

# Segmented Governance Patterns—Fragmented Urbanism: The Development of Guarded Housing Estates in Lebanon

Georg Glasze

*Geographisches Institut der Universität Mainz D-55099 Mainz Germany*

*The development of private, guarded residential complexes on the outskirts of Lebanese cities asks for an explanation. On the one hand, some Lebanese commentators see them as a direct consequence of the war or interpret them as "traditional" ethnic-confessional segregation in a new disguise. On the other hand, international scientific discussion on the spread of this new kind of housing in many regions of the world is dominated by universalistic approaches. The conceptual framework of this case study is based on an intermediate approach. The concept of urban governance uncovers the segmented patterns of social interaction as an important context—a sine qua non—for the development of guarded residential complexes in Lebanon for two periods.*

*Key words: Guarded housing estates, urban governance, Lebanon*

*Le développement de complexes résidentiels privés et surveillés dans les alentours de villes libanaises pose la question des raisons de leur succès. D'un côté, certains commentateurs libanais les voient comme la conséquence directe de la guerre, sinon comme une nouvelle expression de la ségrégation ethno-confessionnelle « traditionnelle ». De l'autre, la discussion scientifique internationale sur l'extension de ce type d'habitat dans de nombreuses régions du monde est dominée par l'approche universaliste. Le cadre conceptuel de cette étude de cas repose sur une approche intermédiaire. Le concept de gouvernance urbaine permet de découvrir les modèles segmentés d'interaction sociale comme le contexte important, un sine qua non permettant le développement des complexes résidentiels sur-*

*veillés au Liban pendant deux périodes.*

*Mots clés : Lotissements résidentiels surveillés, gouvernance urbaine, Liban*

## **Introduction: The Global Rise of Guarded Housing Estates**

The spread of gated and guarded housing estates in many regions of the world has triggered a new and widespread discussion about the relation between social and urban development. The interest of the media and the social sciences in this trend to life behind gates is hardly surprising. Within the guarded housing estates contemporary global processes of urban development seem to materialize, as these estates are taken as indications of certain social developments whose existence has frequently been postulated but which—as social processes—are hardly visible. Thus, the gates and fences are interpreted as manifestations of a fragmentation of urban societies, as well as of a privatization and fortification of former public spaces. However, as the initial research on this subject has focused chiefly on the U.S., academic discussion has, for a considerable time, been marked by a certain U.S.-centrism and by universal judgments. Observations in urban regions of the U.S. were taken as indications of global trends, but this assumption was not based on empirical work. It is only in recent years that geographers and other social scientists have begun research on the spread of guarded housing estates outside the U.S.

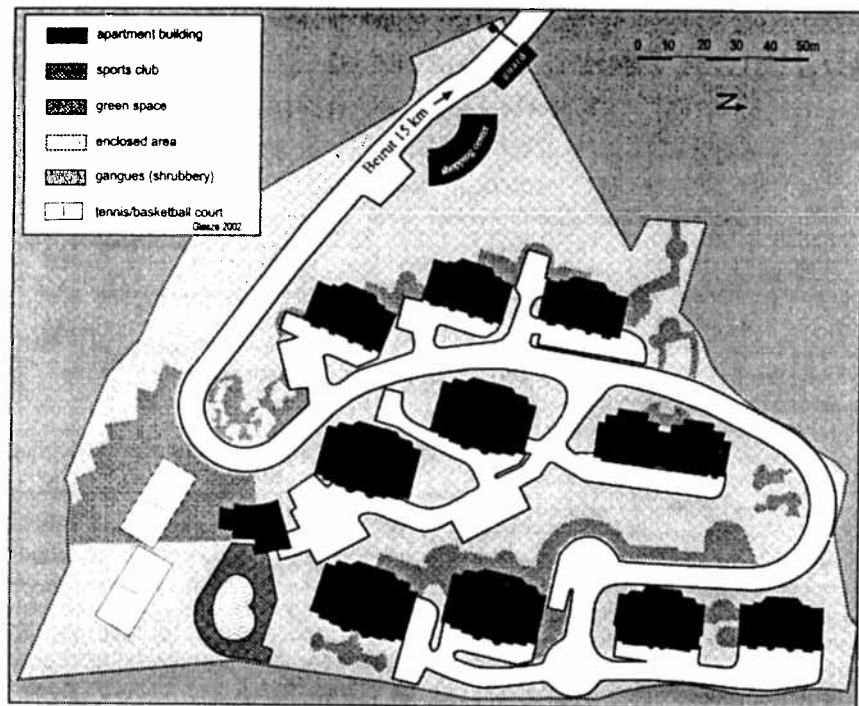


FIGURE 1

The condominium Al Majal, established in the 1990s on a hill overlooking southern Beirut

(Webster, Glasze, and Frantz 2002)—in regions as diverse as South Africa (Jürgens 2002), Latin America (Coy and Pöhler 2002) or South-East-Asia (Connell 1999; Giroir 2002).

Since the 1980s guarded apartment and villa complexes have mushroomed on the outskirts of the Lebanese capital of Beirut and in the developing suburban fringe south of Tripoli, in North Lebanon. Guarded housing estates in Lebanon may be differentiated as *condominiums* containing apartments (Figure 1) and *gated settlements*, with single-family homes or terraced houses predominant.

While these complexes are intended to be used as main residences, there are also several gated beach and mountain resorts, as well as two gated ski villages (Figure 2), mostly used

for secondary residences.

All these projects combine common property with the individual property of a housing unit, the right to use an apartment or house with some kind of access limitation through gates, fences or walls. They offer maintenance and 24-hour-security services, as well as natural (e.g., beach, view) and artificial (e.g., pool, tennis court) amenities. The common property and the common services are managed by a self-governing organization. Altogether these estates represent approximately 2 % of the total Lebanese housing supply in 2000 and an estimated 7 % of the housing stock built in the 1980s and 1990s.

Some authors have linked the spread of guarded housing estates in Lebanon, not to

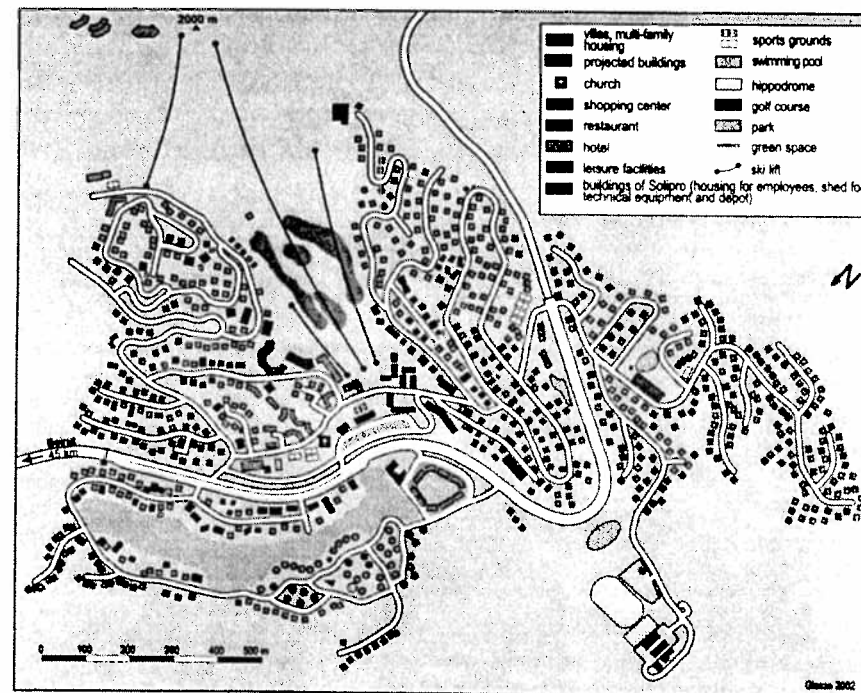


FIGURE 2

The gated ski village Faqra, in the high mountains of Mount Lebanon—a playground of the Lebanese elite

