

## Palestinian Refugee Camps and Brazilian *Favelas* as Urban Heterotopias

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In spite of their historical differences, the social and economic situation in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and *favelas* in Brazil are closely aligned: both are subject to precarious living conditions and various levels of exclusion, characterised by strong social and racial segregation, inequality in the material resources available in the city, absence of a formal system of space management and everyday violence. Camps and *favelas* constitute spaces at the margins of the city and the state, and this is exactly what makes their comparison possible.

This article concerns wider research where a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon is compared to a *favela* in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>1</sup> One

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may argue that Palestinian camps, a phenomenon resulting from an international conflict, are not to be compared to Brazilian *favelas*, which are defined within a national context. Indeed, for many years, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) has emphasised the political aspect of refugee camps, the latter having become a symbol of Palestinian resistance and of the ‘right of return’ of the Palestinian refugees. However, the image of Palestinian camps as ‘kinds of ghettoes or city portions’<sup>2</sup> is becoming ever more prevalent in academic debates.<sup>3</sup> Whereas the subjects of this study may appear to differ significantly, camps and *favelas* find themselves at the margins of the city and the State.

The situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is extremely precarious. The Lebanese political system, as relying on confessional power-sharing, constitutes a fundamental problem regarding the administration of refugee matters: integrating Palestinians into the Lebanese population has always been seen as a threat to the delicate confessional balance of the country. The fact that Lebanon is a country bearing the greatest number of Palestinians still living in camps shows that they have not been acknowledged by Lebanese society. Nowadays, more than 50% of the refugees live in the

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<sup>1</sup> See Amanda SA Dias, *Aux marges de la ville et de l’Etat. Camps palestiniens au Liban et favelas cariocas* (Karthala/IFPO 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Michel Agier, *Gérer les indésirables. Des camps de réfugiés au gouvernement humanitaire* (Flammarion 2008), 115.

<sup>3</sup> As Sari Hanafi observes: ‘One can only understand the problems of refugee camps if they are studied as urban sites. Because those refugee camps have been twice marginalised in the West Bank and in Gaza, those camps look like any slum or deteriorated area in the world. That is how researchers need to understand them for instance; as Parisian suburbs’. Sari Hanafi, ‘Vivre dans le camp, vivre ailleurs. Les Palestiniens réfugiés en Egypte et dans les Territoires palestiniens’, *Bulletin de l’association de géographes français: Géographies* (2006) 83(1), 88 (translated). With particular emphasis on the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, Bernard Rougier asserts: ‘In Beirut, Tripoli and Saïda camps have stepped out of history a long time ago to become a part of the urban geography: they are no longer the melting-pot of Palestinian revolution and are now dangerous zones where poverty and delinquency predominate; they take down the real-estate value of an area and are ignored or avoided by the town-planning’. Bernard Rougier, ‘Le ‘destin mêlé’ des Palestiniens et des Libanais au Liban’, *Maghreb-Machrek* (2000) 169, 46 (translated).

UNRWA camps.<sup>4</sup> The 12 official camps in the country are suffering from numerous problems, such as the absence of appropriate infrastructures, overpopulation, poverty, unemployment, etc.

In Brazil, the *favela* inhabitants are usually Brazilian citizens. However, *favelados* find themselves *de facto* at the margins of society on political, economic, social and juridical levels. National and local medias most often depict *favelas* as the space of criminality and drugs. This interpretation produces a stigmatising discourse which leads the *favela* populations to keep away from the city and to legitimate a more or less arbitrary state of violence inside those spaces. This condition led the Brazilian sociologists Luis Antônio Machado da Silva and Marcia Pereira Leite to use Bruno Latour's concept of 'variable-geometry citizenship' in their reading of the *favelas cariocas*. As the authors synthesise it, 'the notion of variable-geometry corresponds to citizenship that alters according to tacit power hierarchies, but which are informally consolidated, variable and always situated'.<sup>5</sup>

The question of the articulation between the right to a city and the right to a state is present throughout this research. Examining two cases that differ widely historically, but share very similar living conditions at the present time, sheds new light onto the ways of claiming these two rights articulated within the population of these spaces at the margins of society. Of course, comparing the historical and political conditions that have led to their creation is not feasible. However, in order to understand how Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and the Brazilian *favelas* came to constitute spaces at the margins of the city *and* the State, it is crucial to analyse their formation not only as geographical sites, but also the place they occupy, throughout the decades, in the surrounding society's predominant discourse. This paper will aim to challenge the prevailing perspectives according to which *favelas* and refuge camps

