and the Lebanese government should organise standardised rents and appropriate agreements between refugees and Lebanese landlords to limit exploitation.

Livelihoods, work and gender in the city

Whilst the first section of this chapter has provided insight into refugees' decisions to self-settle in Amman and Beirut, the neighbourhoods in which they live and the particular challenges of negotiating their status with regard to shelter and work, this next section engages in a gendered examination of livelihoods, work and vulnerability in the city and the ways in which this differs, and is consistent, across Amman and Beirut.

Refugees struggled to construct livelihoods in Jordan and Lebanon. As highlighted in Chapter Four, and examined briefly above, there were initially no established rights allowing refugees to engage in wage earning employment (Errighi & Griesse, 2016). However, this was slowly changing during the course of this field work as a result of the Jordan Compact (Barbalet et al., 2018). Precarious financial positions and dwindling to non-existent support from humanitarian agencies means that almost all refugees are required to work to support their families and to pay high living costs in their host cities.

Several research studies have highlighted the effect that conflict, flight and asylum have on changing gender roles, with regards to economic opportunities and family breadwinners. Whilst some studies have highlighted the positive opportunities that this has presented to women, who may have been negotiating patriarchal and traditional societies that allowed for little female engagement in the working world, they are often tempered with negative gendered effects (El-Masri, 2013; McIlwaine, 2013). For example, as gender roles change, some women can find themselves increasingly vulnerable to domestic violence as male family members struggle to adjust to their new situation and position (Wachter et al., 2018)

Employment and Livelihoods in Beirut

Day to day life in Beirut was described as financially precarious by every participant. Many expressed fears and concerns related to rent, debt, eviction and poverty. In 2016, UNHCR's *Vulnerability assessment* of Syrians living in Lebanon found that over 71% of households were below the Lebanese poverty line of US$3 a day and the average Syrian household in Lebanon was in debt US$1,135 (UNHCR et al., 2016). As such, finding employment was imperative for refugee families.

As explored above, many participants had male relatives who either had jobs or existing labour links to Beirut. This meant that some men had regular work provided through a *kafeel* who sponsored their right to work in Lebanon, which in turn gave the family a stronger sense of security, an element of belonging in the city and a regular income. However, sponsorship was no guarantee of long-term stability and could be revoked at any point by the sponsor.

Sara, a Kurdish participant from Qamishli in Northern Syria, near the Turkish border, explained that her family had been in Lebanon since the onset of the Syrian conflict as her husband had a job with a steel shop and therefore had a *kafeel* to sign his permit. However, within the last year, the owner of the steel shop had declined to act as his sponsor and consequently his papers and legal status in Lebanon were on the verge of expiring. Sara was beside herself with worry as they were about to lose their right to remain in Lebanon and she felt the only way to reapply was for her husband to return to the Syrian-Lebanese border. This presented numerous risks and concerns, particularly that he would be unwillingly recruited into the conflict.

Most men (including those that had worked in Beirut previously) were not successful in securing themselves a *kafeel*, and were taking irregular, informal work in jobs such as construction or security, wherever and whenever it was available. Thus, their income was highly erratic, often seasonal and vulnerable to competition from other refugees and migrant workers. As a result, constructing stable, consistent livelihoods in the city was challenging.

The state had deemed this informal employment without a *kafeel* 'illegal' in order to protect job security for the native population, and have since 2015 promoted the 'pledge not to work', requiring Syrians to sign a form whereby they agree not to work whilst living in Lebanon (Janmyr, 2016). However, the signing of this document for many is simply cursory: an utter lack of financial support and high debts mean that many refugees will be forced to engage in illegal work in order to support themselves and their families.

Women reflected on the difficulty of their families securing work, linking this with their lack of appropriate documentation and described experiences of being exploited or cheated out of pay:

> *'We work in a place for a week or two, not getting paid by people we are working for. My son has changed 3 jobs so far. They are searching for jobs right now. [Potential employers] are always asking about legal papers, or say: 'You are Syrian, you can't work' (FGD 5, Bourj Hammoud).*

NGO workers and community contacts said that Lebanese workers were frequently overlooked, or even let go, in favour of employing a Syrian refugee which had led to a growth in tensions within refugee hosting communities. This was supported by refugees' own accounts of informal work in the city. They would express frustration and exhaustion at the hours they were expected to work, but countered these issues with an awareness that they (particularly men) were prioritised over Lebanese workers as they were less expensive to employ:

> *'I want to be fair to both Syrian and Lebanese perspectives. A businessman would fire a Lebanese person, to (afford) two Syrians. Syrian workers are in extreme need and they would work from morning until night and face the humiliation [to survive]…a Syrian works for half of the normal pay check and we would work double the shift. [The employer] would delay the payment and then give you only half of it. People are degrading us' (FGD 6, Bourj Hammoud).*

Vulnerability to exploitation was common to both those that had a *kafeel* and those that were working 'illegally' in the informal sector. Thus, both participants with and without a sponsor talked of a 12 -14 hour working day for poor wages. Women reported employees taking advantage of those working without legal papers, threatening them with violence or the LSF in order to circumvent paying their earnings. On occasion, when there was conflict over wages and work, refugees talked of how they were dismissively told to go 'get your people'. This referred to a kinship network, who would support and advocate on behalf of the individual. As employers knowingly employ refugees without legal papers and are more than aware of their illegal status and vulnerability, this comment was used to remind refugees of their inferior position in their host society, and their lack of recourse because of

their illegality. Refugees were extremely reticent to engage in conflict or aggression within the community and, on these occasions, described how they simply let the matter go and looked for other employment (explored further in Chapter Eight).

Employment and Livelihoods in Amman

Refugee status, access to UNHCR and financial support were very different for Syrian refugees in Jordan compared to those in Lebanon. As such, the livelihoods of urban refugees in Amman were less immediately precarious, and the severe debt that blighted almost all refugees in Beirut was less prominent.

In Jordan, refugees are eligible for 10JD per person, per week, in Food Vouchers from the World Food Project (WFP). For families that are deemed highly vulnerable (for example, elderly individuals who cannot work, single mothers with children), the Red Crescent provides additional aid. This was referred to as the 'Iris Scan', a new programme introduced by the WFP to pay for groceries using an iris scan, which was used by many participants as a descriptor of their vulnerability or need (by stating whether or not they received 'the Iris Scan') (WFP, 2016).

Although these vouchers rarely manage to cover the costs of food, and many participants explained that they had to be used at specific stores, it allowed families to stave off their immediate vulnerability. One participant explained that she bought bulk powdered milk with her vouchers which she then sold to local women for a small profit which kept the family financially afloat. Others sold on their food vouchers to allow them greater freedom with where to buy goods.

Amongst participants in Jordan, there were far fewer reports of debt. This is most likely because of more stable rents and because of some of the more accessible humanitarian aid available to Syrian refugees in Jordan (through WFP vouchers). Many family units had at least one working member. For men, this work tended to be inconsistent and informal, such as painting or construction, similar to occupations on offer to Syrians in Lebanon. One or two participants explained that their husbands did have work permits, which had been arranged by employers, as employers themselves were also at risk of consequences (such as fines) if found employing a Syrian without a permit (Alhajahmad & Lockhard, 2017). However, in common with most participants in Beirut, it was rare for men to possess a work permit, as informal roles were not permanent. Many women shared stories of husbands or sons that had been caught and cautioned for working after being caught by *Wafedin*. Others had male family members who had been returned to Syria, or to one of the refugee camps after being caught in employment without a permit. A focus group participant described her husband's experience:

> '*He did have a work permit, but then the [employer] refused to [renew] it. When he got caught [working], they took him to Azraq camp, and then they drove him out to the border, near to Daraa* [southern Syria] *and left him there' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).*

This left families with a strong sense of insecurity, frustration and bewilderment at the position that this left them in:

> '*If my son didn't work, and he wasn't able to provide a living for me, who would? I don't get the iris scan. He tried to get a work permit, but he wasn't able too. Why, why do they do this? It doesn't make sense; we just want to work. We are not bad; we are not stealing. We just want to work' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).*

There were a few (usually teenage sons) who had managed to acquire jobs working in cafés or restaurants, distributing pamphlets or occasionally working in sweatshops. As they were under 18, they were not eligible to apply for a work permit and therefore worked without any option of legality.

Participants also expressed a strong sense of exploitation relating to employment and wages. Akin to women in Lebanon, Jordanian participants shared stories of long working hours and poor earnings:

> '*Even when we want to work, either women or men, they try to take advantage of us because we are Syrians. My husband works in a restaurant, he gets paid less than everyone else because he is Syrian' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).*

> '*[My husband] works a lot of jobs here and he gets scammed. He doesn't get paid, or he gets paid very little' (Samya, Hashmi-Shamali).*

These expressions of frustration and concern point to the underlying challenges of existing Jordanian labour policies towards Syrian refugees. Whilst many of these laws were being amended and greater opportunities for work were in principle being introduced during this field research, due to the Jordan Compact (Barbalet et al, 2018) the existing laws made it very challenging for Syrian refugees to live in dignity, to provide for themselves, or to be functioning and contributing members to their host society. Those that engaged in work risked arrest, deportation, abuse or mistreatment, but felt that they had no alternatives.

These expressions of frustration and concern point to the underlying challenges of the Jordanian labour policies towards Syrian refugees during this field work. Whilst changes were underfoot through the Jordan Compact, most participants were unaware and suspicious of these new work opportunities (As noted in Chapter Four, it is not obvious that the Compact has actually made very much difference to the livelihoods and opportunities for Syrian refugees). Instead, they viewed policy and legal

structures as creating an impossible environment for them. They felt unable to live in dignity, provide for themselves or to be functioning and contributing members to their host society and risked arrest and deportation by engaging in work. This led to a significant sense of insecurity and vulnerability.

Refugee women and work: 'empowerment', exhaustion and exploitation

Typically, husbands or male family members would seek work in Amman or Beirut, as discussed earlier in the chapter. However, some Syrian men had fought and been injured in the civil war or been hurt in bombing raids or conflict in their neighbourhoods. As such, they were not able to work because of their physical (or mental) ailments. Additionally, some were older or had pre-existing health conditions that prevented them from engaging in the typically very physical, informal work that was available to Syrian refugees. In these situations, the household would either rely on another male family member to work and bring in income (for example a brother-in-law, or teenage son). If this wasn't possible, women and children would work where opportunities presented themselves.

Lokot (2018) has spoken of the importance of not engaging in the stereotyping of Syrian refugees and gender norms, finding that many of her female research participants had worked and supported their families before their flight to Jordan, whilst El-Masri (2013) has tracked the increase in women taking on family breadwinner roles in Syrian families in the Beka'a Valley. However, these findings contrasted with the women who participated in this study. Experiences of work and education alongside early marriages often worked in tandem: women explained that once they were married, they were discouraged from continuing their work or their education, usually at the request of their husbands.

> *'Generally, in [Syria], the men work, and the women stay at home. So, I didn't work, my husband worked. [I got] married when I was 16 and in 9th grade. My husband didn't want me to finish my education, so I stopped...I don't know if I wanted to get married. I just wanted to finish my education and play in the neighbourhood.... I don't want the same situation for my children' (Badra, Hashmi-Shamali).*

When I spoke with Yara and Mona about their family life in Syria and how they were coping in Amman, they said they had stopped their education in Syria around 'Grade Six' and that neither of them had ever worked:

> *'[In Syria] we had eight or nine brothers [who worked and provided for the family]. We had everything. We didn't need to work. We never asked anyone for help. But here, we have to ask people for help' (Yara & Mona, Mahata).*

Their brothers were living in Amman with them but were struggling to gain steady employment and did not have *kafala* sponsorship. A small proportion of participants were poor, working class rural

Bedouin women who had worked in rural agriculture before the conflict. However, most other participants, both those that could be understood as working class, and lower- to mid- middle class, had held traditional roles as a mother, caregiver and keeper of the house and had specific expectations placed on them about their social role and responsibly. This general lack of further education and paid work experience led many women, especially those settled in Jordan, to feel at a disadvantage when it came to securing work opportunities. Many felt that only low-skilled labour was open to them, and that Jordanian women had more skills and education than them:

> *'I can't read and write….my family didn't allow me to continue my education because I'm a girl. So, I can only [be a cleaner] here because I don't have any other skills' (Rabiah, Hashmi-Shamali).*

Only a very small number of the women that I interviewed in both Beirut and Amman were working, and only one was working in what might be described as a Syrian, family business (a small tailor shop run by both her and her husband). Employment was more typical amongst female headed families, where women were divorced or widowed, or their husbands had left to go to a third country to seek asylum. The work available was usually in tailor shops doing sewing, domestic work such as cleaning, selling small cooked goods or very occasionally working in the beauty industry. Because of the highly irregular and informal status of these work opportunities, the women were not engaged in the *kafala* system and did not seek a sponsor, or indeed feel it necessary for their work to be 'legitimate'. Women also didn't consider this to be genuine employment because it was engaged in the private, domestic sphere. Participants said that they weren't engaged in 'work work' differentiating between the labour opportunities for men and women, even if both were engaged in the informal sector. Many considered their engagement with work to be safer than men's, in the legal sense, as they tended to work within the privacy of homes or businesses, and therefore the need to have appropriate documentation was significantly less. They also expressed concern (more in Beirut then in Amman) that men would be stopped on their way to and from work by police, whereas many of them felt less scrutinised by security services whilst in public (which is explored further in Chapters Seven & Eight).

Syrian women's experiences of employment largely reflected the experiences of Syrian men. Women expressed the pointlessness of engaging in employment as one could work for 'twelve-hour shifts for very low pay', or on occasion not be paid at all (FGD 8, Mazra'a). Working in such informal conditions opened women up to exploitation and fraud. Two sisters that had attempted to get cleaning jobs talked about how they had been defrauded:

> '*Me, my brother and sister cleaned two houses for a guy, and he didn't pay us, not a single penny, nothing. Even though he knows how hard our living conditions are, he still scammed us and took our money' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).*

Women also expressed negotiating racial and class discrimination regarding their background as Syrian refugees. Fadila talked about her daughter finding work in a tailor shop, mending shirts to support her family:

> '*The guy responsible for the [shop] made her work 14 hours a day. But he wouldn't teach her how to sew. He said to her: "You are a Syrian, you can't learn anything"…I am very, very insulted for her' (Fadila, Na'ba).*

There was a general unease with work opportunities that required women to work with unknown male employers who could potentially harass or proposition them. This was particularly the case if women were working informally, or behind closed doors in private homes doing domestic cleaning. Some participants explained that when they looked for work employers turned them down, informing them that they wanted 'younger women'. Women expressed distaste at being propositioned by potential employers and felt they would be compromising their intimate safety by taking on work:

> '*Whenever I go out to find work, the employer will tell me: "Come and go out with me, then I will employ you". Now, I don't feel good about going out to look for work' (FGD 8, Mazra'a).*

> '*Some men will ask you to come clean their house [for money]. Then they will lock [you] in the house and try to take advantage' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).*

> '*I clean the houses of people I don't know. That is what scares me…not the [lack of a] work permit. I don't know the people, so I feel insecure when I am cleaning their homes' (Rabiah, Hashmi-Shamali).*

In Beirut, a frequent obstacle that women encountered in their search for work was their appearance. As explored in Chapter Four, Beirut is a cosmopolitan and heterogeneous city where Western (casual, tight-fitting), traditional (modest dress, hair covered with a hijab), and conservative (very modest dress, hair and face covered with a niqab) dress are very much the norm and reflects different religious and ethnic backgrounds. This mixture of dress styles is not unlike Damascus and other regions of Syria (Enab Baladi, 2017). Despite these varied clothing styles, several women explained that they were required to remove their hijab and show uncovered hair if they worked in a shop. This was raised not only by women living near traditionally Christian areas of the city, but those that also sought work in and around Mazra'a:

'When I wanted to find work, I was told to remove the hijab' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).

'My daughters have been looking for a job. But I would come home and find them crying because people wouldn't employ them because they are veiled' (FGD 1, Na'ba).

'We tried to find jobs in the area, but they want women without the hijab. It's difficult to get a job with the hijab. Maybe (it's an excuse) they don't want to give us a job' (FGD 3, Na'ba).

Women stated that they would not consider removing the hijab in order to secure work, and therefore they felt unable to find themselves employment as it required them to compromise themselves in a very visible way. This compromise was one that required negotiating socially and individually. Women would need to compromise their personal decision to wear the hijab, but also wider societal norms (particularly that of the wider Syrian diaspora in their neighbourhoods) of Muslim women covering their hair. This issue, of removing one's hijab, was never raised in Amman by participants, in all likelihood because of the majority Sunni community and the typically more conservative dress code.

Working away from the family home, due to the need for income, raised another dimension of insecurity for women, relating to their fears regarding the wellbeing and safety of their family and children. Thus, a sense of feeling insecure outside the home and being in the workplace was further complicated by caregiving responsibilities and concerns. Women discussed their deep sense of fear and insecurity related to their children and their safety whilst they were separated. Some explained that they had had to give up employment or had been let go, after they had attempted to take children into work with them. Takiya, a mother of six had found daily work sewing at a local tailor but expressed discomfort throughout the interview about being anywhere other than home. Before the conflict she had never left her village, and her husband had not been in Lebanon before. Working outside the home was a strange and intimidating experience for her and, whilst appreciative for the work, she did not appear to enjoy it. Reflecting on her job and leaving the neighbourhood she expressed a further concern for the wellbeing of her daughters:

'I would feel uneasy if I left the girls here alone and went somewhere…my heart would be with them' (Takiya, Na'ba).

Studies have noted some of the challenges that refugee and immigrant women face in their new settings as they struggle with a multitude of old and new responsibilities, from the necessity of taking a job to support the family, whilst balancing caregiving needs of the home (Spitzer et al., 2003). Amongst Syrian refugee women, these stressors and responsibilities interact with wider worries and insecurities in the environment in which they lived and worked, to create a sense of insecurity, instability and stress within women's lives. Thus, in such contexts where identities and structures

interact to create oppressive conditions and a sense of insecurity, working opportunities are not necessarily the source of 'empowerment' that many Western feminists might think (Bangstad, 2011; Cornwall, 2007b).

Figure 8: Overlooking high density accommodation in the neighbourhood of Ashrafyeh (Author)

Women's perspectives on their jobs and contribution to the household varied. Warrda's husband was injured in the conflict in Syria and she worked as the family breadwinner. When I asked about her feelings regarding these new pressures, and whether she felt empowered in her new mobility, being out of the house and having the role as a 'breadwinner' she commented:

> 'I [feel] that I have to summon the power to do [work] because I have three kids, but I don't feel that I am empowered…that I have a choice, I don't have a choice in this. I have to keep up….and me working means I neglect my children; I neglect my house. When I come home, I am completely exhausted' (Warrda, FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).

Her comments are reflective of other women who found themselves in new roles in their host communities as financial providers for their families. Here, she describes a sense of being trapped and the capacity to 'have a choice' about whether to work or to care for her family is removed from her. Rabiah's husband had left to try and get asylum in Finland (unsuccessfully), which resulted in her and

her three children living with her husband's family. Because of the restrictions around work permits, she was the only person in the household who worked, engaging in domestic labour that was hidden from the public scrutiny of the *Wafedin*. Reflecting on her experience as the family breadwinner, she noted:

> *'I am not comfortable [working as a cleaner] at all. It's very hard…I feel suffocated by it'*
> *(Rabiah, Hashmi-Shamali).*

She explained that she had had a very sheltered existence, both as a child, and as a married woman and seemed very embarrassed about her work as a cleaner. She was from a very conservative, middle-class urban family in Syria, and this change in social status as the new head of the household, and her husband's journey to Europe, had left her feeling overwhelmed (although she did express in later interviews that she felt a greater sense of 'freedom' in Jordan - see Chapter Seven). Raya, a focus group participant, was a divorced woman whose husband had also lived in Jordan and had provided some support for the family. Eight months previous he had been deported and Raya found that she was solely responsible for supporting her children. She worked by cooking for other families but found that the work was inconsistent. Reflecting on her position as her family's sole support and whether she had a sense of empowerment she said:

> *'I am stronger now, and I should be strong because my kids depend on me. [This situation is]*
> *not by choice, but this is my reality now' (Raya, FGD1, Ashrafyeh).*

There were also contrasting opinions amongst women in Beirut. For example, during a difficult focus group where women expressed high levels of alienation and challenges in accessing employment, one participant quietly and confidently asserted that, since she had been in Lebanon, she had felt a great sense of empowerment through the way she supported her family through her work:

> *'I work as a teacher…I care for children under five. With all due respect to Lebanese people,*
> *my brother-in-law is Lebanese, the house [where I stay] is his, and he makes me pay rent. I am*
> *more than a man than him, because I count on myself. This year, thank God I have found work*
> *providing for my mother, my daughter and my younger brother. Being the man of the*
> *house….it has empowered me' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).*

This participant contrasted her new responsibilities and capacities against that of her brother-in-law, who in her eyes had failed in his masculinity by requiring her family to pay rent to him. By relying on her own skills and acting as her family's provider, she had gained a strong sense of empowerment. Her reflective account provides an interesting contrast to other women's experiences of employment and empowerment in the city.

In summary, then, for some women, the flight from Syria had resulted in new social positions for them where they emerged as family breadwinners, or at least, contributors to the family income (Anthias, 2013b). Whilst typically Western academics may perceive this an avenue of empowerment (Bangstad, 2011; Mernissi, 1975), these women express a complex sense of both empowerment and disempowerment through the demands of balancing primary care for their families and acting as a breadwinner. Whilst they had gained a sense of empowerment through being a provider and responding to the demands placed on their families, they also felt that this compromised their ability to care for their families, enhancing a sense of guilt. Here there is a sense that there is no choice, and empowerment is often framed as exhaustion. Whilst women use their agency and their gender to engage in low key (often secluded) work, they are at risk and feel that working opportunities increase the risk of sexual propositioning or general exploitation.

Gendered coping mechanisms in host communities

Tight financial burdens, stress over legal status, overcrowding and living with extended family in compromised dwellings led to family disintegration and breakdown amongst Syrian families in Lebanon and Jordan. Women in both contexts shared experiences of stress and frustration in their new living situations, which had often led to an increase of tensions, and in some cases domestic violence. High density neighbourhoods, with little public space and little privacy, as well as homes that frequently suffered from permeability and poor structure, resulted in families feeling vulnerable and strained. As families were forced into much smaller dwellings than they had lived in previously, aspects of privacy and social space were removed, upsetting family dynamics and gender norms (see (El-Masri, 2013; Meth et al., 2019).

In Beirut, Husniya, a Kurdish woman who described herself as enjoying a 'comfortable life' before the crisis, talked of how a 'boundary had been crossed' between her and her husband as they had been 'sharing insults against each other'. She spoke of how issues over rent and expenses had led to an increase in arguments. Her description of a boundary being crossed evokes the idea of a relationship altered through the stress of flight and the burden of asylum. Husniya expressed how she was desperate to get away from the conflict within her house and to escape, but also described a nervousness about the wider neighbourhood and a lack of places to retreat to. As a result, she had taken to sitting in the downstairs apartment of her Lebanese neighbour, where we interviewed her.

Fadila, an elderly woman living in Na'ba, found her husband growing abusive and insulting as their circumstances created a heavy strain on the family. She explained how her daughters were married with children and how their husbands had abandoned them because of the 'stress' of living in Lebanon. Her daughters had returned to live with their parents, who were now hosting 10 family

members in their home. They had received some assistance from UNHCR for a time, but this had been cut off for months. The burden of insecurity was heavy on the family and Fadila found herself at the mercy of her husband's temper:

> My husband is being insulting sometimes [to me], because he is tense and sometimes, he lashes out, sometimes he is physically abusive' (Fadila, Na'ba).

Fadila's account of her daughter's abandonment under the strain of flight and asylum was similar to participants in Jordan, a number of whom explained that their husbands had actually returned to Syria because they couldn't bear life in Jordan. However, the women had refused to follow, frequently out of concern for family and for safety reasons. Leesha, a Syrian mother of seven from Dara'a whose husband had previously worked in Kuwait, detailed the deterioration of her marriage under the harsh realities of asylum:

> 'When we got to Amman [my husband] wasn't able to handle living here… He was under so much pressure, he was really short tempered…it caused a lot of problems…He started beating me and the kids…He said: 'I don't care if I die, I'm just going to go back to Syria.' I refused and that's when we separated' (Leesha, Hashmi-Shamali).

This reflects El-Masri *et al.*'s (2013) assessment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, noting the increase in negative expressions of masculinity under the challenging conditions of being a refugee, leading to a rise in abuse within the home and an increase in gender-based violence. In these accounts, it is clear that the stressful circumstances of being a refugee, alongside living in cramped and compromised housing conditions interact to create an environment of tension, stress and frustration which can result in such gender-based violence. The lack of rights and opportunities for refugees in their host communities exacerbate already poor living conditions for these families and heighten women and children's vulnerability to abuse and neglect.

Whilst some men had felt compelled to return to Syria rather than continuing life in exile, others had attempted to make the trip to Europe after finding it difficult to gain work, or feeling that their lack of status left them vulnerable to abuse and arrest:

> '[My husband] is trying to find work, trying to be smuggled to other areas… to go somewhere where he could save us. When he was here there was a risk for men, it wasn't a good situation' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).

Some participants were displeased at their husbands' attempts to travel to Europe. Rabiah, whose situation was discussed above, was scathing of her husband's efforts to get asylum in Finland. She

perceived this to be an impatient and poorly thought out choice born out of his personal frustration rather than their family's needs. He had been denied asylum in Finland and was unable to return to Jordan, leaving her and her children vulnerable and unsure of their future.

Onward movement to third countries was highly gendered, dependant on age and often income. Many participants in Lebanon, viewed those that 'travelled' onto Europe and who had managed to leave Lebanon, as being wealthy and having opportunity, in contrast to their situation. There were generally far more cases in Jordan of women describing attempts to make the journey to Europe. Participants described some successful attempts by family members (all male, and usually in their twenties or thirties) to seek asylum further afield. The expectation would be that these men would apply for asylum and then have their families relocated to join them. However, men were not always successful in achieving refugee status, and family reunification was not always granted. In these cases, participants would frequently ask questions during interviews and focus groups about reunification and asylum procedures in Europe and why they weren't eligible to join their extended family. Women were often left behind in the first country of asylum in the hope that their male relatives would be successful in their efforts to relocate the entire family. However, if this was unsuccessful it left women, children, and dependent elderly relatives in precarious financial situations.

Older, single women whose sons had gone ahead were particularly vulnerable. Because of their age they were frequently unable to work in any way. Additionally, they were often not able to join their older sons who had travelled to Europe through family reunification policies, as most European national and asylum reunification policies typically relate only to the nuclear family unit and not the extended family (see: Council of Europe, 2017):

> '[I am divorced and my sons went to Germany] they tried to get me out [of Jordan] but they were unable to, so I've been left alone with the smaller children…We can't work, we can't live here, I am trapped because I am unable to leave…I will never see my sons again' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).

In these cases, they could only hope that their male relatives were successful in gaining employment in Europe and sending remittances to the family so they could survive.

Family abandonment, patriarchy and polygamy

In these precarious contexts, wives could find themselves discarded, further exacerbating their vulnerability. Despite Qur'anic instruction that a man should only marry additional women if he can provide equally for all the women and their subsequent children, some men appeared to be using flight and asylum as an opportunity to take a second wife without divorcing or providing for their first (or subsequent) wives. Noodah explained that after enduring her husband's tension and domestic

abuse, his mother helped him find a 'new Syrian wife', twenty years his junior, living in Za'atari camp. He subsequently married her, abandoned his family and moved back to Syria, leaving Noodah and her children financially vulnerable and insecure:

> 'He just went off and got married like some teenager or something. I hope that God gives me strength to raise [my children]. On top of being a refugee and a stranger [in this country], and then that idiot leaves us' (Noodah, Ashrafyeh).

During a focus group discussion in Mazra'a, a participant explained that her husband had abandoned her and her two children in favour of taking on a second wife. She was distressed in the focus group whilst describing his decision and frequently commented that he had only done this 'for the money' as the woman in question was wealthy. She felt that in such an ongoing financially precarious context that Syrian men only 'wanted someone with money'. She lamented that she had nothing financially to offer and insisted that the financial vulnerability of Syrian families living in Lebanon was leading to family breakdowns.

Men who had more than one wife, and more than one family, found that their financial vulnerability as refugees left them unable to support two families. I interviewed Yaminah in her tiny dwelling in Na'ba with six of her eleven children present during the interview, as she explained how her husband had cut them off in favour of only supporting his first wife:

> 'So he was acknowledging our spending and paying for us [in the first nine months we were here], but then the other [wife] didn't accept the situation so he stop paying for us….he is married to someone else and has three children' (Yaminah, Na'ba).

This placed Yaminah in a very vulnerable position. She lived in some of the worst conditions I encountered during the fieldwork. Her children were filthy and had collected vegetables from the rubbish heap to eat. Her young sons were working in a café and selling packs of tissue paper on the street so the family could survive.

Research has shown how polygamous relationships typically result in one wife and family being shown preferential treatment (Al-Krenawi et al., 2001). In accounts shared by my participants, both first and second wives described neglectful and challenging situations arising out of their marital arrangements. Therefore, if in typical polygamous relationships, one family tends to be favoured over the others, in this context where resources and community are highly compromised through the stressors of flight and asylum, some families can be completely economically and socially neglected (or discarded). Thus, polygamous arrangements, acceptable within such socio-cultural contexts, interact with refugee policies to endanger the livelihoods and security of women in such environments.

Women also discussed how legal documentation and wider structures of refugee policies and identity papers were used strategically by Syrian men to restrict and control women's legality and mobility in their host countries. These were used as a means of exerting power over women's lives and experiences. This coupled with the deterioration of structural influences of kinship ties and relationships, which women argued had often provided a wider degree of protection for them (for example, many argued that living in Syria, their husbands would have been greatly demeaned for taking on a second wife by the first wife's wider kinship network). This resulted in a change in social positioning for women within their family network and indeed had wider repercussions on their societal positioning.

Sawsan talked of her mother, who was trapped in Za'atari refugee camp with her two younger siblings, because her husband (Sawsan's father) would not allow her to have access to the family book[15] which would allow her to formalise her papers through UNHCR. Sawsan explained that her father had sold significant assets in Syria and was very wealthy but was only concerned with his second family with whom he lived with in Amman. Sawsan commented on his wealth and how he had supported his second wife and young daughter who wore 'gold up to their elbows' but had abused and cut off his first family. Here, Sawsan's father had used the Jordanian law and its policies related to Syrian refugee status and documentation to confine his wife's wider mobility and legality to the Za'atari refugee camp (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).

Her account was echoed in Kalima's experiences in Amman. Kalima was a divorcee who had owned her own house in Syria. Upon marrying for a second time, she found that her new husband was inclined to abusive behaviour, on occasion refused to work, and encouraged her to 'get rid' of her children from her first marriage who lived with them in her house. She explained that she defended and protected her children from her new husband, but that the dynamic had shifted when they arrived in Jordan. Her husband had Jordanian identification documents through his father, and the relationship altered in his favour:

> 'In Syria, [we] lived in my house and I had power. When we came here, it was time for revenge. He doesn't let me talk to anyone or go to anyone's houses. He beats me and kicks me out the house all the time in the night with my children. The law is with my husband more than it is

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[15] The Family Book is a Syrian government-issued document a couple receives when they register their marriage; the names of children born to the marriage are added to the document when they are registered. This is used as a form of identification, in particular to prove marriage and family links (IHRC, NCR, 2015)

with me, because he is Jordanian basically. Even though we are married, I can't get the ID, I don't have the money. It costs 250JD (£250)' (Kalima, Ashrafyeh).

Ghada and her husband had settled in Beirut together after escaping from Syria. Within a couple of years, her husband had become engaged to a second woman, which he had organised by returning to Syria. He wanted to bring her to Lebanon, and Ghada described feeling physically sick at the news. Despite her significant displeasure, she emphasised that the war, and their subsequent life as refugees, had compromised her previous economic and social status. She had held greater power in the relationship previously as she was older and wealthier than her husband and had benefitted from a strong kinship network. However, she was now disconnected from her wider community, and powerless to stop the union. Observing their poverty, lack of privacy and her contempt for her husband and his treatment of her, I commented that I was surprised that her husband thought that this was appropriate time to take on such a commitment. She responded:

'There won't be any strain, because Syrian women have very minimal needs, or very minimal demands, so if [the other wife] comes here, there would be no extra expenses....it would just be the same, the same as [just] me...But I will make it clear that I am the first wife' (Ghada, Na'ba).

In this statement, Ghada expresses her intention to emphasise her position of seniority as the 'first wife', thus tactically 'bargaining with patriarchy' (Kandiyoti, 1988) in order not to lose more power or status within her marital relationship. However, as explored above, this did not always relate to a preferential position and within such a polygamous arrangement she was still vulnerable to neglect or abandonment.

There is no denying that family breakdown, divorce and second (third, or fourth) marriages occurred in Syria before the war. However, the pressures of being refugees increased the likelihood of family breakdown, and some men were inclined to use their patriarchal position, alongside wider structures of legal policy (and disintegrating kinship structures) to discard or exploit their families and dependants. Kalima's account highlights how patriarchal structures can interact with structures of state law to oppress refugee women. In these accounts the changing social positions of refugee women become pronounced (Anthias, 2008). Whereas once they may have been in 'powerful' positions within their family (such as Ghada or Khalima) their new physical location in a country of asylum resulted in a new social positioning of marginality, shaped by the structures of patriarchy and refugee policies.

Some participants described arranging marriages for their daughters for their own protection and future security. Hanan, a middle-class woman from Homs, talked to us of the imminent arranged marriage between her daughter and her daughter's cousin who lived in Saudi Arabia. They had never met, and indeed Hanan doubted she would ever be able to see her daughter again as they did not have the option of leaving Jordan and returning, because of their refugee status. She was deeply uncomfortable about the situation but felt this was the best step to take for her daughter's future. Other participants talked of how they had married off their older teenage daughters to 'good men' in Syria for their protection, before making the journey to Lebanon or Jordan with their younger family members. Studies focused on the Syrian conflict have noted how girls are married off early in order to give them a sense of security, whilst men in host communities take advantage of vulnerable and financially compromised families, offering to marry women, and frequently children, in order to 'assist' the family (Dionigi, 2016; El-Masri, 2013; IHRC/NRC, 2016; Kivilcim, 2016; UN Women, 2013). These accounts add to research that has indicated the continued vulnerability of women in times of conflict to forced, or child, marriage as a negative coping strategy, emphasising that some of this can occur before refugees make the journey from their home countries through the marrying off of daughters to suitors for protection.