global, but to specific local processes. Several authors have interpreted these “exclusive ‘bubbles’ ... of self-sufficiency” (Tuéni 1998, 285) or “autonomous complexes” (Davie 1994, 61) as a result of the Lebanese war. The Lebanese author Michael Young sees these “new cantonments” as a new retreat to “the mountains” and a rejection of the city as the place of living together (1995). Thus he links the boom of guarded housing estates in post-war Lebanon to traditional patterns of ethnic-confessional segregation.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, the spatial seclusion of social groups is not a new phenomenon in the cities of the Arab world. Urban research on pre-modern towns has shown the socio-spatial and material fragmentation of urban patterns into small and distinct quarters to be one of the

most typical characteristics of Arab cities (Abu-Lughod 1987; Raymond 1989; Wirth 2000). As Raymond (1994) says, the “compartmentalization of the city ... [was] particularly marked in the case of numerous religious and ethnic communities” (15). It would certainly be over-simplistic to describe these developments in Lebanon as just a re-appearance of the fragmented settlement patterns in many of the old towns (Glasze and Alkhayyal 2002). On the other hand, it is highly doubtful whether the approaches that dominate international scientific discussion permit a sufficient analysis of the specific contexts in which this kind of segregated housing pattern emerges.

Therefore, this article has two objectives: First, I will show that the three approaches

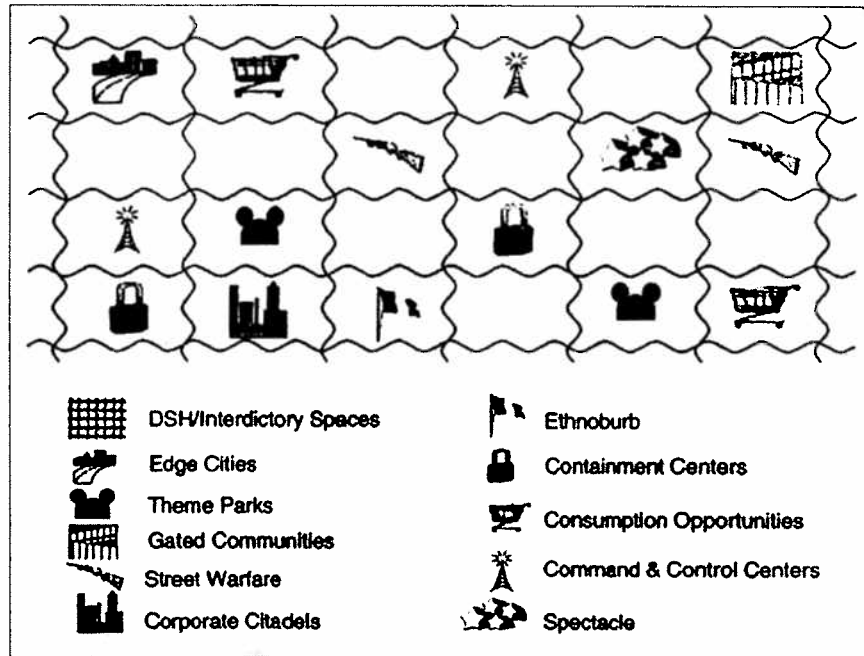


FIGURE 3  
A model of postmodern urbanism (After Dear and Flusty 1998, 66)

that, to date, dominate the debate on the spread of guarded housing estates have some potential to explain several aspects of the development of gated housing estates, but they are too universalistic and do not account for the historical and geographical differences in urban development in different parts of the world. Secondly, therefore, I will outline an approach that allows conceptualizing the specific social contexts of urban developments as institutions and uncovering the causes for the spread, in two specific periods, of guarded housing estates in Lebanon.

**Explaining the Development of Guarded Housing Estates: Three Dominant Discourses**

It is possible to identify three approaches generally adopted in the discussion about the

causes for the spread of guarded housing estates:

Many authors ascribe the spread of guarded apartment complexes and settlements in many urban regions of the world to the crisis of Fordist economics and a global economic restructuring process, which has led to a new social class structure. As a consequence of economic restructuring, qualifications and incomes become polarized between a growing underclass, on the one hand, and a new, highly qualified transnational elite, on the other (dual-city hypothesis). From this perspective, guarded housing estates are seen as the "citadels" (Friedman and Goetz 1982) and "touching down places" (Marcuse 1997) of this transnational elite. American geographers from Los Angeles, like Michael Dear and Ed Soja, even move beyond the idea of a dual city and see the development of guarded

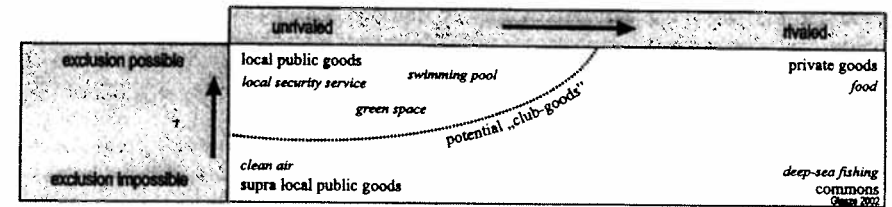


FIGURE 4  
Private goods, public goods and "club goods"

housing estates as part of a fragmentation of urban spaces. In their opinion, the example of Los Angeles shows paradigmatically how a deregulated and flexible economy and a pluralization of lifestyles lead to the development of a "postmodern urbanism," with enclaves that, socially and functionally, are largely autonomous. In 1998 Dear and Flusty published a model that visualizes these new urban spaces. The "gated communities" are presented as one enclave, beside spaces like themes parks, shopping centres, or ethnically defined neighbourhoods (Figure 3).

Social scientists who do empirical research on guarded housing estates often see the causes for their spread in the (changing) preferences of housing seekers. The search for personal safety, good living conditions, a prestigious living place and a socially homogenous neighbourhood leads to the self-segregation of wealthy households.

Some British and American social scientists have suggested a third, and wholly different, more pragmatic perspective, judging guarded housing estates as an economically efficient way of organizing residential spaces and as an alternative to the public organization of local territories into municipalities. Here, the fact that public entities supply collective goods, even in market economies, is commonly explained by the argument of market failure. The market supposedly fails to provide goods when nobody can be excluded from consumption and when there is no rivalry over consumption. A free rider can profit from these goods without financing them, and consequently, the private sector

does not supply such goods. Classical examples for these goods, accordingly called "public," are road networks and air-pollution control. However, the economic geographer Tiebout showed, in 1956, that some of the collective goods generally referred to as "public" are better described as "local public goods." Green-spaces, local security patrols, or public swimming pools only serve those people who are situated at a certain locality. According to Tiebout, these local public goods may be provided by competing neighbourhoods if the following conditions are met:

- Local public goods are financed exclusively by local taxes of the residents.
- Households are fully informed about the neighbourhood and chose the one that suits their particular preferences (voting with their feet).