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<sup>4</sup> UN agency giving assistance to refugees. UNRWA provides social services, as well as education, health services and emergency assistance to Palestinians living in Gaza Strip, West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

<sup>5</sup> Luis Antonio Machado da Silva & Marcia Leite, 'Violência, crime e polícia: o que os favelados dizem quando falam desses temas?' in *Vida sob cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro*, LA Machado da Silva (dir), Rio de Janeiro, Nova Fronteira (2008), 54 (translated).

are traditionally studied, by putting them in relation with one another through their identification as urban heterotopias.

### **Formation of the Palestinian refugee camps and the *favelas* in Lebanon and Rio de Janeiro**

Anthropologists often refer to Italo Calvino's 'Invisible Cities' to understand the urban situation they are examining.<sup>6</sup> I could not avoid thinking of Calvino's city of Beersheba and relating it to the place the camps and the *favelas* occupy in the Lebanese and Brazilian imaginary. Here is how Calvino describes Beersheba and her underground:

They also believe, these inhabitants, that another Beersheba exists underground, the receptacle of everything base and unworthy that happens to them, and it is their constant care to erase from the visible Beercheba every tie or resemblance to the lower twin. In the place of roofs they imagine that the underground city has overturned rubbish bins, with cheese rinds, greasy paper, fishscales, dishwater, uneaten spaghetti, old bandages spilling from them. Or even that its substance is dark and malleable and thick, like the pitch that pours down from the sewers, prolonging the route of the human bowels, from black hole to black hole, until it splatters against the lowest subterranean floor, and from the lazy, encircled bubbles below, layer upon layer, a fecal city rises, with twisted spires.<sup>7</sup>

To this underground Beersheba, corresponds another Beersheba 'where the city's most elevated virtues and sentiments are poised, and that if the terrestrial Beersheba will take the celestial one as its model the two cities will become one'.<sup>8</sup> Understanding these two Beershebas as a metaphor of an infernal city and an ideal city, as pictured by the inhabitants of the city, the underground Beersheba, representation of

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<sup>6</sup> Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (Harvest 1974 [1972]).

<sup>7</sup> *ibid* 111-12

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

the infernal city, must be constantly denied, forgotten, put away from the sight and the thoughts of city dwellers. Because it keeps them away from their ideal of the city, represented here by the metaphor of celestial Beersheba.

Imagined by the inhabitants of terrestrial Beersheba, celestial and underground Beershebas correspond to the definition of utopia suggested by Michel Foucault: 'These are arrangements which have no real space ... They represent society itself brought to perfection, or its reverse'.<sup>9</sup> In Lebanon as in Rio de Janeiro, refuge camps and *favelas* occupy, in the collective imaginary, the place of underground Beersheba: they are spaces that disturb, among others because they remind the inhabitants of the city that celestial Beersheba remains an ideal. Nonetheless, there is an essential difference that distinguishes camps, *favelas* and the underground Beersheba: these places are real spaces, geographically identifiable. They correspond rather to what Foucault calls, in opposition to utopias, heterotopias:

a sort of counter arrangement, of effectively realized utopia, in which all the real arrangements, all the other real arrangements that can be found within society, are at one and the same time represented, challenged, and overturned: a sort of place that lies outside all places and yet is actually localizable.<sup>10</sup>

According to Foucault, between utopias and 'these places which are absolutely other', heterotopias, there would be 'a sort of mixed experience which partakes of the qualities of both types of location, the mirror'.<sup>11</sup> *Favelas* and refugee camps fulfil the function of 'reversed mirror' of the city and the nation. Their places within Brazilian and Lebanese society are the fruit of a social construction operated throughout the decades. The analysis of the construction of the image of the *favela* and the camp throughout the century will show how, in Brazil as in Lebanon, the inhabitants of these spaces acquired the status of extreme figures of 'otherness'. If at first the *favelado* refers the *carioca* to his urbanness and the Palestinian refers

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<sup>9</sup> Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias' in Neil Leach (ed), *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* (Routledge 1997), 332.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

the Lebanese to his nationality, through the decades urbanness and nationality converge: the *favelado* becomes the internal enemy of the nation, while the refugee refers increasingly to the image of social and urban precariousness.