Conclusion

Through the examples presented in this chapter we can see how the existing state law and policy regarding Syrian refugees' status and right to work shapes and mediates elements of everyday violence and exploitation of refugees (Brickell & Cuomo, 2019, p. 13), and shapes the livelihoods and spaces of shelter they can access. As such, these policies create a broad framework of insecurities that refugees negotiate in their day-to-day lives. This is a theme that will be further explored in the following two empirical chapters within the context of other forms of insecurity.

To summarise: a number of scalar, political and practical issues shape refugee decisions as to where to seek asylum. Global and regional politics play into the material conditions of geography and borders. Refugees' choices are shaped by socio-political concerns, economic opportunities, family networks and the material practicalities of where they can access. However, whilst structural forces are at work, there are still tactical decisions possible within these constraints. For example, self-settled participants in Jordan made it clear that they intentionally sought to avoid the complicated political systems within Lebanon in order to enhance the safety of their families, whilst many Syrian refugees in Lebanon sought the potential employment links and opportunities present in that country.

 In both contexts, refugee policies have a marked effect on refugee families' precariousness and socio-economic vulnerability, which in turn increases the vulnerabilities of human security for refugees. The

insistence that refugees in Lebanon are 'not refugees' but are framed and labelled rather as Syrian migrant 'guests' has resulted in the continuation of damaging policies that insist on refugees paying for unaffordable work permits in order to legitimise their presence in Lebanon. Thus refugees, particularly those from poorer socio-economic backgrounds, attempt to establish livelihoods for their families whilst their status and right to be in Lebanon remains 'unauthorised'. This creates spaces of legitimised exploitation and abuse of refugees by individuals who are aware that they are living in precarious situations in their host neighbourhoods and have few opportunities for recourse.

The bail out system in place in Jordanian refugee camps, although now greatly restricted, led to direct exploitation of refugees desperate to escape the camp and enhance security for their families. Policies in Jordan were more systematic and clearer, and refugees were given means of support through food vouchers. As a result, refugees expressed a far greater sense of human security and there were significantly fewer accounts of spiralling and unmanageable debt.

However, labour laws and the *kafala* system pertaining to Syrian refugees in both host countries push refugees, mainly those from poorer socio-economic positions, to work in the informal sector for poor pay and under poor work conditions. This severely inhibits opportunities to improve their situations. Despite generating additional income for the household through working in the informal sector, refugees continued to express their feeling of being highly vulnerable and under extreme stress due to their circumstances. This was because they could be caught and deported, while they were also being exploited and defrauded by employers.

Whilst policies pertaining to Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon is not gendered at the state level, at the micro level, examining the daily, lived experiences of refugees, the law shapes refugees experience in gendered ways, and has gendered consequences. Poor urban infrastructures and shelter in densely populated refugee receiving neighbourhoods coupled with refugee policies that placed severe stress upon families. This creates spaces of vulnerability, and violence, for women. At home they can be exposed to an increase in domestic violence. In potential places of employment, they are subject to sexual harassment or demands to compromise their appearance. Thus, women experience insecurity at several levels: the intimate scale of their bodies, to the materiality of their homes, to their inability to obtain work and to their uncertain status as refugees and outsiders.

The wider patriarchal structures at work in Syria affect women in particular ways in contexts of asylum. Having suffered from poor educational prospects, and having been removed from school early, some women feel that they lack the necessary skills to gain jobs in order to support their families in their host communities and expressed a reliance on men to bring in much needed income.

Patriarchy couples with polygamous relationships and refugee policies to create further oppression, whereby women and children can be discarded or controlled in particular ways. Clearly, polygamous relationships can be challenging (and socio-economically compromising) enough for women when a family is embedded in its indigenous community. However, when they are displaced, and their social and cultural ties have been greatly reduced, or even eliminated, the structural effects of these relationships are felt at their strongest. Refugee policies clearly have gendered implications. Men (who are physically able) are far more likely to seek opportunities for asylum in third countries and leave their immediate and extended family behind. Whilst this places men in highly precarious contexts of ongoing mobility and flight, it traps women and children into particular circumstances in their host countries. For female-headed households, asylum in cities often results in them 'being stuck' in specific neighbourhoods due to their economic precarity and an inability to 'move on'. Here, the daily, lived and gendered implications of refugee law are felt.

These accounts demonstrate how geopolitical scales affect the intimate and embodied lives of refugee women. Patriarchy intersects with geopolitical structures of refugee legal policy to create frameworks of oppression that have deep repercussions on the lives of refugee women. That is not to deny women their agency and capacity - as women throughout the chapter have clearly demonstrated tactical ways of negotiating within such structural conditions – but to emphasise the oppressiveness and difficulty of the contexts in which refugees find themselves. Legal structures prevent refugees, particularly those that are socio-economically marginalised, from pursuing appropriate livelihoods and work. As such, family breakdown, affairs, domestic violence and abandonment increasingly begin to feature as families are deeply affected by the stress of life in exile. This is exacerbated by hostile policies that allow for little leeway. These policies also shape refugee decisions to seek asylum in Europe in order to secure better conditions for themselves, joining the wider global movement of people and their efforts to enter 'fortress Europe'.

Women's identities intersect with structural conditions which result in women navigating new social positions as the family breadwinner. However, despite the expectations of some commentators, these new positions are not necessarily empowering or emancipatory. Women's expressions of agency, capacities and empowerment in this study also very much reflect Muhanna's (2013) research with Palestinian refugee women. Women do take on new roles in their host communities, but these come at a price. Women experience exhaustion and on occasion, embarrassment, working outside of the home. Here they show the complex pay-offs of 'empowerment'. Whilst they may feel proud of the ways in which they care and provide for their families, they also clearly sense that they have failed to care and provide enough for the emotional, caring and upkeep needs of the family and their own home. Additionally, intersectional axes of oppression meet together to further disadvantage women.

Their Syrian identity, gender and socio-economic standing coupled with their lack of status create a 'black hole' of lack of protection and vulnerability. Women's attempts to gain employment are often coupled with demands for personal compromise – to remove hijabs, or to spend time alone with male employers.

Whilst this chapter has emphasised the role of deeply oppressive structures in shaping daily life for Syrian women, it is important to highlight the ways in which women respond to these heavily structured and oppressive environments and contexts in nuanced and tactical ways. For example, the safety and protection of children was paramount to all participants. It dominated concerns and decisions and shaped behaviours and tactical choices. Most women choose the safety and protection of their children over their husband's desire to return to Syria, even if this resulted in divorce and separation, explaining that whilst living in exile is terrifying, returning to live in a warzone would be far worse and would compromise their children's safety and opportunities. Women in Jordan specifically dictated this as a reason for leaving camps for the perceived safety and stability of the city that this would bring their children. Others recognised that their husbands were unable to work, and looked for avenues of employment, even though these were often exploitative and disrupted family dynamics and norms. However, it was also clear that for many women, work should not compromise their position and dignity, and thus working with unknown men or working without a hijab was considered anathema. Women exert decision making, agency and capacity in such conditions, attempting to make the most of their situation and prioritising the safety and protection of their families wherever possible.

The following chapter will build on the findings from this chapter by focusing on the specificity of the ways in which women experience and negotiate public space in Amman and Beirut. It will develop some of the themes that emerged from this chapter, particularly the spatial repercussions and practices of intersecting refugee identities within wider cultural norms and structures and refugee policies, the ways in which host community relationships and attitudes shape behaviours and the patterns of tactical response that emerge from participants in response to these contexts.

Chapter Seven: Negotiating public space and the hegemonic gaze

'The structures of gender, race and class play into determining whose bodies belong where, how different social groups subjectively experience various environment…and what sort of exclusionary and disciplinary techniques are applied to specific bodies' (Silvey, 2006, p. 70)*.*

The above quotation from Silvey underpins the theoretical framing for this chapter, which addresses the intersection of refugee women's identities in the context of their negotiation and experience of public space in their host cities. Silvey's emphasis on the intersectionality of identities and the ways in which this has spatial repercussions, both real and perceived, is characteristic of refugee women's urban experiences. These experiences and perceptions of public spaces shape women's usage, engagement and (re)production of space. The chapter is primarily concerned with the research question: *In what ways do (social, legal and political) structures shape experiences of public space and urban mobility for Syrian refugee women and how do women respond to these?* Through its examination of intersectional identities, mobility and public space, it contributes to the principal research question through a consideration of insecurity both at the scale of the city, and of the home.

As explored in Chapter Two, 'public space' is both a material location (the outdoors) as well as reference to urban spaces of publicness, such as city squares, streets and parks, all of which are imbued with social meaning. Thus, this chapter considers refugee women's experiences and wider public negotiations of their host neighbourhoods, but also some of their more specific attitudes towards accessing so-called 'public spaces' of their host cities. Through these accounts, different spaces of the city emerged as 'forbidden' or 'permitted' to women, depending on the interaction of a number of different structures and issues, and in some spaces, these are more explicit than others (Fenster, 1999).

This chapter builds on the examination in Chapter Six of refugee status, living conditions and livelihoods of women refugees. It does this by exploring how various motivating and deterring structures at different scales interact with refugee women's identities to shape their experiences of public space, in both host neighbourhoods and the wider city. By focusing on spatial experiences of the 'everyday', refugee women's impressions and negotiations of their cities become clear (Lyytinen, 2015b). Whilst the chapter is primarily focused on public spaces, private spaces of home are intrinsically linked and relational to public spaces and a wider sense of both security and belonging for refugees (Brun & Fabos, 2015; Fenster, 2005). Thus, women's reflections and comparisons regarding both these spaces are explored in order to provide insight into how various structures and identities work across different scales to shape women's spatial experiences.

In order to understand the decisions that women make within environments that are often oppressively structured, particularly as they impact on women's intersectional identities, theories of tactical agency (De Certeau, 1984) and patriarchal bargaining (Kandiyoti, 1988) are used to provide insight into women's agency, and in particular their varied active and non-active responses to structural mechanisms (Fenster, 1999). The chapter emphasises both the uniformity and variation in women's experiences in public space in Amman and Beirut, demonstrating the ways in which an intersectional approach provides rich insight into the spatial realities and responses of women operating within structural constraints.

Several intersecting structural and identity issues shape women's experiences and perspectives of space as (varying degrees of) permitted or forbidden, such as age, sexuality, class, finances, and refugee status. These are deeply interconnected and relational but cannot be discussed in such a format here. As such, they are presented in a linear and thematic format as much as possible within this chapter. Where the intersections are particularly significant, such as when they compound exclusion, these will be analysed in more specific detail.

This chapter begins with a discussion of refugee women's weak socio-economic position and the ways in which this marginalisation narrows women's capacity for mobility within their host cities. It will then consider women's social relationships and networks within host and refugee communities and the importance this has for refugee women's mobility and sense of belonging to the city. Additionally, it will examine gendered experiences of verbal and sexual harassment and the ways in which these experiences 'other' refugee women in public space and disrupt their sense of security and their right to the city. Lastly, it will examine the tactics that women engage in, in order to negotiate public space, alongside discussions of gender, mobility and temporality, and the role that patriarchy has in shaping women's relationship with public space.

Daily life, gender and mobility in public space

Refugee women typically balanced a multitude of daily demands and expectations that required public mobility. Day to day lives were punctuated by 'mundane' and regular activities such as taking children to school, visiting the market for supplies or visiting social contacts and relations if they had any in the city. As explored in Chapter Six, some women were employed in their local neighbourhoods, although work was often difficult to obtain. As detailed in the Methodology Chapter, women were asked if they would engage in cognitive mapping techniques in order to map their experiences of their communities. The few women that did participate drew brief maps of only three of four places that they regularly frequented within their neighbourhoods. These were commonly their homes, a place of sociability (typically a place where extended family or friends lived), the school where they took

their children and a local market. What emerged from these contributions was an impression of limited movement, to a small number of places within their immediate neighbourhood.

The following section examines daily activities of refugee women, in order to gain insight into their perspectives of the urban outdoors in their host cities. It considers the experiences, attitudes and emotions of women as they negotiate spaces outside of their homes as they pay social visits, travel to NGOs for aid or attempt to spend leisure time with their families. Women's perspectives are shaped not only by aspects of identity interacting with structures of refugee policy, legality and social and cultural norms, but also past and ongoing experiences, such as those cultivated by the civil war. As such, women's mobility in the urban outdoors is shaped and influenced by a myriad of interconnecting and often relational issues and structures. Some of these are briefly raised in this opening section to acknowledge their influence (such as sexual harassment), and then addressed in more detail later in the chapter.

Socio-economic status and public spaces

Living in socio-economically deprived, high density areas meant that opportunities to enjoy green, outdoor leisure space were few and far between for refugee women and indeed for other members of these urban communities. Occasionally, women in Beirut and Amman talked of how the urban form and high densities of their host neighbourhoods reminded them of communities back in Syria (particularly those participants who originated from Aleppo) and thus felt a sense of the familiar whilst walking the streets of these neighbourhoods. However, most participants were caustic about the lack of public space and greenery in their host cities and the high cost that one had to pay to access leisure opportunities and activities. Women who had lived in high-density neighbourhoods in Syria showed a wider knowledge of their cities which allowed them to access and enjoy spaces of leisure.

It was rare for women to have open spaces or parks within proximity that were perceived as public spaces of leisure. When I asked about public features within the neighbourhood, such as parks or playgrounds, they were often identified by women as being 'too far', ugly or unsafe to use (Deerifa, Mahata). Several participants living in Amman reflected on the beauty and 'the green' of Syria, and the availability of parks and accessible sociable spaces where they felt welcomed:

> 'In Syria I used to go out a lot. Wherever we go in Syria there are lots of parks, and lots of places to go and it's very nice, you can just walk here. There is nothing interesting here for me to visit…[Here] I don't go out much…I don't have any leisure activities' (Yeseniah, Hashmi-Shamali).

Ababsa (2017) has reflected on the lack of safe and useable public spaces for women in Amman, noting: 'There are no gardens, there are no benches, there is a low level of tolerance' (n/p). This was

indicative of how women described their impressions and experiences of their immediate neighbourhoods; Amman was perceived as a dusty, dry and ugly city by participants with a dearth of public spaces where families could visit.

In Beirut, women rarely expressed enjoying leisure time in the city or accessing parks or open spaces. No participant talked of visiting the promenade on the Corniche and as most parks are highly securitised spaces of surveillance, even local citizens expressed rarely using them. In Mazra'a, the Beirut Municipal sports stadium is open during the day for runners and walkers. However, the outside is heavily securitised. Military tanks guard the entrance and there is prolific barbed wire. Whilst locals do use the space to exercise or on occasion for prayer, no participant described using it or perceiving it as a public space of leisure[16]. My personal observation of the space was that it was significantly underutilised (Al Masri, 2016). Women in Na'ba spoke of occasionally using a local community garden that had been developed by a community activist and NGOs, and taking children to a small local playground. However, the playground was often locked by a chain link fence due to ongoing vandalism. These examples point to the lack of public spaces within such neighbourhoods and the challenges that refugees have in accessing them in these contexts (Linn, 2020).

Economic precarity shaped women's mobility and access to public spaces of leisure within their wider host cities. Women emphasised their inability to generate income and their ongoing lack of financial security in the city as limiting their mobility and capacity to seek out spaces of enjoyment or leisure:

> *'We only have enough money to pay for our basic needs, we don't ever have any leisure activities or anything' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).*

> *'Generally, I don't leave [my neighbourhood] …you would have to pay 10JD (£10) if you wanted to go out' (Fariha, Mahata).*

Participants contrasted the frequent time they spent outdoors enjoying the leisure activities on offer in Syria with their friends and family, in comparison to their status as refugees and their resulting experiences of the unaffordability of Amman and Beirut. In Amman, several women highlighted the cultural sites of the Roman Amphitheatre and the Citadel and their desire to visit them. The East of the City suffers from serious congestion and high-density housing and these cultural sites are highly visible in this area. However, for refugees the entry prices (either 2JD [£2] or 3JD [£3] respectively per person) meant they were unable to consider entering or visiting the sites. King Hussein Sports City,

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[16] The Stadium itself has a fascinating history as the host of the Nejmah Football Club, and the location of both sporting and political rivalries. Much of its intense securitization emerges from its footballing and political legacy, particularly between Shi'a and Sunni factions (Al Masrari, 2016).

the main park and sports hub, located in the North of Amman, was considered too much of a distance and the cost of travelling in a bus to the area was a significant barrier:

> '[We] want to go to the Roman Theatre, but we can't afford it... it has been 6 years since we have been to any park or anything like that…In Syria anyone can just go [to the beach or park]. But here you need a car and money for expenses' (Minar, Hashmi Shamali).

For some participants, the lack of public, accessible leisure space intersected with their lack of status and poor financial capacities, and this exacerbated their already poor mental health:

> 'It's very tiring to be here. We don't have any freedom. Or leisure activities. We can't afford to do anything fun or go on a road trip…I feel like my heart died…I just want to get out of the house' (Basmaa, Ashrafyeh).

Lack of finances also hindered the capacity of Syrian women in Beirut to engage with the wider city. As presented in Chapter Six, women had chosen to settle in neighbourhoods for their perceived affordability as other parts of the city were seen as expensive and inaccessible. This was not only regarding rent and amenities, but also because of their shops and markets. Husniya, who had lived in Na'ba for four years since 2012 explained that she had never left the confines of the neighbourhood:

> 'even for walks or just to go around…I heard that a lot of areas like Bourj Hammoud and Doura'a and others are more expensive then here' (Husniya, Na'ba).

Her anticipation and worry of other areas being unaffordable resulted in her confining herself spatially to her immediate neighbourhood. Even though she explained that she would just be 'walking around', she still perceived movement beyond her immediate neighbourhood to have financial repercussions. Others echoed these remarks, emphasising both the unaffordability of neighbourhoods beyond the one in which they had settled, and the expense of using different facilities and shops.

> 'I would like to go out and about in Beirut and Lebanon, but there is no money. I would like to do that, but I can't' (Wajida, Na'ba).

> 'I don't go out of the house at all…I don't have money to shop' (FGD 8, Mazra'a).

Lack of finances and lack of sociable spaces in which to enjoy leisure activities, frequently layered upon aspects of identity and issues of agency within public space which contributed to feelings of insecurity. When discussing parks, or places for children to play, issues of identity and conflict frequently

emerged. Women highlighted experiences of taking their children to parks where fights erupted between Syrian and Lebanese children which quickly deteriorated into racial slurs and the involvement of adults. This created fear and discomfort for women who expressed a desire to keep conflict to a minimum and not to create a 'fuss' within the community (see below) in order to increase their wider sense of security within the neighbourhood. Furthermore, as explored in Chapter Six, women also felt a keen sense of worry and concern related to the welfare of their children in such contexts where their human security was continually compromised. Thus, a motivating factor in not using these spaces was the desire to protect family from insults and bullying and to prevent antagonistic encounters from escalating at a neighbourhood scale, thus maintaining the family's wider sense of security.

Finances also interacted with other issues of identity to restrict mobility. When I asked Wajida if it was the financial restrictions that prevented her from pursuing leisure activities outdoors, or spending prolonged, social time in the community, she emphasised her status as a divorced woman:

>*'I'm divorced, so I would feel scared for myself. From bad guys. I would feel scared for my kids. [That] and financial issues' (Wajida, Na'ba).*

Thus, the practicalities of limited finance were exacerbated by her sense of insecurity in the neighbourhood because of her marital status which left her with a sense of vulnerability. Discussion and accounts of sexual harassment peppered women's narratives in both Beirut and Amman, as discussed in more detail later in the chapter. In this statement, Wajida refers to the ways in which different structural issues, layer upon her identity as a divorced, Syrian, refugee woman to hinder her wider mobility in the city.

Ulima discussed how she had little free time and she would only ever leave her home to go to visit her parents who lived nearby. When I asked what prevented her from engaging in other activities, such as going to a park or making social visits to others in the community, her husband interjected and explained:

>*'Financial difficulties…but there is a bit of insecurity…we don't know the area well…[and] we don't really know the people around here' (Saad, Na-ba).*

Financial restrictions also meant that women could not 'escape' uncomfortable predicaments that they found themselves in. In her diary, Nasim noted how she and another female relative found

themselves abandoned in a part of Beirut which they were completely unfamiliar with, after a disagreement over a taxi fare. As they didn't have any money left, they were forced to walk home whilst guessing the way. Their account was not dissimilar to others who expressed conflicts and disagreement with taxi drivers over routes, drop offs, fares and behaviour within the taxicab itself (as explored further below). Experiences like this had a negative effect on women, building a wider nervousness about spaces outside of the home, and made women concerned about leaving their known neighbourhood. Negative experiences often built a pervading sense of fear of the urban outdoors, thus shaping places outside of the home as an emotional landscape of insecurity for women who felt conscious of their various identities and the way in which this left them vulnerable (see Koskela, 1999; Pain, 1997; Valentine, 1989).

Figure 9: Swings at a local playground in Na'ba (Author)

As examined in Chapter Six, before the civil war, migrant worker patterns between Syria and Lebanon were highly gendered. Very few women had lived with their husbands if they had worked abroad and only a handful of participants described short visits to Beirut in the past. Some participants from rural areas explained that they had never left their village before the civil war and had little knowledge of wider Syria. For several participants, limited experience of wayfinding due to geographical restriction, poor education and patriarchal norms, intersected together to create the city as a confusing and unknown entity. Women expressed that they simply did not 'know' the city in which they had found themselves. Many lacked awareness and understanding outside of their neighbourhoods, and worried about getting lost, particularly if they were illiterate:

> 'If I go out of the area, I wouldn't know the places and I would get lost' (Yaminah, Na'ba).

> 'I don't go out of Naba unless someone gives me directions, because I am illiterate. An illiterate person is like a blind person' (Ghada, Na'ba).

Although families did have mobile phones, these tended to be in the possession of the male head of the family. Women rarely had access to their own phones, which deprived them of a sense of a 'lifeline' and a means of contacting family and others when confronting a difficult predicament. Thus, this digital divide compounded other factors shaping women's spatial lack of confidence (Wall et al., 2017).

Navigating humanitarian aid

Due to their significantly limited financial options and the demands on their time, many women would only actively leave their homes for a purpose. Here, the NGO and humanitarian network played a significant role in drawing women out of their homes by offering aid and assistance. This was typical of both Amman and Beirut. Women would travel across the city if they heard a rumour about a charity giving out assistance or coupons, in the hope they would be eligible for aid. Some participants described these activities as their only wider engagement and movement beyond their immediate neighbourhood:

> 'I've never been out of this area. Both of us [she and her sister] haven't, never. Just to get coupons' (Fahira & Qamar, Mahatta).

> 'I don't leave the area…well I do leave it, but only if I hear a charity is giving out food or

something' (Leesha, Ashrafyeh).

Women were also incentivised to attend focus groups and sessions at NGOs, by the offer of sanitation packs, food and other essential items. Indeed, this would have also featured in the focus groups for this research project, which were held at NGO premises, as women were typically gifted a sanitation pack after participating. Some of the participants expressed delight in partaking in the research study as it provided them with an opportunity 'to do something', to wash, dress and leave the house:

> *'It's not a problem [to partake in focus groups] it's nice for us, it's a trip. We need someone to talk to, we need an outing' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).*

In Jordan, women did not tend to express resentment at these activities, but viewed them as necessary, or even as an opportunity to get out the house. One participant even remarked that diverse NGO visits had resulted in her knowing the city 'better than a local'. These neutral, and on occasion, appreciative expressions regarding aid and a wider mobility may have emerged because of my positionality, which was frequently viewed as a 'humanitarian worker'. Participants may have felt they could not honestly express how they felt at having to navigate the humanitarian infrastructure if I was associated with it (Pascucci, 2017).

However, participants in Beirut were far more caustic about the humanitarian and aid networks and their required negotiation of these institutions. As detailed in Chapter Six, Syrian refugee women in Beirut held negative opinions regarding both UNHCR and any other Syrian refugees who had managed to access assistance through them. Due to their precarious status, both legally and socio-economically, participants discussed visits to see different agencies and charities, both in their neighbourhood and the wider city, to secure support for their families. However, these visits were a significant source of resentment. Often valuable funds were used to travel to NGOs only for women to be treated rudely or discover there was no assistance available. Women considered these experiences negatively and talked of exhaustion and confusion related to this.

This section demonstrates refugee women's difficulties in accessing public spaces of the city and women's wider challenges in acquainting themselves with, and negotiating, their unfamiliar host cities. Women express a desire to be part of the city, to be able to use leisure facilities or to shop, but feel unable to do so due to the interaction of a number of factors. This includes their financial precarity, which is shaped by wider refugee policies which limit access to work and income (see Chapter Six); and concerns related to their gender and ethnicity in being a 'target' for harassment. Impressions of and access to the city varies across different socio-economic and education levels. Those with greater disposable income feel able to use taxis or have a greater confidence in being able

to negotiate the city through the reading of signs and road names. The inability to 'enjoy' the city or to vary day to day life through visiting or exploring different neighbourhoods, parks or sites, had a marked effect on women's mental health and the perception of the city in which they lived. Many areas of the city become inaccessible for refugee women, which led to an expressed listlessness and indifference to their host city.

Social Relationships, Belonging and Mobility

This section explores ideas of belonging, spatiality and social ties, by emphasising gendered networks and relationships in refugees' host communities, highlighting the relationship between seclusion and mobility with respect to social relationships and a sense of belonging. Whilst urban refugees are coping with social, legal and economic exclusion, they can unintentionally further exclude themselves from their host society through their coping techniques, such as relying on refugee organisations or family and kinship networks (Grabska 2006). This can lead to strained host relationships and thus a compromised sense of security. Intra-social links amongst refugee communities enhancing refugees' sense of protection and social capital (Calhoun, 2010) and wider social capital with both host and refugee communities, can lead to employment opportunities, housing and advice and a wider sense of integration (Palmgren, 2014). However, these relationships are often difficult to foster. Steven's (2016) has explored the languishing network of social ties amongst Syrians in exile. He especially highlighted the financial and emotional strains of being a refugee, alongside a failure of NGOs to foster pre-existing networks. This section builds on his contributions with an emphasis on gendered networks, mobilities and space in urban areas.

Social visits form an integral part of the social life of women in the Middle East. Women are typically engaged in daily visits to friends, relatives and neighbours and build strong inter and intra family social networks through these visits (Singerman, 1996). Participants shared varied experiences in their reflections on family, neighbours and general sociability and connected-ness in their host communities. For some participants, relationships and social calls to neighbours were an important part of feeling that they belonged or had support in the wider community, whilst others expressed difficulty in building networks and experienced a sense of isolation from both Syrian refugee communities and their host society.

In both Beirut and Amman, refugee women's forming of new relationships was determined by gender and proximity. This appeared to have greater weight than shared ethnicity or heritage. Participants described friendships and social bonds with Syrian, Lebanese, Jordanian, Palestinian, Kurdish or Armenian women, most of whom were their direct neighbours. This lessened the time that women spent on the street travelling, and this proximity allowed for friendships and connections to build

slowly and naturally over time:

> *'[Building relationships] is just a matter of distance…because of the distance I have gotten more close to my neighbours, so I go to them more then I go to visit my Syrian neighbours' (Mouna, Hashmi Shamali).*

Thus, some participants had successfully managed to build relationships within their host communities which had enhanced their social lives, their mobility within and outside of the apartment buildings and sense of security and belonging. Basmaa, an expressive participant who lived in Ashrafyeh, went further. Rather than merely discussing a handful of friendships with women in proximity she countered:

> *'I don't only feel that I belong to the community, I feel like I have **become** the community. When I first got here, I was afraid of everything…. but I quickly managed to mingle and be a part of the society' (Basmaa, Ashrafyeh).*

However, her account was unique. Others felt disconnected and alienated from the host community and didn't consider themselves to be deeply entrenched within it. For example, reflecting on her life in Aleppo, Zulima said she felt a 'marked difference' in how her daily life had transformed especially since the family had just celebrated Eid. In Aleppo, she had: 'a very different social life', where she would spend time with friends and family. Since living in Beirut, she rarely left the house, as she had no family living in Lebanon and therefore no one to visit, although she had slowly started to build connections with her two neighbours. She had been living in Na'ba, for over a year and was taken aback when I asked about where she spent her leisure time and if she was building relationships in her host neighbourhood, saying in response:

> *'This is a strange country. I can't spend time at a stranger's house'.*

Many participants acknowledged the high proportion of Syrians living in their neighbourhoods but insisted that this had no influence in creating a greater sense of feeling connected, safe or belonging to the community. Rather, it was only family connections that appeared to count in feeling secure and to aid a wider sense of comfort and belonging. In Beirut, only one participant and her husband expressed feeling as though they belonged to a 'Syrian community'. Zada and her husband recounted experiences of conflict and difficulties in the neighbourhood and concluded that they were reticent to socialise and build relationships with local Lebanese.

Speaking with Karam and his wife, Takiya, he explained that they frequently saw Syrians around the

neighbourhood but didn't know them and wouldn't approach them unless they had known them previously. He explained that 'Syria is a big place' and intimated that, just because they lived amongst other Syrian refugees wouldn't necessarily mean they would approach them to ask advice about the neighbourhood or work. Alyas echoed these sentiments, stating that she thought her neighbourhood consisted of '75% Syrians', but that this made no difference to how she felt or to the connections she had built.

Even if women were restricted in their outdoor activities, visiting family was considered an important and essential aspect of daily life. Maintaining these networks was imperative, and reliance on them was strong. However, these also served to further isolate refugees from their host communities (Grabska, 2006). Strong family networks lessened incentives to connect with neighbours or to accustom themselves to their neighbourhoods and the wider city. The sense of family ties and community provided an aspect of belonging and safety, and to a certain extent addressed issues of isolation. Some participants explained that they 'didn't need' to get to know neighbours because they had family, and that they wouldn't reach out to them if they needed help or assistance but would rather rely on their family network:

> *'I try to keep limited relationships with other people…I struggle to find common points with them…and also, I don't have to go to them for help…my husband's entire family live next to us. So, we have family support. I don't really need to [make contact with neighbours]' (Rania, Hashmi Shamali).*

> *'I've got lots of relatives here, so I don't need to talk to the neighbours' (Keila, Mahata).*

These excerpts intimate a conscious decision to remain apart from the wider community in which refugee families are living and to avoid building stronger social networks. This decision to remain inward-looking and disengaged from wider community is reflective of research that has shown the tendency for refugees to maintain anonymity in their host community, out of fear of arrest and deportation (Jacobsen & Nichols, 2011; Stevens, 2016). For some participants, it was clear that decisions to remain apart from others were in order to minimise potential points of friction, which could create conflict within host communities. In situations of conflict, as examined in further detail in Chapter Eight, refugees frequently expressed that they felt that there was a consistent, underlying power imbalance weighted towards the host community. Therefore, decisions to remain distant from others were clearly a mechanism of protection. Furthermore, women explained how gossip and

backstabbing in the community affected their ability to integrate with their neighbours. Ishtar discussed how she would avoid engaging in gossip and conversation within the wider community and would be pressed on this by other women:

> *'I say to them: "I didn't come here for trouble. I'm here to live." I don't take sides with anyone…Whenever you have been in war, nothing else will really matter. [Petty neighbourly issues] are not real problems [they are not] worth it' (Ishtar, Ashrafyeh).*

Her experience of a 'gossipy' community that attempted to drum up drama and conflict in order to pass the time was echoed in Wajida's experiences in Beirut. She talked of her conscious decision to avoid close relationships as she felt that other women in the community criticised each other:

> *'I know people [in the community] …but I don't deal with them…there is a lot of gossip amongst the neighbours. I try to avoid it by not talking with anyone…I pulled myself away [from relationships]' (Wajida, Na'ba).*

Wajida, like others in the community, found that her marital status could result in gossip and isolation. She was a divorcee but explained that she frequently described herself as a 'widow' because of the stigma surrounding her divorced status and the repercussions she experienced (for example, public ridicule directed towards her sons). Shayma, a single mother living in Amman whose husband had abandoned her when she was in Syria, found it impossible to create a support network:

> *'[Other women] worry about their husbands…they alienate me because I am single and I don't have a husband…Arabs are like that' (Shayma, Ashrafyeh).*

She found that she frequently had 'no one to talk to', whilst shouldering the significant care burden of both her children and elderly parents. These comments provide some insight into a reticence, and on occasion, an inability to engage with both host communities and the wider Syrian community in exile. These accounts echo findings from Cornwall's (2007) research with Yoruba women in Nigeria. She found that in contrast to feminist academic expectations of networked and supportive women in socio-economically deprived conditions, women were often wary about engaging with each other.

Figure 10: Refugee children play in their home in Ashrafyeh (Author)

Additionally, urban refugees can exclude themselves from their host populations in order to gain specific rights – notably those of citizenship, return to their home country or resettlement in a third country (Sanyal, 2012, p. 638). Whilst refugee women did not express a desire to gain citizenship in their host countries, many referenced a desire to be resettled or to return home. As such, these matters may also be at play when refugee women keep themselves apart from their host communities, particularly as Syrian refugees will be deeply aware of Palestinian political history, which is heavily imbued with a 'right to return'. Furthermore, the governments of Lebanon and Jordan[17] are also preoccupied with ensuring that Syrian refugees are not integrated into their states in the long term, so this sense of not belonging, of temporariness, in the everyday, is also shaped by wider structural mechanisms (as explored in Chapter Six) to ensure refugees don't gain a sense of being settled.

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[17] In the case of Jordan, since 2016 there has been a slight shift to a greater acceptance of the potentiality of a longer-term Syrian population living in Jordan. However, women would still have been shaped by their experiences within the country.

Despite some women expressing satisfaction, safety and a preference to be in the seclusion of home, spatial confinement also appeared to have a highly detrimental effect on women's mental health. Participants had already been subject to traumatic experiences both within and during their flight from Syria. Several participants had come close to death themselves, been threatened with or experienced sexual violence, lost close family members, were injured or had lost children in utero. The civil war resulted in many participants being forced to remain indoors for fear of sniper attacks or bombings. Some participants had lived in Homs or Aleppo under severe bombardment, in *Daesh* controlled areas under the organization's declared caliphate. Others lived in more rural areas where they had not necessarily had direct confrontation with the conflict but had witnessed bombing from afar and encountered numerous blockades and security checks. Some participants had been internally displaced within Syria, camped in the desert on the border with Jordan, or had being smuggled into Lebanon. Additionally, women were often separated from family and kinship links that had played a strong role in their sense of community, identity and safety. These experiences had a clear mental toll. Women frequently discussed their heightened preoccupation with fears and concerns related to family members living back in Syria, or those that had attempted to make the journey to Europe, and the recollection of traumatic memories from the war.