Foldvary (1994) has pointed to the fact that the self-administration and the gating of guarded housing estates meet these conditions and enable the exclusion of free riders. In economic terminology, groups that collectively, but exclusively, consume specific goods on the basis of proprietary and/or membership arrangements are called "clubs," and the collective but exclusive goods, "club goods" (Buchanan 1965). Foldvary (1994) and Webster (2002), therefore, interpret the guarded housing estates as the establishment of club economics with territorial boundaries. As "territorial collective goods" (Foldvary 1994, 25) or as spatially defined "club goods" (Webster 2002, 399) these local public goods are placed exclusively at the disposal of the

club members—the residents of the complex. In the long run, housing seekers are able to choose the private neighbourhood that best suits their preferences—just as if they were buying a new television, a pair of new trousers, or a new car (Figure 4). Finally, Foldvary and Webster judge guarded housing estates as the outcome of an evolution in urban institutions that enables a market-driven, and therefore efficient, supply of local public goods.

### Critique of the Three Dominant Discourses

These three approaches can be assigned to three basic social theories and, therefore, largely share their potentials and shortcomings. The argument that a global economic restructuring has led to new, fortified elite spaces follows the tradition of neo-Marxist political economy. This macro-theoretical approach offers an explanation for the international dimension of the development of guarded housing estates, as well as for the historical “kick-off” of this phenomenon at the end of the 20th century. However, empirical studies have shown that the dualization of societies may not be the most important factor for the development of gated housing estates. The development of income distribution in some of the so-called global cities is not appropriately described by the idea of the dual city (cf. Hammett 1994). Studies in the U.S. (cf. Frantz 2000) and other countries (cf. Kanitschneider 2002; Kohler 2002) have shown that it is not only the elites who are moving into gated housing estates; rather, the trend is apparent also in the decisions of many households in the medium income range. Finally, this approach does not sufficiently explain the regional differentiation of these developments or answer questions such as, Why are gated housing estates established outside of the big metropolis? Why is there (at least up to now) no or almost no such development in some global cities, like Tokyo or Paris?

Concentrating on the preferences of housing seekers follows the tradition of demand-oriented urban research. The strength of this approach lies in identifying the motivations and images that inspire housing seekers to buy or rent in a guarded housing estate. However, many studies of housing have shown that housing seekers have only a very limited choice. A one-sided focus on individual preferences clouds the issue of differentiated power of action and purchasing power. An explanatory approach based exclusively on the preferences of housing seekers would explain the development of gated housing estates, not only too simplistically, but also incorrectly as the consequence simply of personal tastes. In order to understand why specific social groups, in specific regions of the world, move into guarded housing estates, one has to conceptualize the social context in which housing seekers act.

Discussing guarded housing estates as an instrument that enables an efficient supply of collective goods combines the approaches of neoclassical and institutional economics. The theory of “club goods” complements the dichotomy between private and public goods and shows that, from an economic perspective, the guarded housing estates cannot adequately be described as privatization but should be seen as a creation of new exclusive “club spheres.” Finally, the analysis of private neighbourhoods as club economies helps to explain the economic attractiveness of these complexes for developers, local governments, and residents. Developers may profit from the fact that the establishment of a neighbourhood governance structure with the power to exclude free riders, as well as the power to regulate the use of common spaces and facilities, reduces the risk of neighbourhood economic degradation. Thus the long-term risks of investing in large-scale projects are reduced and developers are able to invest more in creating and maintaining shared facilities. Furthermore, they can market not only the individual home but also the club goods within the neighbourhood as

contractual tie-ins. (Local governments may profit from private neighbourhoods’ being established within their boundaries, as they obtain a development that is self-financing and adds to the local base. And residents may profit from the level and the quality of local public goods supplied in private neighbourhoods. Private neighbourhoods offer a range of services (e.g., maintenance, 24-hour-security, solid waste collection), as well as artificial (e.g., pool, tennis court, green spaces) and natural amenities (e.g., beach, view). Furthermore, individual owners may profit from stable home values, as self-administration ensures strict control of the social and physical environment. Nevertheless, the theory of club goods poses some problems. The idea of an evolution towards economically efficient institutions is blind to the conflicting interests in societies and, therefore, is apolitical, and ultimately, a-historical and a-geographical. To what extent this form actually is an attractive option for the actors involved in a specific regional housing market cannot be explained by this approach.

To conclude, the macro-sociological approach, “global economic restructuring,” as well as the micro-sociological approach, “individual housing preferences,” and the economic, “club-goods”-approach have some potential to explain some aspects of the development of gated housing estates:

- The theory of club goods helps to explain the potential attractiveness of this form of neighbourhood organization for actors on the demand side and on the supply side, as well as for public actors.
- The rapid development of gated housing estates in many regions of the world suggests that there are global processes that lead actors involved in housing markets to view gated housing estates as a reasonable option. However, the global city-dual city hypothesis seems to depend too much on economic determinism and has, at least partially, been empirically disproved. Certainly, the results of empirical studies of housing

preferences should not be taken as explaining the development of gated housing estates. However, such results can convincingly be integrated into more complex conceptions.

To conclude, historically and geographically differentiated development patterns cannot sufficiently be explained by these three approaches alone. For the conception of a regional case study, these approaches somehow seem too “big” or too “small.” Therefore, in the discussion that follows, I will develop an approach that conceptualizes the social and political environment of urban development as consisting of institutions. Until now, the potential of institution-based urban studies has hardly been recognized by research on the development of gated housing estates.

### The Urban Governance Model and Methodology

For the Lebanese case study, I applied an approach, which conceptualizes the social context of urban development as consisting of institutions. Often, institution-based approaches in urban studies have focused on public actors. It is only in recent years that, under the label “urban governance,” this unilateral focus has been expanded to non-public actors. My research aimed to identify the actors on the demand side, such as households looking for a new flat; the actors on the supply side, such as architects, investors, or builders; as well as public actors involved in the development of guarded housing estates. Moreover, I attempted to reveal the constellation of interactions and action-oriented principles that lead to the development of guarded housing estates. The pattern of involved actors and their interactions in a specific historical and regional situation is here called urban governance.

The concept of “governance” is, like the concept of “government,” closely related to the idea of steering but refers not only to steering by state authorities but also to

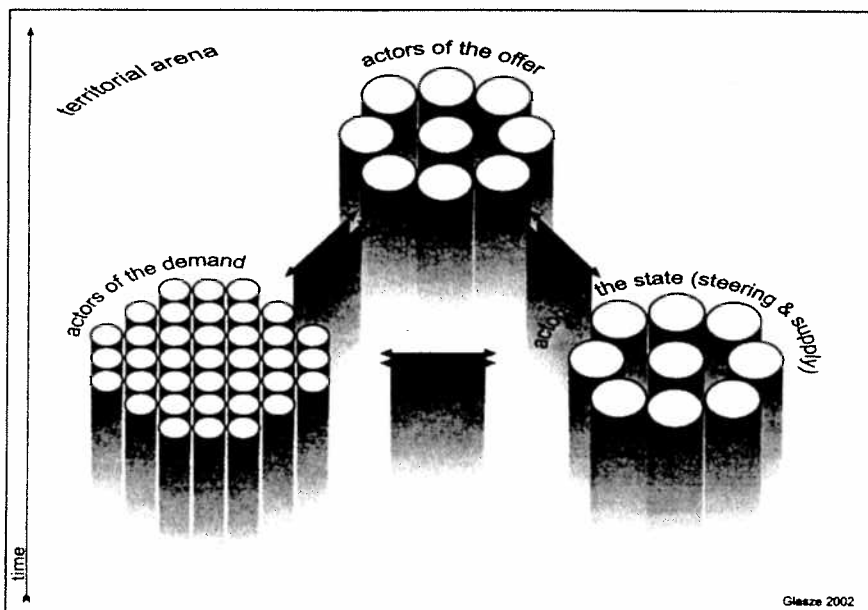


FIGURE 5  
The "urban governance"-model

steering by the complex interplay and interests of different actors (Figure 5).