It is therefore important to approach *favelas* and refugee camps from a historical perspective. Two main works help us understand the elaboration of the discourses concerning these populations, notably during their early years: *La favela d'un siècle à l'autre*, from sociologist Licia Valladares<sup>12</sup> and *l'Exil Palestinien au Liban*, from historian Jihane Sfeir.<sup>13</sup> Taking account of the historic perspective offered by these works, it becomes possible to approach the formation of the camps and the *favelas* from a Foucauldian perspective, keeping in mind Foucault's notion of knowledge and power. This framework then demonstrates that actions emanating from Lebanese and Brazilian authorities towards the refugees and the *favelados* correspond to the predominant representations of these groups. In other words, throughout the history of camps and *favelas*, the knowledge production has continuously nourished a certain use of power.

### The social construction of the *favela*

In *La favela d'un siècle à l'autre* Licia Valladares shows how, since its origins, the *favelas* have nourished Brazilians' social imagination.<sup>14</sup> Adopting the hypothesis that the *favela* is an invented category, Valladares proceeds to examine various discourses, images, representations and analysis that have accompanied its history throughout the twentieth century. She proposes a 'periodisation' of the different approaches to the *favela*.<sup>15</sup>

The first period corresponds to the beginning of the twentieth century, when the representations of the *favela* was organised around a founding myth—the 'myth of Canudos'.<sup>16</sup> According to this

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<sup>12</sup> Licia do Prado Valladares, *La favela d'un siècle à l'autre* (MSH 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Jihane Sfeir, *L'exil palestinien au Liban. Le temps des origines (1947-1952)* (IFPO 2008).

<sup>14</sup> L Valladares (n 12).

<sup>15</sup> *ibid* 14

<sup>16</sup> *ibid* 24

myth, *favelas* originated from the establishment of various old fighters of the war of Canudos (1896–1897) at the *Morro da Previdência*. The construction of this myth does not result only from the geographical reference of the village of Canudos or the historical reference to the final battle. It is supported by the narration of these events made by the author Euclides da Cunha in *Os Sertões* (1902).<sup>17</sup> Various characteristics of the Brazilian *sertão*, as described by da Cunha, would have been given by Rio's intellectuals in their lectures of the new 'miserable neighbourhoods'.<sup>18</sup> The duality *sertão* versus littoral was transposed in these first images, under the form of the opposition *favela* versus the city.

At first *cariocas* approach the *favelas* with a degree of curiosity, labelling these spaces and their populations as exotic.<sup>19</sup> The *favelados* are associated with a *sertão* that the *cariocas* only know through the novelistic narration of Euclides da Cunha.<sup>20</sup> Transposed to the inhabitants of the first *favelas*, the agrarian aspect of this Brazilian region contrasts with the urban lifestyle of city dwellers. The *favela* was also perceived as the place where Black populations brought their beliefs, their music and their extravagance. During this period, the *favelado* became an extreme figure of 'otherness'. The poor who squeezed themselves into Rio's mountains modify the *cidade maravilhosa*. The opposition *favela* versus city reinforces the urban identification of Rio's dwellers. It is a manifestation of the opposition *sertão*/littoral, civilised/savage, rich/poor, clean/dirty, healthy/sick, moral/amoral. Through the bias of a negative analogy,

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<sup>17</sup> Euclides da Cunha, *Os Sertões* (Laemmert & Cia 1902).

<sup>18</sup> L Valladares enumerates the main characteristics of Canudos advanced by Euclides da Cunha: 'a) The specificity of a process of rapid urban growth, messy and precarious ... b) The topography of a region of hills that makes it a true bastion of difficult access ... c) The absence of private land property, with the establishment of a form of communal property of the space of the village ... d) the absence of hold of the State and public institutions ... e) a specifically political order marked by the hold of a chief ... f) a space that conditions the behaviour of individuals ... g) a moral behaviour that is revolting for the observer ... h) ... a danger for the entire region's social order ... i) For Euclides da Cunha, Canudos was the representation of freedom ...'. L Valladares (n 12) 24-26.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

the figure of the *favelado* contributes to the construction of the *carioca*'s urban identification.