Confinement to home, or to their immediate neighbourhood, for a prolonged period during the war had a strong effect on women's perspectives of life outside the home. The urban outdoors was heavily associated with fear and death. Participants, particularly those living in Amman, spoke of how this fear had permeated their day to day reality to such an extent that they found it difficult to unsettle even when they were conscious that they had found safety in their host communities. Women compared their sense of stability and *aman* (security) within their host communities to the 'insecurity' of Syria. Thus, even though many were uncomfortable in their host settings and described a range of insecurities, in comparison to their experiences in Syria, their new settings were an improvement. Nailah, whose family escaped Homs in 2012, during the Homs Offensive, reflected on her personally-imposed restrictions in Amman:

> *'When I first got here, I was terrified. Because of the situation in Syria we couldn't leave the house. It was absolutely terrifying… you would actually die. So, I kind of took that fear with me when I came here. I stayed an entire year in the house. I didn't feel safe to go out' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali).*

Mahira and her family were living in the region of Deir ez-Zour, a site of numerous clashes between the Syrian regime, the Free Syrian Army and *Daesh.* Brown's (2018) analysis of women's status under

Daesh rule shows an intensely patriarchal fixation on controlling women's presence and appearance in public space and ensuring that women's existence is predominantly cloistered. Experiences of *Daesh* had notably shaped Mahira's perceptions of space and safety and left her reticent to leave the perceived protection of her home:

> '[In Beirut] I don't go out…even with my husband I don't go…. Because [our area in Syria] was controlled by Daesh, as women we wouldn't go out' (Mahira, Mazra'a).

Keila also commented on how her public mobility changed during the conflict and continued to influence her mobility in her host city:

> 'In Syria, before the war, I would visit [my family] by myself [in rural Homs]...But during the war, I wouldn't. So now it's a changed habit' (Keila, Hashmi Shamali).

This wider sense of fear and seclusion related to their experiences during the civil war was supplemented with negative encounters within their host communities, confinement to their homes because of fear and discomfort, lack of financial opportunities or by their extended family's wishes (see more below). For many women, this resulted in isolated and disconnected lives. Participants talked of how they were *gharib* (strangers or outsiders) to the community, but also to themselves:

> 'I don't go anywhere; I don't deal with anyone…I have a really strange life. I am a stranger everywhere. In my house, in my community, because I don't go out. I don't do anything; I just stay in the house. I don't meet people...I am just surviving, living day by day' (Badra, Hashmi Shamali).

> '[Day to day life] does feel weird…it's like being in a prison. A big prison' (Takiya, Na'ba).

Diary entries from participants in Jordan were particularly articulate in expressing some of this isolation and depression:

> Days passing by, every day like the one before it, nothing new. Loneliness, living in this place as strangers, we're still strangers, we try to cope with this new society, hard living conditions, how are we to provide for our families, the rent to our house, how do we live in dignity without being hurt by anyone else? Or without being disrespected? (Hanan, Diary excerpt, Amman).

Even for those participants that had made efforts to connect themselves to the social fabric of their host community, there was a sense that they were outsiders. Despite living in the country for years, women felt that they didn't belong and were not fully accepted. Thus, they were cautious in how they

behaved or expressed themselves:

> 'My neighbourhood is very nice, and my neighbours are very nice. But I still feel that I can't express my opinion…because I feel like a gharib [stranger] and I don't have a right to say anything. They view us as strangers' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).

This perspective of being *gharib*, an outsider, foreigner or stranger, was often used by participants to describe their emotions within their host communities and their difficulties in feeling that they belonged or had rights and highlighted their societal isolation, boredom and depression. This last comment from the focus group in Amman demonstrate that these feelings are expressed not only amongst women who lived highly secluded lives, but also amongst those that had made efforts to build relationships. These expressions of living in a prison and being a stranger even in one's home show the ways in which private dwelling spaces are not necessary a space of comfort, or security for women. Indeed, many women talked of how compromised living spaces had enhanced feelings of suffocation and isolation. Thus, for many women these spaces are not considered to be *bayt* (i.e. home), with its associations of comfort and belonging.

Additionally, it was also clear that regardless of the length of time they had been living in their host communities, there was still a strong yearning amongst participants to return to Syria, not unlike the sentiments shared by many displaced refugee communities (Brun & Fabos, 2015). Some discussed returning regardless of whether peace had been achieved and many talked at length about their concerns about family and their desire to be reunited with them despite concerns of safety. This desire to be home, with extended family, in places of familiarity, couples with refugee status that deems refugee's 'guests' and makes little attempt to integrate or support them with a longer-term view:

> 'I'm adapting…. kind of. I do feel comfortable here, but at the same time not fully comfortable, because comfort is in bayti [my home], in Syria. So, let's say I am [managing] until I can move back' (Shahar, Na'ba).

Women's social relationships and networks in their host cities (and their wider mobility concerning this) are determined by a network of interconnected structural issues and personal experiences which interact with participants identities. Networks of family relationships predominantly lead to a stronger sense of belonging and stability within host cities. However, these networks also shaped decisions regarding wider social networks and integration and tend to play into decisions to remain aloof from wider society. Women that didn't have such networks, either from an inability (for example, determined by their marital status intersecting with societal stigma around divorce or singleness) or

an unwillingness (often determined by experiences of fear) to build relationships, expressed a much higher sense of dislocation and unbelonging within their host cities. The lack of daily 'encounterability' on the street (Hodgson, 2012), of people to visit and connect with, a reason to leave the seclusion of home, led to a strong sense of isolation and a lack of knowledge of the city. For many women this then reproduced feelings of fear and insecurity when in public space. In these accounts, continued seclusion, because of fear or a sense of unbelonging in society, shaped women's daily lives in negative ways.

Verbal and physical harassment in public space

Women experienced high levels of verbal, physical and sexual harassment in their host cities whilst negotiating public space, which deeply eroded their sense of security, safety and belonging in host communities. Examples featured in every focus group and interview. A significant majority of the participants referenced negative and derogatory comments about their Syrian ethnicity and status as refugees (Lyytinen, 2015a). These persistent comments wore away women's sense of security and often their sense of having a 'right' to be present in public space and the wider city. The following section presents experiences and reflections of harassment in public space in Amman and Beirut, highlighting the ways in which different categories of identity are perceived or foregrounded by others.

Derogatory and insulting comments related to one or more of a woman's identity categories, was considered typical by most participants. Participants in Lebanon shared countless experiences of verbal harassment in public space directly related to their ethnicity and refugee status:

> 'Some people are good [but] some people… would be insulting on the street, they would say something's like: "You Syrian people you came here and since [then] you ruined my life"' (Shahar, Na'ba).

Some of these comments were xenophobic and politicised in nature, related to complaints that Syrians were 'invading' and taking over the country. Participants described having their accents mocked and being discouraged from speaking in their mother tongue:

> 'Every time we walk on the street [people in the community] keep saying: 'We can't get rid of you now, you control the country' (Nayat, Lebanon).

> 'Whenever I speak Kurdi in public, people say to me: You can't speak that [here]. Are you trying to create another Kurdistan over here?' (FGD 8, Mazra'a).

Whilst several participants, such as Shahar above, emphasised that 'not everyone' in the community treated them in this way, there was clearly a high frequency of these remarks. Even regular irritations, such as nudging someone on a pavement or not crossing a road quickly enough was often met with a sharp comment about women's Syrian heritage. These constant negative and harassing comments about women's status and presence in Lebanon led to a sense of uneasiness and discomfort in public space:

> *'I don't feel comfortable on the street. I'm a stranger in this country, it's not my country and other people [locals] would look at me as someone who is weird or strange. And sometimes they would verbalise these things saying: "Syrians are burdens, why are you here? You're a burden"' (Emani, Na'ba).*

Participants in Amman also discussed received comments about their ethnicity and refugee-ness whilst in public space, many of which were derogatory and focused on 'othering' them. However, these comments did appear to be less relentless than what women described in Beirut:

> *'If you are walking down the street and someone notices that you are Syrian, you get hell from them. We keep hearing: 'Oh, you are Syrian, you took our country, you destroyed our country' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).*

> *'When we go out, we hear people cursing us because we are Syrians. I had to change my residence and the place that I live just not to hear anything bad about being Syrian, it got out of control' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).*

Occasionally, women would emphasise that these experiences hadn't occurred in 'their' immediate neighbourhood, but rather in areas of higher density, where there was greater anonymity (for example, in a market). This constant emphasis on one's refugee status and ethnicity all added to a sense of unbelonging in the host community, which fuelled a wider sense of insecurity whilst in public space.

Visiting charities for assistance throughout the city was a gendered activity, predominantly undertaken by women. Syrian women were frequently publicly chastised for begging on the streets or soliciting charities, even if this was not the activity they were engaged in. Yara and her sister Mona recalled their irritation at being shouted at by their neighbour when they left their overcrowded apartment, saying:

'"These Syrian women are just going around everywhere, begging for money and going to charities"' (Yara & Mona, Mahata).

Whilst they emphasised that they never felt fearful, and their neighbour was simply 'rude', the constant reminder of being watched when leaving home, observed on the street and being judged for one's nationality was unpleasant and exhausting for women.

During my second focus group in Na'ba, the women that had gathered bonded immediately when I explained that the research study was examining their experiences of public space, security and safety. They instantly started talking about how they were yelled at aggressively on the way to the café that morning:

'When there is a group of Syrian women walking together locals think we are going out begging.' (FGD 2, Na'ba)

These verbal jibes related to women 'begging' and visiting NGOs also demonstrates why women feel frustrated and acerbic about negotiating the city looking for humanitarian assistance as explored above. Women are mocked and taunted about their status as refugees, and their reasons for being present in the urban outdoors. These comments continually disrupt and intrude upon women's negotiations of public space.

Verbal harassment could take on a heavily gendered tone. Alongside accusations of begging when out in public, some women found they were publicly criticised for being visibly pregnant or having 'too many children', indirectly being accused of wasting scarce resources and depleting the Lebanese economy:

'[I was on the street] holding my son, and a [Lebanese woman] said to me: "You are Syrian, and you are giving birth here? Are you serious?" It's a bit of an insult to us…I wanted to say something to her, but I didn't' (Yaminah, Na'ba).

'People on the street would [say]: "So, you're here, giving birth to children and then throwing them on the street"… I was pregnant and [when I arrived in Beirut] I went to register with [an NGO] and the woman there told me: "You're here and now you're pregnant just so you can get extra help from the UN?"…I said to her: "Why are you saying this, are you paying from your own pocket?" And she said: "From my pocket, or not from my pocket, why are you [Syrians] always having children?"' (Shula, Na'ba).

Participants emphasised that it was local women who shamed them for being pregnant or having too

many children and who would make derogatory and snide comments about their Syrian ethnicity. Shula insisted that because she was alone, other women had the nerve to make comments about her pregnancy and thus she had a stronger sense of safety in public space if her husband was with her.

My community contact in Na'ba stressed that she had observed the harassment of Syrian women by Lebanese women, saying they would make Syrian women feel 'uncomfortable' whilst navigating the urban outdoors. For her, this was unpleasant but not unexpected. She had witnessed Lebanese women harassed by Syrian men and implied that some of the antagonism between Syrian and Lebanese women was emerging from both women's wider experiences of harassment (from either Syrian or Lebanese men) and the strains of living together in a congested and poor neighbourhood, saying:

> 'Life for the Lebanese is very difficult here as well…they received little assistance previously' (Community Contact, Na'ba).

As such, the community contact was not surprised to see a deterioration in relationships between the two groups of women. Syrians were also perceived as receiving generous assistance from NGOs whilst Lebanese were required to 'make do' in deprived conditions. When discussing ongoing relations between Syrians and the wider community, NGO and community contacts explained that alongside tensions relating to work, housing and resources, there were rumours circulating that Syrian women were 'stealing' Lebanese men from their wives. The perception was that Syrian women were using this as a tactic to provide for their families. Marriage to a Lebanese man would give them protection and legality (these rumours were occasionally referenced in focus groups, see also: Dionigi, 2016). As such, Syrian women could be viewed as predatory and desperate by their host community. This may go some way in why they were subject to derisive and racist comments about draining the country's resources or 'destroying' people's lives.

The multitude of comments relating to women's nationality and status eroded their impressions of safety in public space, and wider sense of belonging to the community. Women expressed a cultural insecurity in their inability to be able to speak with a Syrian accent, or to meet together, without facing derisive comments about 'taking over' or going 'begging' (Lemanski, 2012). Women's pregnancies intersect with wider issues and structures that create points of tension. Ongoing or recurrent pregnancies tap into broader fears regarding demographics, power and state security (Smith, 2012). This is especially relevant in states such as Jordan where there are long standing internal conflicts over the demographic balance of the Palestinian refugee population with the 'Jordanians', and in Lebanon where governance is based on religious and ethnic demographics. A burgeoning population also raises

fears over scarce resources and rising prices, particularly amongst socio-economically marginalised communities. As such, pregnant women are publicly scorned by their host community, accused of depleting resources and not caring for their children. Hence, in examining refugee women's accounts, wider host community fears, which appear to be linked and (re)produced through state concerns of security related to demographics, becomes conspicuous. Whilst women's accounts of verbal harassment were clearly gendered, and deeply intertwined with their identities of being a woman, a mother and a refugee, this verbal harassment was primarily attuned to the foregrounding of their Syrian and refugee identity. Participants typically framed these as an everyday, 'irritant' or unpleasantness that eroded a sense of belonging. What created a greater sense of unease and insecurity were degrading sexual propositions and comments linked to women's ethnicity and status, which by their sexual nature, were far more focused on women's gendered identities and created a stronger sense of fear and insecurity.

Public sexual harassment and sexual propositioning

The intersection of women's refugee status and their gender made them susceptible to comments and insults about their sexuality and their bodies whilst in public space in their host communities and in the wider city. Participants were not unaccustomed to occasional sexual remarks from strangers in public when living in Syria. However, these were often perceived as less offensive in nature and far less common. Women highlighted that in their host cities, sexual comments differed to what they heard in Syria. In their host cities they were often characterised or remarked upon as being 'prostitutes' and being willing to exchange sexual favours for much needed resources. Their identity as refugees, and their position within society, led to impressions that men felt able to approach and proposition them.

When comparing experiences in Amman and Beirut, there were far more gratuitous and frequent experiences of sexual harassment amongst participants in Beirut. However, in both contexts, participants lamented the high incidence of sexual harassment and the cultural shame that this brought on them:

> 'As women…we are prone to being harassed by landlords, taxi drivers and grocers, especially if we don't have a husband in our lives…..Many people in our area are subject to this harassment but if they would speak up they would shame themselves in society… because we are Arab….No one is being shy about asking [for sexual favours], young men, older men, would ask…. Some men are following us until we reach our building' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).

'My daughters are beautiful, and men would look at them disgracefully. Making it sound as if they were prostitutes. It has upset them a lot. My daughters avoid going out. They think it is better to be under the bombing in Syria' (FGD 3, Na'ba).

'I hear a lot of [catcalling]…they know I'm Syrian….in Syria there is a particular neighbourhood for these kinds of hooligans. But here you find them everywhere…they have no shame' (Yesenia, Hashmi Shamali).

'There is a lot of problems with catcalling here. It is worse if you are alone' (Alma, Mahatta).

In Na'ba, Yaminah described how she had been searching a local rubbish dump for food for her children when a local man stopped and propositioned her:

'"Aunty, why are you taking garbage from the dump? Sleep with me twice and I'll give you $100"' (Yaminah, Na'ba).

She was shaken by the experience, but this was tempered by the almost immediate response of a local Lebanese man who had witnessed this harassment and yelled at the man to leave. Even though she had been protected and assisted on this occasion, as she was a divorced mother on little income, she felt extremely vulnerable, even at home. She needed to work, but was concerned for her daughters safety because two men had attempted to force their way into her home while she was out. These experiences had a strong effect on her opinion of the city and her neighbourhood. Her financial vulnerability had left her highly, and visibly, vulnerable to others in the community, who attempted to take advantage of her circumstances. Here, the intersection of her gender, marital and refugee status had a marked effect on her experiences of space.

Participants in Beirut also emphasised a sense of vulnerability in closed and confined pseudo-public spaces such as shops or taxis, where they might be alone with men. Shula related a story where she was travelling in a taxi after a visit to an NGO for assistance.

'The taxi driver started asking [questions] ….and then he said: "Ah, you are Syrian? Would you pleasure me…For an exchange?" I was very taken aback by it. I put a ringtone on my phone and said: "My husband is calling", and then I pointed at a stranger on the street: "That's my husband, he's waiting for me,"….it was terrifying for me so I don't go into a cab alone any other time' (Shula, Na'ba).

When travelling alone in the city, women felt vulnerable to the advances of men they didn't know,

many of whom appeared to take advantage of the rumours that circulated about Syrian women and survival sex. Taxis frequently featured as locations where women were inappropriately propositioned, or even assaulted:

> 'Now I don't feel safe going into cabs at all. Whenever I go in a cab to another area, the moment [the taxi driver] finds out that I am Syrian, they would think I am cheap and they would start flirting with me' (Shahar, Na'ba).

Other participant discussed experiences in clothing and food stores where the shop owner or other customers had behaved inappropriately:

> 'I went into the supermarket and someone tried to touch me, and I told them: "Get away", and the owner interfered and said: "Who do you think you are? Who are you to say you are being harassed?"' (Nasim, Diary excerpt, Lebanon).

Nasim's experience, whereby she was chastised and embarrassed for trying to defend herself, contrasts with Yaminah's earlier account above, where her harasser was chased off and admonished for his behaviour. These accounts demonstrate the uneven experiences of security and society within host communities. Whilst some women might experience protection and assistance within their host community, others are undermined and ridiculed.

These incidents occurred in quasi-public spaces, whereby participants were either travelling through public space in a semi-private vehicle, or in a semi-private space, such as a shop, which permits members of the public to interact. These spaces often allowed for the creation of close, or private, encounters in situations where it was difficult for women to move away or signal for help. Nasim's account in the shop where she was accused of being hysterical in response to being touched is also indicative of the challenges that some women face when trying to draw attention to their predicament.

These experiences of sexual and verbal harassment increased perceptions of public space as 'masculine' and indeed, as a place belonging to those with rights and citizenship, from which refugee women were alienated by through verbal and sexual violence. In both Amman and Beirut, women discussed their discomfort at navigating spaces dominated by men. Several participants noted that men occupied, or 'loitered' around public spaces which made them feel intimidated or restricted as to where they could go. A focus group participant in Amman noted that when running simple errands in Amman she frequently encountered groups of men:

> *'In front of the mosque, in front of the pharmacy, in front of the supermarket. It makes me really uncomfortable'* (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh)

She linked this to other women's experiences of catcalling and sexual comments, adding that this, and the constant public presence of men, made her feel uncomfortable when outside her house. Parks and open spaces in these neighbourhoods also had a sense of being masculine spaces, where men might 'hang out' in groups. This lead to impressions that the space was unsafe for women who were alone, or that they were not able to remain in the vicinity of these men without their 'honour' being compromised. For example, when I asked women in the neighbourhood of Mahata if they used their local park, they were adamant that it was not a safe space and that they wouldn't go there. My community contact in Mahata also emphasised its lack of safety and noted that as a lone woman, I shouldn't visit it as it was frequently populated by groups of bored, migrant men, who tended to gather there if they had been unsuccessful in securing informal work opportunities for the day. Although no one specified any negative encounters or incidents in the park, it was perceived as a 'masculine space' which women felt discouraged from using.

Women in both Lebanon and Jordan noted the tendency of local men to gather around single-sex girls' schools, which made them concerned for women's and girls' safety and morality. For example, Sama spoke of her difficulties in completing her schooling because of the presence of men around the school:

> *'My mother didn't want me to finish school because there were lots of men there. They would [hang] around the entrance. I would hear lots of [catcalling]. They would try and break into the school and hide in the bathrooms'* (Sama, Ashrafyeh).

As such, women were influenced in how they used public spaces, in part through a wider, learnt, concern of what was deemed 'proper' or appropriate behaviour for their gender, which was shaped by the structures of societal norms. This influenced not only public spaces or leisure areas but also spaces of opportunity and education. However, women also expressed a preoccupation and worry about the threat of sexual violence which was largely shaped by their identities as Syrian refugee women. Thus, their nervousness in public space was affected by wider structures of societal and cultural norms, as well as the intersection of their identities. In societies shaped by patriarchal norms, whereby relationships between men and women are sensitive and segregated, the intense male gaze upon the female form acts as an 'active polluting and defiling agent that physically impacts the female body…(able) to impute a bad reputation and suggest a lack of respectability' (de Koning, 2009, p. 546). In such contexts, women are expected to be on the move to a destination, to have a clear purpose to their activities outdoors or else risk the invitation of sexualised contact. De Koning notes how even

low-level sexual harassment is a reminder of a 'constantly observable male gaze' (p. 546-7). This is a challenging set of circumstances for a refugee woman to negotiate. Sexualised remarks, harassment, unwanted contact and low-level stalking (curb crawling etc.) related to both women's gender and nationality act as oppressive, verbal and material reminders of their position. These comments meet at the intersection of women's gendered and racial identities. Power is deeply inscribed through sexualised comments, particularly those related to the request of sexual favours because of women's refugee and marginalised socio-economic status. Furthermore, these comments act as reminders of refugee women's visibility in public space. If women seek to be discreet, in order to negotiate public space and security services in their host cities when they lack legal papers, these interactions only serve to widen fears that they are highly visible.

Tactics of appearance, behaviour and mobility in public space

Public dress and behaviour are theorised as methods of gender performance, a way in which sexuality is displayed, reflecting and reinforcing wider structural social and cultural gender norms (Goffman, 2004). For Syrian refugee women, this 'performance' was a conscious and often tactical choice and predominantly one of public blending, of looking 'in place' in order to enhance their personal security (Fluri, 2011). Women expressed a desire to remain invisible and blend in socially, thus maintaining anonymity in the city as a refugee, engaging in 'acceptable' feminine norms of decorum in public space and to be above reproach. Sur, (2012b p. 218) notes how women feel a 'responsibility to protect their modesty' by engaging in a 'code of conduct' as held by masculinist culture. Women self-police their dress and behaviour to ensure they are not blamed for 'not adhering to the safety guidelines' if they are victimised. Syrian refugee women were influenced by the structural influences of a patriarchal society, which created challenges for their intimate security related to both their gender and refugee status. In such contexts, where refugee women inhabit a marginalised position, deeply shaped by patriarchal societal norms and structures of refugee policy, women respond tactically, that is adopting and adapting to the structures around them in order to enhance their sense of security (de Certeau, 1984).

Dress and Harassment

In the Middle East, veiling, and dress, are particular socio-spatial practices that are embedded into wider relations of power and enacted in the urban (Secor, 2002, p. 7). Regarding the practise of veiling in the region, theorists have noted the ways in which the hijab and niqab act as 'mobile security' and visual respectability for women, legitimising women's presence in the urban outdoors (Fluri, 2011; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2001). This section examines the ways in which outer dress and appearance intersect with refugee women's identities and wider socio-cultural norms to shape experiences of

(in)security whilst in public space. These have a wide spectrum of outcomes for different women and shape their wider impressions of public space and the ways in which they are permitted to be present in their host cities.

Figure 11: An interchangeably public and private space that leads to refugee homes in Hashmi Shamali

Beirut participants displayed varied appearances depending on their religious identity and social class. In focus group discussions and interviews, women from a Christian background (typically Orthodox Armenian) were dressed casually in jeans or trousers and tops, wore make up and did not cover their hair. Some participants had visible jewellery which was also an indicator of class, position and religious orientation (many wore a symbol of a gold cross on a necklace). Studies have noted that there is less of a culture of veiling, and indeed a greater personal mobility and independence of Kurdish women in comparison to Arab women (Bengio, 2016). However, all Kurdish women that I interviewed insisted that they had veiled themselves when living in Syria and that they had continued to wear the veil outside of the seclusion of home in Beirut. Muslim participants dressed conservatively in black abayas or jilbabs with a hijab. Muslim participants from rural backgrounds wore very relaxed hijabs, loosely

thrown over hair and draped across shoulders. These acted as a signifier of the women's rural background, as well as their class.

Despite this range of appearances, dress appeared to have little effect in dissuading harassment. Rather, refugee women's dress and appearance in public space spotlighted their differences from their host community and emphasised their status as outsiders. This was particularly the case for Muslim women who engaged in more conservative dress. Beirut is a cosmopolitan city that brands itself as the 'Paris of the Middle East'. As such, traditional Muslim dress of hijabs and jilbabs are juxtaposed with relaxed Western clothing. Uncovered hair is not unusual, particularly in the predominantly Christian neighbourhoods of the city (such as Bourj Hamoud).

Refugee women in Beirut reported that more conservative dress seemed to promote lewd comments and sexual harassment on the street. Women who wore the *abaya* reported men following them in the street, hissing and propositioning them:

> '[Wearing the abaya] seems to make it [harassment] worse. They think we are naked underneath it' (FGD 2, Na'ba).

> 'A guy began catcalling me, because I was veiled and wearing the abaya, and he started speaking not nice words, saying: "Go with me, on a small trip". He thought I was a whore [that] I don't have values' (Amira , Diary excerpt, Lebanon).

Deeb & Harb (2013) have emphasised that even though wearing the hijab is a common clothing practise in the city (to the extent that it is no longer seen as 'piety' but rather a normal reflection of Islam), it is received negatively in some areas of Beirut. Thus, there is a politics to women's clothing and appearance and how they wear the veil. This reflects on perceived public morality, but also their religious affiliation which is deeply tied to ethnic politics in the city. Whilst it does seem apparent that sexuality does play into an aspect of conservative dress and sexual harassment (see Mernissi, 1975), the abaya also appeared to act as a visual indicator that women were Syrian, which in turn introduced additional elements of identity and politics to the interaction. Women also received mocking comments about being supporters of *Daesh* because of the organisation's insistence on highly conservative public dress:

> 'When we walk past people on the street, they laugh at us and call us "ISIS"' (Iman, Diary Excerpt, Lebanon).

Thus, women who wore the abaya felt that it enhanced their visibility as a 'Syrian refugee' and this in turn was the motivator behind how men behaved towards them in public. A report by Enab Baladi

(2017) notes a change in gendered dress codes in Syrian since the onset of the civil war, including the increased use of more conservative dress (such as abayas) in rebel-held areas of the country, whilst contrasting this with a tendency towards more liberal dress in regime-held areas. The politics of gendered dress, therefore, does appear to be caught up in the wider politics of the Syrian conflict, which may in turn have an impact on host impressions of Syrian women and their political and religious affiliations in their host cities. This may explain barbed comments directed at Syrian women, suggesting they were affiliated with *Daesh,* despite conservative Muslim women in Beirut also wearing the black abaya.

Whilst women in Beirut insisted that they had not changed their appearance or clothing from how they dressed in Syria, several women in Amman explained their tactic of changing their appearance in order to either enhance their personal security, or in order to 'fit in' visually with the fabric of Amman. Some participants in Jordan had worn the niqab when they were living in Syria, but this had changed during the war and the practice continued whilst in Amman. The reasons for this were rooted in experiences of scrutiny and violence at checkpoints whilst in Syria:

> *'[I was at a] roadblock [in Syria], and [regime-forces] took off my hijab and veil violently, and since then I've had some sort of complex that I don't want to put it on anymore. Even though my husband wants me to put it on again, I don't feel comfortable….at that roadblock they were very violent with me…I stopped wearing [the niqab] because it was dangerous to my life' (Rabiah, Hashmi Shamali).*

> *'I used to veil my face and cover my eyes…but when I came here I took off the [niqab]…Before the war it was ok to wear the [face] veil, but [during] it was not ok….it was not allowed. I would hear racial stuff about it' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali).*

These were highlighted as racially and politically charged experiences for the women. They identified men at roadblocks as (regime-supporting) Alawites (Alawite women do not wear veils) who had insisted on the women, who were Sunni Muslim, being 'uncovered' in order to be identified. Women felt that the niqab had become an outward signifier of their Sunni identity and potentially a signifier of opposition to the regime. Thus, they had taken to wearing a simplified hijab during the civil war and continued this trend in Jordan in order to 'fit in' visually and thus achieve an inconspicuousness within their host society (Enab Baladi, 2017; Fluri, 2011). This helped to foster a sense of security in public space through 'appropriate' attire that helped them to discreetly merge into the public.

Despite efforts to blend into public life in Amman, and to maintain anonymity, Syrian women in Jordan were frequently identified as such because of the fashion of their hijab. For example, Yeseniah discussed the frequent catcalling that she heard and explained:

> 'They know that I am Syrian, I hear it [their comments]. Because there is a stereotype here for Syrians, how they dress, how they walk...'

When I asked Yeseniah to describe this further, she emphasised it was how she looked during the interview, which to my untrained eye simply appeared to be a neatly fitted hijab and jilbab in muted colours, not unlike what many women in Jordan would wear whilst out in public. However, what indicated that Yeseniah was Syrian was the way in which she had fastened her hijab. Farah, my translator, emphasised that: '*Jordanians don't wear their hijabs this way*'. Later, walking through the neighbourhood of Hashmi, Farah explained that she could immediately identify Syrian women from their appearance as we passed them on the street. Frequently Syrian women would wear their hijab low on the forehead and tucked across the chin. This allowed the wearer to pull up the lower part of the hijab over their nose, so only the eyes were showing (in a similar manner to a niqab), in order to provide more modesty if required. Jordanian women didn't wear their hijabs in the same fashion. Most of the participants also wore an abaya, or a jilbab, whilst a handful continued to wear the niqab. Neutral, subdued colours were favoured, navy, dark brown and black. As such, their appearance was perceived as being very modest when out in public space.

In contrast to the women above, many of whom had decided to remove the niqab in order to enhance their sense of security, Jasura had taken to wearing a hijab upon arriving in Jordan, something that she had not done previously in Syria. She was a married woman, living in Hashmi Shamali with a large network of family living close by. Her female relatives adopted a range of approaches towards head coverings, some using a hijab and others not, and she emphasised their personal agency in making this choice themselves. However, her reasons for wearing it in Jordan were because:

> 'it's safer and more decent' (Jasura, Hashmi Shamali).

She emphasised that Hashmi wasn't a more conservative neighbourhood, but simply that she felt by wearing a hijab she was more discrete and less noticeable whilst outside of the home. She explained that some of her relatives had continued to go out unveiled but she was not comfortable with this any longer. Thus, she very much saw wearing the hijab and dressing conservatively as a personal choice driven by women's agency, but nonetheless shaped by social and political processes in place in the neighbourhood. For example, Jasura's reasoning that she had chosen to wear the hijab as it was 'safer' and 'more decent' indicates that she believes that women who navigate public space without a hijab

would be taking a risk, and might entice inappropriate behaviour that would compromise their personal safety. As such, she (re)produced the expected religious and cultural norms and codes of conduct of women in public space through an internalising of feminine responsibility to behave and dress in particular ways (Ranade, 2007). However, this was also influenced by a desire to protect her intimate security in a community where she had fewer rights and lower status.

Her experience was in sharp contrast to Aleaha, a middle-class, university-educated, Syrian mother of one. Whilst Aleaha was a practising Muslim, she had chosen not to wear the hijab in Syria or Jordan. This had become the source of great friction for her in Mahata, where she lived with her husband and their son. She would wear a loose scarf slung over her hair and shoulders, alongside more relaxed 'Western' clothing, such as jeans, and frequently wore make up. She emphasised that in Syria she was seen as 'fashionable' but that in Mahata her appearance was greatly despised. She quickly found herself publicly criticised and prejudiced against, for not dressing 'appropriately' in the community. As a result, she had begun to confine herself more and more to her home, not from a sense that she was physically unsafe, but because the litany of remarks she received from the community endangered her mental health. She refused to change her appearance by conforming to the conservative expectations of the neighbourhood. This refusal to tactically respond to gendered and cultural norms, by dressing more conservatively, had a direct effect on Aleaha's social isolation and a very detrimental impact on her mental health. She wept openly throughout the two-hour interview in her home and explained that she simply spent most of the day sleeping or crying. Her use of dis-active tactics, to stay at home rather than negotiate verbal abuse or change her appearance, had resulted in strong impressions that she did not belong, and was not welcome, in the community (Hamdan-Saliba & Fenster, 2012). The community's response to Aleaha, and her reaction in turn, demonstrates how gendered and patriarchal structures, which shape women's expected norms of dress and behaviour, are reproduced through the societal exclusion of women who push against these norms, thus reproducing space in gendered ways.

Women's differing perspectives demonstrate the complex ways in which women are 'permitted' to inhabit public space based upon conforming to certain behavioural norms, and the intersectionality of their identities, which result in a spectrum of experiences. Whilst women in Beirut wear modest and conservative attire which is typically framed as a device which enables women to negotiate public space safely (de Koning, 2009; A. J. Secor, 2002) in actuality it highlights women's status as outsiders and refugees, making them vulnerable to lewd harassment and propositioning. In Jordan, some women engage very reflectively and consciously in the practice of their appearance. They demonstrate a knowledge and awareness of the gendered, political and social norms of the

environment that they are negotiating, using their tactical agency to enhance their personal sense of security through using clothing styles to 'fit in unobtrusively' or 'be modest'. These approaches reflect how women tactically respond to wider structures in order to access public space and to enhance their sense of security when in it. Those that disengage from this tactical approach or ignore wider structural influences (such as Aleaha) experience extremely negative experiences consequences which limit their sense of being welcome or being allowed in public space and lead to isolation and mental difficulties.

Tactics of Feminine Behaviour and Invisibility

Alongside descriptions of day to day clothing, many participants would go on to offer how they were 'dignified' and 'appropriate' whilst out of the house. These decided norms about what was dignified had clear associations with traditional norms of femininity and invisibility: looking down and avoiding eye contact, staying close to walls, not talking in the street, avoiding drawing attention to oneself, being neat of appearance and, as discussed above, for the majority of participants who were Muslim, wearing the hijab and being modestly dressed.