This model meets the criticism often levelled at universalistic models of urban development: the idea that "politics matter" is conceptualized by taking into account both the actors on the demand and the supply sides and the actors with political power, as well as the "rules" of their interactions. The dictum that "history matters" is conceptualized as the "third dimension" of institutions. Defined as supra-individual patterns of human interaction, "institutions" create what is called path dependency. And, as the rules for the interplay of different actors are often solidified as institutions which refer to specific territories—extreme examples are formal institutions such as laws and decrees—this approach enables us to conceptualize regionally different contexts of urban development as "territorial arenas," which means that "geography matters."

In view of this multifaceted approach, the case study was based on a linkage of different methods—a triangulation of the methods of qualitative and quantitative social studies, as well as of the methods of classical geographical research. As basis for the next steps of the case study and in view of the absence of even elementary empirical information on the phenomenon, I mapped the guarded housing estates countrywide. In accordance with the urban governance approach outlined above, qualitative research methods constituted the core of the research agenda (Glasze 2003): Narrative interviews with 25 residents of guarded housing estates focused on the accommodation biographies of these people, their motivation for moving to such a housing complex, and their life within the complex. Three group interviews with several residents of guarded housing estates followed the same scheme but concentrated mostly on the life

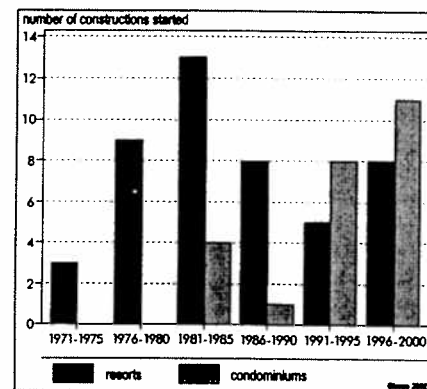


FIGURE 6  
Construction period of resorts and condominiums in Lebanon

within the complex. Day-to-day community life in two housing complexes was observed during longer stays in two complexes.

The main actors on the supply side were architects and developers. Therefore, problem-oriented interviews with 9 architects and 30 developers constituted an important part of the research agenda.

In 11 interviews with representatives of the media, advertising agencies, private security services, and environmental NGOs, as well as employees in public planning in two major municipalities affected by guarded housing estates, I tried to get information about these organizations. These interviews, then, were carried out as expert interviews—individual aspects played only a minor role.

An important source of information was the analysis of documents such as press archives, juridical documents such as laws and decrees, grey literature such as planning concepts, the master theses of Lebanese students, and protocols of meetings. The qualitative content analysis of publications and advertising for 20 projects aimed at uncovering how suppliers marketed their products and which images and language patterns they thought appropriate in order to underline the attractiveness of the housing estates.

These qualitative methods were complemented by a standardized survey of 653 residents, which helped to retrieve information about the demographic and socio-economic structures of the households within guarded housing estates. It also yielded important information about the residents' housing biographies, as well as about community life within the complex. Last but not least, the survey aimed at a quantitative analysis of the motivation for moving into a guarded housing estate.

#### Guarded Housing Estates in Lebanon: From Enclaves of Well-Being to Lifestyle Enclaves

Guarded housing estates in Lebanon were mostly established in two periods. In the first phase, during the civil war from 1975 to 1990, the first resorts and condominiums were constructed. In the second phase, during the 1990s condominiums mostly, as well as few resorts and gated settlements, sprang up on the outskirts of Beirut, Tripoli and Saida (Figure 6).

#### Exclusive Refuges: Resorts and Condominiums during the Civil War

The construction of the first resorts and condominiums in Lebanon was closely related to the specific context of the civil war and was concentrated to a high degree on the Kesrouane region, in the centre of the area controlled by Christian militias—the so called "Christian canton." Here, a specific cooperation was established over several years among the developers of resorts and condominiums, the leaders of the militias, and families looking for new housing—mostly Christians taking refuge in the region (Figure 7).

In view of the missing foreign tourists and the influx of Christians from Beirut and Tripoli, some hotel owners on the coast of the Kesrouane region decided, in the mid-1970s, to transform their building complexes from hotels into resorts with owner-occupied

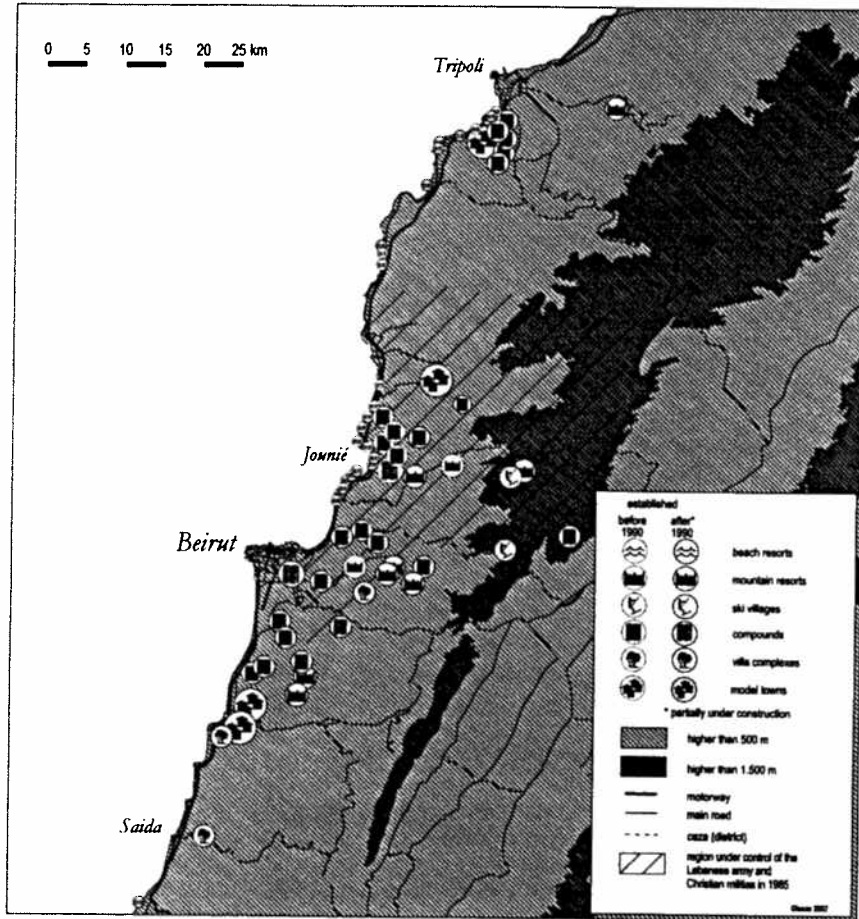


FIGURE 7  
Guarded housing estate in Lebanon

apartments.

The developers profited from the fact that the militias had largely superseded the authority of the state. In times of absent, weakened, or corrupt state authorities, developers took advantage of the public domain of the coastline and illegally privatized access to the beaches. Originally, the area of most of the beach resorts did not exceed 2 ha, yet many doubled or even tripled their surface

area later (Figure 8).