It was also during this period that the *favela* became a social and urban problem, treatable by the means of measurable and concrete politics. Worried about the future of the city and its population, doctors and engineers approached the existence of *favelas* as a real 'social pathology' putting the city's beauty and health at risk. 'The representation of the *favela* retakes the idea of illness, of contagious harm, of social pathology that ought to be fought'.<sup>21</sup> There was a convergence of medical and urban discourses. Various political measures and public interventions took place within Rio's *favelas*. At this period the first systematic studies on Rio's *favelas* took place, notably the census of 1948,<sup>22</sup> specific to the *favelas* of the federal district, and the census of 1950,<sup>23</sup> 'that confirmed the location of this kind of urban settlement'.<sup>24</sup>

They inexorably implicated a direct link between the negative characteristics of their populations and their place of habitation. For example, the creation of Proletarian Parks at the beginning of the 1940s was envisioned as a solution to the problem of the *favelas* whereby these parks aimed at transferring the poor population from the city centre to more distant areas. Not only did they attempt to make poverty invisible to the eyes of society, but also they proposed a 'moral adjustment' of the transferred populations.<sup>25</sup> The simple naming of these residential ensembles implied a valorisation of the worker. For a long time, the *favelas* were considered temporary problems. The idea was to continue to relocate these populations to distant areas. The parks themselves were conceived as transitory

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid* 31

<sup>22</sup> The first census of the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro (then Distrito Federal) was a local census, made by the municipality (Prefeitura do Distrito Federal). It was finished at the end of March 1948 and published in 1949.

<sup>23</sup> National demographic census carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) every ten years.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid* 16

<sup>25</sup> Juliana Farias 'Da atualização dos mecanismos de controle : a transformação dos favelados em população matável' *Os Urbanitas—Revista de Antropologia Urbana* (2008) 5(7).

spaces that would ensure the former integration of their inhabitants in normal urban life.

Valladares argues that the representations of the beginning of the century have largely influenced the predominant representations of the *favela* during the second half of the century. The period that spanned the 1950s until the 1960s is characterised by ‘a valorisation of the social community that constitutes the *favela* and the inauguration of true fieldwork studies mobilising the methods of social sciences’.<sup>26</sup> It was at this time that the processes of territorialisation of urban poverty within the *favelas* took place. In response to this stigmatisation, social scientists opposed themselves to the vision of *favelados* as a marginal group. The critic of the ‘marginality theory’ grows in scope with Janice Perlman’s publication *The Myth of Marginality*.<sup>27</sup> *Favela* inhabitants were integrated into urban life by the means of their insertion in the work market and their actions in the political and cultural arenas. Nonetheless, despite their diffusion within intellectual circles, these works that oppose a dichotomist view of *carioca* society have not succeeded in changing the stigmatised representations of *favela* inhabitants in the social imagination of the city.<sup>28</sup>

During the 1960s and 1970s, the perception of *favelados* as a result of social marginality was widely diffused, having notably served as ideological justification to the ‘anti-*favela*’ operation: between 1962 and 1974, 80 *favelas* were wiped out—with 26,193 houses demolished and 139,218 people relocated into residential ensembles produced in series for this purpose.<sup>29</sup> It was the widest public intervention within Rio de Janeiro’s *favelas*.

The last period proposed by Valladares spans from the 1970s until today.<sup>30</sup> This period corresponds to a new phase of production of representations and knowledge about Rio’s *favelas*. It is

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<sup>26</sup> L Valladares (n 12) 65 (translated).

<sup>27</sup> Janice Perlman, *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro* (UCP 1976).

<sup>28</sup> See L Valladares (n 12).

<sup>29</sup> Licia do Prado Valladares, *Passa-se uma casa: Análise do Programa de Remoções de Favelas do Rio de Janeiro* (Jorge Zahar 39).

<sup>30</sup> L Valladares, *La favela d’un siècle à l’autre*.

characterised by the boom of doctoral studies on *favelas* within Brazilian universities. However, the sociologist estimates that *favelas*' representations produced by contemporary universities are in continuity with those constructed during the two preceding periods. Having become a fashionable subject, the *favelas* would have come to be considered as *the* place of social modern exclusion. Throughout her study, Valladares positions herself against the stigmas linked to marginalisation. For this period, Valladares focuses on the increasing interest of the academic world towards the *favelas*, but does not approach the state's progressively security related approach of these populations.

