

**Piety and Pleasure:  
Youth Negotiations of Moral  
Authority and New Leisure  
Sites in al-Dahiya\***

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In the pious Shi'i community in the southern suburb of Beirut, young people seek out spaces for social interaction that accord with the norms of morality and appropriate behavior defined by their religious tenets. Yet they do not do so blindly. Rather, young people often redefine those tenets through their social interactions, interpreting injunctions in ways that may open moral codes to broader definition or limit them more stringently. In this paper, we argue that youth practices and discourses of morality are flexible in their deployments, especially when it comes to recreation, and that this interpretive flexibility works to redefine ideas about leisure within a framework of religiosity. In addition, through the process of navigating and rewriting the boundaries of moral comportment in relation to leisure, pious Shi'i youth are contributing to the (re)production and (re)construction of an Islamic milieu in the city that also extends to other regions of the country.<sup>(1)</sup> Although this milieu has no

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(1) By "milieu," we mean both the physical spaces where people live or enact particular norms and values and the public sphere where those norms and values are debated. Pious Shi'i Muslims thus are always participating in defining the Islamic milieu and its boundaries. For more, see Deeb 2008.

geographic borders, it is possible to imagine it as centered in al-Dahiya. Over the past ten years it has grown both spatially and in terms of popularity, and has proliferated into ever-more arenas of life.<sup>(2)</sup>

In this article, we focus on two aspects of our project related to youth: first, on the notion of generational change as one factor in the emergence of a vibrant leisure sector in al-Dahiya, and second, on the ways that pious youth redefine ideas about appropriate morality and leisure by drawing on a variety of authorizing discourses, including their own interpretive authority. In what follows, we first discuss the context and address the timing of youth reformulations of appropriate leisure, and then use the example of leisure practices in new cafes and restaurants to analyze this shifting moral landscape.

### Why now?

Several factors explain why youth debates about places and practices of leisure started to proliferate in the early years of this century. The first is political contingency: the liberation of South Lebanon in May 2000 marked a moment when, as one of our interlocutors said: "People wanted to go out again, especially youth...It's natural, because we could breathe." These consumer desires were reflected in and encouraged by private capital investment in the entertainment sector. Several entrepreneurs, often Shi'i expatriates returning to Lebanon, told us that they felt confident about investing in the leisure sector after 2000, especially after witnessing the successes of two large-scale entertainment projects in al-Dahiya: Fantasy World and al-Saha Traditional Village.<sup>(3)</sup> The political polarization that later followed the July 2006 war fortified territorial enclaves, limited mobility and consolidated sectarian-based practices. As people began to go out closer to home, entrepreneurs responded to these new market pressures. In our summer 2008 survey of half the cafes and restaurants in al-Dahiya, 64% had originally opened between 2006-2008.<sup>(4)</sup>

(2) In our larger project, we discuss the production and contestation of the Islamic milieu, spatial practices in relation to the vibrant leisure sector in al-Dahiya, the history and political-economy of the new leisure sector and the role of capital and international investments in its development, and shifting ideas about taste in relation to class mobility in the area.

(3) Fantasy World was initiated in 1999 by a private contracting firm close to Hizbullah (al-Inmaa' group) and provides "family entertainment" through a theme park, restaurants and cafes. Al-Saha Traditional Village was inaugurated in 2001 by al-Mabarrat, Sayyid Fadlallah's philanthropic organization, and includes restaurants, cafes, wedding halls, a motel and a museum (Harb 2005).

(4) The majority of these cafes have been opened by local small businessmen, many of whom invest in a café or restaurant along with a few friends or family members. For more on these cafes and restaurants in al-Dahiya, see Harb and Deeb 2009.

A second factor has been the socio-economic transformation of the Lebanese Shi'i community over the past thirty years and the growth of middle-class Shi'i consumerism. Indeed, the 1990s saw the consolidation of an urban Shi'i middle class in Lebanon, the result of greater educational and sectarian institutional support, as well as remittances and high rates of return emigration. In Dahiya, pious middle-class youth have begun to demand the same access to leisure that youth of other neighborhoods of Beirut have long enjoyed, but with the caveat that the leisure activities remain consistent with their lifestyle.