Often, a new resort was developed under the patronage of the leader of a militia. Therefore, in the first place, the developers could disregard the planning and building laws without meeting resistance. Thanks to the close relations of some of the militia leaders to the marginalized and confessionally segmented public authorities, some developers could obtain even public approval

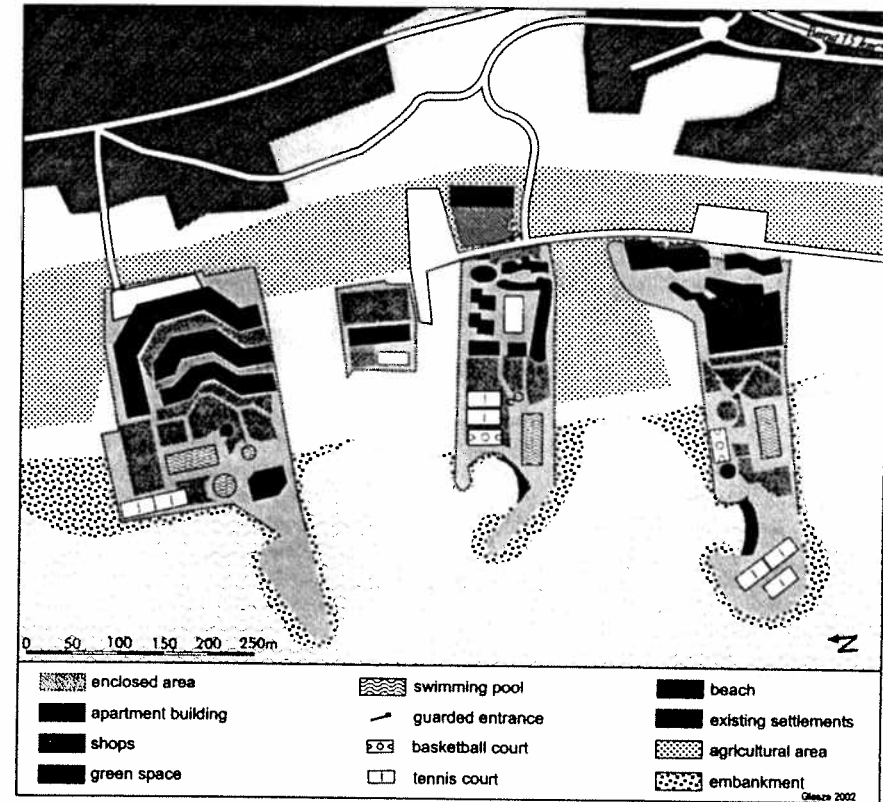


FIGURE 8  
Three resorts in the Kesrouane region

for the illegal occupation of the public domain. In the second place, the militia leaders profited from these projects, as they got a financial contribution from the developers and took a tax from the apartment buyers. Furthermore some militiamen found work as guards or watchmen in the new complexes.

The financial success of these resorts led other investors to copy this successful model. Indeed, they were successful. Again and again, new "rounds" of the civil war made additional families look for a refuge in the region. Moreover, thanks to the economic boom of the 1960s and 1970s, as well as to the influx of money from Lebanese guest workers in the

Gulf States, a lot of families had enough money to buy a first, if not second, apartment. The first gated condominiums in Lebanon were established in the mid-1980s, also in the Kesrouane region. The purchasers of these first condominiums were, for the most part, upper- and middle-class Christians, who had left Beirut or Tripoli. Many had already lived in beach resorts, where they took refuge and came to appreciate this kind of housing. Once they decided to stay in the region, many looked for larger apartments in a condominium estate.

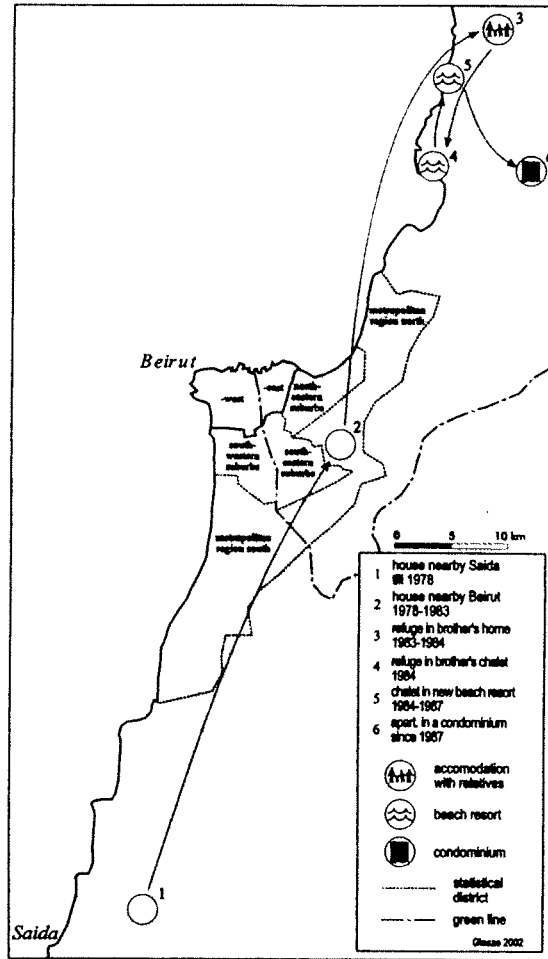


FIGURE 9  
Housing biography of a Lebanese family

**The Housing Biography of Family A**

Family A comes from South Lebanon, near Saida. They already had been expelled from their home in 1975. In 1982 they had to give up their new house in Beirut, due to fighting at the so-called green line. Together with her daughters, Mrs. A went to her brother's home, north of Beirut, in the

Kesrouane region, far away from the casualties in Beirut. For several months they stayed in the chalet of her brother—a small apartment in a beach resort. As the situation in Beirut did not improve, the family decided to buy a chalet in another new beach resort. They planned to keep the apartment after the end of the war as a holiday home. But the war did not end; on the contrary, in 1985 their house in Beirut was destroyed. So they decided to stay in the region and to look for a permanent home. They wanted to keep the comfort of a guarded housing estate. At the end of 1985 they moved into a big apartment offering 250 m<sup>2</sup> in a newly built condominium. Mrs. A summed up their life in the condominium during the civil war: “We did not suffer like the others did. We always had water and electricity. And we have been in a big house, a community. ... It has been a world apart.

People who moved to a gated housing estate during the war were, in most cases, attracted by the secure supply of water and electricity. During the war, the resorts and the condominiums were enclaves where the secure supply of water and electricity was guaranteed, in surroundings where public services had more or less stopped functioning (Awada 1988; Dajani 1990). Generators and enormous water tanks or wells made the complexes largely self-sufficient. In particular families, driven out of their old domiciles, valued the protection offered by fences, guards, and life in a community. Thus with the resorts and condominiums, the demand for a residential environment that promised a secure supply and personal safety was satisfied. During the

war, guarded residential complexes enabled the residents to maintain a minimum quality of everyday life, which could hardly be found outside the gates.

**Guarded Housing Estates as Enclaves of a “Global” Lifestyle—The Post War Boom**

In the post-war real estate boom of the early 1990s, more than 20 new projects—predominantly condominiums and gated settlements—were started in the suburban surroundings of Beirut and Tripoli. Unlike the first guarded residential complexes in the 1980s, the residential complexes of the 1990s were established by developers who had almost all of whom had experience in the real-estate sector. Most of them had become familiar with the concept of guarded residential complexes outside of Lebanon. Some had already been involved in the planning, the building, or the administration of such complexes—for example, in South America, the U.S., or Saudi Arabia. After the end of the war, they expected that Lebanon would again become an “Eldorado” of the real-estate sector. Their conviction was based on two assumptions. First, there was the prospect of a large demand for luxurious dwellings. Many of the interviewed developers assumed that there was a huge deficit in the housing supply, especially for the young urban couples. Furthermore, the “millions of wealthy Lebanese” abroad, who would return to their mother country or at least buy a second residence there, would foster the demand for housing. Secondly, many developers acted on the assumption that Lebanon could recover within a few years as the main economic and tourist centre of the Arab Middle East. Therefore, capital investment in real estate seemed to promise high and rapid returns on investment—especially investment in luxury apartments.