Until the 1980s, the *favelas* were mainly represented as locations of poverty. This negative image of the *favelas* was nonetheless counterbalanced by their valorisation as the land of Samba and popular culture.<sup>31</sup> During the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, an important shift took place in society's perception of these territories. This period coincided with an increase in the narco trafficking inside Rio's *favelas* and an augmentation of urban violence in the city.<sup>32</sup> From then on, the *favelas* would be represented almost exclusively through the violence and insecurity they created in the city's residential neighbourhoods.

The feelings of fear and insecurity that the inhabitants of the city express towards the *favelas*' inhabitants contributed to the development of a perception where each one of them was identified as a potential criminal. Progressively, the *favelas*' inhabitants were identified as extreme figures of otherness, the archetype of the 'dangerous classes'.<sup>33</sup> The result was a dichotomised perception of

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<sup>31</sup> Márcia Pereira Leite, 'Violência, risco e sociabilidade nas margens da cidade: percepções e formas de ação de moradores de *favelas cariocas*' in LA Machado da Silva (dir), *Vida sob cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro* (Nova Fronteira 2008).

<sup>32</sup> At the end of the 1980s, the narcotraffic bound itself to the international cartels in order to facilitate the entrance of large quantities of cocaine in the Brazilian market: Alba Zaluar & Marcos Alvito (eds), *Um século de favela* (Editora FGV).

<sup>33</sup> Louis Chevalier, *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIXe siècle* (Librairie académique Perrin 1958).

the city, which appeared to be divided between its formal neighbourhoods and its criminalised margins.<sup>34</sup>

In Brazil, the *favelas* inhabitants were progressively perceived to be ‘supposed criminals’.<sup>35</sup> The state’s approach to these territories was progressively security related.<sup>36</sup> Denounced over the years by intellectuals and human rights organisations, the arbitrary and systemic coercion of some armed ‘interventions’ inside the *favelas*—among other things—allow us to qualify them as ‘spaces of exception’.<sup>37</sup>

### The construction of ‘the enemy inside’ in Lebanon

In *l’Exil Palestinien au Liban*, historian Jihane Sfeir examined the arrival of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in 1947 and the early times of exile. Over the years there has been a change in the representation of the Other: ‘The perception Lebanese have of Palestinians evolves: they became the embarrassing guests, the refugees and, later on, during Lebanon’s civil war of 1975, “the enemies within”’.<sup>38</sup>

The Palestinian exodus had not been anticipated by Palestinians nor Lebanese. The arrival of 100,000 Palestinians corresponded to a ratio of one Palestinian to ten Lebanese. This new

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<sup>34</sup> Zuenir Ventura, *Cidade Partida* (Companhia das Letras 1994).

<sup>35</sup> Brazilian media often refer to ‘him’ who dies during police ‘interventions’ inside the *favelas* as a *suposto traficante*, or ‘supposed criminals’.

<sup>36</sup> As Foucault demonstrated, there’s an inherent relation between power and knowledge, where power is based on knowledge and makes use of knowledge. (Foucault 1974).

<sup>37</sup> ‘The state of exception is characterised by the suspension of the writ of law. It may be limited in time and be associated with state mobilization, as when a state decrees a state of emergency during wartime; but it may also be permanent and instigated by the status of a particular space. There is no question of a state of exception being officially promulgated in the Brazilian *favelas* or Palestinian camps in Lebanon. However, certain elements there mean their condition may be analyzed in terms of spaces of exception. These elements consist notably in the predominance of a martial metaphor, the perception of a state of necessity, the use of special armed forces, the blurring of executive and legislative powers, the existence of quasi-sovereign actors within these spaces, and the transformation in the lives of inhabitants exposed to death’ Dias (n 1) 386.

<sup>38</sup> Sfeir (n 13) 56.

reality demanded a series of adaptations on both sides. At the time of their arrival, Lebanese nationality and the methods of acquiring it were still under construction. The arrival of the Palestinians came as a new element, adding to the pre-existing sense of community and religious identity.