This featured particularly in interviews with Syrian women in Beirut. Wajida, was very conscious of her status as a single mother and divorced woman, and was determined that she would conduct herself in such a way as to not invite attention from men:

> 'On the street in Lebanon no one has tried to harass me, or get in my way, or cat-calling or anything. Because I am very strict. I am very proper, orderly, I follow the rules. No one can get their way with me, with respect to men' (Wajida, Na'ba).

In this comment, Wajida refers to following 'the rules' that she is expected to conform to. She frequently emphasised through her interview that she was a respectable woman who was not vulnerable to inappropriate relationships with men simply because she was divorced. She was very nervous of the stigma of her divorced status and had previously had difficulties with her family who had pushed her to get remarried for reasons of respectability (not protection). She had resisted these efforts and was determined to project herself as pious and upstanding. Her emphasis on being 'strict, determined and orderly' demonstrates how Wajida was highly conscious of her public spatial presence. Wajida verbalised that she should not be a target because of how she conducts herself, and therefore if she was to be approached, it would be because she had allowed her disciplined outer appearance to 'slip'. Thus, she has regulated and policed her public behaviour, by adhering to the masculine 'code of conduct' (Sur, 2012) and feels that she has been rewarded by being treated respectfully and not catcalled or propositioned. Her perspective indicates the ways in which she has

internalised and reproduced patriarchal and gendered expectations of how women, such as herself, are expected to behave in public space (S. Joseph, 1996).

Alongside the influence of cultural and social norms shaping women's behaviour, other participants emphasised their wider fears and insecurities with respect to public space and its impact upon their behaviour when leaving the house:

> *'We would walk close to the wall, so we don't do anything [wrong]…we have had similar experiences, we don't want to make a fuss [or draw attention]' (FGD 3, Na'ba).*

> *'[Of course, there are a lot of problems for me as a woman]. So, I keep quiet, I don't speak, I stay home [intentionally], I shut up [intentionally]…because there is danger. There is danger outside the house' (Husniya, Na'ba).*

Whilst tactics of accepted feminine appearance and behaviour in public space were used on the one hand to retain a sense of social respectability (Ilahi, 2009), on the other, women felt that appearance and behaviour had direct potential to compromise their security outside of the home. Often I would ask women to be more specific: 'What did they fear outside the house? What was dangerous?' But many had difficulty in articulating this further, only emphasising that the urban environment was a dangerous place to be for a refugee woman. This alludes to Valentine's (1989) and Koskela's (1999) arguments that often 'fear' for women is less of a one-off terrifying encounter and more of a pervading sense of alertness in public space. However, over the course of interviews and focus groups more specific accounts of harassment or encounters with security personnel emerged which had clearly shaped impressions of the host city as a dangerous place. As such, women attempted to create a visage of non-threatening, compliant femininity which allowed for their presence to be overlooked or seen as benign, discouraging the attention of men, enhancing their respectability and thus heightening their sense of personal security. As covered later in the chapter, women also felt it necessary to limit their mobility, particularly in the evenings, in order to comply to societal gendered norms, whilst also ensuring their personal protection and avoiding potential conflicts or harassments from others in the community.

Chaperoning: The Tactic of Company

Alongside a focus on how they should look and conduct themselves whilst in public space, women also used several other tactics to give them a sense of protection and propriety when in public space. Being accompanied whilst conducting errands, or visiting family, was a common means of enhancing a personal sense of security. Many women described relying on family networks, neighbours and relatives to navigate public space. Whilst women didn't always associate being accompanied as a necessary component of being outdoors (some women simply had company to pass time), most

expressed a preference for company as it broadly increased their sense of security. For example, Alma and Rima emphasised that they would often leave their homes in Syria by themselves, but felt it was unwise to do so in Amman:

> *'We don't go out by ourselves here. My sister was out in Hashmi and her purse was stolen. In Syria we would go out by ourselves…but there is fear here' (Alma & Rima, Mahata).*

Mouna described an experience in her local neighbourhood where she was followed on the way to the grocery store by a man in his vehicle. She said the experience had left her 'terrified' and she would now only leave the house if she was accompanied by her twelve-year-old son:

> *'Every time I want to get out of the house or do something, I take my son with me. I was absolutely terrified that [this man] was stalking me and following me everywhere I went' (Mouna, Hashmi Shamali).*

Some of the women actively used their children as a barrier to unwanted attention. In Beirut, Shahar explained how she would always take her daughter with her, so 'people would play with my daughter and forgot about me'. She went on to explain that having her daughter with her was akin to creating a boundary for people, for them 'not to be inappropriate' towards her. Other women felt that being accompanied by female children was unhelpful and opened them up to more difficulties. Instead, they focused on having the company of 'anyone' that was a male - a young son, husband, brother or father - whilst out in public space. Following Shula's encounter with a taxi driver who propositioned her for sex after he discovered she was Syrian, she explained that if she had to be out the house, she would always take a male with her, particularly in a taxi, 'even if he was a young boy'.

Participants also referred to their previous 'norm' in Syria. This revealed a complexity of gendered attitudes to public space and the chaperoning of women outside of the privacy of home. Some participants noted that in Syria they would always be accompanied in public space for reasons of propriety, whilst others emphasised that they enjoyed personal independence. This was inconsistent and varied across both cities and across different women's religious and social categories:

> *'I don't like to go out alone. I don't like to be out without a man. [It would be fine in Syria] but not here, it's not safe' (Fariha, Mahatta).*

> *'I've been veiled since I was 12 years old. We lived in Aleppo with my in-laws, my mother in law would be taking care of everything. We wouldn't be allowed to go to go out, to get stuff…unrelated to the war and everything. So [my mother in law] would take care of getting groceries and other [things]' (Mahira, Mazra'a).*

There are cultural and religious norms about gender, space and security that operate and (re)produce over various scales and these accounts provide insights into individual gendered spatial mobilities and the ways in which these are shaped by kinship, culture and identity. In Syria, some women were chaperoned when out in public space in order to maintain a sense of public gendered propriety, whilst others enjoyed personal independence. However, as refugees, these norms no longer applied as kinship and societal ties were fragmented. Without close family members, women were required to navigate the urban outdoors alone. Some women found greater spatial freedom in their host cities, whilst others felt compelled to use a chaperone which they hadn't done previously or they confined themselves to home. Within these reflections, women's complex opinions regarding their changing mobility emerged. Whilst some felt that being a refugee had afforded them a greater freedom in public, others expressed a general apathy towards these changes as they came at too high a cost.

Rabiah spoke of how she was confined to her home in Syria by the wishes of her family, whilst growing up and then by her husband, once married. She had lived a secluded life and had little knowledge of her home country. Living in Amman, she found herself emancipated from these controls and restrictions on her mobility and enjoyed her sense of freedom even though this came with compromises:

'My parents were really strict; they took me out of school and got me married early. I used to wear the [niqab] and I didn't even know where my street ended…and then I had to come here! [Laughs]. Here I feel like I'm alive, I can do whatever I want' (Rabiah, Hashmi Shamali).

Badra felt she had more freedom as she was now 'allowed' to run errands alone, after the civil war had fragmented her kinship ties resulting in her and her husband living apart from his family. However, she expressed a yearning to return to her previous life, considering her enhanced spatial freedom and mobility a poor alternative to the social networks and sense of belonging she had enjoyed previously:

> *'There is more freedom here than in Syria…because [in Syria] the men did everything…Mostly I left the house to shop for clothes, and I had to leave with [a woman] older than me. [Here] I don't have any [restrictions] going out on my own… [But] I preferred the way I lived in Syria even though I didn't get to go out…because here I feel very isolated' (Badra, Hashmi-Shamali).*

These accounts both reinforce and rebut feminist accounts of the empowering and shifting gender roles in asylum. As explored in Chapters Two and Three, women often experience a change in their gender role in conflict, flight and asylum, but these are not always a positive or empowering (El Masri, 2013). Many women resent these perceived public 'freedoms' preferring the seclusion, dignity and

position of their previous lives even if these may appear to be stifling or traditional to Western audiences (Mahmood, 2005; Muhanna, 2013). These accounts indicate the complexity of women's experiences and feeling, with women both appreciating and disliking the changes in their mobility, an understanding of which is enhanced through an intersectional approach to their lives and experiences.

Temporality, Kinship and Mobility

Male and female kinship relations frequently shaped and structured participant's interactions, attitudes and mobilities within public space in their host cities. These verbal or internalised 'instructions' emerged from a combination of factors, including the interaction of a woman's identity, traditional societal norms and fear of the unknown 'public'. Thus, restriction of women's mobility did not emerge purely from a desire to limit women based upon patriarchal norms. Rather, this issue interacted with other structural mechanisms of security and refugee policy, and thus a wider desire to protect women in complex and dangerous environments (Cornwall, 2007a). This next section delves into gendered and societal norms of mobility and seclusion, kinship relationships and notions of fear/safety of public space to better understand women's navigation of the urban outdoors. By specifically highlighting the subject of temporality and mobility, wider relationships between gender, kin and mobility become clear, and differences between Amman and Beirut are emphasised.

Temporality & Restriction

Discussions with participants which centred on temporality, unveiled varied and complex impressions of space, gender and security, and the ways in which different issues and structures shaped spaces of the city as forbidden or permitted at particular times, or to particular genders (Fenster, 1999). These discussions amplified distinctions of safety and belonging between Amman and Beirut, and further emphasised the ways in which women's mobility was shaped by both male and older female relations (Kandiyoti, 1988; Lokot, 2018).

Most participants in Beirut emphasised an early evening cut-off of around 7-8pm after which they viewed mobility in the urban outdoors to be 'unwise'. This was usually when visibility began to be compromised due to fading light, and when there was greater activity in the streets due to the close of the working day and general night-time sociability. Many identified the evening as a time when tensions were more prominent between refugees and the host community and where conflicts might escalate. Women were averse to being outside of the home alone at this time and would scoff 'never' or 'no way' in response to being asked if they spent time in public space in the evening. Several participants emphasised the that the presence of male relatives dictated the extent of their mobility in the evening:

> *'[If I go out] I would definitely hear men who would flirt with me or harass me on the street…I feel safe when my husband is here. When he comes [back] at night, we go out together'* (Shahar, Na'ba).

To be out in the evening in Beirut was particularly risky, as some areas had taken to creating curfews for Syrian refugees living in their neighbourhoods. These curfews were introduced by several different community authorities (for example, municipalities, municipal police, political parties) for diverse reasons; usually if fighting in Syria spilt over the border into Lebanon, or from a wider societal argument that Syrians 'needed to be protected' (Dionigi, 2016). A report by HRW [(2014)] noted that these curfews were in likelihood illegal and had no standing in the law, but that municipal police and vigilante groups enforced them. Speaking with political parties in Na'ba and Mazra'a, both insisted that there were no curfews in place in Beirut and walking around the neighbourhoods I never saw any signs[18]. However, other research has indicated their presence (Dionigi, 2016; HRW, 2014) and NGO representatives emphasised that there were curfews in place in the city. When I raised the issue of curfews in interviews, most participants said they were generally aware of curfews, and restrictions on Syrians' movements in the evenings, although many argued that these weren't operating directly in their neighbourhoods. However, some participants in Mazra'a noted the occurrence of intermittent curfews implemented for security concerns, stating that in those cases, Syrians would communicate amongst themselves and avoid leaving their homes. Khalila noted that one of the reasons her family had avoided settling in the Southern Suburbs was over the additional control of movement of Syrians, particularly at night:

> *'Syrians are not allowed out in the evening [in Al Dayiha] so we would feel better here. We choose this area so we would be safe [from curfews]'* (Khalila, Mazra'a).

In Bourj Hammoud, participants mentioned that there was a curfew that was communicated with a 'clear slogan' on a large sign, saying that Syrians were not allowed out in the evenings after 8pm (Bourj Hammoud, FGD 6).

Syrian women felt heavily restricted to the indoors in the evening, reasoning that going out after dark would be unsafe. Curfews, which ultimately forbade their presence on the street in the evening, made public space even more unwelcoming. Not only do refugees who live in Beirut already suffer from marginalised status and disordered legality, but these curfews emphasise and create spaces of legal exceptionalism, that whilst perhaps aren't 'formal' or state sanctioned, still operate and create boundaries of permitted and forbidden behaviour and presence (Brickell & Cuomo, 2019; Fenster,

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[18] However, I did witness banners relating to a Syrian refugee curfew when travelling outside of Beirut.

1999; Pickering, 2011). Because of the fragmented structure of the state and security services, political parties and vigilante groups felt able to implement curfews, criminalising Syrians who transgressed public space at night, in order to 'protect' the wider community. This results in an uneven implementation of these practices which are possible because of the lack of a strong state. In turn, refugees restrict their mobility and their presence in public space, particularly in the evening, to avoid arrest and keep possible encounters (with informal security providers, for example) to a minimum. Thus, many public spaces of the city are regulated and reproduced to reflect the privileges of some of the host community, and reinforce the differentiated power and control of public space by different individuals and stakeholders (Silvey, 2006, p. 70).

Regarding public mobility in the evening, responses from participants in Amman varied greatly. There were no curfews in place, and although security personnel do run checks on neighbourhoods, there is not the same heightened presence of security. Some women voiced the same attitudes of participants from Beirut: insisting that they felt unsafe and would avoid being outdoors after 7-8pm in the evening or would utilise company in the evenings in order to feel more secure:

> '*I never go out at night. I am generally afraid. I don't go out after 7pm, but lots of other Syrian women do. I don't have that [courage]' (Mouna, Hashmi Shamali).*

A number of participants stated that they would never restrict their personal agency regardless of the time of day (Koskela, 1997), emphasising that they had few limitations on their mobility in Syria, and that they considered living in Amman to be similar:

> '*I used to go out whenever I want in Syria, and I go out whenever I want here…Even at night' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).*

> '*I go out alone. Anytime, I don't care. I feel safe here…I don't feel afraid to do anything. [Before] the war, it was the same as here, I would go out and do whatever I want' (Leesha, Ashrafyeh).*

These attitudes contrasted with women's experiences in Beirut whereby participants were particularly reticent to leave home in the evening and would certainly only contemplate doing so with a companion.

Whilst concerns related to temporality and wider security and refugee status were more explicit in Beirut and explored in further detail in Chapter Eight, women in Amman did share accounts which indicate wider cultural and societal norms and expectations about women's presence in public space in the evening. Women in Amman expressed annoyance and frustration with a sense of being 'monitored' by the wider community in public space. Noodah, a single mother who was recently

separated, explained that she had generally felt confident in public space in Jordan. As such, she had found odd jobs to support her family and she felt safe to run errands by herself and confident to leave the house 'anytime'. One evening her son injured himself and she had to carry him to the local hospital at 1:30am. The next day, women from the community approached her elderly mother to ask why she had been out on the street in the middle of the night. She expressed a strong sense of isolation from the community because of her status as a single mother, and was frustrated that other women's response was not to help her and her son, but rather to express concerns about her transgressing the 'rules' about public space by being outside late at night alone, and to question her moral character.

This sense of being observed and judged was also expressed by Aleaha. She explained that her neighbours 'talked' because she would be out of her home in the evening visiting her sister and wore visible makeup. Men in the neighbourhood had begun to tease her husband and asked if she was out in the evening 'to get you money', intimating that women were only out in the evening if they were morally compromised and working as prostitutes. Ababsa (2017), has noted that in Amman it is 'socially unacceptable' for a woman to walk alone after sunset, except in some of the more commercial parts of the city. She adds: 'Disregarding these unwritten rules will often expose women to suggestive remarks and (unwanted attention)' (n/p). Whilst Aleaha and Noodah were similarly exasperated and dismissive of wider societal concerns, these accounts indicate the ways in which space is socially (re)produced as masculine, and how space shapes expectations around 'appropriate' gendered mobilities, particularly at night.

It was not only the wider community who affected women's perception of public mobility at night, but also extended family. Women particularly highlighted how their husbands expressed concerns or expectations regarding their mobility. For example, participants expressed how they might like to partake in particular activities outdoors, or simply escape the confines of the home for a break but were prevented from doing so because of their husbands' wishes. Ulima's husband was present throughout her interview, and he provided his perspective:

> 'When I first came here, a lot of [Lebanese 'bad guys'] in the neighbourhood started insulting me. It's affected us. I wouldn't go out beyond [6pm] …there are a lot of people that would just harass and hit us' (Saad, Na'ba).

As such, Saad felt that both he and Ulima were at risk of being targeted because of their Syrian nationality and their lack of power and knowledge of the neighbourhood. This had shaped their decisions not to leave the house in the evening as they felt they would be an easy target for

harassment. In this account gender was less relevant, and nationality and refugee status predominantly shaped the temporal relationship with public space.

Hearing the perspective of Syrian men, what emerged was often a significant concern with security and lack of status (explored in more detail in Chapter Eight). Thus, cultural norms of gender, and notions of protecting women's honour, interacted with a wider landscape of insecurity which resulted in many men insisting on restrictive mobility for their wives. Many men spend most of the day outside the relative seclusion of the home negotiating opportunities for work (or if younger and the family was able to send them, at school). Like women's experience in the urban outdoors, men experienced harassment, violence, fraud and arrest. The frequent difficulty or nervousness in approaching, or having access to, authoritative security providers exacerbated these incidents. When women reflected on their sons and husband's experiences in public space in their host community, there were often accounts of assault and muggings, whereas this rarely, if ever, featured for women participants. As such, men's understanding and knowledge of their position in their host society is arguably framed in a more violent and precarious lens than their female relatives and may indeed be wholly more negative. Whilst women's gender held embodiments of 'honour' and 'morality' which clearly shaped men's attempts to limit their time in public space, these decisions were also clearly influenced by male experiences of violence and othering in their host community. Thus, some of the ensuing restriction in public space emerges from a wider concern over refugee status and security within host communities. Despite this, women still found agentic ways of responding to wider male concerns about security and public space to ensure they still had independence.

Some participants were pragmatic and resigned to an acceptance that they couldn't be outdoors or go to specific places at certain times, without the presence of their husband or a male relative. This was combined with financial restrictions and fear of the host community whilst exposed in public space. Thus, these restrictions 'made sense' to participants, and were perceived as sensible, even though they were restrictive.

Other participants were frustrated by this limitation on their mobility and agency and voiced their desire to do certain activities and were therefore irritated at the restrictions placed on them. Many explained that the means of circumventing these potential restrictions were achieved through withholding incidents of conflict or harassment, maintaining silence or, on occasion, defying their husband's or family's preferences. Participants intentionally kept negative encounters or harassment to themselves in order to protect their ongoing mobility. Thus, experiences of catcalling or general harassment hadn't prevented women from continuing to navigate public space. However, they did

express fear that other's (particularly husband's) reactions and responses might affect their mobility. Badra discussed visiting her family in the Jordanian Northern Governorate, explaining that she rarely left her relatives' house because the comments directed towards her in public were so derogatory and crass:

> '[I hear] the really dirty words, in Arabic we say from the belt down'.

When I asked her if she had ever shared these experiences with her husband, she was adamant:

> 'No way. Because then [he would] deny me leaving the house'.

Badra's husband often limited her mobility despite her wider confidence in the city and her insistence that their local neighbourhood posed no threat. Later, she talked about the difficulty of leaving the house in the evening despite her personal wishes and insisted:

> 'This is not about me, that I don't feel safe. It's about my husband and what he wants…he doesn't let me go out' (Badra, Hashmi Shamali).

Yeseniah talked about the relentless catcalling she experienced in public space in Amman. Despite her exhaustion and irritation, she was adamant that she would not share these experiences with her husband:

> 'No, he would tell me: "Never go out again!" …I wouldn't tell my husband' (Yeseniah, Hashmi Shamali).

Shula (who had been propositioned for sex by a taxi driver) equally insisted that whilst she shared the encounter with her sister-in-law, she wouldn't ever share it with her husband. When we asked her to explain this further, she looked directly at Akilah (my interpreter) and said: '**You** know what he would do'. When I tactfully redirected the question to ask about his response, she responded simply: 'he wouldn't let me go out anymore'. Her frank response to Akilah indicates her assumption that Middle Eastern men have a 'set' response to the harassment of women, which alludes particularly to concepts of shame/honour, gender and restriction. Shula had already described how her husband had emphasised that the neighbourhood was unsafe and how she had to be 'cautious' with everyone. She discussed other occasions when she had been desperate to simply go for a walk outside but had been prevented from doing this by her husband. This led to a growing resentment and she suspected her mobility would be further curtailed if she shared experiences of sexual harassment. Her husband's instruction to her to be 'cautious' in public space demonstrates how women can routinely be seen to

carry the blame for sexual propositioning and comments, by being present in public space (de Koning, 2009, p. 548; Sur, 2012). It is of little surprise that women tactically kept negative experiences to themselves or only shared them with other women who would be sympathetic. By sharing these experiences with male relatives, women made themselves vulnerable to questions about their conduct in public space and would expect larger restrictions on what little mobility they possessed, resulting in their access to public space at times being 'forbidden'.

Figure 12: One of the main streets of Na'ba (Author)

By contrast, the husbands and male relatives of some participants encouraged them to leave the seclusion of home. This echoes the findings of Cornwall (2007, p. 161), who notes that feminist analyses of marriage are often 'blinkered' to other dimensions of gender relations that feature within these relationships. She argues masculinity in patriarchal contexts is often theorised as 'oppressive'. However, in her work, she found numerous partnerships of care, co-operation and mutual dependency, which also emerged in this study. A focus group participant noted that her husband had actively encouraged her to leave the seclusion of their home during the day and to engage in activities outside the home. However, she felt that she was unable to do this by herself insisting: 'I don't like to

go out' (FGD 3, Na'ba). Her focus group was dominated by women who expressed a strong sense of fear in the urban outdoors, who would only leave the house in groups of two or three, never spending more than 'an hour' outside the home. It was clear that she associated public space with a lack of safety and emphasised that even though nothing had expressly occurred, she held a fear of the unknown. Her husband had identified her seclusion and encouraged her to get to know the neighbourhood. However, she continued to spatially confine herself as much as possible. Mahira, a participant living in Mazra'a, shared a similar experience, saying that her husband encouraged her to leave the house, make relationships and get around the community, but that she was too fearful. Others also expressed how they had shared upsetting encounters of harassment with their husbands in order to gain emotional support and did not fear that there would be wider repercussions to their mobility.

In these accounts, women demonstrate the access and mobility they have in public space, but how this can also be curbed and restricted by wider fears and concerns of family relations. These accounts show how women's urban imaginations are imbued with a lack of safety, perceiving public space in the city as insecure and dangerous, reflecting Lyytinen's (2015b, 2015a) work with urban refugees in Kampala. They also reflect heterogeneity in relationships. Whilst some men feel compelled to control women's movements in urban outdoors, others actively encourage their movement and independence outside of the family dwelling for their own health and wellbeing. Furthermore, restrictions on women's mobility may not necessary emerge from patriarchal expectations of women being unwelcomed in public space, but from a genuine fear of women's compromised legal status and their possible encounter with state security institutions or others that could confront their legality. In Amman and Beirut, there were clearly examples of positive and balanced personal relationships where restrictions and controls had emerged from concerns of protection or security, or indeed, where women were encouraged by partners and family to engage in their new communities for their own health and wellbeing. As such, different aspects and issues of personal security are constantly being balanced against each other. For example, women's mental wellbeing to be independent and mobile versus the wider insecurity of refugee status and protection.

Women also show a range of tactical responses when their mobility is threatened, including withholding negative incidences or ignoring their husband's perceived preferences. These indicate some of the ways in which women utilise tactical agency in order to live out their preferences and to maintain their mobility.

Female relatives, mobility and temporality

Older women and female relatives also had a role in shaping impressions of public space and in directly limiting younger female relations' time spent in the urban outdoors. Kandiyoti (1988) notes how in classically patriarchal societies women engage in patriarchal bargaining to offset subordination to men by controlling younger women (p. 279). Therefore, they reflect and reinforce men's expectations about how younger women should behave outside of the seclusion of the home, and men and older women become 'cultural guards' dictating behaviours in particular spaces (Fenster, 2005; Sur, 2012). These older women often shaped expectations regarding the ways in which spaces of the city were permitted or forbidden to other, younger women (Fenster, 1999), dependent on factors such as their age and marital status.

Expressions of power, and power imbalances, between different age groups, were occasionally articulated during interviews and focus groups. These expressions were typically coupled with an expectation that younger women would be targeted in public space, and thus required protection. In this study, older female participants very much viewed themselves as 'sexually neutral' and sexually unthreatening, whilst younger women were presented as 'targets' for male attention. Therefore, they possessed greater freedom to 'transgress' the gendered temporal and spatial limitations of public space placed on women through cultural and social norms. Thus, women experience different gradings of access and mobility within public space, dependent on the intersection of their identities.

Fathima reflected on her family's overall immobility outside of the confines of their home stating that they were nervous and fearful over the potential for conflict outside and therefore tended to stay indoors as much as possible. However, when it came to her younger daughter, Fathima's fears became related to the sexual threat posed to her in the urban outdoors because she was young and a target:

> *'We wouldn't go out because of a fear about what might happen….and also because my daughter is a young woman (she is 16) and there are men about' (Fathima, Mazra'a).*

Later in the interview she commented that she and her sister Deema would accompany her daughter if she needed to be out in the city, in order to ensure she was not vulnerable to the advances of men. In Ashrafyeh, I interviewed Sama, a young married woman, alongside her confident mother-in-law, Basmaa, whom she lived with. Throughout the interview it was clear Sama had very little voice in the home, and her daily activities were greatly shaped by her mother-in-law. It also became clear that her mobility was restricted by the matriarch. Talking about some of their daily activities, Basmaa stated:

'We don't let Sama go out after 7, because she is young…because I am old, I can go out by myself, so it's ok…but because [Sama] is younger, men would target her' (Basmaa, Ashrafhey).

When I asked Sama what she did during the day and if she had ever considered looking for work, she explained that she would only undertake this if she was accompanied by her mother-in-law. Basmaa frequently interrupted and spoke for her even when I addressed her directly, not in a dissimilar fashion to interviews that took place when husbands were present. It was a highly unbalanced and hierarchical relationship, and frequently Basmaa was openly dismissive and derogatory towards Sama. This is not to say that Sama was devoid of her own tactical ways and means of responding to these behaviours, which was often reflected of other interviews where there were hierarchal or gendered relationships at play. For example, a common tactic was to completely disengaged from the conversation taking place, utilising silence and sullen displeasure to communicate attitudes towards the dominating party (Yeoh & Huang, 1998).

The age dynamic was also interesting to observe during focus groups of women from different ages and backgrounds. Despite arguing that younger women shouldn't be out the house in the evening for their protection, catcalling and sexual propositioning were dismissed as innocuous by older participants. Frequently when discussions of sexual harassment arose, focus groups would divide on the grounds of age. Younger and middle-aged women would talk of how such incidents left them feeling highly insecure and unsafe in public space whilst older women dismissed their distress (and disgust) saying these remarks and experiences were 'harmless'. Many older women did not consider experiences of verbal sexual harassment to be something that should undermine younger women's sense of security. Rather, there was an element of expectation that women who found these experiences unnerving and unpleasant needing to take this behaviour 'in their stride'. Stanko (1995) notes that there is a tendency to frame sexual comments as 'ordinary' in the context of public space, and therefore to dismiss the association of fear with these experiences. However, in this context, where women were economically, legally and socially vulnerable and endured daily comments about their ethnicity, to be propositioned and objectified whilst navigating public space built strong emotional landscapes of fear and unbelonging. Indeed, studies have demonstrated that societally subordinated status has a marked effect on an individual's perception of safety in public space (Pain, 2000). These focus groups demonstrated a complex and diverse landscape of impressions of gender, space and sexual harassment which were influenced by a myriad of factors. Fears of sexual violence or harassment were far more common amongst younger women, who then expressed a greater discomfort in public space. They often felt that these spaces were not available to them at certain times, or only if they conformed to certain behaviours (for example, being chaperoned). Conversely,

older women, particularly those in Amman, expressed a broader freedom and a nonchalance towards sexual harassment or the potentiality of sexual violence. In these accounts, older women appeared to have tactically 'bargained' with patriarchy (Kandiyoti, 1988), enjoying their wider mobility and power afforded in their older age, encouraging younger women to stay indoors or to not take harassment seriously.

These accounts show a diverse range of attitudes and concern with spatiality, temporality and security. Alongside wider concerns of personal safety and insecure status, there are patriarchal relationships, structures and societal norms at play. Some husbands and older female relatives extend expectations and influence over women's temporal mobility, thus socially reproducing public space to reflect wider social norms prevalent in the region, arguing that certain spaces are not 'permitted' to younger women, particularly at specific times of the day. These expectations do not necessarily emerge from an expectation that public space 'belongs' to men, although there is an aspect of this. Amongst societal and cultural expectations regarding gendered behaviour, there are other structural issues which intersect with identities and personalities to influence impressions of public space as unsafe, or which limit wider mobility.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed women's mobility within their host cities and the ways in which various structures and multiple identities create and extend oppressions (or opportunities) upon refugee women in the urban outdoors. By engaging with intersectionality, this chapter has sought to circumvent binary interpretations of refugee women as either agents or victims, and presented complex, heterogeneous accounts of women's experiences of mobility and insecurity in their host cities. Through these accounts, the ways in which refugee women (and to a certain extent, refugee men) inhabit and access different spaces, in graded terms of forbidden and permitted, become evident. Public space is not purely the domain of men, nor private space a location of feminine seclusion. Rather, women inhabit, use and access public and private spaces in varying and graded terms which are shaped by structural mechanisms of patriarchy, social and cultural norms, categories of identity, refugee policies and personal experiences. Women hold a range of different subordinate and dominant positions and social locations in their host communities. This is dictated by their different identities and their relationships interacting with structural mechanisms of patriarchy and legal policy (Anthias, 2008). For example, older Syrian women demonstrate a much stronger position of power and authority over younger women, dictating their mobility and behaviour in public space, despite being in a 'subordinate' position within the social hierarchy of their hosts' communities.

This chapter demonstrates how refugee women, occupying positions of societal marginality, continually negotiate a hegemonic scrutiny when in public space. This is not only regarding Jordanian or Lebanese men, who might typically be perceived as 'occupying' or holding power in public space in Amman and Beirut. Rather, what emerges is a variety of restrictive structures implemented by a range of different groups and individuals who hold varying aspects of power and position. Thus, Syrian women's presence in public space is not only commented on, judged, and therefore, restricted by male citizens, but also by Syrian men and women, particularly those who are older or related. These individuals shape women's mobility both through an internalised acceptance of patriarchal norms (for example, women's unchaperoned mobility being perceived as 'immoral') and a wider fear of the insecurity of Syrian refugees' position in their host societies.

In such contexts, where patriarchy and identity intersect and women are subject to public scrutiny, patterns of tactical behaviour emerge, which women use in order to blend into their host society. Many women describe using similar behaviours and dress that are perceived as decorous and pious in order to aid their negotiations of public space. This includes modest clothing, avoiding contact or interaction with members of the opposite sex, a quiet demeanour or using chaperones in order to navigate public space in an 'upstanding' manner. Women are also inclined to stay within their homes in the evening as women's public presence in the night-time is often considered risky or inappropriate through a combination of socio-cultural norms and refugee's status within their host community. Consequently, these tactical behaviours often reproduce patriarchal and gendered structures and norms. However, as demonstrated in this chapter, even when engaging in societal norms of gendered dress and behaviour, incremental aspects of their appearance or accents result in them being identified as outsiders. This result in them being targeted by disgruntled or opportunistic others who appear to consider them vulnerable and thus an easy focus for threats.

Other tactical practices include withdrawal, from public space or from personal relationships and community integration. This is often shaped by experiences of gossip and harassment. Syrian refugee women expressed a sense of judgment and observation within their host communities, from both the indigenous host and the displaced refugee community, noting that this often emerged from other women. Women talked of being weighted with expectations, and subsequently criticised, regarding their dress, behaviour and way of life: from leaving the house in the evening to falling pregnant. These habits of gossip and criticism led many women to avoid contact and relationship with others. Women who were divorced particularly suffered under these conditions whereby they were socially isolated because of the social 'risk' they posed to other women in being 'tempting' to other women's husbands, particularly in contexts where polygamy is accepted.

Women express a strong sense of being *gharib* (outsiders) in their host communities in the way they are treated and their general sense of unease and insecurity. Whilst some women attempt to build social networks and integrate into their communities in order to build a stronger sense of community and belonging, others reject these opportunities, citing fears of host community behaviour or choosing to prioritise family links. This intentional avoidance of the host community was also shaped by the presence of wider family relationships. Women expressed a preference for proximity to their wider, displaced family, and how as a result they did not 'need' to build connections and relationships within in their host communities. However, many women express a sense of societal isolation, especially those with no social networks, or those that have internationally kept themselves apart. Women express a feeling of dissociation from their lives, saying that they are strangers 'everywhere' including their own homes. Thus, women's disconnection at the home scale and at the public scale are deeply interconnected (Fenster, 2005, p. 229). This disconnection further disrupts and inhibits women's knowledge and sense of belonging to their host cities, as women are reticent to go outdoors. This thwarts their capacity to understand the spatial cartography and dynamics of their host cities, creating an ongoing sense of insecurity.

These tactical decisions of withdrawal, and negative perceptions of host community disrupt opportunities for relationships and solidarity between marginalised host and refugee communities. Whilst some studies have indicated how support, alliances and political manoeuvring can be achieved through solidarity at the urban margins (Ataç et al., 2016; Brickell, 2014; Lancione, 2020) this study builds on the findings of some of Cornwall's (2007) work, which found that there are often barriers to women's solidarity and mutual support when women live on the margins. This work finds concerns such as suspicion, fear, spatial and temporal vulnerability, social isolation and gossip create barriers to the development of these potential networks and opportunities amongst women. As such, because of women's social positioning and personal experiences, there is no guarantee that the sorts of networks and solidarities that humanitarian workers and academics presume to develop will 'naturally' do so in such environments. This in itself is unfortunate, as women's isolation and fear clearly affects their mental wellbeing and many express a deep loss from their lack of social links.

Threats and insults build on impressions of (in)security in the city for refugee women. Women's daily lived experience of being 'othered' in their host city, by being objectified, marginalised and abused enhances their sense of insecurity within the city. Women lack status and legality and such negative encounters further their fears and impressions of the city as unsafe and reflect a particularly gendered aspect of marginalisation. The last empirical chapter will examine women's experiences and perceptions of security services and conflict resolution, and the spatial repercussions of this.