However, at the end of the 1990s it became clear that the demand did not meet the supply of luxury residences, which came

on the market in large numbers. Wealthy Arabs from the Gulf States only reluctantly bought real estate in Lebanon, and the return of Lebanese from abroad almost came to an end with the lasting economic crisis in 1996. Since then the emigration of young Lebanese has exceeded the repatriation. Moreover, against the background of the recession at the end of the 1990s, many households of the Lebanese middle class were no longer able to finance a dwelling in a guarded residential complex. Last but not least, in the Beirut region the guarded residential complexes, which are mostly situated in the periphery, are faced with a new trend to living in the city centre—partially fostered by the more solid reconstruction of Beirut’s city centre.

In large-scale publicity campaigns the investors tried to reach their target group in Lebanon, as well as the Lebanese abroad. In the advertisements, guarded residential complexes were presented as self-sufficient and socially homogenous oases in nature, far away from the environmental pollution and the disorder of the cities. The brochure for a big condominium project near Beirut, for example, promised “homes for the future society.”

The promise of a better quality of life—good environmental conditions; leisure-time facilities; and a “modern,” international, and well-educated community—appealed to young households of the Lebanese middle class. Lebanese re-migrants, who returned to the country after the end of the war, expected, in choosing a guarded residential complex, an orderly and acceptable place to live, such as they had become accustomed abroad. Both groups were attracted by the image of a global lifestyle, oriented to Western models, which was promised by the advertisements. Thus a young Lebanese man who returned to Lebanon after living in South and North America for several years described his life in the condominium Al Majal (Figure 1): “I almost feel like I were still in Miami here; there is a basket court, there is a pool, there will be a highway to the city ...”

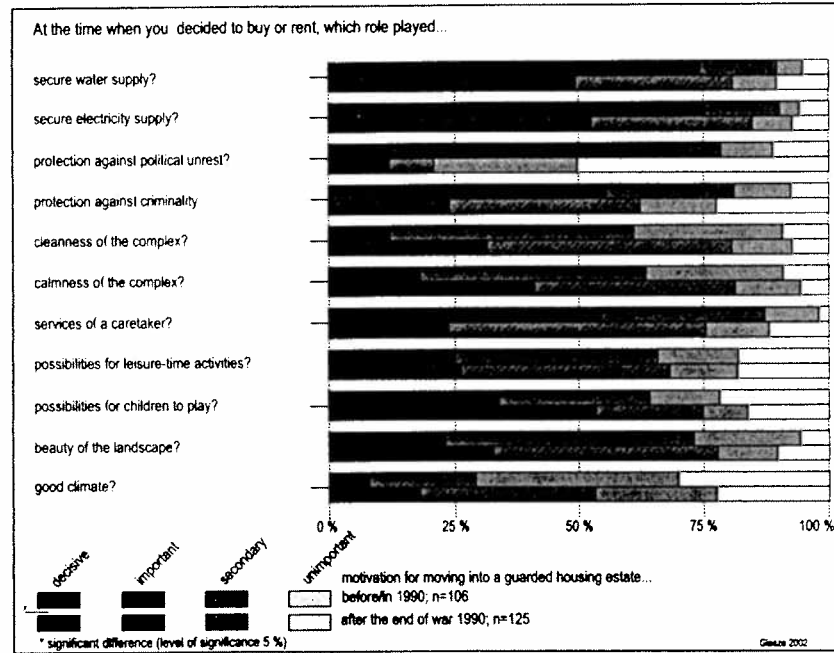


FIGURE 10  
Motivation for moving into a guarded housing estate

Nevertheless, the “secure supply of water and electricity” together with “possibilities for children to play in a safe and green surrounding” were still the most important motives cited by people who moved to guarded housing estates after the end of the war (Figure 10). Therefore, even after the reinstallation of public authority, the residents were still attracted by the private provision of local public goods within the guarded housing estates.

On a micro-scale, the complexes filled the gap left by the inadequacy of public authorities at the national level. And this was true not only for supply but also for regulation. The bigger projects, especially, attracted customers by establishing regulations for zoning and building that were much more severe than public regulations and served to ensure aesthetic surroundings for the clien-

tele. The developers of the “private model town” Mechref, for example, established regulations for each section that were far more rigid than the regulations of public planning for this area. Thus they limited the areas where multiple family dwellings were permitted and prescribed a minimum lot size of 1 000 m<sup>2</sup>, a maximum surface exploitation of 30 %, a maximum total exploitation of 40 %, a maximum building height of 10.5 m, and the coverage of a minimum of 60 % of roofs with red roof tiles.

**Synthesis: “Club Economies,”  
“Globalization” and Regional Governance  
Patterns—Components of an Explanatory  
Model**

This case study of Lebanon has shown that the development of gated housing estates

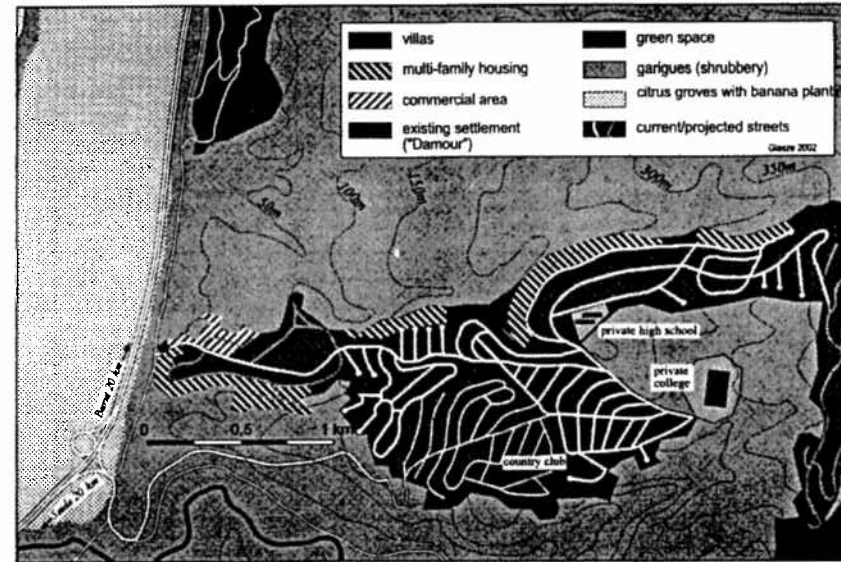


FIGURE 11  
The zoning of the private, guarded settlement Mechref, south of Beirut

cannot be understood fully with the approaches of a universal model alone. Nevertheless, some results of the case study are also valid beyond Lebanon. The findings of researchers who studied the development of gated housing estates in other parts of the world,<sup>2</sup> allow drafting a model of the development of gated housing estates, which, for didactical purposes, integrates a range of different approaches (Figure 12).

The economic functioning of private and guarded housing estates can be described as club economies with territorial boundaries. Self-administration, with the obligation to pay fees on a regular basis, solves the problem of free riding. Furthermore, communal life in the complexes, as well as the development of buildings, is regulated on a contractual basis. This form of neighbourhood organization, therefore, offers some potential advantages for the local state and the suppliers, as well as the residents.