Sfeir stressed the importance of the creation of the State of Israel in the processes of construction of Lebanese nationality.<sup>39</sup> It was the emergence of this country that led the Lebanese to become conscious of their geographical borders, which were blurred during the time of mandatory Palestine. Israel assumed the role of the external enemy of the Lebanese State and its people. The presence of the Palestinians on Lebanese soil reinforced feelings of Lebanese patriotism.

The management of Palestinian affairs was limited, at first, to their identification and registration. In Lebanon, as in Brazil, we observe the need for counting and categorising these populations that had become alienated over time. In Lebanon, the question of the numbers was even more delicate than in Brazil, since it was determined in the confessional system of power sharing. The naturalisation politics observed in Lebanon was inseparable from a fundamental religious element. Under the mandate of president Camille Chamoun (1952–1958), most Christian Palestinians were naturalised.<sup>40</sup>

During the first years of the Palestinian exile in Lebanon, just as during the appearance of *favelas* in Rio, the perception of these situations as provisory predominated. In Lebanon, on the other hand, the establishment of the camps acknowledged the persistence of the refugees' presence. For many years, Palestinians did not install themselves in camps. As Mohamed Kamel Doraï observes: 'The camps that exist in Lebanon today formed in the middle of the 1960s. Until then, the refugees mobilised themselves, under constraint or voluntarily, among different camps, and from Lebanese towns and villages towards the camps.'<sup>41</sup> Almost ten years passed before the

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<sup>39</sup> *ibid* 84

<sup>40</sup> *ibid* 67

<sup>41</sup> Mohamed Kamel Doraï, *Les réfugiés palestiniens du Liban. Une géographie de l'exil* (CNRS Editions 2006), 56 (translated).

tents were replaced by concrete housing, at first with zinc roofs and then with cement.<sup>42</sup> It was a long and painful process for Palestinians, as the more their houses became concretised, the more their return to Palestine seemed compromised. Lebanese themselves also criticised the installation of camps in the long term. Still today, Palestinian refugees are subject to restrictions on the entry of construction material inside the refugee camps, which prevents all maintenance and renewal of their habitations. In 2005 such restrictions were lifted, but they can be imposed once more by decree of Lebanese authorities.

Sfeir reports that the management of Palestinian affairs in Lebanon became increasingly security oriented, controlling their right of displacement.<sup>43</sup> They were forbidden to move inside Lebanese territory without a permit. Confronted with a country that was under national construction, Palestinians were marginalised within the society and the Lebanese space.

As for the image of Palestinians in Lebanon, it evolved considerably: from rich tourists before 1948 to the enemies within. The Palestinians, thousands of people running from the war under precarious and chaotic conditions, became camp inhabitants (*soukkan al-moukhayyamat*), the refugees (*al-laji'oun*) being identified as the foreigners who disturb social, economic and religious order. If the refugees first inspired the compassion of the Lebanese, the military defeat and the perpetuation of a situation of emergency ensured that the refugee was increasingly perceived as a threat to public tranquility and a factor of division in 'national cohesion'.

Since their arrival in Lebanon, the question of the refugees has been linked to the question of migrants within the demographic and political debate. For a long time, Palestinians would be granted the status of foreigners with no nationality. As for the refugees who arrived after 1948, the situation was even more precarious: with no access to government services, they are were judged to be illegal residents. In this sense, societies' perception of refugees and

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<sup>42</sup> According to MK Dorai, 'in 1959, UNRWA estimates that the ensemble of the tents have disappeared from the camps, being replaced by concrete housing' (ibid) 58.

<sup>43</sup> The governmental decision of the 15 May 1951 forbids Palestinians to circulate without a permit within Lebanese territory: Sfeir (n 13) 95.

*favelados* was similar. For example, at the beginning of the twentieth century, popular habitat had become a main theme when discussing the future of Rio de Janeiro, which was at the time, the capital of the Republic. This theme was widely structured by the medical corps, which worried about questions of insalubrity and epidemics. In the same way, in Lebanon, a certain hygienist discourse was developed around Palestinian refugees. As the savings they had brought from Palestine diminished, their situation became more and more precarious. The Lebanese became afraid that the degradation in their living conditions would entail a proliferation in maladies threatening their own health. In Lebanon and in Brazil, refugees and *favelados* and similar lived experiences in that their material precariousness and their supposedly poor hygienic conditions, which were then interpreted as a threat to the health of the society.