Chapter Eight: (In)security, conflict resolution and mobility in Amman and Beirut

This chapter explores the ways in which Syrian refugee women interact with formal and informal security provision in their host cities, the ways in which these interactions are spatialised, and how they influence impressions of (in)security within host cities. It is primarily focusing on the research question: *How do Syrian refugee women engage with structures of formal and informal security and conflict resolution provision in their host cities?* It examines how both social and legal contexts shape refugee interactions and encounters with state and non-state providers of security in the every day, and how the relationships and connections between the everyday, embodied, security of the individual relate to the wider national and regional concerns of (normative) security.

Achieving security, in the sense of personal safety and protection, involves relationships with 'security providers' and with formal and informal coercive power, and access to avenues to mediate or achieve redress if conflict arises. The chapter recognises the distinctions between state preoccupations with 'security', concerned with borders and sovereignty, and individual concerns of security as a lived experience, that is 'individual responses to a set of constructed, contested and negotiated threats' (Fawaz & Akar, 2012, p. 107). Using feminist geopolitical and geolegal positions, this chapter considers the ways in which macro scale structures, particularly legal and policy structures relating to refugees, alongside state capacity (as 'strong' or 'weak'), shape gendered experiences of security in the everyday. By focusing on lived experiences of (in)security, the very different political and social contexts in Jordan and Lebanon come into play. Whilst Lebanon is broadly understood as a 'weak state' and has an extensive hybrid security system at work, Jordan is a 'strong state' with a centralised and organised security apparatus (Hazbun, 2016; B. Salloukh, 1996). This is coupled with differing approaches to refugee legality, particularly access to identity papers and documents, explored in earlier chapters.

The ways in which refugees' intersecting identities and their legal status (or lack thereof) play into experiences, access and perceptions of security providers, and the role that this plays in ongoing perceptions of public space will also be evaluated. As such, it builds on some of the findings and analysis of Chapters Six and Seven. This includes discussion on: the ways in which refugee policies interact with social and cultural norms and refugee women's identities, to shape access and experiences of shelter, livelihoods and public space within host communities; the continuities and differences in which this is experienced in Amman and Beirut; and the tactical ways in which women use their agency in order to respond and negotiate these structures and experiences.

It begins by considering how refugee women's perceptions of state security provision are marred by their experiences of conflict in Syria, and how this shapes attitudes towards security provision in their host city. Thereafter, it goes on to analyse women's spatial experiences and encounters with state security provision in their host cities and how this is shaped by their identity as 'refugee women'. Having established some of the complexity and gendered ways in which this operates, what follows is an examination of the alternative providers of security within Amman and Beirut, with a specific focus on political parties. The chapter then examines further community stakeholders that can act as a means of security or conflict resolution for refugee women but are, in reality, rarely used or accessible to women. Lastly, the chapter explores the ways in which women tactically negotiate issues of insecurity within their host communities, employing aspects of their identity alongside social and cultural norms in order to enhance their (and their wider family's) sense of security. This section demonstrates some of the agentic ways in which women respond to oppressive and challenging conditions in their host cities.

By using theories of intersectionality this chapter draws out the complexities of women's experiences regarding lived security in their host cities, specifically regarding impressions of, and access to, providers of security. Women express a fear and wariness, as well as an appreciation, for different state and non-state security providers, who, in different contexts, fluctuate between a source of security or insecurity for refugee women.

Experiences in Syria shaping fears of public space and security institutions

Experiences of living in, and fleeing, a warzone had a deep and lasting effect on families. As explored in Chapter Seven, the Syrian civil war had affected the spatiality of women's lives. Women were often confined to home because of dangers of the conflict, or because of the social demands and expectations of different regimes (such as *Daesh*). Whilst Chapter Seven explored the ways in which the conflict had impacted women's experiences of public space and led to a fear of leaving their homes this section highlights how encounters and impressions of state security institutions during the civil conflict, permeated refugee's wider perceptions of police and army in host cities.

Many women found it challenging to adjust to the presence of security personal within their host cities, associating uniforms, military camouflage and weapons as aggressive, hostile and unsafe.

> *'At first I had a fear of anything that resembled the regime in Syria, whether it was a policeman, airplane, cops, whatever' (Zarifa, Hashmi Shamali).*

> *'I'm scared of the police…I have a complex because of what happened in Syria. I feel very scared. My daughters can't tell the difference between fearing the police in Syria, and fearing the police here'* (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).

Many participants highlighted their initial sense of alienation in their host communities as they dealt with the trauma of flight and asylum. Yara talked of her strong sense of fear in her neighbourhood which she attributed to her experiences in Syria and the psychological condition she had developed as a result. She also expressed fear over symbols representing the regime and seeing planes in the sky. Ulima and Saad reflected on the proliferation of security checkpoints in Beirut which left them feeling uneasy:

> *'[In Syria] there are lots of checkpoints…when the [Syrian Army] saw [my husband] was from Aleppo, they started beating him up. So, here, whenever we see checkpoints, we are scared of that happening again'* (Ulima, Na'ba).

Participants joked about some of these memories, including their reactions to police and planes in their host countries, and how they had adjusted with time to their new surroundings. These accounts, whereby women would share their genuine fear, but undercut it with jokes, is not unlike Palestinian refugee participants from Johnson's (2007) study who engaged in 'deflationary humour' to deflect their anxieties and fears about their situation (p. 610-611). Nailah explained that she had managed to overcome her agoraphobia, and now knew a couple of people in her local neighbourhood whom she would visit, whilst Zarifa confidently declared that she didn't feel fearful when out the house any longer and felt far more confident negotiating the city, even independently. However, it was clear that experiences in Syria, particularly airstrikes, and interactions with police and army, had left some women extremely fearful of leaving their homes, particularly in the early days of their asylum. It also demonstrates the ways in which a sense of intimate insecurity can be experienced not only in material grounded experiences at the city scale, but in the overhead spaces above the city.

These experiences left a marked effect on how women perceived state security institutions. Women's impressions of the urban outdoors were shaped by both a fear of physical harm and death, and also a fear of state security and the power and authority they might have to detain, arrest or torture. These perceptions of the police or army as representatives of the state, which in Syria posed a strong threat to citizens, had permeated into longitudinal perceptions of security providers as being potentially unsafe or threatening. This had spatial implications, in that security forces are predominantly present and monitoring public spaces. As such, participants expressed an aversion, particularly to the urban outdoors, as they associated this an increased likelihood of interacting with representatives of state security.

Legality, Space and (in)security in Amman and Beirut

Chapters Six and Seven have presented some of the ways in which refugee papers and wider legality linked to residency and working opportunities shape refugee experiences and (in)securities in their host communities. This next section builds on this analysis of legality, residency and work, to consider the ways in which refugees and state security services are brought into confrontation through security services' monitoring and issuing of refugee papers, and the ways in which this shapes perceptions of space and security services in each context.

Legality, mobility and security in Beirut

Due to the ongoing political climate in Beirut (as explored in Chapter Four), public space in the city is monitored by a range of both state, and non-state security actors. The most tangible reminder of this is through the city's proliferation of *hawajaz.* This is a term (literally 'barriers') that refers to a checkpoint or blockade, which can be either temporary or permanent, and can be operated by functionaries of a political party or by local police (Monroe, 2011). *Hawajaz* are fixated on identity and an individual's right to 'belong' or be present in a particular place at a particular time. Several scholars have commented on the complexities of negotiating different security providers operating within the city, the effect this has on daily life and the production of public space (Fawaz et al., 2012; Monroe, 2016). Alongside the city's residents, refugees must also negotiate the presence of these state and non-state security providers. However, as most Syrians do not possess the legality to reside in Lebanon, checkpoints are a source of fear and act as a means of controlling refugees' access and negotiation of Beirut.

Where possible, checkpoints were avoided or spatially and verbally negotiated. Women referred to the necessity of paying bribes to pass through *hawajaz*, or appealing to army and policemen's compassion for their situation:

> '[I] don't have the legal papers…I would pay a bribe or a fee or something. Once they caught one of my sons at the checkpoints. And I explained their situation and what they are going through and then they let him go… [If I see a checkpoint] I feel scared. Maybe they would catch my son. And we don't have money to release him, and maybe they deport him back to Syria, and I'm very scared about that' (Zulima, Na'ba).

Even participants that did have legal papers, expressed fear and concern about checkpoints that were so fixed on an individual's identity and legality. Fathima, a wealthier participant who had legal status through her husband, spoke of her son's experiences at checkpoints when he was outside their neighbourhood:

'There is a checkpoint close by, but they wouldn't search us… [But, my son] when he was in another area, and they were asking him: "Why are you here?" And things like that, about his whereabouts. So, the checkpoint in our area would make us feel safe, but further, beyond [our] area we would feel a bit uneasy [about checkpoints], a bit uncomfortable' (Fathima, Mazra'a).

Many women talked of renegotiating their mobility in the city, changing routes or returning home to avoid interacting with these checkpoints, citing concerns that if their papers were illegal that they could face imprisonment or deportation. For many, their expired papers at least indicated that they had previously possessed a legal residency permit and allowed for some degree of negotiation at a checkpoint. For example, one could emphasize one's poverty, or that that the family was in the process of renewing residency or acquiring a *kafala*. For others who had not entered Lebanon legally and had been smuggled into the country, vulnerability and fear was even more acute:

'People who don't have legal papers would avoid [the checkpoints and the police] and would stay at home. We came into this country legally, but our papers expired. But for people who were taghrib *[smuggled]….it is always [vulnerable for them]' (Zada, Na'ba).*

These individuals felt that they didn't have the 'right' to register with UNHCR and intentionally engaged in far more determined tactics of anonymity and seclusion in the city. They were typically far more financially precarious, and appeared to be from poorer, more working-class backgrounds.

Some participants held a registration certificate issued by the UNHCR, and many viewed this paper as vitally important regarding their status. Janmyr (2017) notes that the main difference between refugees who are registered and those who are recorded (under the post-May 2015 policy) is not the level of assistance on offer, but fundamentally the certificate itself, which acts as an important vehicle of legitimacy that could assist refugees in negotiating *hawajaz*.

Women often carried a photocopy of the original UNHCR document on them; even though for many this document had 'expired' (the original registration certificate was issued for two years). This provided some sense of legality, and hence security, within Lebanon:

'I would feel secure because I have papers from the UN. If anyone wanted to talk with me, I would say I'm registered with them, even though they [the UN] are not really helping me at the moment…but it does help. There is a specific number, if anyone [gave you trouble] you would call this number' (Alyas, Na'ba).

However, because of the poor access to UNHCR, the lack of material assistance and the rescheduling of appointments, others were caustic about the papers, saying they provided little sense of protection or legitimacy. This was particularly in reference to assisting refugees if they were stopped at a *hawajaz* or arrested by security:

> *'I only have a paper [recording my family] with the UN... [if I were in trouble] what would that do to help?' (FGD 6, Bourj Hammoud).*

> *'[UNHCR] gave me a barcode. This does not make me feel secure. There is no security' (FGD 5, Bourj Hammoud).*

A focus group participant explained how her husband had been recently arrested because of his lack of legal papers and expressed her frustration regarding *kafala* policies and permits:

> *'They let him out on the condition he made legal papers, renew his visa, find a* kafala*, in the duration of month. He couldn't find a job [or* kafala*], now there is a search warrant in his name' (FGD 6, Bourj Hammoud).*
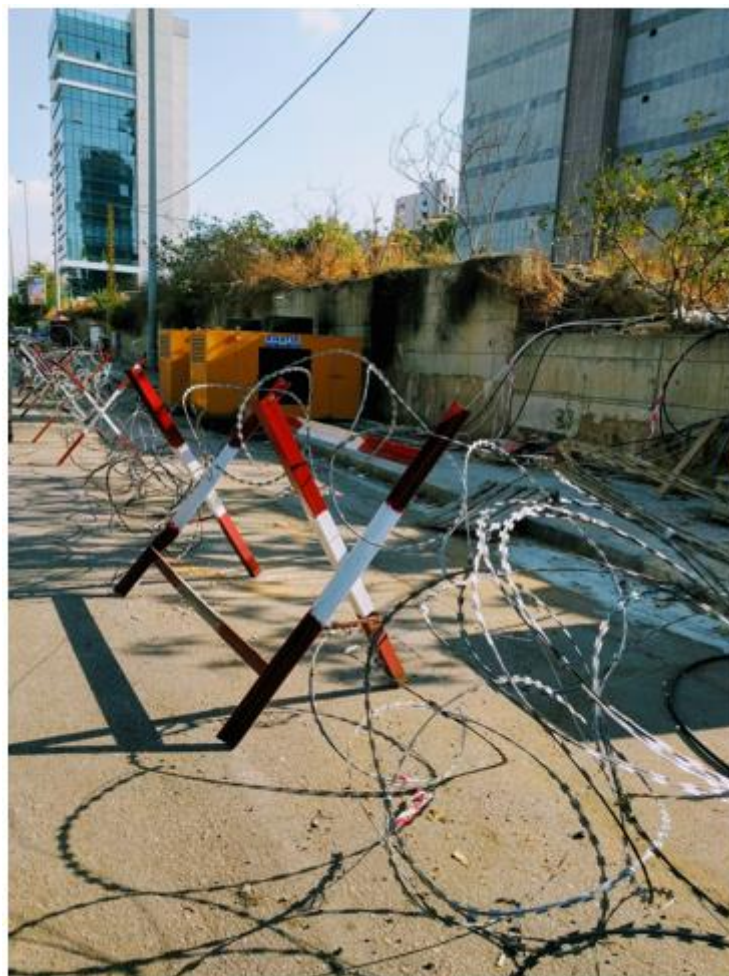
Figure 13: Barbed wire on the streets of Beirut (Author)

If refugees were unable to afford a permit, most continued to limit their mobility in the urban outdoors, avoiding security providers, and experiencing a heightened sense of insecurity. Although there are numerous arrests of those without papers, the Lebanese government has generally avoided large scale deportations (although there were some exceptions to this in the early days of the crisis, see: Dionigi, 2016). Instead, detention and arrest were intended to induce refugees to 'legalise' their status and gain a *kafala* sponsor for work. Thus, authorities used fear as a tool to encourage refugees to comply with legislation and policies. However, as detailed above, refugees simply couldn't afford this process, and arrests and detention did little to transform this experience, save to heighten fears (Interview with Lebanese NGO, September 2016).

Women who had built networks within their host communities, commented on the benefits of hearing about checkpoints in advance from others in the neighbourhood, which aided their spatial decision making. This was particularly the case for young men who were perceived as being more vulnerable to arrest:

> *'A Lebanese guy we know, would ring me or my sons to let us know [about checkpoints in the area]' (Wajida, Na'ba).*

> *'If there was a certain [event] they would tell you not to go out…It is communicated verbally through Syrians…[they] would tell you if there is a curfew or [house checks]' (FGD 8, Mazra'a').*

Police not only conducted checkpoints but would also be involved from time to time in house checks. However, this was often done alongside dominant political parties, and refugees explained that in their experiences, these were generally calm events that were conducted respectfully.

Gender and class both have a strong role to play in negotiating checkpoints and security providers. The intersection of these categories can create a highly insecure environment for an individual. Security measures in Beirut are predominantly focused on:

> 'lower class men, seemingly non-Lebanese who, mainly due to media and different political actors discourses have been suspected to be the main cause of the deteriorating security situation in the country' (UNDP, 2015, p. 19-20).

Men are frequently presumed by state security services and political parties to be affiliated with Bashar al Assad's regime, rather than neutral, and are thus perceived as politically and socially dangerous. Lebanon has a long history of hosting migrant Syrian laborers who are employed in blue collar work, such as construction and gardening. Syrians are also considered to be more conservative then Lebanese. As such, some researchers have found that Lebanese citizens presume that Syrian men harass Lebanese women because they are unaccustomed to the personal freedom that these women enjoy (Carpi, 2016). All these factors add to a sense that Syrian men are dangerous, poorly educated, working class and represent a risky political undercurrent that affects the stability of Lebanon. This ensures that Syrian men are deemed 'suspicious' when in public space and are often acted on because of the 'potentiality' of their behavior (Monroe, 2011). This assumption that men were more threatening was reiterated by Syrian women themselves:

> *'They are more likely to check [men's papers] because [men] are more likely to make problems and be dangerous' (FGD 4, Bourj Hammoud).*

Hawajaz are operated by men, typically in security uniforms, and armed. Women often commented that they were not considered a threat, but their husbands and sons were, and that police were frequently fixated with men's identities and backgrounds:

> *'They wouldn't ask for papers from me or my daughter because I am a female and they wouldn't be intrusive or demanding about that. But with my husband, they would [want] to see his paperwork' (Shahar, Na'ba).*

> *'[I haven't experienced the checkpoints] but my son goes to prison every 2-3 months because he doesn't have the Lebanese approval to be here' (Husniya, Na'ba).*

Some participants shared a perspective that men spent more time in public and that women would only leave the home to partake in domestic responsibilities such as buying groceries, as explored in more detail in Chapter Seven. As a result, refugees felt that security services were not interested in being 'intrusive' against women's mobility, as it was perceived as domestic and unthreatening.

Despite the propensity for men to be stopped, searched and occasionally arrested, a handful of women noted that they had seen female refugees arrested and detained alongside men, despite their capacity to negotiate checkpoints. These women warned that they were not free from detention, or aggressive tactics from police, because of their gender:

> *'On the way [to the NGO] there was a checkpoint... and they took both men and women into custody. They don't discriminate [between them] if the papers are illegal' (Yaminah, Na'ba).*

These comments reflect the gendered experience of both public space and refugee experience, indicating how women often did not see themselves at risk for deportation, but how they feared the arrest and detention of male relatives, many of whom were the primary breadwinner for households (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014). Turner (2016, 2018) has detailed how the rhetoric of 'vulnerability' does not cover refugee men, yet, there is clearly a strong focus by the state on men's legitimacy, presence and mobility in public space, whilst women are often framed through a domestic lens, confined to the seclusion of home and anxious to return to it. Despite this, women are not entirely immune from the gaze of the state and are also vulnerable to arrest and detention.

Refugees' predominant interaction with state security services was through the daily negotiation with, or presence of, state security personnel on the streets of Beirut. Refugees expressed a strong desire to avoid representatives of the state due to their lack of power and status, emphasising that they would not approach the state security premises (such as a police station) to resolve a problem or report a crime:

> *'I feel fear when I see security. I feel unsafe when I pass a checkpoint…We wouldn't dare go to General Security [if we had a problem] we would get beaten up and shut up….no one helps us' (FGD 8, Mazra'a).*

Women felt unable to use or approach state security representatives to manage actual incidents of conflict or crime at the neighbourhood level. Few sought recompense, and those that had approached the police for assistance, explained that were often rebuffed or ignored and had to accept whatever circumstances they found themselves in:

> *'You are a Syrian, you are a foreigner, you would have to give up your rights if a problem happened. As a Syrian, you would have to shut up and stay quiet…if there was a big problem you would have to move to another area' (Khalila, Maza'a).*

Bushra, a divorced mother, shared a story of a taxi driver's attempted assault on her as she left his taxi. When she reported the incident to the police, she was dismissed and undermined:

> *'[the driver] assaulted me, and I have the number [plate]...of the taxi. And I reported him at the police station and nothing happened' (Bushra, Na'ba).*

The police were sceptic, asking how she could have escaped her predicament while noting the license plate at the same time, dismissing her and telling her to report it to the taxi firm. Whilst some women

hypothesised that they would utilise police if they encountered a serious problem (typically considered a physical assault resulting in bodily harm, or an aggressive burglary) those that had been subjected to actual fraud, theft and violence all spoke of avoiding conflict and confrontation where possible and maintaining 'silence'.

Zada and her husband worked together in a small tailor shop in the centre of Na'ba. During her interview, her husband sat quietly in the background sewing, occasionally responding if asked a question. They had several stories regarding theft and exploitation in the neighbourhood. Their small tailor shop had taken on a large order for a Lebanese businessman, who never paid for the completed order. I asked why they hadn't followed it up, or gone to the police to report the theft, but they were reticent:

> *'We didn't ask for help. We didn't want anyone to know. We accepted what happened and moved on. We are new people here and we don't want trouble. We came from a place with trouble. All we want is our safety, and for our children to go to school. We have suffered. If a man came to the shop and started causing trouble, we would just say: 'it's fine'. We avoid conflict, we would waive fees for work [and avoid trouble]' (Zada, Na'ba).*

Zada and her husband also expressed a fear of approaching police or political parties to report someone who had defrauded them as they were concerned that such people would return 'with thugs'. This fear of reprisals had kept them extremely nervous of those that they did business with, and they insisted now they would only do work for people they trusted and wouldn't 'mix with Lebanese people'. They avoided revealing details of incidents to their wider community, fearing subsequent conflict and exploitation. Their experience echoes that of urban refugees in Malaysia, who frequently find that they are subject to victimisation because they are unlikely to approach security services or report incidences (Nah, 2018). This couple felt that Syrians had very little recourse to justice in the neighbourhood and that no one would represent them. During their interview they shared a story of a man they knew who worked in Bourj Hammoud, who was attacked and mugged of nearly US$2000 when he was returning home after being paid for a job:

> *'Who would he complain to? Who would help him? Maybe people would say to him: "You're a liar"' (Zada, Na'ba).*

An escalation of violence, however, was perceived as something that some participants felt would require the presences of state security services, particularly if refugees held appropriate documentation:

'If it was something on a smaller scale...a small, minor fight, we would prefer to fix things in a peaceful, community-ish, kind of way. We wouldn't call the police...so there wouldn't be any damage to them and there wouldn't be any damage to us. But if the problem is big, if it was maybe physical violence, that necessitates the presence of the army or the security forces, we would have to go to them' (Deema, Mazra'a).

Deema was one of the more secure participants in the study. Her husband had secured a *kafeel* through his full-time job, which meant that the family had managed to renew their residency permit legally. They were middle class, living in the most expensive rental property in the study. Although she still expressed a lot of nervousness about checkpoints, for the most part, she was more secure in the neighbourhood then most and was a member of a Syrian women's support group. Her legal status, class and knowledge of her rights and her belief that she could ask her husband's boss, or their landlord for assistance, if they ran into difficulties, enhanced her sense of security in the neighbourhood, and her confidence in approaching the police if they experienced violence. Her social networks, wealth, legal status and standing in the community all aided a sense of belonging and security. In contrast, those refugees whose lower socio-economic status and marginality meant that they could not establish their legitimacy in the city, felt unable to access state security institutions for help and assistance, and checkpoints throughout the city enhanced and spatialized their pervading sense of unease.

Although checkpoints, which were strongly focused on identification and status, were a source of great concern for the women, police and political parties promoting security within the neighbourhoods were often appreciated. With the spill-over of the Syrian conflict into Lebanon resulting in heightened periods of tension, security personnel circulated the neighbourhood to conduct house to house searches. On these occasions, many participants expressed relief and gratitude for the presence of armed police:

'Of course, when the army[19] comes I would feel safe. Because when there is conflict...[they] control the situation and I would feel safe. If the army doesn't come, the conflict would perhaps escalate and there would be more consequences' (Shula, Na'ba).

'I sometimes see army and security personnel around the neighbourhood. They make me feel secure' (Jadara, Na'ba).

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[19] Both the ISF and the LAF wear combat uniform in their day to day policing of the city. Additionally, since 2011 the LAF has also become increasingly involved in day to day policing in Lebanon (Tholens, 2017). As a result, participants frequently interchanged the ISF and the LAF and referred to them both as 'the army' even when asked specifically about police.

'We try to avoid the checkpoints if we can [as they imprison men]. With the presence of the army, we all feel safer. We prefer the army to be in control. Rather have that, than the thugs' (Zada, Na'ba).

'[Regarding the ISF/LAF] I feel unsafe …they are stopping and catching our children. But at the same time, the army is a sort of safety for the area…so I do feel safe' (Husniya, Na'ba).

Some of the participants expressed fears that what had happened in Syria could extend into Lebanon, and that refugees would be caught in further conflict. These concerns are shared with most stakeholders and citizens in Lebanon. Despite its political and geographical proximity, there have been efforts to keep Lebanon out of explicit involvement in the conflict, and to dampen tensions emerging between differing political factions and creeds as a result of the conflict and the ongoing refugee crisis (Dionigi, 2016; Salem, 2012). Whilst no participant actively expressed a pro-Assad stance, on limited occasions, frustration would be expressed that other Syrians had 'caused' the Syrian civil war with their protests against Bashar al Assad's government, which had resulted in impoverished circumstances for many Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Therefore, the presence of general security on the streets, or through house searches, which were frequently described as respectful, appeared to be highly appreciated by women. This is similar to Hanafi's (2010) findings in Palestinian refugee camps, where despite networks of Palestinian-provided security within refugee camps, there was still a desire to have state providers of security (e.g a police station) near settlements, in case incidents spiralled out of control. However, the findings above also demonstrate that this desire for a state security presence stretches beyond camps, or urban refugee camps, into the poorer neighbourhoods of the city.

These responses reveal an ambivalent, scalar and contextual perspective on urban (in)security in relation to security providers. Lyytinen (2015) highlights that security and insecurity are highly related and, at times, inseparable issues for urban refugees. Because of shifting identities that are continually intersecting with wider structures of state politics, patriarchy and refugee policies, a refugee's source of security can alter to become an element of their insecurity. This can be particularly dependent on which of their ascriptive identities take the foreground. For example, when a woman's gendered identity is foregrounded, she is often able to negotiate checkpoints, but when her nationality is foregrounded, she is perceived through a wider geopolitical lens of disrupting 'state security' and is vulnerable to arrest if her papers are lapsed.

The spaces of the city that these women inhabit also develop their varying sense of (in)security. Refugee women reside in marginalised communities, which are typically high density and prone to

violence and crime, living in structures that can be permeable and compromised (Pasquetti, 2015). Sources of insecurity within these neighbourhoods are closely related to intimate worries of crime and violence. Drug dealers, domestic abuse, home robberies, sexual harassment, assaults, rapes, muggings and rumours of kidnapping and disappearances, were all discussed by participants. As such, many women felt that a police presence might also address or prevent day to day crime that pervades such areas and chips away at their sense of personal safety and community. Women typically express a far greater sense of fear related to crime than men, particularly violent and sexual crimes, due to their physical inferiority, and cultural and patriarchal norms relating to femininity (El Sadaawi, 2015; R. H. Pain, 1997; Valentine, 1989). Thus, it is not surprising that in interviews women expressed an appreciation for the moral 'order' and stability that security services provide, rather than a sense of insecurity. However, *hawajaz* that are focused on identity documentation and a 'right to be present', alter security providers into a source of fear. These checkpoints connect refugees to wider geopolitical concerns of security, borders and sovereignty, and disrupt refugee's sense of a right to the city through probing interrogations regarding their spatial mobility in the city. Thus, security in this context is a shifting landscape of differing threats very much dependent on lived experience, identity and context and deeply related to spatial mobility (Akar, 2012).

Legality, mobility and security in Amman

The structure of the Jordanian State and its regulatory approach to managing incoming Syrian refugees results in contrasting experiences and perceptions of security and public space for Syrian refugee women, compared with those living in Beirut. Existing policies, which provided refugees with identity documents and status through the Ministry of Interior, meant that women expressed some sense of reassurance that they were 'permitted' to be in Jordan, and therefore felt that they possessed some protection and rights. Refugees would typically have at least one interaction with the police, as all had been to a police station to organise their identity documents as part of the Urban Verification Process introduced in 2015. This process also offered amnesty for those that didn't have existing legal documents to be in Jordan (Achilli, 2015). Most were unflustered by this encounter with the police, and the necessity to attend police headquarters, seeing it as positive and explaining that it was 'just an ID, so there is nothing to be afraid of'. A change of attitude towards state security providers was expressed by some women however, who described their initial fear concerning the police due to their experiences in Syria, which had slowly changed over the years of their asylum:

> '*When we first got here, we were really scared. [When] we got to know the police more, we [were] not afraid of them anymore. They [the police] are very decent' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).*

'When we first got here, we were sort of scared of the police, but when we got to the borders, the police treated us really well. We like the police more than we like the people. Because they are so humane, and we have never seen anything from them that is not good' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali).

Speaking informally with Jordanian police about their attitudes towards Syrian refugees, they emphasised that from their perspective, they treated Syrians fairly and considerately and in the same way that they would treat Jordanians:

'We treat Syrians exactly the same [as we treat Jordanians]. They are our brothers'. (Conversation with Police Captain, Hashmi Shamali)

When asked about whether they would feel confident about speaking with the police or requesting their assistance, women's responses were often in marked contrast to those in Beirut and many were bewildered by this question. Most were open to the idea of approaching the police and insisted that they possessed legal documentation and therefore held rights in their host country:

'We didn't do anything wrong, so why would we be scared?' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).

'We are legal, and we don't have anything to worry about' (Fariha, Mahatta).

'We didn't do anything [wrong] so why should we feel [that we have to hide]?' (Hanan, Hashmi Shamali).

'We would go to the police immediately if there was [a big issue]. Our relatives would do the same, it goes without saying' (Jasura, Hashmi Shamali).

The complex security apparatus that existed on the streets in Beirut was absent in Amman. Therefore, negotiating checkpoints of different security providers and providing identity documents was a far less common aspect of day to day life in the city. Whilst I regularly saw a police presence in Amman and it was clear that certain spaces of the city (such as hotspots of protest or popular tourist areas) were being monitored by a police presence, this presence was rarely heavy or organised. It certainly paled in comparison to Beirut's ultra-heightened sense of security with checkpoints, barbed wire and military uniforms on the street.

However, like participants in Lebanon, women highlighted the gendered experience of the police and public space, noting how men were perceived by the police and the state as 'risky' or a 'threat', whilst women were perceived through a lens of vulnerability, domesticity and innocence. When encountering police in public space, women insisted that they would feel safe and confident:

'They treat women as if they are holy here, they don't ask for ID's or anything' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).

'The police are really nice, and kind, and they respect women here' (FGD 1, Ashrafyeh).

It was clear that many women associated their female identity as key to aiding their relationships and interactions with security services. Here patriarchal norms and kinship ties worked in positive ways for women, as they expressed a sense that police (who were predominantly male) felt a sense of responsibility and duty towards protecting female refugees. This in turn created a twofold sense of security and safety in that they were not a 'target' for police, and that they were also able to access security services if they needed assistance because of societal patriarchal and kinship obligations to protect and respect women.

The identity card provided through the MOI for Syrian refugees was a key component of security for refugee women. This allowed women to feel legitimate in Jordanian society and increased their confidence whilst navigating public space in the city. The benefits of regular amnesties for refugees who had been smuggled over the border or from one of the camps, and did not have Jordanian identity documents, was clearly illustrated through Hanan's account:

'My husband taghrib *[smuggled] me from the camp. But I wasn't able to walk the streets for five months because I didn't have an ID...and when my son saw a policeman or an officer....he would run to me yelling: 'Mom, Mom, Mom, there's a policeman there!'....[my] son was afraid they would take me back to the camp' (Hanan, Hashmi Shamali).*

Hanan later described visiting a police station during an amnesty for documentation, explaining that she was treated gently and humanely by an officer who said:

'Why were you afraid [to organise your papers]? We wouldn't have done anything to you'.

Appropriate documentation was critical to enhancing refugees' sense of legitimacy and their 'right' to seek assistance from state security services. Discussing a house burglary that took place shortly after their arrival in Amman, a focus group participant noted:

'The [theft] happened when we first got here, and we didn't have legal documents. We felt we didn't have the right [to go to the police]' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).

These two statements highlight the link between state-sanctioned legality and a personal, embodied sense of insecurity. Without appropriate legal papers, particularly during the early period of their asylum, refugee women engaged in restrictive practices, believing that their presence in the country was illegal and they were unable to access security services. By restricting their mobility and avoiding

police, they experience increased vulnerability and isolation within their host community. Thus, appropriate legal status provides a sense of safety, security and legitimacy within host communities and enhances a refugee's sense of possessing rights.

Despite predominantly positive perspectives of how Jordanian police interacted with refugee women, some participants were still deeply shaped by their prior experiences of war which permeated their perspectives of state security services (see opening section). These were then exacerbated by their personal experiences with *Wafedin* raids in their neighbourhoods (see more below).

> *'I'm scared of the police. Because of [what happened to] my son, and also because we have a complex about what happened in Syria…I feel very scared'. (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh)*

Additionally, like fears expressed by participants who had experienced violence or theft in Beirut, some participants expressed a concern that they couldn't approach police for fear of community reprisals. Reflecting on her son's assault by some local thugs, Mouna noted that she was too nervous to approach the police because her son (and most of the rest of the community) knew who was responsible for the attack. She felt unable to take the matter further, as it would result in him being targeted and assaulted again. Here, the dynamics of a close, and highly dense neighbourhood, works to undermine productive connections with state security services.

Despite positive attitudes towards the police, participants were still wary about their position in society. Some frequently referred to themselves as *gharib*: 'strangers' and outsiders, referencing the high incidence of verbal harassment they encountered, as explored in earlier chapters. Women felt they had fewer rights if police were required to mediate between Jordanians and Syrians and as such needed to be conscious and aware of their position and avoid conflict:

> *'If we got into trouble with a Jordanian…the right would be with them. The son of your country is closer to you… but in general [the police] respect [refugees]' (FGD 1, Ashrafyeh).*

Negative encounters with police had a clear effect on refugees' attitudes towards security, eroding their faith in traditional protective institutions. Very occasionally, participants would mention approaching the police but being rebuffed or ignored:

> *'My neighbour's son attacked my son with a knife...when I called the police, they said to me: "Call us when a [real] crime happens" [and hung up]' (Saba, Hashmi Shamali).*

Other women felt the police were inaccessible and wouldn't assist refugees in problems and conflicts:

> *'The police don't solve our problems. The only person who would solve your [own] problems is you' (Basmaa Ashrafyeh).*

These expectations and experiences left refugees concerned and reticent to trust police. However, for many women this didn't affect their public mobility. For example, Saba said she would still feel 'completely comfortable walking the streets', but that she couldn't 'trust' the police to assist her.