Market demand for leisure compatible with moral norms based on specific forms of Islam is also related to the growth of a transnational Muslim public sphere (Eickelmen and Anderson 1999, Salvatore and LeVine 2005) and growing markets for pious fashion (Balasescu 2007, Moors and Tarlo 2007), faith-based travel and pilgrimage (al-Hamarneh & Steiner 2004, Pinto 2007), and religious commodities and commemorative practices (Starrett 1995, Schielke 2006). New cafes and restaurants, combined with the proliferation of new communication technologies (e.g., Bluetooth, internet) have provided spaces where youth can meet, flirt, and redefine the boundaries of appropriate intimacy in the process (cf. Mahdavi 2009). Through their demands for certain types of leisure spaces, youth in al-Dahiya are participating in a growing global capitalist culture that highlights the construction of particular Muslim identities.

However, political and economic factors do not sufficiently explain the growth of either a leisure sector that meets particular moral criteria or new forms of appropriate intimacy among youth. Instead, we suggest that a complete understanding of why new sites, debates, and ideas about leisure have recently emerged in al-Dahiya must take into consideration the generational shifts that have occurred in the area.

## **A generation of "more-or-less" pious youth**

The Shi'i Islamic mobilization in Lebanon in the late 1960s and 1970s<sup>(5)</sup> resulted in two changes that are significant to understanding the contemporary context. The first is numerous Shi'i social and political institutions, including the political party Hizbullah and the institutions of Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah,<sup>(6)</sup> which ensure multiple sources of moral authority. The other major

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(5) For more on this history and the institutions of Hizbullah, see Deeb 2006, Harb In press, Norton 1987 and 2007.

(6) Another key political movement that emerged from this mobilization is of course Haraket Amal. However, Amal is the group least involved in the construction of the Islamic milieu we are discussing, and its relationship to faith is less pronounced than that of Hizbullah or Fadlallah.

change is that a particular sort of pious and moral lifestyle based on specific religious ideas and practices has become both a part of common-sense knowledge and desires for many in al-Dahiya, and a social norm to which people are often expected to conform. The emergence of this generation of pious youth provides the missing explanatory link for understanding why new practices and ideas of leisure are currently proliferating in the southern suburb.

The power of generational shifts in producing social change has been theorized from a number of perspectives. The Birmingham school of cultural studies popularized a notion of youth as actively constructing subcultures, particularly through commodity forms (Hebdige 1979, Hall and Jefferson 1993). Several anthropologists have recently noted that the consequences of the subsequent focus on "youth culture" as a universally applicable concept has been a fetishization of youth as a category and of resistance, divorced from political-economic, historical, and relational contexts (Cole 2007, Christiansen et al 2006). They re-center Mannheim's classic understanding of generations (1952: 291) as produced and defined through shared experiences and understandings of as well as specific responses to particular historical and cultural events (Borneman 1992, Christiansen et al. 2006). Cole and Durham (2007) additionally emphasize that although youth are often crucial to social change and its imagination, they must be understood in relation to older generations and state structures.<sup>(7)</sup> Within this conversational context, we understand generational categories to emerge through social processes, in relation to specific cultural and political-economic contexts and, we would add, in relation to shifting moral norms and sources of moral authority.

In al-Dahiya, today's pious youth represent a significant generational shift away from the previous "Islamic vanguard" generation - whose efforts in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s led to the Lebanese Shi'i Islamic movement and its institutionalization. That generation often had to fight against their own parents' notions of morality - cast as "traditional" - in order to be able to enact their new understandings of both religious and political commitment. This contrasts sharply with the experiences of young people in al-Dahiya today, who were born and raised in the 1980s, after the key struggles of the vanguard generation had taken place, may have attended Islamic schools, and came of age in an environment where norms of public piety were taken for granted and where Hizbullah was already a popular and powerful political party.

(7) Cole and Durham posit the concept of "regeneration" to describe this "mutually constitutive interplay between intergenerational relations and wider historical and social processes" (2007:17).

At the same time, vanguard generation mothers have expressed concern that their daughters are not adequately pious, and some suggested that this may have been related to the extent to which the community as a whole had reached a point where particular forms of pious comportment were a hegemonic norm (see Deeb 2006: 226-8). In other words, they were concerned because pious practice for youth had become normative and perhaps routinized, and because it was *not* constructed in opposition to the norms of their environment. Many parents feared that this very normativity would provoke an abandonment or insincerity of piety in their children.

And indeed, these fears may not be entirely unfounded. We suggest that these parental concerns point to the ways that youth have begun to question moral boundaries related to ideas and practices of leisure, by engaging with multiple sources of moral authority, including their own interpretations. While religious faith is certainly important to many young people in al-Dahiya today, and many do embrace a pious lifestyle, their definitions of that lifestyle differ from those of the vanguard generation. Specifically, it is the details of practice that are consistently debated and redefined.