In addition, Palestinians constituted a social group in a country that tried to preserve a fragile confessional balance. By its simple presence, the Palestinian was ‘accused of holding up the creation of a unified national identity’.<sup>44</sup> Sfeir advances, thus, the hypothesis of the Palestinian as the ‘enemy within’, complementary to the ‘outer enemy’, Israel. The presence of this enemy within contributed to the reinvention of a ‘Lebanese Self’.<sup>45</sup>

‘Stranger’, ‘potential destabiliser’, ‘troublemaker’: the stigmas concerning Palestinians grew. The Palestinians reflected the fears of Lebanese, by reflecting the image of everything they do not want to be: poor, stateless, powerless, desperate to return to a country that has been annexed by another.

Following the years of accommodation, major political events took place in Lebanon and within Palestinian society. Bassma Kodmani-Darwashi proposes the following periodisation:

- 1949–1969: development of refugee camps, which are closely controlled by Lebanese State. During this period, ‘Lebanese feelings vary from sympathy, indifference to latent hostility’.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid* 127

<sup>45</sup> *ibid* 128

<sup>46</sup> Bassma Kodmani-Darwish, *La diaspora palestinienne* (PUF 1997), 71 (translated).

- 1970–1982: ‘emancipation of the refugee camps towards Lebanese State, emergence of a movement of Palestinian resistance as an autonomous power centre inside Lebanese political system and a strong polarisation of the political scene between partisans and adversaries of Palestinians’.<sup>47</sup>
- 1982–1983: ‘departure of Palestinian leaders (PLO) from the country and a rise of insecurity for the civil population’.<sup>48</sup>

During the PLO years, as Palestinians became militarily and economically autonomous, hostility of the Lebanese population intensified towards the Palestinian State that was developing on national soil. In 1987, Lebanese National Assembly abrogated the Cairo agreements unilaterally, despite PLO protestations. Palestinians found themselves once more without formal legal recognition. In 1989 the Taëf agreements, which officially put an end to the civil war, made no mention of the political or civil Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Henceforth, Palestinian living conditions did not improve. After the end of the conflict, Lebanese legislation went back to its pre-war positions, in which the juridical frame concerning Palestinian presence was not clear. *De facto*, Palestinian refugees’ status is more precarious than the status of foreigners, notably because of the reciprocity clause presiding over the definition of their rights in Lebanon.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *ibid*

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*

<sup>49</sup> Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have different legal status. The ‘registered refugees’ are registered with the UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities. They can directly benefit from the different services provided by the Agency, such as education, health and lodging. The ‘non-registered refugees’ are Palestinian refugees that are registered by the Lebanese government but not by UNRWA. They have limited access to the agency’s services. The ‘non-registered’ or ‘non-id’ refugees are neither registered by the agency, nor by the government. In general, they do not resort to UNRWA assistance. Their mobility is also extremely limited as, not having any papers, they are afraid of being arrested by the police.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the images Lebanon and Brazil built around their undesirability, allied to the examination of the policies employed towards them, reveals that the gap between both processes of exclusion is not as considerable as we could have thought at first. In both cases, a security approach to these populations progressively takes place. In the same way as in Lebanon, the presence of refugees comforts the Lebanese sense of identity, in Brazil inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro gained a social distinction from their confrontation with the chaotic universe of the *favelas*.

Progressively, in Lebanon an urban dimension is added to this mirror game. In both countries, a dichotomy between *the inhabitants of the formal city* and *the inhabitants of the informal city* appeared. In Brazil, the question of the nation state, present in the Lebanese case since the arrival of the Palestinians, became increasingly predominant. Between the 1980s and 1990s, a rupture occurred in the integration that the Brazilian national project offered to the poor. This way, in Brazil as in Lebanon, a dichotomy emerged between *those who were protected by the jurisdiction of the state* and *those who lived in a no man's land*. In this sense, we can affirm that the condition of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon and the *favelas* in Brazil, originally very distant, have the tendency, in present times, to converge towards the same reality: that of the urban ghettos that, in addition to a geographical marginalisation, know a *de facto* marginalisation within the nation state.