The rapid development of gated housing estates in many regions of the world suggests that there are global processes, suggests that actors in different housing markets judge gated housing estates as an attractive option. The global city dual city hypothesis offers a macro-sociological explanation for this global development. However, the case study of Lebanon, as well as studies in other regions, has shown that it is not only the elite that is moving into gated housing estates and that the importance of the “dualization” of societies for the spread of gated housing estates has to be qualified. If one defines “globalization” as a “time-space compression,” triggered by new technologies of information, communication, and transport, as well as by the liberalization of national and regional regulations, it is possible to identify some economic, political, and social consequences that render gated housing estates more attractive for developers, housing seekers, and public organizations (Glasze 2003):



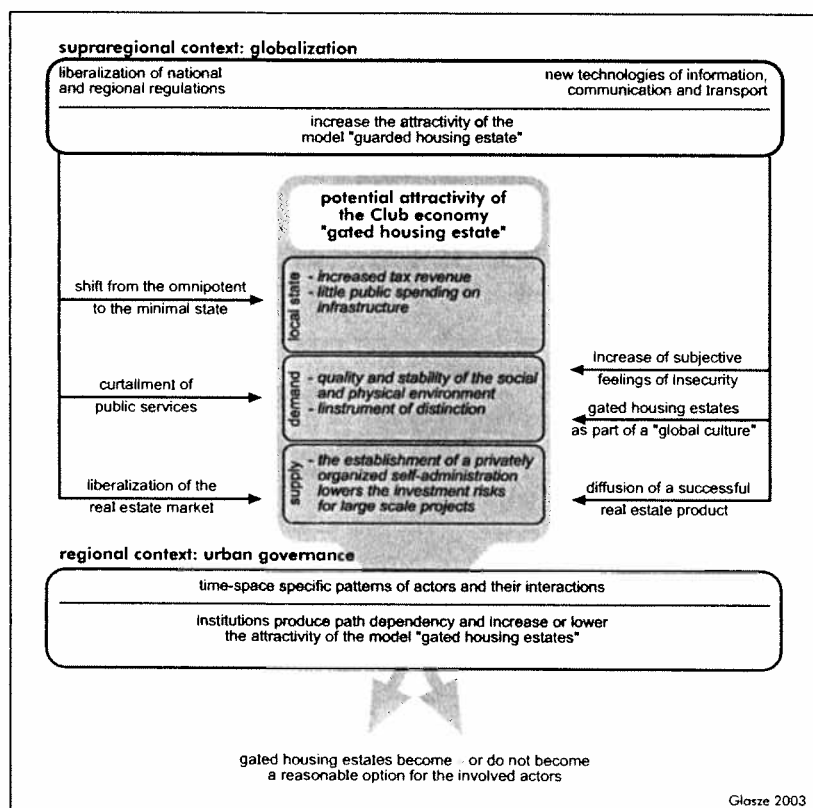


FIGURE 12  
A model of the development of gated housing estates

1 *The shift from the model of an omnipotent state to a minimal state*—In the second half of the 20th century, in almost all Western countries, has been established a state model that can be described briefly with the keywords “Keynesianism” and “welfare state”: The basic idea has been that the state intervenes in the economy in order to steer and balance, without endangering, the capitalist market system. Provoked by a crisis of finance, legitimacy, and execu-

tion, a change in the model away from the concept of an omnipotent, interventionist state may be perceived. Especially since the breakdown of the communist systems in Europe, ideas of deregulation and privatization dominate the political discourses in many countries around the world. The idea is to replace intervention through politics and public administration with the supposedly self-regulating forces of market mechanisms. However, in a minimal state the municipalities are

hardly able to steer urban development, in the sense of permitting democratic political decision making. The liberalization of real-estate regulation and urban planning has enlarged the margin of manoeuvre for private investors in several countries. In post-war Lebanon, the international context, with liberalization and privatization the dominant discourses, kept the public pressure in favour of effective public bodies weak. Furthermore, as this case study in Lebanon and further studies in Latin America (Janoschka 2002) and South East Asia (Leisch 2002) have shown, the secure provision of a high quality infrastructure (e.g., electrical power, drinking water, communication) plays a crucial role in the attractiveness of private and gated housing estates for housing seekers. In many regions, especially in the so-called Third World, guarded private complexes replace public administration and regulation—but only for a clientele that has the means to pay for it.

2 *Growing feelings of insecurity*—In the course of changing social differentiation and individualization, fundamental uncertainties arise. Informal social networks, like kinship or other traditional forms of community, grow weaker and are no longer available with certainty in times of crisis. At the same time, in many countries one can observe that systems of social security have been reduced. Furthermore, in many regions competing private media lead to a growing “canalization” of media coverage. And last but not least, the global flux of migration increases the visibility of strangers and rouses new feelings of uncertainty (Siebel 2003). Against this background, many residents of guarded housing estates do look for security—the security to live in an environment whose physical and social qualities are regulated by private contracts and are, therefore, often perceived as more

stable than in “normal” neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, in contrast to much of the media coverage, in Lebanon and in many other countries “security” seems to be only one motivation for life in such a housing complex, and often not the most important.

3 *Guarded housing estates as part of a global culture*—In Lebanon guarded housing estates are marketed as places of a modern and Westernized elite—as part of a global culture—and many residents do, indeed, perceive their place of residence in this way. Studies conducted in other countries of the so-called Third World show similar results. Furthermore, international migration accelerates the spread of this form of housing. So interviews with residents of guarded complexes on the outskirts of Beirut have shown that Lebanese families who got to know and to appreciate the concept of autonomous and guarded housing estates in Saudi-Arabia looked for similar forms of housing when they returned to their home country. On the supply side, a diffusion of new models can be observed as well. Several developers of gated housing estates in Lebanon knew this concept from professional experiences outside of Lebanon. For example, like shopping centres, gated housing estates are part of a repertoire to which actors on both the demand and the supply side are able to refer.

**Segmented Governance Patterns—  
Fragmented Urbanism**

As shown earlier, several effects of globalization increase the attractiveness of territorial club economies. Nevertheless, the question of whether gated housing estates actually do become an individually reasonable option for the actors involved in a specific housing market can only be answered by analyzing the historically and geographically different patterns of urban governance. In Lebanon, the

development of the first guarded residential complexes was closely related to the specific context of the civil war, in particular in the "Christian canton," and was driven by the demand for "enclaves of well-being" in times of insecurity. The development of guarded residential complexes in the 1990s was connected, to a greater degree, with supranational trends and was mainly driven by the supply side. However, the reconstruction of the governance patterns in both phases shows that in both phases the actors involved acted in a complex social context, which was the *conditio sine qua non* for the emerging of guarded residential complexes as an individually meaningful option for them. The boom in guarded residential complexes cannot be explained without taking into account the specific interactions among developers, housing seekers, and public authorities, which were structured along sectarian lines (Glasze 2003).

Even after the war, the Lebanese state did not secure a reliable supply of collective public goods. Many families distrusted the efficiency of the state. The choice of a dwelling in a guarded residential complex was often a way to achieve a better supply of local public goods on an individual basis (e.g., green spaces, secure water supply and disposal, good environmental conditions). As has been shown, the secure supply of energy and water frequently played the crucial role in the decision to buy a dwelling in a guarded residential complex also in the 1990s.

Private investment in the property market is little controlled. Public urban planning was re-established after the war, but the building law, and especially the practice of the public authorities, made the establishment of self-sufficient residential complexes in peripheral regions an economically meaningful option, although it did not determine their development.