### **Multiple moral authorities**

The diversity of youth opinion and interpretation on matters of leisure is facilitated by the existence of multiple sources of moral authority in the Lebanese Shi'i community. While pious young Muslims often expect the spaces and behavior of people around them to conform to certain moral standards, they are also well-versed in the interpretations of multiple religious scholars, and tend to view moral standards with a greater flexibility than did the vanguard generation. It is through this flexibility that this new critical mass of "more-or-less" pious youth has both contributed to a new market for particular sorts of leisure sites, and, crucially, holds new desires to redefine what constitutes appropriate and moral behavior in leisure.

One of the factors contributing to youth approaches to moral authority is the ease of access to authoritative opinions, facilitated by the plethora of print and audio-visual media produced by the offices of religious leaders and Hizbullah. Sermons, decisions, advice and recommendations are distributed through books, pamphlets, audiotapes, and CDs, and are broadcast via websites, television and radio. Youth also seek and obtain knowledge about religious interpretations and advice from religious leaders through private meetings, telephone and internet consultations. In addition, young people talk to one another about the opinions of various leaders and scholars, passing information around that may or may not be accurate and up-to-date.

Hizbullah is a key voice in defining the boundaries of moral behavior with regard to both leisure sites and appropriate moral behavior. While the party does not formally enforce many religion-based moral norms, there are certain moral limits in the southern suburb that differ from other parts of Beirut - the most obvious being that cafes and restaurants do not serve alcohol. Hizbullah will exert pressure on a restaurant that tries to serve alcohol and may resort to threatening its owner. However, situations rarely escalate to that extent because the broader community will usually first exert economic pressure that would put any establishment that tried to serve alcohol out of business. Other limits are far more flexible, and despite Hizbullah's popularity, the party is only one source of moral authority in the community and it struggles constantly to negotiate the boundary between political power and the promotion of particular social norms.

Another key voice in defining the boundaries of moral behavior is religious scholar Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah who has been a *marja' al-taqlid* since the 1990s. Fadlallah is the most popular *marja'* in Lebanon, followed by Ayatollah Khamenei and the Iraqi Sayyid Sistani, both of whom have representatives in al-Dahiya who provide guidance and advice to their followers. Fadlallah's popularity is due to his clarity of language, pragmatism, and belief that interpretation should work to facilitate young people's lifestyles whenever possible within the limitations of Islam. This is especially important in the pluralist context of Lebanon, where Fadlallah is appreciated as a *Lebanese marja'*. As a result, he tends to be viewed as more progressive than others on a wide variety of issues, including gender and sexuality. Fadlallah also consistently encourages his followers to use their judgment and interpret situations for themselves, a call that exists in constant tension with the practice of following a *marja'* in the first place. As Sayyid Ja'far, Fadlallah's son and representative, explained to us, Fadlallah is concerned with advising people on what is *haram* and *halal*. But, he continued:

"There is another level that is related to life in general, and that is the level of *akhlaq* (morals) or *qiyam* (values). And this level rests on the choice of the individual himself, meaning that he chooses to *yankharit bi aw la yankharit bi* [participate or not participate], depending on his mood, his environment, his culture, and his perspective on his role in life. There are people who, maybe don't like to go to certain places, and other people no... and as long as a person doesn't do anything *muharram* (forbidden) in these places, then there is no problem with him going there."

This emphasis on individual responsibility is crucial to the emergence of today's pious youth as a generation that is pushing the boundaries of moral behavior. Furthermore, while the vanguard generation generally keeps their personal interpretation within the frameworks set by Fadlallah and Hizbullah,

young people have been pushing the boundaries set by those formal authorities and prompting discussions that touch on different areas of life. And religious leaders seem to be responding. For example, many Shi'i religious scholars state that one cannot pray while wearing nail polish, while others say that if one completes her ablutions first and then paints her nails, prayer is acceptable. In July 2008, young women described Fadlallah's opinion to us as follows: as long as one nail is left clear, one can paint her other nails and pray, explaining that as long as water can pass unrestricted over one unpainted nail, a person can still complete her ablutions. Yet by April 2009, Fadlallah's response to the same question, this time asked via his website, was that nail polish does not interfere with ablutions and therefore one may wash and pray while wearing it.

Today's youth in al-Dahiya are educated, literate, expectant, media-savvy, and, as a result, feel entitled and able to engage in these debates about moral norms, and reshape them. We describe these youth as "more-or-less pious" to emphasize the flexibility with which they tend to approach the majority of moral norms and their own definitions of their piety. Their commitment to their religion is by no means uniform. Instead, many have taken Fadlallah's teachings about individual moral responsibility to heart and believe religiosity is something to be developed by the individual. This individualistic notion of faith also parallels their consumerist subjectivities and fits with broader transnational shifts towards commodity-based religious identities. We now turn to illustrating the ways that youth hone and renegotiate moral norms through appropriate leisure sites.