Another state security institution that left refugees deeply uneasy was the Jordanian secret police, the *Mukhabarat*. This agency has a fearful reputation, and frequently Jordanians would joke with me that even they feared the *Mukhabarat* and would avoid interacting with them at all costs. *Mukhabarat* often wear plain clothing and present an 'everyday' image, and, especially for an outsider, are not easy to spot or avoid. Leesha described being snatched off the street by *Mukhabarat* officers and interrogated for 24 hours, after she had approached a local church that had a reputation for helping Syrian refugees with third country resettlement[20]. Leesha described this interrogation as primarily focused on her decision to enter a church, and what appeared to be a fixation with her potential conversion to Christianity[21] rather than her status as a Syrian refugee. However, she described her strong sense of terror when she saw a visual presence of state security in public space and expressed many fears about deportation. A focus group participant expressed strong distrust of any state security services, as *Mukhabarat* had smuggled her family from one of the border camps and had later extorted them by threatening to return them to the camp if they didn't provide him with more money (FGD 1, Ashrafyeh). She felt there was no one she could seek help from as *Mukhabarat* are greatly feared and have significant power. These experiences left women fearful of state security institutions, particularly those that are perceived as secretive and powerful.

In contrast to refugee women in Beirut, women in Amman predominantly expressed confidence that they could approach and use police, which in turn lessened their vulnerability to exploitation. However, gendered distinctions begin to emerge when examining refugee encounters with *Wafedin* in their neighbourhoods.

As outlined in detail in Chapter Six, food vouchers and support provided though UNHCR and the Red Cross were rarely sufficient to cover livelihood needs in Jordan. Many women, their male relatives and children were seeking employment, or were employed, in infrequent low skilled labour (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). As few refugees possessed genuine work permits, the threat of arrest was high as the *Wafedin* frequently ran work permit raids on the 'typical' refugee and migrant hosting neighbourhoods in East Amman. Migrant workers as well as refugees were targeted in these searches. Participants shared accounts of plainclothes officers arriving in the neighbour and eliciting an

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[20] Humanitarian organisations working out of local churches to assist refugees with asylum is not uncommon. I came across a handful of these organisations whilst in Jordan, who were involved in assisting refugees with their applications for asylum in third countries.

[21] Conversion to Christianity is illegal in Jordan. However, churches as institutions, and Christianity as a practised religion, are generally tolerated as long as they are not actively proselytising.

atmosphere of panic. Refugees would attempt to evade arrest by scaling buildings or jumping out of windows, resulting in injury, or feigning that they were shop customers instead of employees:

> *'[The atmosphere changes when the* Wafedin *arrive]. Everyone is scared, everyone is running around. It's so bad…people don't know where to go…it's like a flashback to when we were still in Syria. They use the huge police cars that are armoured' (Rabiah & Zafira, Hashmi Shamali).*

The expression of fear attached to male relatives being 'sent back to Syria' was far more intense in Jordan then it was in Lebanon. This fear stemmed from personal experience, as many of the women had relatives who had been deported, threatened, imprisoned or moved back to one of the Border Camps when caught working without a permit. This was compounded by the regular visual reminders of these *Wafedin* raids in their neighbourhoods. Whilst men in Lebanon were frequently detained and arrested, evidence of actual deportations were not found across this research project[22]. However, refugees in Jordan had either had personal or second-hand experience of a family member being detained and deported. Participants expressed resentment at the deportations of family members that had been working to support their socio-economically compromised families and felt that these experiences had created a barrier in their capacity to access state security provision.

As established above, MOI identity cards had a positive effect on the sense of security and belonging within Jordan, by permitting refugees to be 'present' within its borders. However, the inability to gain a legal work permit through a *kafeel* resulted in gendered anxieties and discomfort in public space and a deep nervousness regarding security services. Typically, men were engaged in informal work, such as construction or painting, which required them to work in the outdoors, and would often wait in public spaces (such as under bypasses) to attract informal work opportunities. As such, men engaged in visible practices of work without permits, which led to a pervading fear of being caught with the resulting repercussions. Women often contrasted their attitudes towards state security institutions with their male relatives, saying that the men were 'terrified' of being caught, and highly uncomfortable in public space when police were present, whilst they felt that they were treated respectfully by the state:

> *'My husband is absolutely terrified by [the police], because once he was painting a building, and he was chased by [them]…..if he was caught, he would be deported….He is not that worried when he is working inside of apartments, because he would just close the door and work in peace. But he is worried when he works outside' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali).*

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[22] The lack of an aggressive deportation / *refoulement* policy appears to be in part down to labour market concerns, as Lebanon had a strong reliance on Syrian migrant workers pre 2011. See: Janmyr (2017) and Turner (2015) for more on this. Additionally, Jordan has frequently limited movement of refugees because of concerns related to terrorism, or potential to 'make trouble' (for example, deportations of refugees from Za'atari refugee camp over protests).

'In terms of my husband, and in terms of work and such, he is completely terrified of the police' (Zarifa, Hashmi Shamali).

''Every time my brother tries to work, he gets caught by the Wafedin*. They caught my brothers' multiple times and every time they would be forced to sign the warning saying they wouldn't work again…The men can't work, the* Wafedin *keeps coming to arrest them, and sometimes that ends in deportation'* (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).

Nailah's comments, highlighting her husband's fear, illustrates the risk of working visibly in public space without a permit, and how this affects attitudes towards police and a heightened sense of insecurity in public space. Turner (2015) notes that young, single refugee men were often denied the ability to leave border refugee camps as they are the greatest threat to the labour market in Jordan. Thus, they are perceived as having the potential to disrupt the human security of Jordanian citizens' access to work. As such, refugee men working without permits become the target of the security gaze and are readily deported. This had a profound influence on perceptions of security services and foregrounds the relationship between gender, space and security. In 2016, policy changes to Syrian refugees' rights to work were amended through the Jordan Compact at the London conference (Barbalet et al., 2018). The resultant policy changes led to the Jordanian government issuing a set amount of non-employer and non-position-specific, simplified (and free) work permits, particularly for those who had ongoing informal work in the construction sector. Despite the emergence of these permits in the year preceding my interviews, there was still a marked nervousness about them. NGOs requested that I emphasised, during interviews, that more flexible work permits were now available. Despite my efforts, participants continued to insist that they would need a permanent job, or that there was still an expensive payment attached to the permit. This illustrates the challenges of communicating policy changes with an urban refugee population, who often seek to enhance their anonymity and avoidance of the state. It also demonstrates, that despite arguments to the contrary, refugees fear and distrust the Jordanian State enough to dismiss this policy as 'too good to be true' and claim that is must have caveats and conditions attached. These examples demonstrate the Jordanian State's capacity and how it quickly and effectively penetrates day to day society through tools such as the *Wafedin* or the *Mukhabarat*.

The *kafala* process of work sponsorship also placed Syrians in highly vulnerable positions. They felt unable to approach the police as they might displease their *kafala* and lose their legal status and employment. A participant described how her eleven-year-old daughter had been molested by her husband's employer, a man well known to their family. She was furious and extremely concerned for her daughter's safety, however her husband refused to allow her to report the incident to the police as it endangered the family's sponsorship and their status. As such, the family had dealt with the

incident through informal mediation[23]. She disagreed with her husband's decision not to report this to the police, and the family's continued relationship with the man in question. She expressed a strong sense of frustration that this was the approach her husband had chosen for their family, but felt she had little option. Thus, with or without *kafala*, women's access to appropriate avenues of protection and justice may be limited.

Refugee women, mobility and state security in Amman and Beirut

Perspectives of security services and (in)security are deeply gendered in Amman and Beirut and intersect with macro structures of policy, state structure and issues of identity. In both Beirut and Amman, women sense that they receive gendered preferences when encountering or approaching security services. In Amman, women consider themselves to be treated respectfully and considerately despite their status as outsiders in contrast to (especially informally employed) Syrian men. In Beirut, women feel that when their gendered identity is foregrounded over their nationality, they can negotiate checkpoints and security personal, appealing to gendered assumptions of women as unthreatening domestic caregivers and thus of no interest to the 'gaze' of state security.

Gendered and national identities work particularly to shift social positionalities of power regarding women's experiences and interactions with security services (Anthias, 2008). Whilst women appear to have subordinate positions in the way they are perceived as 'domestic' and vulnerable, this provides them with a more secure position than that of refugee men, in regard to their mobility and capacity to navigate security providers or checkpoints. Whereas men are perceived as dangerous and are therefore more scrutinised, women can use the intersection of their identity to navigate and negotiate these structures. However, when their nationality is foregrounded by security providers, particularly in Beirut, women experience a shifting landscape where they are also vulnerable to arrest and detainment.

However, one of the key differences between these two contexts is legal status, which has a clear effect on refugees' own perspectives of their right to be present and their right to access services. Women express a deep nervousness about approaching security services in Beirut when they did not have an authorised status. These led to a heightened fear when negotiating public space and indeed a desire to renegotiate space or to limit one's mobility. Even though women feel nervous having direct contact with state security services, they still express an appreciation for their presence and a sense that they bring 'order' to the city. By contrast, legality for refugee women in Amman provides them

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[23] We spoke with this participant following the focus group as we were very concerned about child protection issues. She explained that she had not reported the incident to anyone 'with authority'. We encouraged her to let the Social Worker at the NGO know so at the very least the institution could provide support for her daughter and assist her if she wanted to take it further. We then followed up with her a few days later when she confirmed she had informed the NGO and they were dealing with the husband.

with a right to access security services, and therefore they express a heightened sense of security within their host community alongside largely positive attitudes towards police as being accessible and compassionate towards them.

Having analysed refugee women's experiences of state security and the wider effect this has on their day to day lives and perceptions of security within their host communities, the following section considers alternative security provision and the role this has on experiences of (in)security in Beirut and Amman.

Political parties as alternative conflict management and security provision

Political parties in Beirut

Moving beyond state security institutions, other avenues and representatives emerge as a means of enhancing or mediating security issues for refugees in their urban host communities. In Arab culture it is common to resolve challenges and conflicts at the community level, where possible, by engaging mediators. Involving police, or wider formal security representatives is avoided and community efforts at mediation are preferred, particularly in more rural contexts. This is in order to avoid the implications of involving police, security services or eventual court cases, which are often considered to be damaging or embarrassing for an individual's reputation (Johnstone, 2015; Özçelik, 2006). Informal, community level mediators include political parties, religious representatives, community leaders and councils and Mukhtars (community mayors). In refugee communities, especially in refugee camps, community leaders and representatives, as accessible mediators, emerge quickly (Sullivan & Tobin, 2014). These institutions and individuals allow for alternative means of resolving conflict or enhancing security for refugees, particularly as refugees lack formal documentation which makes them reticent to approach police.

This section examines further refugee reflections on access to security services and conflict management within their host communities, by focusing on stakeholders outside of state security institutions. This first sub-section explores the role of political parties in each city, due to their prolific presence in Beirut in particular, followed by a brief sub-section which explores other avenues of security within each city that were discussed during focus groups and interviews.

In place of formal state security actors, political parties active and present at the community level, can act as mediators and peacemakers, negotiating conflict on behalf of community members. As this next section will show, the role of political parties as mediators highlights the differences between Amman and Beirut. Because of the weak state structure present in Beirut, and its fragmented and plural security framework, political parties have significant power, within and beyond the spatial boundaries

of their neighbourhoods. However, in Amman where the strong state is at work, this was notably less present. Indeed, civil society was notably impalpable. This next section examines the presence (or lack thereof) of political parties in Amman and Beirut, their interactions with refugee women and the ways in which this plays into spatial, perceived and actual experiences of (in)security.

Political parties frequently act as alternative security providers, mediators and conflict resolvers for Lebanese citizens. This is typically due to the ways in which political parties are embedded into civil society in the country through kinship, tribal and ethnic linkages and their proximity to the everyday citizen (Boege et al., 2008). This assistance also extends to some migrants and refugees and allows for a grassroots resolution of issues at the neighbourhood level. Lebanese neighbourhoods are often awash with political paraphernalia: flags, posters and slogans of the dominant political party are typically visible. In Na'ba, the Shi'a party Hezbollah has a strong presence, and is very much ingrained in the daily life of the neighbourhood. Refugees' perspectives of the party and their involvement differed. Whilst some extolled the party and felt that they provided protection and accessible conflict resolution, others were nervous of the influence the parties had and were unsure of their position. Some women credited Hezbollah's assistance with negotiating releases for male relatives who were stopped by security checkpoints in the city. Shahar, a young married woman shared:

> 'He [my husband] was stopped at an army checkpoint for like 2 -3 hours…Then he talked to someone from Hezbollah that he knows, and he fixed it for him' (Shahar, Na'ba).

When I asked if she knew who to contact if she had trouble at a checkpoint, she explained that it was only her husband who had the connection with the political party. Carpi (2016), who conducted research in Lebanese localities outside of Beirut, echoed these findings, stating that: 'Syrian refugees, especially males…(seem) capable of accessing security through informal channels' (p. 19). However, several women in this study, notably from female-headed families, highlighted the protection offered to women by the party, particularly regarding their personal protection. Participants recalled being encouraged to speak with Hezbollah party representatives if conflict or negative encounters in the neighbourhood re-occurred (for example frequent catcalling, harassment or propositioning). One participant noted that after she had had some difficulty in the neighbourhood Hezbollah had taken note of her name and her family situation (notably that she was divorced with three children and extremely impoverished). These participants highlighted the intermediary role of political parties in conflict resolution at the neighbourhood level, and their ability to secure an element of safety for women's mobility in public space:

'I would feel safe because of Hezbollah…because of the political parties…they would make me feel secure because they would protect women, and they wouldn't do anything to me' (Yaminah, Na'ba).

'[Hezbollah] enforce security, they provide security for both Syrian and Lebanese people (Wajida, Na'ba).

'The political party Hezbollah…support Syrians and they would work as peacemakers between the people if there are conflicts' (Shahar, Na'ba).

Hezbollah operatives in the area noted how Syrian refugees would often prefer to seek assistance from their party, situated outside official state structures of security and justice provision, to resolve a conflict or problem, stating that:

'They would prefer to go to [us] rather than to the army or police station because for most of them their papers have expired. A lot of the [police] officers, would tell the Syrians just to leave, it might take a lot of time to [file a lawsuit] take action, so justice is more swift with the party' (Hezbollah Official, Na'ba).

Whilst Hezbollah's party line is to welcome and care for Syrian refugees regardless of their political or religious background (a majority of displaced Syrians are Sunni Muslims), their longer-term interests are still focused on discouraging Syrians' long term integration into Lebanon as this affects the confessional balance of Lebanon (Dionigi, 2016; Thibos, 2014). Hezbollah's actions are thus focused on the short to medium term, with conflict resolution commonly attainable in this timeframe. The comment above, by a senior Hezbollah representative in Na'ba, highlights the informal channel of conflict resolution that the party offers not only to Lebanese citizens, but to Syrians as well. Most of this conflict resolution appeared to be low level mediation between parties. The representative did not mention 'punishing' individuals for particular crimes and did say that for significant crimes the ISF and LAF would always be contacted and the party would not address these issues themselves (although they may play a role in detaining an individual). Speaking with a representative from the political party Lebanese Forces, they further emphasised that regarding issues of sexual harassment, resolution and punishment wouldn't be judged according to an individual's ethnicity, but rather by the gender of the victim:

'We would fight with him [a harasser] …whoever he was we would be very firm with him. We wouldn't look at it as 'Syrian' or 'Lebanese', no one would support someone who was aggressive or inappropriate towards a woman' (Lebanese Forces Official, Na'ba).

Whilst political party representatives spoke cautiously in interviews of tensions that incoming Syrian refugees had brought to their communities (predominantly because of the strain on resources), most were quick to emphasise to me that they would always assist in mediating and keeping tensions between different groups to a minimum and would assist those in need. Close relationships between refugees and political parties, and indeed, the use of political parties as mediators, particularly between refugees and state security services, enhances these parties' knowledge and power within their neighbourhoods (Boege et al., 2008).

However, not all participants were appreciative of the presence of political parties. Karam, a husband of a participant, was uncomfortable and unsure of how to negotiate them. He had experienced a mild confrontation with a Hezbollah representative, which left him intimidated and cemented his view that 'Lebanese people aren't good'. This experience was exacerbated by the short amount of time the family had lived in the area and their lack of social networks.

In Mazra'a the Future Movement, an established Sunni political party from the March 14th alliance, insisted that Syrians never approached them for help and assistance and that the Party preferred to stay out of 'refugee and government issues' (Future Movement Official, Mazra'a). Over the course of the Syrian refugee crisis, this party (alongside others) had changed its perspective towards incoming refugees from a humanitarian response to a security threat, particularly regarding Syrian refugees and unemployment, crime and a rise in consumption of compromised resources and their longer term presence in the country (Dionigi, 2016). A representative of the party expressed that Syrian refugees had no time or interest in local Lebanese politics because they had enough problems of their own and the Lebanese political landscape was too complicated for outsider involvement.[24] This is supported by El Helou & Antara's (2018) report on Syrian political involvement in Lebanon, whose respondents frequently noted the flaws of the Lebanese political system and the lack of opportunities for Syrians to be involved. Thus, the party insisted they had little to do with refugees and certainly didn't perceive their role as a conflict mediator. However, speaking with local NGOs and researchers in Mazra'a, it emerged that a network of Future Movement informants operated in the neighbourhood, in order that the predominant political party had ongoing knowledge and involvement of what was going on at the street level, and often intervened in low level security issues. In likelihood because of my positionality as an outsider, and indeed the official's own position (an extremely prominent position in the party in Mazra'a) this detail was not forthcoming even when it was explicitly asked about.

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[24] Syrian refugees are predominantly Sunni and there is generally an anti-Assad attitude amongst most in exile (although many of my participants promoted a politically neutral sentiment) (see Diongi, 2016, and Salem, 2012)

Women in Bourj Hammoud noted the strategic importance of aligning with political parties active in the neighbourhood in order to secure protection for themselves, indicating that involvement in political parties requires a payoff of some sort:

> 'Political parties would only welcome you if you wanted to be recruited, if you wanted to receive protection. [I] know a lot of people who have done that, a lot of people who got involved'. (FGD 6, Bourj Hammoud)

These accounts show contrasting attitudes from and towards political parties including the motivation for refugees to be engaged with them. Several other women interviewed had a more taciturn attitude to the prevalence of political party presence. As noted above, some insisted that the only means of protection for them was to maintain silence in the face of crime and harassment. Others explained that they barely noticed political party influence, and would not approach them for assistance, often insisting that 'only God' would help them if they had difficulties. One Kurdish participant explained that she had been approached by a local Kurdish political party who had emphasized their shared heritage as a motivator for providing help and assistance, but she was disappointed:

> '[The Democratic Kurdish Movement] came in and told me: "Your family is Kurdish, so you are like us, so we want to help you", they took our information they saw our family's civil record, things like that… we haven't heard from them since….I have tried to contact them, they don't answer their phones'(Husniya, Na'ba).

She explained that whilst her family had been involved with political parties in Syria, there was 'no safety, only danger', for Syrians involved in political parties in Lebanon. However, she felt it necessary to reach out to the party, when circumstances had deteriorated for her family. An NGO contact also advised me that many Kurdish Syrians would prefer to avoid political parties, or indeed any group that might be able to identify them. She explained that Kurdish men had a double expectation on them to either serve (i.e. be conscripted into) the Syrian Armed Forces, or the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in the Syrian civil war. Therefore, she insisted, they preferred to remain as anonymous as possible.

A majority of the women interviewed were Sunni Muslim, and for them the Shi'a composition of political parties such as Hezbollah was intimidating and a source of insecurity (see Salem, 2012, for more on this). One focus group noted that:

> 'Whenever people from Hezbollah die in combat, the Shi'a people in the area become very agitated…the men destroy Syrians stores…but they don't attack women' (FGD 2, Na'ba).

This indicated that the highly political nature of the neighbourhoods could be a source of discomfort for Syrians. Furthermore, the armed involvement of groups, such as Hezbollah, within the Syrian civil war brought issues of security, and memories of war, to the forefront of the everyday.

Participants from Al Dahiye also expressed some discomfort with the intense presence and posing of political parties at the neighbourhood level. Fathima and Deema, two sisters who lived together in the area, explained:

> *In Lebanon, there is religious and political diversity…every area is affiliated with some specific political movements… [our area] has affiliation with Amal political party[25]. So in the area you would have people who are affiliated with them who ride motorcycles all the time and they would look like 'bad boys' and they would want to show off their muscles, that they are controlling the area, that they have a presence…They would like to [show off their power] to both the Lebanese and the Syrians, but the Syrians, because [we] are the weak point, because we are both strangers and foreigners, we would feel this threat…ten times more' (Fathima & Deema, Mazra'a)*

Here, Fathima and Deema note that Syrians' inferior position relating to their status as refugees and outsiders enhances their discomfort in the face of aggressive political posturing, particularly whilst negotiating the outdoors. These comments also indicate the gendered element of security provision. Participants described security providers as male, exhibiting highly masculinised behaviours to assert their dominance and strength. In the city I observed that most, if not all, security actors or community mediators, were men. I did not see any female state, or non-state, sanctioned security providers: however, these do exist (I did observe women in uniform in Jordan, predominantly as traffic police). Informal security is provided by men usually stationed in specific areas of the neighbourhood to create a security 'presence'. For example, in Na'ba, political representatives (from several parties) sat outside the central Shi'a mosque throughout the day. As such, masculinised security provision intersects with cultural and societal norms of public spaces as masculine to create a hegemonic sense of ownership and dominance of public space by male citizens (Fenster, 2005). Women feel uneasy in such spaces, both due to their gender and their status as outsiders.

Other participants in less politically active neighbourhoods, spoke of their fear and their lack of knowledge of the presence of political parties. Here political parties were active in particular 'areas' that were preferably avoided:

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[25] The Amal Movement is a predominantly Shi'a political party which is part of the 8th March Alliance.

> *'Security is linked to the political parties. [We feel] that certain sides are connected to other sides, even on the streets we are scared to say something…The Lebanese have so many political parties [and] they are not all on the same page. [If we asked for assistance] would they approve of us? Would they help us?'* (FGD 5, Bourj Hammoud).

Despite their sense of not knowing which political parties represented which groups, women were conscious that political parties were linked to security provision and power hierarchies within neighbourhoods. This left them feeling insecure and highly conscious of their behaviour on the street when political parties and security personal were present. Khalila noted the heavy focus on security in Al Dayihe, noting that despite all the political checkpoints, it was perceived as highly insecure:

> *'Over here [Mazra'a] we haven't noticed [any security points]. But in Al Dahiye there are more security checkpoints, even though there is no security…so it is nicer and better here. Over there they would stop people all the time and be more detailed in what they check'* (Khalila, Mazra'a).

The heavily gendered provision of security can make women feel insecure and concerned about navigating public space. For example, Fathima and Deema went on to explain that they felt concerned about their daughters walking to the nearby all-girls school because the aforementioned Amal representatives, who drove around on motorbikes, frequented the area around the school. As such, she and her sister chaperoned her fifteen-year-old daughter to and from school 'to avoid any trouble'. Here there was a sense that young men's connections to political parties could act to empower them in anti-social and threatening ways. The sisters went on to say that Syrians:

> *'Wouldn't want to have any trouble with those people… with those political parties… we would avoid any [encounters with them]'*(Fathima & Deema, Mazra'a).

Emani was similarly uneasy about political parties and their very visible presence in their neighbourhood and in public space:

> *'I see [political party representatives] on the street... near the mosque, by particular cars…. I feel fear because they are strangers. I don't know them, and they might…give us difficulty'* (Emani, Na'ba).

Emani explained that whilst she recognised that there was a lot of political paraphernalia (party flags, slogans and pictures of martyrs) around the neighbourhood related to various political parties, she was unsure about which parties were actually present. This added to her confusion and nervousness about the parties operating at the neighbourhood level, and the dynamics of the community in which she was living. Other participants expressed a concern over political parties, their authority and the

potential for wider criminal activity. Ayesha and her husband noted that 'pop up' temporary *hawajaz* and plural security networks created layers of confusion over police and political party legitimacy in specific areas and created opportunities for criminal behaviour:

> *'Regular people would demand to see [our papers]. Not ISF or police, just regular people, who then try to steal your papers…sometimes [they are] on motorbikes. They will say: "we're from a political party", and if you demand ID you might be hurt' (Ayesha, Mazra'a)*

These contributions show the various ways in which political parties in Beirut act as creators of both security and insecurity for refugee women. Whilst some emphasise that political parties are accessible and 'peacemakers' at the community level, acting as a means of conflict resolution and assistance, others contend that the wider security apparatus at work, created and perpetrated by political parties, makes them feel deeply uncomfortable and spatially insecure. This takes on a particularly gendered tone due to the masculinised dominance of political parties. Political parties can act as mediators between refugees and the state and can stand as 'guarantors' of refugees when they negotiate police checkpoints, by vouching for them. However, political party's own checkpoints permeate a sense of unease and can empower young men, in particular, to behave in spatially aggressive and dominating ways.

Political Parties in Amman

Whilst political parties often stepped into the gap to mediate and resolve neighbourhood level disputes in Lebanon, the lack of a fully developed civil society means that this conduit didn't exist for Syrian refugees in Jordan. When participants were asked if the neighbourhoods had a sense of hierarchy or if political parties were present and active in the neighbourhood and utilised by refugees, the women answered in the negative:

> *'There are no political figures here. There are no searches…. But a lot of charities come' (Sabah, Hasmi Shamali).*

Many reflected on how accustomed they had become to house searches, roadblocks and political and sectarian sensitivity in Syria, and how they found these issues to be remarkably absent in Jordan. Some expressed distaste and an aversion to anything political, attributing this to the conflict in Syria, particularly as many had felt that sectarian divisions within the country had been exacerbated since the conflict and had dealt a severe blow to community cohesion:

> *'Since the day of Hafez al Assad…we were raised not to talk about politics…or even saying the word 'Alawite'. So out of that fear we never talk about politics. Even here we take that habit with us and we never interfere with politics or political parties or anything of that sort. It's*

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something we grew up with…it's like a taboo, you can't talk about it…All my friends [in Syria] were from different beliefs, and different sectors, and nothing ever happened between us before the war started. I'm very sad about [the war], because I had friends from all different walks of life. But politics, nobody talks about. Or religion, or anything. You can't publicly speak about it'. (Nailah, Hashmi-Shamali)

Nailah explained that this was not a gendered division, but rather, that both men and women were discouraged from talking politically. This dislike of a multiplicity of political and religious groups meant that she perceived Jordan as neutral and stable, with only 'Christians and Muslims'. This statement, underlining the dislike of discussing political parties, suggests that there could be further involvement, but that participants simply do not want to discuss it. Eidmouni (2017) noted that efforts in Lebanon to engage Syrian women in 'political empowerment' workshops were viewed poorly by women, because political participation is frequently linked to opposing the Syrian regime. Many prefer to avoid such topics of conversations and programmes that might engage them with political issues. Other researchers have noted the reticence of Syrian refugees to discuss or be involved in politics as they fear 'serious conflicts with the law' if they do so (El Helou & Antara, 2018, p. 7).

Arguably, in Jordan, the lack of civil society, poor political party presence in the neighbourhoods, and work from other researchers in the field suggesting poor political activism, are all indicative that there is little political party activity at the neighbourhood level. Political parties do not appear to be embedded at the grassroots, neighbourhood level, acting as mediators where migrants or refugees feel unsure of accessing police services, or ingraining themselves into the dynamics of neighbourhood society.

Although some civil society organisations hinted that there was political activism happening in the neighbourhoods of East Amman amongst refugees, I found it difficult to secure interviews with any organisation that would discuss this in depth. I was continually referred onward; my meetings were rescheduled, or my emails went unanswered. I couldn't determine whether this was because of my status as an outsider, the subject to be discussed, the participants being unable to find the time, or a combination of all three of the aforementioned. I anticipated some involvement or presence of political parties, particularly organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, in poorer neighbourhoods of East Amman. Mali (2013) detailed the involvement of some Syrian refugees in Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood, joining the organisation's street protests when they arrived in Jordan, bolstering their numbers. However, the Muslim Brotherhood was banned and re-launched in 2016, amidst great controversy, and is suffering from ongoing internal divisions (Magid, 2016). As such, during this fieldwork the party's attentions appeared to be fully engrossed with their challenges related to the Jordanian government, and their status within the country. Additionally, Davis (2016) has considered

the harsh treatment of politicized Sudanese and Somalian refugees in Jordan to be sending a clear message:

> 'to all refugees, migrants and citizens that their status in the country is not protected by international norms and agreements. **The message is to be quiet and accept what is on offer**. And there are few or no channels for complaints, whether about the (refugee) status itself or about inadequate protection and ineffective or imbalanced aid provision' **(Davis, 2016, p. 3)**.

Indeed, in 2012 following protests in Za'atari camp, 200 Syrian refugees were deported back to Syria, despite international outcry over the protection of refugee rights (Malik, 2014). This, alongside heavy-handed tactics by the *Mukhabarat* and a widespread knowledge of deportations and expulsions of Syrians, particularly men engaged in work without permits in urban areas, may have a marked effect on refugee decisions to remain low key and un-politicised. The government response to these political activities is where one sees the strength, or so-called 'ferocity', of the Jordanian state in practise (Ayubi, 1995; B. Salloukh, 1996). Its centrally-organised security apparatus and intimidating security services can act quickly and severely. This shaped men and women's fear of politics at a local scale and reduced their engagement with civil society.

Many participants were surprised at the questions relating to civil society, mediators, hierarchy and political parties. When I explained the context for these questions, namely that women in Lebanon had received help and support through political parties with regard to negotiating security, and on occasion, wider conflicts in their communities, many participants in Jordan used the opportunity to criticize Lebanon's 'support' for the regime in Syria. Participants emphasized how poor conditions were for refugees in Lebanon, insisting that Lebanese politics made Lebanon unsafe for Syrians. They did not perceive alternative security providers to police to be something positive, and were extremely negative about Shi'a political parties (such as Hezbollah) that operated in Lebanon and were also involved in the Syrian civil war.

Mukhtars, Community Leaders and Religious Institutions as alternative conflict mediation in Beirut and Amman

Outside of police and political parties, other organisations and individuals were present within host communities and could potentially act as a means of mediating challenges and conflict and thus, enhance a wider sense of security for refugee women Beirut and Amman. However, in contrast to the opinions and experiences of political parties and police, when asked about alternative providers of security, or community mediators or leaders, women in both Beirut and Amman explained that they had very little to do with these people. Some questioned if they existed at all. Whilst in Beirut there

appeared to be more of a network of these individuals, in Amman very few women referenced representatives:

> 'I haven't come across anything like a [community leader] here' (Yeseniah, Hashmi Shamali).

> 'Others in the community don't assist…Community leaders, political parties…No, to each his own. Everyone is just busy with their families, or their own situation' (FGD 2, Ashrafyeh).

> 'We don't want to put our trust or confidence in anyone because of what has happened - we have had a bad experience every time we did' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).

For example, Mukhtars are elected street level community representatives, often described locally as 'community mayors'. They are the lowest rung of municipal governance, and they have a range of administrative responsibilities (such as signing birth and death certificates, regularizing papers) but also act to safeguard community relations (Lutfiyya, 1966; Stel, 2015). A handful of studies, specifically from Beirut, have noted how Mukhtars play a role in community relationships with Syrian refugees, often signing their papers or acting to mediate conflict between refugees and the host community (Boustani, et al., 2016; Stel, 2015). However, the women that I spoke with in Beirut were dismissive about Mukhtars and felt that they only acted in self-interest:

> 'Mukhtars are always showing off [their power and influence]. Mukhtars sign papers, but nothing is free, we always have to pay for it. But they wouldn't help us [in a conflict]. They wouldn't help us'(FGD 8, Mazra'a).

Participants highlighted that their lack of papers were a further reason that Mukhtars would not be able to assist them.

> 'Our papers are not mufawadyn. We can't talk to a political party or anything, we can't speak to the Mukhtar…Because we are not [authorised] no one can help us' (FGD 4, Bourj Hammoud).

Thus, refugees also perceived political parties and Mukhtars to be part of the wider state administrative apparatus and therefore unavailable to assist them in their 'illegal' status. Women in Amman stated that they had had Mukhtars in Syria, but that in Jordan the system was considered old fashioned, and what few Mukhtars were around were 'only for Jordanians'.

What emerged as more typical avenues of help or support were neighbours or religious institutions. Women who attended churches or mosques regularly explained that they might go to these places to seek help or advice. Those that did were typically very positive about the ways in which these communities had enhanced their sense of belonging and safety:

'I have a small community in the mosque, so I turn to them for help if I get into any trouble… Syrians, Palestinians, Jordanians, all of them. All of the things that made life easier for me here as a refugee are the people I made friends with in the mosque' (Nekia, Hashmi Shamali).

In Beirut, Onekka talked of how the local mosque had assisted in mediating between her, a large international NGO that was providing water butts, and her Lebanese neighbours who were displeased about her receiving a water butt on her roof. These tensions were not uncommon and were usually related to the use of space and property, as well as overriding tensions regarding the prioritising of refugee care over host community care. Onekka highlighted the different religious and ethnic affiliations at work, but insisted that:

'The mosque doesn't differentiate between Syrian and Lebanese people. So, we could go at any point and say we are having this specific conflict, and the [Sheikh of the mosque] would help us'.

Onekka also noted the way in which the mosque and the local Mukhtar worked together to resolve her particular conflict with her neighbours:

'I went to the NGO, and the NGO went to the Mosque….The mosque is Shi'a, and my neighbours are Lebanese Shi'a, and the Mukhtar's office is close to the Mosque. So between the NGO, the Mukhtar and the Mosque, they worked it out' (Onekka, Na'ba).

However, experiences varied. Whilst some spoke of strong community support within religious institutions and an agreement that they would approach these places for assistance or advice, others argued that churches or mosques 'wouldn't help' with 'issues of difficulty'.

Whilst participants in both Amman and Beirut recognised the lack of wider community representatives and highlighted their general discomfort within their host communities, a number did emphasise the role that their neighbours played in advocating on their behalf. As discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, relationships with the host community are generally strained. However, many participants shared accounts of hospitality and generosity provided by the local population. Furthermore, a number noted that if they had difficulties or problems within their neighbourhood, or needed advice, they would turn to their neighbours for assistance:

'We would go to the neighbours first if there were any difficulties or problems…we trust the neighbours' (Derifa, Mahata).