Thus the question arises. Why does the Lebanese state not fulfill core tasks of public and municipal authority. The answer lies in the institutionalizing of segmented interac-

tion patterns. Even the re-established Lebanese state does not fulfill the idea of an organizational unit, where public authorities have a certain autonomy in relation to the particular interests of individual groups and orient their actions to the public interest. Ministerial posts, in fact all posts in the administration, are occupied in equal parts by Christians and Muslims. Most employees in the public service owe their posts to a confessionally determined preference by a patron. Therefore, they remain clientelistically connected with this patron. Also, after the end of the civil war, public representatives in the highest ranks of the state presented themselves expressly as members and representatives of "their" confessional group (Picard 1994). The ideal of public actors who initiate and moderate the construction of the public interest in public discourses, as well as ensure their final adoption, fails in the context of segmented interaction patterns. The state is rather the tool that serves to implement particular interests or at least to defend them. Public regulations are interpreted as an illegitimate use of clientelistic structures by participants from another segment and seldom find acceptance as legitimate implementations of a public interest. Therefore, also, in post-war Lebanon public regulation seldom finds acceptance as the implementation of a public interest and is regularly regarded as a non-legitimate attempt to expand the power of one particular group. In consequence, often, public control of urban development is determined by a *laissez faire* attitude. The Lebanese sociologist Khalaf doubts, in principle, if "urban planning as a rational strategy for controlling and allocating resources" (1985, 214) is possible in view of a sectarian state organization and the importance of confessional and clientelistic relations.

Comparison of the governance patterns of both periods shows that the interaction between the investors and the leaders of the militias during the civil war can be interpreted as an aggravation of a pattern that has a long

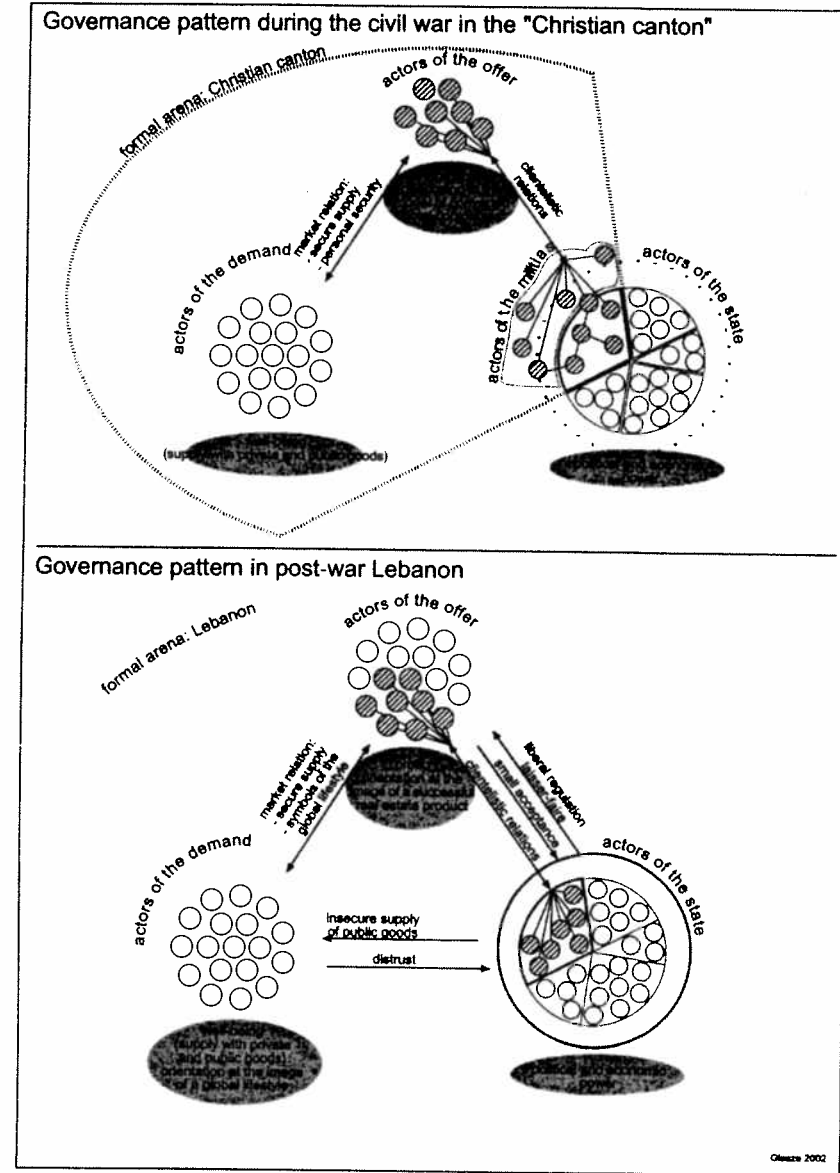


FIGURE 13  
Urban governance in Lebanon

tradition in Lebanon and dates back to the segmented structure of the Lebanese state at the beginning of the 20th century, a pattern that continues in post-war Lebanon: clientelistic connections between economic and political elites along confessional lines and, associated directly with those connections, liberal public regulation and unreliable state supplies. Power and the resources associated with public functions are segmented, in accordance with a more or less proportional representation of the religious communities (Figure 13). Since 1943 all governments of independent Lebanon have pursued a liberal political course, granted the private sector nearly unrestricted leeway, and limited public regulation and supply to a minimum. Only against the background of these decade-old traditions can it be understood that nearly all of the developers and owners interviewed were convinced that the possession of a property entails the right to develop it. Furthermore, the absence of even a minimum amount of public regulation during the civil war often corrupted the distinction between legality and illegality. The option of legalizing nearly all offences against town planning and building laws through the payment of a fee, confirmed the conviction of many developers that building laws should not be taken "too seriously" in Lebanon. The attempt of the Hoss government to strengthen the supervision of construction activities in 1999 was interpreted by many developers as an unequalled and outrageous interference in their property rights. Altogether public regulation is constrained by *laissez faire* policy. Ideas for the long-term protection and a sustainable creation of public goods fail inevitably. The concept of self-sufficient, guarded residential complexes, therefore, finds a fertile environment.

The dominant elites of the different religious and confessional communities profited and profit from the segmented structuring of social relations. Thus it is not surprising that they kept or strengthened the segmented structure of the Lebanese state, partly by essentializing the differences between confessional

groups and seeing these differences as fundamental, as a Lebanese "gouvernementalité" (Foucault 1989), prior to the construction of the state, and partly by linking an anti-confessional rhetoric with a confessional practice (Mahdi 1996; Reinkowski 1997).

However, the successful protest of Lebanese environmental groups against the building of new beach resorts in Jbail shows that in the 1990s new actors stepped into the arena. They asked the Lebanese state to protect the public property of the coast from privatization and to keep international agreements concerning the protection of monuments and the environment (Al-Azar 2000). Ultimately, they asked the public authorities to act like ideal public authorities. The future will show whether a reform of the Lebanese state can develop from such beginnings, as the basis for public actors that let themselves be guided by the idea of the public interest. However, in view of a still unreliable supply of local public goods (e.g., bad environmental conditions, lack of green areas, uncertain supply of water and energy) and an urban development that is largely uncontrolled, all of the investors, architects, and developers interviewed were convinced that guarded residential complexes are the lifestyle of the future. The plans to realize that future are already in their drawers.

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#### Notes

- 1 Young refers to Hourani.
- 2 I would like to thank my colleagues of the research network Gated Communities/Private Urban Governance for fruitful discussion during our meetings and

conferences in Hamburg 1999, New York 2000, and Mainz 2002 (cf. <http://www.gated-communities.de>).

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