> *'Most problems, you can't resolve them on your own, so generally I do ask for help, I ask the neighbours. I trust them' (Nailah, Hashmi Shamali).*

These experiences of neighbours supporting, defending or advising refugees left participants with positive impressions of their communities and neighbourhoods. In Beirut, Wajida noted how her Lebanese neighbours advocated on her behalf when her sons had gotten into a physical altercation in the wider community:

> *'My Lebanese neighbours who are here [indicates next door] came out and said: 'This woman is a good woman, she doesn't do anything [wrong]. She's part of us…so stay away' (Wajida, Na'ba)*

This altercation had greatly upset Wajida, and she emphasised that because her neighbours had protected her and her sons, she felt safer in the neighbourhood, or at the very least, safer than she had when she lived in other areas of Beirut. Thus, whilst some participants felt that relationships with their neighbours and the wider community were strained, or even hostile, others recounted the support and care they had received from these individuals and felt that these would be amongst the first people they would speak with regarding difficulties and conflicts within the neighbourhood.

Gender, Tactics and Conflict Resolution

In Chapters Six and Seven, this thesis has highlighted the ways in which flight and asylum have contributed to shifting gender roles, not uncommon to other refugee crises. They have also highlighted some of the tactical ways in which women have responded to, and negotiated with, structures of policy, legality and patriarchy to enhance their sense of security, particularly when in public space. This next section examines some of the personal, tactical ways in which women seek to resolve tensions, conflict, and on occasion address criminal activity. Whilst Chapter Seven highlighted how women tactically enhance their personal safety or anonymity in public space, this section examines the tactics that women employed in order to resolve or avoid difficulties and some of the gendered societal shifts that have taken place.

Men's inability to gain employment, their injuries from the conflict, or their negative experiences with authority figures, had compromised their role in the family unit as protector and provider. Sabah's husband had a pre-existing heart condition which was exacerbated by their flight and asylum. They had four children and frequently she took the lead in their family life in Jordan because of his illness. This included liaising with the police to organise their security papers and resolving difficulties they experienced. She recounted an incident where her neighbour's son pulled a knife on her fourteen-year-old son:

'I tried to solve the problem on my own…I called the neighbour and said: "Please get your son away from my kid". She [the neighbour] said: 'My brother works in the police, I have the power to send you back to the camp.' I said: "Fuck you and your brother" and I hung up on her'.

She went on to emphasise that even though she was alone, she was strong and determined:

'I called the police. I called everybody. Nobody gives a damn. I'm just going to do this on my own' (Sabah, Hashmi Shamali).

Several women described simply getting on and solving difficulties. Many women recalled advocating aggressively on behalf of their children, husbands and parents and their own personal safety. Discussing issues of harassment in Beirut, Fadila aggressively muttered:

'If someone tries to molest me or harass me, I would cut his throat' (Fadila, Na'ba).

Figure 14: Refugee woman on the streets of Na'ba (Author)

Badia recalled being followed in the street and propositioned:

'[He was saying he wanted to get to know me] I was scared, but I acted tough and I said to him: "So what if I'm Syrian? [it doesn't mean you can proposition me]"' (Badia, Mazra'a).

After they were defrauded by an Egyptian man in their community in Beirut for *kafala* papers, Alyas encountered the man in her neighbourhood by chance and even though unable to elicit any money from him, confronted him:

> *'I know he would want to avoid us. But once I saw him in the neighbourhood and I argued with him. I said: "How could you do this to us?!" It was very difficult' (Alyas, Na'ba).*

Sabeen explained that her brother in law had been captured in Syria which had made him extremely nervous and distrustful of police. As a result, he wouldn't organise the family's IDs, placing them in a compromised position. After a prolonged period, his wife went to sort their identification documents with the police and organised schooling for their children. Sabeen reflected:

> *'[My sister] took charge and she went [to the police]….When [men] get depressed they get everyone around them depressed, but the women's [attitude] is always: 'Yes, I want to do that, and that, and fix this"…In Syria the men had a strong role because they work and they get money for the house and now they don't have that role, so [the women] became stronger over their men. I feel bad for them. [Men] were* azeez[26] *[powerful] in Syria, now [they are] the one who begs in the street' (Sabeen, Ashrafyeh).*

A participant explained that two of her brothers had been caught by the *Wafedin* whilst they were working. They were arrested, sent back to one of the border camps and she heard they were going to be deported to Syria. At this point, her mother went to the police at the border camp to advocate on their behalf:

> *'My mother said: 'I will do anything, just don't send them back to Syria.' [She negotiated]… eventually they said: "We won't deport them back, [but] by the end of the day, they need to be out the country." By the end of the day she had them on a plane to Turkey…'*

Her mother was in the focus group, and I asked her gently, how she had managed to resolve the problem and pay for the tickets to Turkey, knowing that their finances were compromised. She responded:

> *'I am their mother; I would do anything for them. Because Syria means death….900JD I paid, not including tickets….to this day I am paying off the debt' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).*

The 900JD (£900) that she paid was to release her sons from the camp and it secured them the 'right to travel'. When I spoke with a legal aid centre in Amman, the organisation made it clear that open negotiations frequently occurred between refugees, police and border control and the ability to

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[26] *Azeez* is an Arabic term that means strong and powerful, but also has connotations of being in a cherished position, with respect and honour

prevent deportation frequently came down to begging tactics, *wasta* and money.

Other women also shared accounts of fighting ferociously for the release of male relatives, utilising what money they possessed, their resolve, tenacity, feminine position, kinship ties, or shared Arab heritage to argue the need for their release. During one focus group two different women shared accounts of negotiating with police for the release of their sons:

> *'When my son got caught, I went to the police station with him and my disabled daughter. I showed them my daughter and said: "Look at [my daughter], how will I provide for her?" I started begging him, so he let my son go.'*

> *[My son was arrested] and the police wanted to send him back to the camp. I said to them: "What are you doing? He is an orphan; he is the only one who can provide for the family." We tried to get any connection they could get to get him out the police station…He provides for the family, so if he goes back to Syria, we would have to go back with him. It cost us 45JD [£45] to get him out, through a connection' (FGD 3, Ashrafyeh).*

On occasion, kinship idioms were used in order to engage with the 'values and institutional arrangements associated with patriarchy' (S. Joseph & Slyomovics, 2001, p. 8). Frequently women would use terms such as 'sister' or 'daughter' to evoke a sense of gendered kinship responsibility from police. After some tension at the police station over her documentation, a focus group participant found herself at the mercy of a disgruntled officer until her mother stepped in:

> *'[The policeman said to me] "I'm going to write in your ID that you are not legal in the country, that you are not a resident." My mother had to intervene and get the ID for me. [My mother] kept saying to him: "You are like my son, she is like your sister, we are in Jordan, we are supposed to be like family to each other, we are not supposed to treat each other this way," to get him off my back' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).*

These negotiations, particularly with security providers, show the fluid, and renegotiated landscape of legality and security within these contexts, as already highlighted earlier in the chapter. In the same way that women (and indeed men) negotiate *hawajaz* on the streets of Beirut, women also negotiate with security representatives that have the capacity to arrest, detain or deport their family members.

It is unclear whether these issues (such as arrests) would have been resolved without a family member's negotiation. However, it is clear that in Amman refugees felt that they could approach police and advocate for family members, even if the family member had been engaged in an activity that was deemed 'illegal', such as working without a permit. During the negotiations, women often invoked kinship ties and patriarchal norms which dictate that men have a responsibility to look after the welfare of women.

As touched on in previous chapters, some women also highlighted how the disruption in their communities had resulted in a sense of freedom from cultural and gendered norms particularly around aspects of shame, honour, power and confidence. In Mazra'a one of the focus groups reflected on issues of domestic violence and sexual harassment:

> 'As an Eastern society, as Arabs, it's not very acceptable to talk about such things. If I report [sexual and domestic violence] I would be looked upon as an outcast….A woman would be patient up to the point of death before speaking out…When we came to Lebanon, I had more room and space to speak about such things than in Syria. There is a shift, there is more freedom for people to speak about [these things]. There are two sides to thinking about empowerment and oppression. In Syria, our living conditions are better, we have our own house, our own land, my husband was working. There is free medical assistance. But I wouldn't be able to speak up if my husband beat me. Here, the living conditions are very difficult…but I feel I can be more open about my [personal circumstances]' (FGD 7, Mazra'a).

Another participant in the same focus group shared a story of how she and her brother had helped a 'Lebanese daughter of the neighbourhood' escape her husband who had beaten her badly and was roaming the streets looking for her. Even though this participant emphasised that she rarely left her home and suspected that she was endangering her own life, she still felt it important to assist and protect this woman. She dressed her in an abaya to disguise her identity and, alongside her brother, accompanied her through the streets to get a bus out of the city.

Whilst some participants engaged in bold, confrontational tactics, as demonstrated earlier in the chapter, there was an overwhelming sense from women that the power structures at play meant that locals would always be preferred over a Syrian. This belief that Syrians' experiences wouldn't be trusted and that there were no 'peace makers' in the neighbourhood to speak up for them featured frequently in interviews and during focus groups. Many women thus felt it necessary to engage in non-confrontational tactics of silence, decorum and diplomacy to ensure issues of conflict did not escalate. In Beirut, participants often talked about the need to adopt silence and compliance and avoid trouble:

> 'If there were any conflicts, we would try to calm it down…I would tape my mouth [rather than say something]' (FGD 2, Na'ba).

Women would frequently accompany these statements about downplaying conflict and calming down hostile encounters by either physically placing a hand over their mouths or wiping across their closed mouths. This is a very corporal response and highlights a physical need to silence oneself in a situation where an individual might defend themselves. Some participants spoke about the need to calm their husbands down if they had been insulted, and to avoid sharing difficult encounters and incidents so

as not to be drawn into an altercation (FGD 2, Na'ba). Zubaida recalled an incident at the community playground which escalated into violence and threats between a local Lebanese family and her relatives:

> '[This guy] was shouting: "You son of a bitch, you son of a whore, who are you?" Calling him out for a fight. And my husband got irritated and I stood at the door and said: "You can't go out; we don't want any problems or anything"' (Zubaida, Na'ba).

Thus, whilst some women felt confident of defending or protecting themselves, confronting harassers and petty criminals or petitioning police and negotiating with political parties, others suppressed the desire to respond in order to keep family members calm and out of trouble. These responses indicate some of the differing ways in which women employ diplomacy and highlight their tactics of silence in the face of oppression and potential conflict. Women were not alone in keeping incidences from wider family or maintaining silence in the face of violence and conflict. A focus group participant was told by her neighbour that her son had been assaulted and had a knife pulled on him weeks after it had occurred. She took his response as a reflection of how she and other refugees dealt with conflict in the community:

> 'Whenever we face a problem, we don't turn to anyone, we face it ourselves. I said to my son: "Why didn't you tell me what happened?" He said: "I don't want to cause any problems". I was so upset' (FGD 4, Ashrafyeh).

These comments indicate the ways in which tactics of silence and avoidance are not only the repertoire of women, but also the tactics of refugee youth. Thus, these acts of diplomacy can be understood as considered tactics of marginalised groups.

The examples presented in the section above resonate with the research of Muhanna (2013) and Johnson (2007), who have both examined agentic tactics of Palestinian refugee women living in repressive conditions. Johnson explores how women engage in tactics of *qawiyye* (strength), supporting imprisoned family members and taking on a role of advocate and negotiator of the family's rights. She notes that women are still conscious and respectful of the wider patriarchal system, and the position of their husband, even though they view their own role within the family as evolving into that of the head of the family. In the same way, Syrian women advocate for their families by engaging in kinship idioms and situating themselves, and those they are negotiating with, within a wider gendered, kinship structure. Women use their gendered position within a classically patriarchal structure as a tactic to negotiate, respectfully and tenaciously, with those in power (typically men), on

behalf of family members in order to enhance their protection and security. Additionally, women show a keen aggression and survival instinct in negative conditions. However, this is not the only tactic within refugee women's repertoire. Women also choose to engage in silence and calm diplomacy in order to keep tensions and conflicts which could quickly escalate, to a minimum. During these incidents, women remind men of their wider responsibility to their families, situating them within their family unit and within their wider position as refugees in a host community, imploring them to take the route of silence rather than 'saving face' by escalating insults.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the ways in which Syrian refugee women perceive and experience aspects of personal protection and issues of conflict resolution and management in their host communities by considering how they interact with state and non-state security provision in Amman and Beirut. These experiences shape attitudes and experiences of urban (in)security for refugee women and, as this chapter has explored, have spatial repercussions.

Comparing the two contexts, there are several continuities and differences as to how women perceive security services and how they manage conflict and crime within their neighbourhoods. Yet within these experiences, there is much ambivalence, complexity and individuality. What emerges is how categories of identity interact with wider structural mechanisms and past experiences to shape attitudes and perceptions to notions of personal protection and accessibility to security services in host communities. In both contexts, the ascribed gendered identities of women often ensured that they were perceived as 'domestic', 'harmless' or in need of protection by state and non-state security services. This allowed the women some freedom to interact with security services, from negotiating the release of a relative from prison to navigating the monitoring by *hawajaz* on the street. Thus, their ascribed identities as 'outsiders' - vulnerable women who needed protection - often assisted their wider navigation of security structures, in contrast to refugee men.

Broadly speaking, women in Amman have positive attitudes towards police and security services, and consider them to be accessible and compassionate, particular with women refugees. Women rarely use or seek out alternative, non-state providers of security, either because of their relative absence within civil society in Jordan, or because they feel they can access support from local police. However, some women also express concern because of contact with the *Mukhabarat*, or with the *Wafedin* which results in them being nervous, reticent, and on occasion, resentful of the police and security services in Amman. Thus, attitudes towards security provision are shaped by a number of interacting and individual factors and structures.

In contrast, women in Beirut express largely negative and consistently fearful attitudes towards interactions with state security services, often indicating their lack of legal status in Lebanon as a specific reason for this. Because there is a large network of alternative security provision and conflict mediation avenues, some women look to these individuals and organisations for assistance. However, this is still marred by a fear that the rights and needs of Lebanese citizens will take precedence of those of Syrians. There is also often a sense that alternative providers are indifferent to their plight. Furthermore, women also express fear and concern that connections to political parties or other power structures embolden men in negative ways which make women more fearful of these groups and of navigating public space. However, despite these generally negative opinions and encounters, women still express an appreciation for the presence of security services within their neighbourhoods, often feeling that they (particularly state security providers) keep tensions in check. Thus, while women prefer security services to be present and active in their neighbourhoods, they are unlikely to seek out assistance, preferring to avoid rather than seek interaction with them.

There is parity across these two contexts in the way in which women express a pervading ontological insecurity because of their experiences in Syria. Experience of war and conflict, particularly elements of warfare such as aerial bombardment, transform spatialized perspectives of insecurity to include a vertical and overhead spatial fear that feeds into a wider sense of insecurity for refugees. Women often expressed an inability to divorce their fears of security services that emerged during the Syrian conflict, from their ongoing day to day experiences with security personnel in their host cities. As such, there is an emotional climate of insecurity and fear that feeds into experiences of security and spatiality in the city, creating a sense that the urban outdoors is unsafe and that security providers, an extension of the state, cannot be trusted (Pasquetti, 2013). This is then exacerbated if refugees do experience actual arrests or detentions relating to their legal status. As a result, it makes them less inclined to view security services positively and, if there are alternatives available, pushes them towards these providers. However, over time, women living in Amman expressed a growing sense of belonging, safety and accessibility to police services, which enhanced their sense of security. By contrast, women living in Beirut did not appear to overcome fears related to state security, and if anything, their experiences of living in Beirut appeared to exacerbate many of their perceptions of security services as 'unsafe' particularly if focused on the individual.

Women in both contexts employ a range of tactical responses to their situation in order to negotiate the complexities of security structures and refugee policies in their day-to-day interactions in their host cities. Thus, 'security' is defined and redefined by social agents in their day-to-day interactions and encounters (Fawaz & Akar, 2012). Emphasising the experiences of individual refugee women demonstrates how security, and security outcomes, are continually renegotiated by refugees through

appeals, *wasta* and kinship idioms. From their marginalised position, and often compromised legal status, refugee women engage in a range of tactics to protect their embodied security and indeed what is often the wider human security of their families. These negotiations (and differing outcomes) echo the findings from Chapter Six, which demonstrate that refugee policies, although not gendered at the macro state-policy scale, are highly gendered at the lived, city scale. It is evident that amongst the host community that men are perceived as 'dangerous' whilst women are frequently labelled as vulnerable, harmless and domesticated. As such they are positioned to advocate on behalf of their families, utilising kinship idioms, bribery and persuasion as tactics, contextualising themselves within broader patriarchal and kinship networks of male guardianship and hospitality (S. Joseph, 1999).

This chapter contributes to wider academic debates on institutions of security and their relationship to refugees (Campbell, 2006; Nah, 2018; Nyaoro, 2010; Pavenello, 2010). This thesis extends this by examining the lived experiences of refugees in relation to a multitude of security personnel institutions and specifically draws out the ways in which encounters, and interactions, are spatially specific and gendered.

Figure 15: Overlooking high density dwellings in Mazra'a (Author)

Chapter Nine: Conclusion: (in)security and urban refugee women

This thesis is driven by an interest in the relationship between space, security and identity, and a principal research question: *How do the social, political and legal contexts of host countries interact with the identities of Syrian refugee women to produce multiple scales and forms of (in)security and how do women respond to these structures?* Through a feminist, critical realist approach to structure, agency and identity, it has demonstrated how the interaction of structures and identities produce layered, scalar and ambivalent experiences of (in)security. This approach encourages both an appreciation for the subjectivity and individuality of experience, but also an analysis of the broader implications of how ascribed identities are perceived and acted upon by others. The use of feminist theories of geolegality and geopolitics conceptualised the interrelated scales of (in)security that operate within refugee women's lives, and the particular role of law in creating spatial exclusions, inclusions and (in)securities through boundary drawing. Through this framework, this thesis has drawn attention to the spatially and temporally differentiated experiences of (in)security for refugee women (J. H. Clark, 2013; Lyytinen, 2015b).

This thesis has sought to ensure that the individual experiences of refugee women are brought to the fore, in order to provide rich and detailed accounts of refugees' lived experiences of (in)security within urban contexts of the Middle East. In considering the ways in which the social and legal constructs of host countries shape refugee women's experiences and perceptions of (in)security, it contributes to filling the lacuna of literature on refugee women's access to, and perceptions of, both formal and informal security and the ways in which they address conflict resolution when occupying marginalised social positions. It aids in conceptualising the ways in which women use their agency and tactically negotiate their position and personal protection within oppressive conditions, and builds upon theorisations of gender and space by examining the ways in which refugee women perceive, access and negotiate public and private spaces of their host cities.

The employment of a comparative methodology allowed for an examination of refugee experience across two different contexts. This approach aids in strengthening understanding of how different structures operate and interact with identities to shape lived experiences of insecurity. Through examining two cities, which are situated in national frameworks that display both similarities and differences in their state strength and their security frameworks, deeper understanding of how structures and identities interact to shape (in)security emerge. This approach also enables an element of reflection upon theoretical framing of Jordan and Lebanon as 'strong' and 'weak' states

respectively, by analysing the ways in which refugee policies are applied and how security structures operate regarding refugee communities.

Foregrounding and emphasising refugee experience and refugee voice was a central tenet of this thesis. As such, it placed refugee women's accounts at the forefront, in order to situate them as knowledge holders and experts in their experiences of war, flight and refuge. Personalised and individual accounts have much to offer in the way of lived realities, deviances and anomalies in experience, which speak beyond data sets and tick boxes. These methodologies are vital when working with refugee populations in order to ensure that refugees are not perceived as a homogenous mass of 'border invaders' that threaten state sovereignty. The use of interviews, focus group discussions and solicited diaries, emphasised refugees as individuals with cultural and social histories and identities, who can fully contribute to their host societies and require compassionate and considered care, protection, rights and empowering solutions. As explored in the Methodology Chapter, these methods are not without their limitations or ethical quandaries. However, utilising qualitative methods is integral to ensuring that marginalised women have the space to express, explain and reflect on their circumstances and to outline their personal desire for how the 'state of things' could be.

The three empirical chapters that preceded this Conclusion Chapter have presented accounts of women's experiences of their host communities in Amman and Beirut. Through this comparative lens, several issues and themes become salient. The following sections summarise very briefly the answers to the research questions posed in the Methodology Chapter and explored in the empirical chapters (and necessarily losing much detail), before presenting the emerging and cross-cutting themes, findings and implications in more detail.

Answering the Research Questions

Through an examination of Syrian refugee women's security of shelter and livelihoods in Chapter Six, the gendered effects of refugee policy experienced in the lived every day become salient. The chapter posed the question: *In what ways do these (social, political and legal) structures of host countries affect Syrian refugee women's security of shelter and livelihoods within their host cities and how do women respond to these?* By examining and comparing access to shelter and livelihoods, the negative influences of state refugee policies in shaping access to work, and therefore determining the spaces where refugees can afford to live, emerge. State refugee policies and laws have clear implications for the lived human security concerns of refugees in their everyday lives. Refugee policies that are structured to impede the ability to gain access to the labour market, or indeed insist on refugees' paying to secure their ongoing legal status in their host country through the *kafala* system or through

authorisation documents, have a highly detrimental effect on refugee livelihoods and their human security. Whilst refugee policy is not gendered at state and policy levels, this chapter demonstrates that hostile refugee policies have deeply felt scalar affects that impact on the intimate and embodied lives of refugee women, as families experience deep strain from their inability to live 'decently'. Human security concerns of livelihoods, shelter and employment shape wider perceptions of stability, welcome and security within host communities and are experienced and felt in socio-spatial ways. While this was the case across both cities, there were differences which relate to the nature of the state and the details of their policies, which resulted in participants in Jordan expressing a greater sense stability and less fear and precarity. However, ongoing restrictions regarding labour and employment did influence enduring concerns about security and settlement. Women are clearly affected by the structural laws and policies in place but respond in a range of tactical and considered ways. For example, women prioritise the needs and wellbeing of their dependants, and these concerns often shape their decision-making regarding movement to the city and ongoing self-settlement over return to Syria.

The relationship between (in)security, mobility and spatiality emerges in Chapter Seven, through an analysis of women's access to, and experiences of, predominantly public, but also private, spaces of the city. The chapter posed the question: *In what ways do these (social, political and legal) structures of host countries shape experiences of public space and urban mobility for Syrian refugee women and how do women respond to these?* This chapter demonstrates how different structural mechanisms interact with categories of identity and personal experiences, to shape perceptions of public and private spaces within host cities. In particular, the interaction of patriarchy and socio-cultural norms, refugee policies and women's gendered and refugee identities, result in spatial experiences of varied and graded 'permitted' or 'prohibited' areas for refugee women. This chapter demonstrated how patriarchal norms, which influence impressions of public spaces as 'masculine space', intersect with refugee women's identities, which structure perceptions of them as vulnerable outsiders, to enable an ongoing climate of harassment and exploitation in their host cities. A litany of negative experiences, including verbal and sexual harassment, resulted in many women expressing a sense of being outsiders and strangers within their host cities. Across both contexts, women's mobility was influenced by men and older women's attitudes of both what was 'appropriate' and what was 'safe', given the intersection of women's gendered and refugee identities. As a result, women show considered reflection regarding their mobility, behaviour and dress whilst outside the privacy of their home, often acting tactically through placing importance on their appearance and behaviour in appearing conforming and 'upstanding'. There is a belief that this behaviour and dress, in turn, will provide an element of security to women.

Broadly speaking, women based in Lebanon described more daily, active, public activities, but also a far greater sense of fear and discomfort in public space, particularly in the evening. This was shaped by the complex hybrid security network operating in Beirut, the visible securitisation of public space and the use of restrictive pseudo-legal curfews. In contrast, women in Amman were far more varied in their impressions of public space, with some intimating that they were just as mobile and independent as they had been in Syria, if not more so.

Looking to conflict resolution and issues of personal protection, Chapter Eight considers Syrian women's access to, and perception of, formal and informal security provision in Amman and Beirut. The chapter posed the question: *How do Syrian refugee women engage with structures of formal and informal security and conflict resolution provision in their host cities?* Here, issues of identity become deeply salient in how security was felt, experienced and accessed by refugee women. Differing state structures and security networks, and their effects on refugee's lived experiences of (in)security, were more palpable. Ascribed identities of gender were relevant to spatial negotiations of the city, particularly with security providers (both state and non-state). Experiences and attitudes towards security provision were ambivalent and complex, both appreciative and resentful. However, comparing across the two contexts it was clear that the role of official papers in ascribing a sense of legitimacy, and thus security, was prominent.

Women's sense that they were 'legal' in Jordan had a clear impact in how they broadly felt about police as a positive, fair and accessible service. In contrast, women in Beirut expressed a fear and concern about almost all interactions with state security services due to their lack of authorised papers. Whilst some women did express an appreciation of political parties as an alternative avenue of conflict resolution, many also recognised that there were issues of both power and gender at work and expressed a preference to avoid involvement with these organisations. Refugee women in Amman indicated that Lebanon's wider involvement in the Syrian conflict as one of the reasons why they had avoided seeking refuge in the country, expressing fear that the involvement of political parties meant that they could easily be deported or engaged in the conflict by forces that worked alongside the Syrian government. These women perceived Jordan as a state of stability, emphasising that Amman's disengagement from wider geopolitical conflicts and sectarian issues within the Levant made it an appropriate place to seek refuge. Thus, regional geopolitical issues of war and alliances take effect at the city scale, transforming spaces of the city into potential encounters of insecurity and fear, or as locations of stability and safety. Through these contributions, refugee impressions of Lebanon as a fragile and compromised state, and Jordan as a stable and strong state become clear. These reflections provide insight into wider theoretical framings of these states as 'strong' or 'weak' from the perspectives and lived experiences of marginal groups.

Across all the chapters, refugee women's tactical agency was analysed and discussed within different contexts, from women accessing work opportunities to negotiating with security providers, thus contributing to the final research question: *How do Syrian refugee women experience and respond to multiple scales of (in)security, and what tactics do they employ in order to negotiate these structures of power?* Across the empirical chapters, women demonstrated a range of tactics (that is incremental, often spontaneous, activities or behaviours), deployed in order to enhance their sense of security within their host cities. These are decisions and activities of agency, enacted within typically oppressive environments, where women are in a subordinate position and are using what power and social positioning they do have, to immediately enhance their sense of personal protection. Many of these tactics are behaviours that enhance their own socio-cultural sense of femininity and thus, to a certain extent, uphold, and reproduce patriarchal structures and the gendered nature of social space. However, several women demonstrated strong powers of negotiation and confrontation with others who had authority and power, including security providers. Despite their apparent fear or concerns related to their position, women still expressed a responsibility to advocate for themselves, or other members of their families.

Thus, women respond in a multitude of ways to the insecurity of their position, usually based upon their social position and through a tactical response. Whilst these actions are not necessarily 'empowering' in themselves, refugee women demonstrated a remarkable and determined effort to make the most of their situations. However, oppressive structures also influence women to take non-active tactical decisions in order to enhance their sense of protection and security (Hamdan-Saliba & Fenster, 2012). In particular, choosing to confine themselves to their homes to avoid interactions, led to an even greater sense of isolation, boredom and listlessness and an inability to connect, or feel a sense of belonging with their host community. Thus, non-active tactics often result in women expressing a sense of 'othering' within their own lives, where they did not recognise themselves, or their futures. Therefore, whilst women are utilising tactical agency, such non-active tactics can have a detrimental effect on their lives.

Cross-cutting themes

This section considers three cross-cutting themes that emerged from this thesis. As with the theoretical framework and empirical chapters, there are linkages and overlap, and as such there are some corresponding and relevant findings across themes. However, it is useful to think of these ideas separately.

1: Ambivalent (in)securities, shaped by the interaction of identity with social, legal and political structures

The first theme is how refugee policies interact with economic conditions and structural patriarchy to shape experiences of (in)security in spatial and gendered ways. For refugee women, (in)security is formed through intersecting experiences, identities and structures merging and interacting. Issues of (in)security are deeply gendered and experienced at varying, overlapping scales, which render security relational and variable. These experiences in themselves are fluid and not 'static'. Rather, the continual interaction of different structural forces and categories of identity, create varied and fluctuating socio-spatial experiences of (in)security, which are dependent on the interaction of these structures with refugees' ascribed and subjective identities, and the wider social meanings imbued upon material spaces of the city.

The intersection of nationality, gender and often class, creates an acute vulnerability, where women are often unable to seek help and assistance and thus negotiate conflicts in negative ways, such as keeping silent in the wake of violence, assault, theft and fraud. This intersects with refugee's protection and rights policy infrastructures within their host communities, to create a perfect storm of gendered insecurity for refugee women. However, these interactions do not always create consistent effects. Experiences of insecurity are always determined within wider geopolitical, regional and local frameworks, through the foregrounding of different identities and through temporal aspects of night/day; they thus fall along a continuum, whereby the same contexts can produce spaces and experiences which are simultaneously (and changeably) 'secure' and 'insecure'. As a result, security service personnel are both threatening extensions of the state, and bringers of law and order; political parties fluctuate between being alternative and embedded conflict managers and aggressive and lawless threats. In using Fawaz and Akar's (2012) understandings of security as 'lived' and using feminist geopolitical approaches to examining experiences in the everyday as a springboard for considering scalar experiences of (in)security, this thesis has demonstrated how, for many urban refugee women, there appears to be a landscape of changing insecurities, that require daily negotiations and fluid tactics (see more below). These insecurities are invariably more severe in Beirut, where the fragile and compromised state structure and its resulting hybrid governance and security networks, interact with refugee's women's identities across highly securitised spaces to create lives characterised by unbelonging and insecurity.

Just as security is not experienced in a static, consistent way, it is not applied by state or security providers consistently. By examining experiences at the city scale, through lived and individual experience, the apparent dominance of macro structures of state strength, structure and policy, become muddy and fluid. Women provided many accounts of how they negotiate their irregular status within their host communities, including accounts of obtaining the release of male relatives who work without permits in Jordan, and the negotiation of their embodied encounters with *hawajaz,* despite

their 'unauthorised' presence without legitimate papers. It is thus also pertinent to note that these policies, which are apparently very exacting at the state scale, are fluid and renegotiated at the city scale; conversely, national policies, which may protect and enhance the rights of refugees, may not be enacted at the city scale. As such, policies are always limited in the ways in which they offer rights and protection for vulnerable groups, particularly in contexts where the state is fragile, fragmented or fierce, and thus not fully permeating into all civil life (L. Landau, 2014). This has clear implications for policy and the realities of contexts in which policies regarding refugees are created and enacted. The fluidity of policies and refugee women's capacity to negotiate terms of security and status may also play into a wider sense of 'deregulation' in their host cities, which aids a sense of insecurity. Women's accounts of arbitrary arrests and detentions, experiences with political parties and security services, which punctuate day to day life in the city, form an impression of urban spaces and refugee policies as fluid, shifting and 'unregulated'.

2: The hegemonic gaze, (in)security and the (re)production of space

Negotiation of public space is also a negotiation of the hegemonic gaze dominant in that space, which shapes experiences and perceptions of (in)security, particularly for marginalised groups. Thus, spatiality and security are linked and this results in different spaces of the city being reproduced in particular ways. While this second theme overlaps with the first theme, detailed above, in examining how issues of space and security are linked and scalar, it specifically demonstrates how intersectional identities interact with structural mechanisms to shape experiences of space, rather than space being binarized into genders.

Chapter Six explored how refugee policies in Jordan and Lebanon affect refugees' legality, and rights to work, within their host state. This chapter demonstrated that such policies had detrimental impacts on refugee's livelihoods and shaped the spaces of the city that they sought refuge in, typically informal neighbourhoods and compromised dwellings. Chapter Seven detailed how Syrian women's identities as 'outsiders' and their complex refugee status, intersects with socio-cultural structures of patriarchy, which results in a sense of insecurity and othering in public space, exacerbated by a barrage of verbal and sexual harassment, including criticism for being pregnant and being a burden on the state. Chapter Eight detailed how women's refugee status interacts with structural mechanisms of formal and informal security services in the city, noting how these affect women's perceptions of public space as a location of citizenship and belonging.

Across each of these chapters, issues of nationality, age, class and gender created varied understandings and experiences of space and security. Participants did not perceive public and private spaces within gendered binaries (although it was clear that socio-cultural norms of gender and space

certainly influenced perceptions), but rather considered access and negotiation of public space to be determined by a range of interacting factors and structures, none of which were static. For example, older Syrian refugee women expressed a greater sense of freedom and independence in public space, intimating that younger Syrian women needed to be chaperoned, or preferably stay indoors, particularly in the evening as their gender, nationality and age made them a target for propositioning. Syrian women often intimated that the presence of loitering men, or men with power (i.e. security services) made them deeply uncomfortable when in public space. However, they also detailed how they negotiated these individuals using their gender and nationality, whilst pointing out that Syrian men had a more challenging experience within public space as their identities resulted in them being labelled as 'dangerous'. Lebanese women harassed Syrian women in public for being pregnant and being a burden on the State, creating a hostile and unwelcoming atmosphere, intimating that public space was a zone of citizenship. Wealthier Syrian women, who held authorised papers, expressed a far greater sense of security and freedom in public space. As such, individuals are continually negotiating a hegemonic gaze in public space, which is determined by social locations and structural mechanisms. Their ability to negotiate this hegemonic gaze is determined by their own social location as a result of the interaction of their various identities and it affects their own perceptions of how safe or secure a space or situation may be.

Private spaces of the home are also complex locations where there is little privacy and security. Chapter Six highlighted the terrible dwelling conditions of many refugee families, who expressed fears of their permeable and compromised homes. Within private spaces of the home women detailed experiences of domestic violence, which deeply affected their sense of security. Chapter Seven highlighted how many women felt compelled to stay indoors out of fear, but as a result, private spaces of the home became suffocating and isolating, where they feel increasingly dissociated from an active and engaged life, rather than a haven of privacy and safety. Abuse and harassment could also continue into these spaces as neighbours yelled abuse through walls and opportunistic others tried to gain entry to homes. Women also spoke of shifting balances of power within their families and the privacy of their homes, which were directly affected by refugee policies within their host countries. Homes may be both havens of quiet and privacy and locations of intense domestic violence and material insecurity. Public spaces are both spaces of interaction, empowerment, warmth and welcome, as well as locations of verbal and sexual harassment and othering. These reflections demonstrate how space is often incorrectly broadly brush stroked into categories of 'male' or 'female' spaces, whilst overlooking other nuances of identity, such as class, nationality and ethnicity and how these interact with wider structural mechanisms. Rather, structures and identities interact to create social positions of hegemonic authority that interact with the materiality of particular spaces.

3: Tactical agency as a response to (in)security and the repercussions of spatial (re)production

The way in which refugee women engage in tactical agency is important to note for refugee scholars and practitioners, as it serves as a reminder of, and a way of theorising, the ways in which refugee's utilise their own agency in oppressive conditions. Through this framing, refugee women can be understood as negotiators of structurally oppressive conditions, rather than simply as helpless 'victims'. Thus, their personal capacity is being acknowledged, alongside their need of assistance and aid.

The intersection of refugee women's gender and nationality and the interaction of these with wider constraining structures, typically places them in a subordinate, marginalised and insecure position within their host cities. In both Amman and Beirut, women engaged in a range of tactical 'active' and 'non-active' tools in order to negotiate their host communities and to enhance their sense of personal protection and security (Hamdan-Saliba & Fenster, 2012). These tactics can be perceived as both subverting or upholding patriarchal norms and have both positive and negative outcomes for women refugees. Women's varied tactical responses and capacities reflect the interaction of differing identities and structures which create varied social positions. For example, a middle-class Syrian woman with a *kafala* might feel more secure in negotiating a checkpoint than a working-class Syrian man with no legal status. Thus, tactical responses are very much a reflection of the interaction of identity and structural mechanisms.

When encountering *hawajaz*, or state security providers, women in both contexts used tactics of identity, including foregrounding their feminine identities as mothers and caregivers, their position as 'subordinate' refugees or their ethnic identity as Arabs (Muhanna, 2013). Many women engaged in language which positioned themselves as submissive and domestic, deploying kinship idioms to remind others of their regional kinship ties and relationships, women's position as a 'guest' of a host community, and Arab familial hierarchal structures which emphasise male responsibility in acting as protector of women. Whilst these tactics may be perceived as upholding patriarchal norms, by emphasising their own position as dependent, women demonstrated significant courage, persistence and resilience when negotiating with security providers. This emerged particularly when women negotiated with security services for the release of family members, or for a compassionate response to illegitimate papers.

Women also engage in tactical diplomacy and silence, frequently choosing to be submissive and silent despite their desire to express frustration, anger or injustice. This was specifically engaged in order to avoid potential threats of violence, to ensure wider neighbourly cohesion, or indeed to demonstrate their submission to those with greater power and resources to them. As such, these behaviours are

not necessarily telling of how women might *want* to respond but are reflective of how women *choose* to respond in uneven power matrices in order to enhance their embodied security, and on many occasions, the wider security of their families.

These tactics are perceived as necessary, as refugees consider their subordinate societal position as not holding the same weight as a citizen's rights and position. Thus, conflict avoidance is often due to a lack of power and position. Women refugees see citizens as holding and wielding power and view themselves as deeply politically inferior. For example, even though most women in Amman considered the police to be fair and just, in contrast to the view of police in Beirut, they still echoed the same concerns of women in Beirut, that the police's claims of even-handedness would tip in favour of a local if there was an issue of conflict. Thus, identity as a 'refugee' and outsider played a significant role in how women perceived their status and how they chose to tactically respond to various environments and situations.

Non-active (avoidance) tactics often have a highly detrimental impact on refugee women's mental health, sense of belonging and wider engagement with their host cities. Non-active tactics, such as spatial confinement, accentuate and reproduce a sense that refugee women are not welcome, are not permitted in public space and disrupt their sense of belonging and right to the city. Spatial confinement to homes, particularly because of negative and anti-social behaviour, results in a deterioration of mental health, where women spend endless days worrying about relatives in Syria, family members attempting to work in the host city without legal papers, and their children's future prospects, whilst confined to dwellings which are typically structurally compromised. Thus, whilst there may appear to be an element of 'choice' in these activities, e.g. deliberate avoidance of leaving the house, these decisions leave women feeling 'foreign' in their own lives, homes and wider host city. This is a concerning and necessary issue to draw attention to, as women described distressing and isolated lives which are exacerbated by socio-cultural norms, particularly regarding their presence in public space and the policing of their behaviour and interactions with others. This disengagement has repercussions for the ways in which space and gender are reproduced in such settings. Women's avoidance of public space because of a sense of insecurity or isolation results in the continued reproduction of public space as a location of masculine citizenship as discussed above (Fenster, 2005).

These cross-cutting themes demonstrate how experiences and perceptions of security and spatiality are influenced by the interaction of social positioning and structural mechanisms. Security is demonstrated as ambivalent, and understanding space in graded terms of permitted and forbidden (Fenster, 1999) alongside an analysis of identity and power structures, enriches understanding of how space is (re)produced in the lived every day and how this in turn affects perceptions of (in)security.

Women respond to ambivalent securities and spaces through tactical decisions and behaviours in order to enhance their mobility and personal sense of security. This approach to understanding identity, space and security can be encapsulated in the term 'intersectional geo-security'.

4) Spatial, temporal and relational vulnerability and the limits of solidarity

Recent studies have drawn attention to the ways in which migrant and refugee solidarity groups have worked together to mobilise claims and resources on states and agencies (Ataç et al., 2016). This builds on other research conducted with marginal groups which have demonstrated the effectiveness of gendered solidarities on the urban margins and explored the wider impact of these groups (Brickell 2014). However, this research with marginalised, urban refugee women has found that refugee women experience, and are shaped by, a range of spatial, temporal and relational vulnerabilities. These affect their day to day lives in their host communities and in turn shape and disrupt opportunities for solidarity and support in the urban margins.

Women carry trauma from their experiences and flight from war, which affects their wider experiences of spatiality, from negotiating the street to fearing overhead spaces as locations of potential violence. Women feel a keen sense of personal vulnerability when negotiating space at night, feeling that they are unwelcomed and unsafe because of both their Syrian and female identity. The loss, or separation, from kinship connections and family have a clear effect on women's mental health and sense of belonging, home and wider support. This is then compounded by personal experiences in host communities where women are often the target of criticism, hostility and harassment, by both women and men. This results in women feeling isolated, unsupported and longing to return home. Because of the wider Syrian conflict, women feel unable to reach out to Syrians in their community who they do not know personally and some intentionally distance themselves from potential networks of support. Additionally, in resource depleted urban margins, relationships and connections are difficult to forge when incoming refugee populations are perceived as straining already compromised systems or given preferential treatment of care and support by humanitarian agencies. This is further compromised by the dynamics of day to day life which are influenced by oppressive structures.

In these contexts, amongst Syrian refugee women and their communities, opportunities for solidarity appear to be far rarer. Women are reticent to build links, nervous of other Syrians and wary of their host community and their position within it and concerned about involvement in 'politics' and what this might bring. Having escaped war, many express a desire to remain quiet and aloof and to wait for day to day life to improve rather than demanding better care and assistance from their host State. As such, opportunities for community solidarity or potential solidarity groups on the urban margins, both those that draw together refugee women or refugee and host communities, is disrupted. Women feel

that wider perceptions of their identities which are both broadly ('strangers') and specifically (single or divorced) applied and understood, all affect the extent to which they can build relationships within their host communities and affect their sense of security. This is not to state emphatically that opportunities of solidarity or political involvement are not present (for example, solidarity and support groups have been developed amongst Syrian, urban refugee women in Turkey – see UNHCR, 2017a). Or, that other women may be engaging in opportunities of political solidarity and social movements, but rather that it was not present amongst my participants for the various reasons outlined above.

In thinking through ways of assisting urban refugees and in considering the potential power of solidarity and collective action, these findings demonstrate the importance of expanding understandings of vulnerability in such contexts. These findings suggest the value of wider understandings of 'vulnerability', which is often associated with system or network weaknesses and can lead to homogenous categorisations which overlook the individuality of experience (Clark, 2007). Understanding vulnerability as an individual's compromised human security, but also having spatial, temporal and relational elements, allows for a wider reflection on how refugee and host communities interact and relate to each other, and the extent to which both marginal host communities and refugee communities can (and want to) work alongside each other.

Particularities and Contributions from Research Findings

This study provides an insight into refugee women's experiences in Beirut and Amman in 2016-2017 and highlights the particularities of how refugee policies in each state interact with other social structures to shape lived experiences of (in)security in the everyday at that time. Refugee policies and wider geopolitical issues are in constant flux and motion, being re-examined and re-established by a wide network of stakeholders alongside refugee rights and issues of wider socio-economic development in Jordan and Lebanon. Indeed, there were ongoing changes to state refugee policies whilst I was in the field. Therefore, this study provides insight into urban refugee women's experiences at a particular time and in two particular contexts as outlined above.

There were several reasons why this research was limited in what it could study, and so also in the nature of its claims. Firstly, on some occasions I was prevented from spending longer lengths of time with participants and secondly, access to participants was sometimes significantly controlled and limited by gatekeepers. Furthermore, some topics were considered too controversial or sensitive to be pursued and as a result, some questions and follow up questions I desired to ask were not possible. Therefore, there are some issues that are relevant to the themes of this thesis but remain unexplored in the depth I would have preferred, particularly around hierarchal power and political parties within informal and refugee-receiving neighbourhoods of Amman and Beirut. Despite these limitations, this

research does provide insight into the wider influence of structural mechanisms and the ways in which these interact with categories of identity to shape socio-spatial experiences of insecurity.

Whilst qualitative comparative studies are rare in refugee studies, this research project has demonstrated how critical realist feminist methodological approaches to comparative case studies can provide considered voice and insight into individual's contextual experience, while drawing broader insight on how structures act to create particular circumstances of oppression and marginality. Thus, it has contributed to the scarce comparative literature on urban refugee women in the peripheral world. Whilst refugee scholars have indicated the worth in using intersectionality as an approach to understanding (specifically women's) experience of being a refugee (Ayoub, 2017; A. Carastathis et al., 2018), much contemporary intersectionality work tends to be post-structural (Martinez Dy, 2016). This is problematic as post-structuralism limits opportunities to identify causal relationships, and so talk back to and dismantle, oppressive structures; to discuss more widely how these structures operate across a multitude of contexts to continually oppress marginal groups; and to consider wider generalities, which allow for cross-contextual policy changes (Cooper, 2016; Gunnarsson et al., 2016). A critical realist approach to intersectionality that conceives categories of identity as both ascribed and subjective, as both real and socially constructed, enables a measured insight into the realities of refugee women, who are often judged and treated in accordance to their ascriptive, not their subjective, identities. How refugee women are perceived is often critical to their treatment and shapes their lived experiences of insecurity. Thus, a critical realist feminist approach aids in not only platforming their experiences, but also showing the ways in which structures shape the gendered experience of urban refugees.

This approach enables a wider insight into refugee women's experience across different contexts, particularly those in the peripheral world, in more classically patriarchal societies, or in contexts where policies treat refugees as economic migrants rather than displaced refugees. Many of the structures that shape refugee women's lives in Amman and Beirut (such as patriarchy or state refugee policy structures) will be present in many refugee receiving countries in the peripheral world. However, as demonstrated in this comparative study, there will be differences across contexts where differing frameworks (such as state strength) shape quotidian life in varied ways, even in contexts that appear to share much culturally and geographically. However, there will also be some broad similarities that aid wider theorisation of women's experiences in different, repressive contexts. Specifically, looking to the ways in which refugee women respond to the interaction of oppressive structures, there can be an expectation that refugee women will respond tactically, creatively, with agency, to negotiate the best possible outcomes for their personal protection and that of their wider family. Indeed, this study continually demonstrates that women are rarely passive pawns of structural mechanisms, but

considered, tactical agents, negotiating oppressive circumstances, who require solutions that utilise this agency, whilst being mindful of socio-cultural norms and wider socio-legal structures. This awareness of socio-cultural norms often means that women will unknowingly continue to uphold oppressive norms (in order to protect themselves), which results in their ongoing marginalisation and repression. Further study, examining and comparing refugee women's experiences in other contexts, would allow for deeper insight into the role of structural mechanisms and identity in shaping an everyday sense of security.

This approach also enables a critical understanding of gendered refugee experience, whereby women's socio-spatial experiences are not purely 'oppressive'. Refugee identities and wider structural mechanisms can act in ways that are positive or emancipatory for women (although, as indicated in this thesis, emancipatory or empowering experiences are rarer, especially amongst women who are socio-economically compromised). What emerged within this study was a range of differing gendered experiences. A comparative study across different genders, using a feminist, critical realist approach, would certainly provide a different aspect into the ways in which gendered refugee identities interact with social and legal structures to create socio-spatial oppressions or opportunities and would be an important avenue for further study.

This thesis echoes calls from other researchers (Betts & Collier, 2015; Janmyr, 2016, 2017), who have emphasised the need for reforms to Jordan and Lebanon's refugee policies. In addition, it calls attention to the particular gendered effects of these policies on everyday lives. Feminist research is inherently political and demands change and transformation to the structures that affect the lives of the most marginalised. Using recently developed literature on feminist geolegality (Brickell & Cuomo, 2019), this thesis has demonstrated how refugee policies have deeply felt gendered affects in the everyday. It has shown how both formal and informal policies, and formal and informal 'enforcers' of the law are experienced in gendered ways. This is pertinent to consider and encourages application of these theories to other refugee contexts to consider the gendered effects of law and policy.

Refugee women's attitudes and perceptions of humanitarian agencies and UNHCR in such settings is worth highlighting. More care should be taken in communicating with refugees why UNHCR is unable to register or assist them and other avenues of assistance within the city should be highlighted. This should include efforts to assist refugees in understanding their host city's socio-political undercurrents and its broad spatial layout and dynamics. More educated, urbanite refugees who understand the asylum process appear to be frequently prioritised by agencies, and illiterate and socio-economically marginalised refugees are often struggling to have their voices heard, or needs seen to, in such contexts. UNHCR should make greater efforts to ensure they are embedded in informal or poorer

neighbourhoods where marginalised refugees are living and make stronger efforts to communicate the limits of their position and the rights and protections of refugees in such settings. Programmes that promote further skill building and confidence (in particular, literacy) amongst women in these settings should also be favoured.

As established in the earlier chapters of this thesis, urban refugees are a population that is still largely overlooked in research and knowledge, and in the limited literature, male (often African) experiences tend to be focused on and examined. When it comes to women refugees, it is often their experiences within camps (such as camp's spatial layout and women's vulnerabilities to GBV) that are highlighted.

This thesis has contributed to some of the gaps in knowledge, highlighting women's experiences in cities of the Middle East, providing insight into the realities and experiences of what it means to be an urban refugee woman in such contexts. In particular, this work has demonstrated the importance of examining everyday experiences in order to consider some of the nuances and the patterns of behaviour and experience that emerge amongst urban refugees. Women in these contexts are clearly affected by the oppressive structural conditions in which they find themselves. However, they equally emerge as tactical, considered negotiators that both push against, and use, gendered and patriarchal norms, in order to achieve the best outcomes for themselves and their families. Whilst all women do not respond in the same way to their environments and have unique and differentiated experiences, when thinking about 'the urban refugee woman' there are a number of themes and issues that are salient and worth considering and applying to different contexts.

For urban refugee women, their position within heterogenous urban settings, as both the location of their shelter and their livelihoods, brings different aspects of relationship, spatiality, livelihoods and protection to the fore. For example, relational concerns are a significant aspect of both home and host life for urban refugee women and have an important spatial dimension. Relationships within the home can be affected by gender-based violence, a change in family roles, responsibilities and power dynamics and concerns related to dependents. Relationships with the host community significantly shape women's perceptions of welcome, integration and safety. These play across a number of different spatial scales: the body, the home, the street, the city. Identity has a strong role in these experiences and can result in many women spatially and relationally isolated, by personal choice or through wider socio-cultural norms and hierarchal relationships. This, alongside their compromised socio-economic status, results in many women experiencing a wider disconnection from and limited knowledge of their host city. Women want to be able to participate, integrate and enjoy their host cities, but often feel unable to do so. Despite a typical sense of isolation, many women demonstrate an acute awareness of the dynamics of their neighbourhood and their place within in, engaging in

behaviours and dress that will not draw attention, avoiding places or individuals of potential conflict, and ensuring that wider family members disengage from potential disputes. Because of close cultural and language ties in this context, women are also keenly aware of how to present themselves and how to negotiate with stakeholders that hold more power and position than them, reminding, particularly men, of their obligations and responsibilities towards protecting those that are more vulnerable.

War, flight and self-settlement affect family dynamics and gendered roles and responsibilities across a number of considerations. Living in crowded and high-density conditions and disruption from kinship ties can result in urban refugee women being vulnerable to domestic violence, abandonment or polygamous relationships. This study indicates the complexities of refugee women and work in such settings. Most women express a desire to and interest in bringing in income, but often feel thwarted by their lack of appropriate skills (typically shaped by patriarchal norms in their home society) or by potential exploitation and harassment. Many of those that do find opportunities to work find these experiences exhausting, mentally and physically, as they try to juggle these responsibilities with caring for their families. Thus, whilst there is an expectation that refugee women who settle in urban areas may experience 'empowering' avenues of employment and self-reliance and new roles within the family unit, many find these opportunities straddle a complex web of economic, social, emotional and personal security concerns.

Whilst in the research field, I was continually struck by women's resilience and determination in the face of traumatising experiences of war, heart breaking circumstances and deeply constraining structures, alongside an oft-repeated phrase that 'only God would help us'. As the Syrian conflict continues and the world encounters new challenges from coronavirus, it is vital that we do not forget the structural circumstances that refugees live with daily, and to consider the ways in these structures often make change and opportunity difficult to achieve. These need to be addressed, in order for refugee women to have lives of dignity.

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APPENDIX

List of Refugee Interviews

Beirut (September – November 2016) & Amman (February – April 2017)

INTERVIEW	DATE	PSUEDONYM	BRIEF BIO	LOCATION	MALE PRESENT	MULTIVOICE	RECORDED
Interview 1	23/09/2016	Alyas	Sunni, married mother of 4, from Raqa'a, working class	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 2	23/09/2016	Yaminah	Separated mother of 11, Bedouin, from near Aleppo. Wouldn't specify religion, working class	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 3	23/09/2016	Wajida	Divorced mother of three, young thirties, wouldn't specify religon, lower-middle class	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 4	24/09/2016	Ulima	Married mother of two, Sunni, young twenties, from countryside of Aleppo , working class	Home, Na'ba	Y-HUSBAND	Y	Y
Interview 5	24/09/2016	Takiya	Sunni, married mother of 6, late twenties, from Dakishe, working class	Home, Na'ba	Y -HUSBAND	Y	Y
Interview 6	26/09/2016	Shula	Sunni, married mother of 3, late twenties, from Aleppo, lower middle class	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 7	26/09/2016	Shahar	Married mother of one, Sunni, young twenties, from Deir Ez Zour	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 8	26/09/2016	Zulima	Married mother of three, Sunni, from Aleppo, late twenties	Home, Na'ba		N	N
Interview 9	27/09/2016	Zada	Married mother of six, Sunni, 40 years old, from Raqqa	Work, Na'ba	Y-HUSBAND	N	N
Interview 10	27/06/2016	Zubaida	Sunni, married mother of 6, 23 years old, working class from Raqaa	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 11	28/09/2016	Bushra	Christian, divorced mother of three. Middle Class, mid-thirties, from Damascus	Café, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 12	28/09/2016	Fadila	Sunni, married mother. Elderly, Lower Middle Class	Café, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 13	29/09/2016	Husniya	Kurdish Muslim, married mother of 5, Lower middle class, from Aleppo	Home, Na'ba		N	N
Interview 14	29/09/2016	Ghada	Married mother of one, early forties, Sunni, lower middle class	Home, Na'ba		N	Y
Interview 15	28/09/2016	Jadara, Onekka	Friends. Sunni, married mothers in their late twenties with young children. Lower middle class, one from Aleppo one from Afreen.	Home, Na'ba		Y	Y
Interview 16	11/10/2016	Emani	Married mother of one, early twenties, Sunni, from the coutryside of Aleppo	Home, Na'ba		Y	Y
Interview 17	06/10/2016	Badia	Kurdish Muslim, early thirties, married, two children, from Quamlishee, working class	NGO, Mazra'a		Y	Y
Interview 18	01/11/2016	Sara	Kurdish Muslim, 19, married mother of one, lower middle class, from Quamlishee	NGO, Mazra'a		N	Y
Interview 19	01/11/2016	Fathima & Deema	Sisters (live together) Deema, married with four children, Sunni. Fathima divorced with children, Sunni. Middle class with kafala status	NGO, Mazra'a		Y	Y
Interview 20	02/11/2016	Ayesha	Married mother of 2, late twenties, Sunni, from the countryside of Aleppo	Home, Mazra'a	Y-HUSBAND	N	Y
Interview 21	02/11/2016	Khalila	Married mother of 3, young thirties, from countryside of Aleppo	Home, Mazra'a'	Y	N	Y
Interview 22	02/11/2016	Mahira	Married, mother of 2 (and pregnant), sunni, working class, + from Deir Ez Zour	Home - Mazra'a	Y	N	Y

INTERVIEW	DATE	PSUEDONYM	BRIEF BIO	LOCATION	MALE PRESENT	MULTIVOICE	RECORDED?
Interview 1	27/02/2017	Mouna	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 4, mid-thirties, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 2	27.02.2017	Nailah	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 4, early-thirties, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 3	28/02/2017	Rabiah	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 4, early-thirties, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 4	28/02/2017	Zarifa	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 2,early thirties, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 5	28/02/2017	Sabah	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 2, 23, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 6	06/03/2017	Yesenia	Sunni, married, working class mother of 2, late twenties,	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 7	06/03/2017	Nekia	Sunni, lower-middle class, mother of 2, step mother of 2, late thirties, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 8	07/03/2017	Badra	Sunni, lower-middle class, mother of 4, late twenties	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 9	07/03/2017	Rania	Sunni, married, lower-middle class mother of 4, from Homs	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 10	07/03/2017	Samya	Sunni, married, working class mother of 4, late twenties	NGO, Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 11	08/03/2017	Aleaha	Sunni, married, upper middle class mother of 1, from Homs	Home - Mahata			Y
Interview 12	09/03/2017	Basmaa & Sama	Basmaa: Sunni, married, working class mother of 4 (elderly) and Sama: married, daughter in law (late teens), from Damascus	NGO, Ashrafyeh		Y	Y
Interview 13	12/03/2017	Derifa	Married mother of two, middle-class	Home - Mahata	Husband/FIL	Y	Y
Interview 14	12/03/2017	Fariha & Qamar	Fariha, married lower-middle class mother of 7 from Homs, early thirties, Qamar, married middle class mother of 5, from Homs	Home - Mahata		Y	y
Interview 15	13/03/2017	Ieesha	Sunni, lower middle-class, separated mother of 3, from Daraa	NGO, Ashrafyeh			Y
Interview 16	13/03/2017	Noodah & Shayma	Noodah: Divorced mother of 6, Shayma, divorced mother of 7,	NGO, Ashrafyeh		Y	Y
Interview 17	14/03/2017	Hanan	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 4, early forties, from Homs	NGO, Ashrafyeh			Y
Interview 18	14/03/2017	Kalima	Sunni, separated mother of four from Damascus, working class, late forties	NGO, Ashrafyeh			N
Interview 19	16/03/2017	Ishtar & Sabeen	Mother and daughter, both married living in separate homes, middle class, from Homs	Home - Hashmi Shamali		Y	Y
Interview 20	16/03/2017	Tira & Jamal	Two sisters, Tira married mother of 10, 37 years old, Sunni; Jamal married mother of 4, 25 years old, both working class, from Homs	Home - Mahata		Y	Y
Interview 21	19/03/2017	Yara & Mona	Two sisters in early twenties. Middle class, unmarried, living with large extended family	Home - Mahata/Marka	Father	Y	Y
Interview 22	21/03/2017	Jasura	Sunni, married mother of 5, 32, from the countryside of Homs, working class	Home - Hashmi Shamali	Husband	Y	Y
Interview 23	21/03/2018	Keila	Sunni, married mother of 4 (pregnant), 28,from the countryside of Homs, working class	Home- Hashmi Shamali			Y
Interview 24	21/03/2019	Alma & Rima	Sisters In law. Alma 22, married and pregnant, Rima late twenties, with children, both Sunni, from Homs, lower middle class	Home - Mahata		Y	Y

List of Focus Group Discussions

BEIRUT				
Recorded/Not Recorded	**Focus Group Number**	**Number of Participants**	**Date**	**CC or NGO Worker Present**
Y	FGD 1, Na'ba	5	28/09/2016	Yes - Community Contact
Y	FGD 2, Na'ba	5	28/09/2016	Yes - Community Contact
Y	FGD 3, Na'ba	5	28/09/2016	Yes - Community Contact
Y	FGD 4, Bourj Hammoud	12	25/10/2016	No - post FGD interview, social worker
Y	FGD 5, Bourj Hammoud	6	26/10/2016	No - post FGD interview, social worker
Y	FGD 6, Bourj Hammoud	4	29/10/2016	No - post FGD interview, social worker
Y	FGD 7, Mazra'a	11	06/11/2016	Yes - Social Worker
Y	FGD 8, Mazra'a	7	07/11/2016	Yes - Social Worker

AMMAN				
Recorded/Not Recorded	**Focus Group Number**	**Number of Participants**	**Date**	**CC or NGO Worker Present**
Y	FGD 1, Ashrafyeh	3	01/03/2017	Yes - Social Worker
Y	FGD 2, Ashrafyeh	7	01/03/2017	Yes - Social Worker
Y	FGD 3, Ashrafyeh	5	02/03/2017	Yes - Social Worker
Y	FGD 4, Ashrafyeh	5	02/03/2017	Yes - Social Worker

List of Diary Participants

NAME	LOCATION	BRIEF BIO
Nasim	Beirut	Sunni, mid- thirties, married mother, not working, from Aleppo
Fatima	Beirut	Sunni, late twenties, married mother, not working, children with health complications, from Aleppo
Iman	Beirut	Sunni, late twenties
Najat	Beirut	Sunni, early forties, married mother, not working
Amira	Beirut	Sunni, mid-forties, married mother, from Aleppo
Fahira	Amman	Sunni, lower-middle class, mother of 7 from Homs, early thirties
Rahima	Amman	Sunni, middle class married mother
Hanan	Amman	Sunni, married, middle class mother of 4, early forties, from Homs

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS LEBANON		
Participant	**Location**	**Date**
Community Contact	Working in Na'ba	20/09/2016
NGO Representative	Working in Bourj Hammoud	25/09/2016
Political Party Representative (Hezbollah)	Na'ba	29/09/2016
Political Party Representative (Lebanese Forces)	Na'ba	06/10/2016
Political Party Representative (Future Movement)	Mazra'a	26/10/2016
Mukhtar	Na'ba	29/09/2016
Mukhtar	Mazra'a	10/10/2016
Researcher	Working in Mazra'a	26/10/2016
ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS JORDAN		
Participant	**Location**	**Date**
Community Contact	Working in Mahata	12/02/2017
NGO Representative	Working in Ashrafyeh	21/02/2017
NGO Representative	Working in Ashrafyeh	09/03/2017
Justice Centre (JCLA)	Amman	30/03/2017

Refugee Interview outline (semi-structured format)

> *My name is Sarah Linn, I am a researcher from the University of Sheffield, UK. This is my translator, X (brief introduction of translator). I have been speaking to Syrian refugee women about their experiences of life in the city.*
>
> *I want to ask you some questions about what it is like living in your neighbourhood. How you get around, how you resolve problems and how you feel, especially when you are outside of your home. I am doing a study to show people in England what is like for a refugee woman who lives in a city in Lebanon/Jordan. Thank you very much for your time and for sharing your experiences with me.*
>
> *Anytime you would like to stop, please just say so. I would like to record this, so I can write up some notes, but only I will have access to the tape and afterwards, I will destroy the tape. If you change your mind, just say – I will stop recording and we will stop the questions. You don't have to take part in this study, if you don't want too. Are you happy to participate in the study and do you have any questions?*
>
> *We are just going to ask a few questions about you to begin with, your background and how you arrived in Lebanon/Jordan. Then I will ask some questions about the neighbourhood and your activities and how you might resolve problems and difficulties.*
>
> (NOTE: Occasionally I encourage the women to cognitively map their neighbourhood – i.e. as we talk about a

Name:

- Age:
- Marital Status:
- (Children?) :
- Is your family here with you in Lebanon/Jordan?
- Religion:
- Life in Syria: (Did you work, did you live with extended family?)
- UNHCR papers (what is your status?)

(NOTE: This is for my own records, I like to have the women's first names so I can speak to them properly during the interview, but if they don't want to give them, this is fine. I won't use their names or any identifiable aspects in my work.)

- Where are you from in Syria and when (and how did you arrive in Lebanon/ Jordan?)
- Were you in a camp? If so, how/why did you leave?
- Why did you choose to come to Beirut/Amman?
- Where about are you living now? (if this isn't clear – need to know neighbourhood)
- How long have you lived in your particular neighbourhood? Are you going to keep living here?
- Do you have family in Jordan/Lebanon? (Are other people from your community living in your neighbourhood? Do you know them, are you connected?)
- What is the neighbourhood like? (Do you know your neighbours? Are there lots of Syrians living there? Is it a good neighbourhood? Family? Friends? Have you managed to settle in?)
- What does your daily routine look like?
- Are there areas where you wouldn't you go in the neighbourhood? Where would you avoid? Would it be ok if you were with others, but not by yourself?
- Are their particular places you don't like? Or have you been told to avoid any places?
- Has anyone ever made you feel uncomfortable on the street? (Maybe said something to you?)
- How have other women in the community behaved towards you? Are they welcoming, do you interact with them? (Both refugee and host community)
- Have people's attitudes changed over the time you have been here? (Prompts: Were they welcoming, but now not so much? If so, does that make you feel a less safe?)
- Do you feel that you have a sense of belonging to the city and to this neighbourhood?

- What helps you to feel safe when you are out? (Prompts: Clothing, charitable registration or involvement, UNHCR papers, Authorization permit, walking with friends/family, going to a place you know – nothing, it never occurs to you?)
- Have you adjusted your appearance since you arrived in Lebanon to make you feel more protected? (started wearing the hijab? Wear the hijab indoors because of sharing accommodation?)
- If you must run an errand, will you take others with you? (For company? For safety?)
- Do you leave the neighbourhood? If so, for what reasons? (Do you ever visit friends in other parts of the city?)
- Would you use public transport or a taxi (yes, no, why)

- Are there certain times that you wouldn't go out? (Prompts: National holidays? Night time?)
- Where do you feel safest? (Prompts: Home? NGO Centre? With others? Safe space?)
- What helps you feel secure?

I'm going to ask you a few questions about resolving conflict or difficulties in the neighbourhood and about different security providers

- If there is a disagreement in the neighbourhood, who normally helps to resolve it? (Prompts: police, army, political parties, religious mediator, mukhtar?)
- If there is a disagreement between Syrians, who normally helps to resolve it? (Syrian representative?)
- Would you ever speak to the police/army? Would you ever ask them to help resolve a problem or difficulty?
- Who would you go to, to assist in resolving a major conflict or problem?
- How do you feel when you see someone in uniform?
- Is there a certain group or political party that operates in your neighbourhood?
- Is there a curfew in your neighbourhood? How did you know about the curfew? How does it make you feel?
- Have you every accessed/used the Mukhtar? (What for, did they assist you?)
- Are you aware of different signs, flags, patrols, representatives indicating different political parties operating in your area?
- Are you aware/know the different political parties in your neighbourhood? If you had a problem with a birth certificate, or if your landlord was giving you trouble, would you speak to a member of the political parties to help you sort this? (No? If so, who would you go to?)
- What happens when you pass a checkpoint? Do you avoid them? Do you know of anyone who has had difficulty with them?

Thank you's and passing over of contact information. Do they have any questions?

Refugee Focus Group Outline (Semi-structured format)

My name is Sarah Linn, I am a researcher from the University of Sheffield, UK. This is my translator, X (brief introduction of translator)

I want to ask you some questions about what it is like living in your neighbourhood. How you get around, how you resolve problems and how you feel, especially when you are outside of your home. I am doing a study to show people in England what is like for a refugee woman who lives in a city in Lebanon/Jordan. Thank you very much for your time and for sharing your experiences with me.

If anyone wants the group to stop, please just say so. I would like to record this, so I can write up some notes, but only I will have access to the tape and afterwards, I will destroy the tape. If you change your mind, just say – I will stop recording and we will stop the questions. You don't have to take part in this study, if you don't want too. Are you happy to participate in the study and do you have any questions?

I am going to ask a few questions about each of you to begin with, your background and how you arrived in Lebanon/Jordan. Then I will ask some questions about the neighbourhood and your activities and how you might resolve problems and difficulties.

(NOTE: Occasionally I encourage the women to cognitively map their neighbourhood – i.e. as we talk about a particular place they use, or don't like, they draw it out on paper as we talk – not all engage with this, so it tends to only be something I use depending on the interview)

(If possible, in given setting, ask for a bit of brief background from each participant at outset, covering these issues and where possible how/where they arrived in Amman/Beirut)

- Name:
    - Age:
    - Marital Status:
    - (Children?):
    - Religion:
    - Life in Syria: (Did you work, did you live with extended family?)
    - UNHCR papers (what is your status?)
    - When/how did you arrive in Jordan/Lebanon or Amman/Beirut
    - Why did you settle here?
    - General living standards & circumstances (rent, location, condition, experience)

Main Questions

- Can you tell me a bit about how life has been in your local neighbourhood? (Have people been welcoming? Have you settled in? Do you have access to resources?)
- Are you working? (Did you work previously, what have experiences been like? How is family income organised?)

- Do you leave your local neighbourhood and how do you feel when you leave it? (Do you use any leisure spaces? Do you visit NGO's? Do you use public transport? Have you encountered any issues with these?)
- Can you describe some of your experiences when in public space? Do you feel confident going out alone? Do you restrict yourself? (Can use examples of other participants describing harassment if needed)
- If you had any problems or difficulties in the neighbourhood, how would you resolve them? Is there someone who might help you? (Police? Neighbours? Family?)
- Do you have someone that represents or helps your family? (A Mukhtar? A Syrian representative for refugees in the community?)
- Do you see much police or army in the neighbourhood? How do you feel about this?
- Would you speak to the police/army if you had any problems or difficulties?
- Do you have a sense of belonging to your local neighbourhood/community/city/host country?
- Does your life look very different to how it was previously in Syria? (In what ways?)
- (If appropriate) Do you feel empowered by these changes?

Thank you's and passing over of contact information. Do they have any questions?