### **Leisure sites, "appropriate" cafes and restaurants**

Since 2000, young people living in the southern suburb have been enjoying their free time in new places that have been multiplying throughout their neighborhoods. There are at least 75 new cafes and restaurants in the area, bustling with smartly dressed customers smoking *argileh*, drinking cocktail juices, eating *saj manaqish*, chatting and gazing, enjoying the privacy of a space hidden behind a column, or being part of the spectacle. Cafés operate also as catwalks: young women, whether wearing headscarves or not, go to cafés made up and very well dressed, exhibiting their bodies. Young men show off brand names and other external signs of distinction - sometimes in relation to faith or politics, by wearing "Shi'i" rings or using Nasrallah's speeches or a party anthem as a ring tone.<sup>(8)</sup>

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(8) These are large single-stoned rings that sometimes contain a protective "hijab" - a slip of paper with a Quranic verse written on it. In Lebanon, they are associated with Iran and Hizbullah.

Most of these new sites are intent on providing their customers with modern stylized décor, high-quality food, coffee, hookahs and wireless Internet access. Consider for example Café.Yet, an internet café in a prime location in the southern suburb. Waitstaff dressed stylishly in all black serve Illy brand Italian coffee along with French and Arabic pastries and hookahs. The café is colorfully designed, with chairs and tables fitting into each other to form red, black and white cubes, and shiny reflective floors and walls that produce a sleek, polished effect. Many young people expressed their appreciation for the high-end services and aesthetic provided by this café and others like it. In describing these places, they highlighted how the recreational sites previously on offer in their neighborhoods were not up to "quality standards," while those available in Beirut were while not being respectful enough of the religious norms to which they strive to conform. New leisure sites in the southern suburb combine both of these requirements: aesthetic and service qualities with what many called a "conservative atmosphere." Indeed, what distinguishes these places from others in Beirut, and marks them as "pious" - or perhaps the better term is "moral" - is their facilitation or accommodation of a particular lifestyle, described as '*shar'i*' (licit) or *muhafizin* (conservative) - or often simply "*munasib*" (appropriate) - by both their clientele and their owners. At its most basic, this means that they do not offer alcohol or non-halal meat. It also sometimes means that they also do not play dance music or allow intimate interactions between sexes, though these latter restrictions are far more debatable and are among the moral norms being contested by today's youth.

How are youth (re)shaping these spaces through their negotiations of moral norms and their simultaneous desires for fun and faith? Negotiations are taking place in conversation with formal sources of moral authority in al-Dahiya. Fadlallah and other religious leaders weigh in informally about the appropriateness of various sites, suggesting standards of behavior rather than assessing specific sites. In keeping with his views on individual responsibility, Fadlallah emphasizes that beyond the clear rules on what is *halal* and *haram* - into which fall things like alcohol, halal meat, and physical intimacy between unmarried people - everything else falls into the realm of personal interpretation and has more to do with societal values than religious law.

More critically, Hizballah is both directly and indirectly involved in defining the relationship between play and morality. Party-run municipalities provide support to specific establishments and discourage others - by facilitating legal permits for the former and exerting pressure on the latter to redefine their business to fit within the party's ideas about moral standards. One café owner whose establishment has Italian soda syrups lined up on a wall behind a coffee bar reported a visit by guys who "looked like Hizbullah" who seemed to be



inspecting the contents of those bottles. Apparently he passed the test, as his business has been doing quite well since. This speaks also to the indirect censorship - led by committees resembling "neighborhood watch" groups - that takes place via unofficial boycotts of local cafés that do not fit the party's ideas about moral standards. This enmeshment was highlighted by a prominent woman party member, who explained that such cooperation between "society" and the party was "natural," saying, "Our society is helping a great deal with this. So today, you see that there are *shar'i* swimming pools, and you find, as you mentioned, cafés, and these things are increasing a lot. And it is under our control, I mean, it's not outside our control. Many of the owners of these projects make sure that we are in support of the project, (...) and people ask us, 'Can we go to this place? Is there a problem with going to so-and-so's place?' It's not Hizbullah that's doing it. I'm saying that society, people are demanding these projects, and are also asking our opinion of these projects." Hizbullah's leaders may also legitimize establishments through their patronage, though their visits can also be interpreted as attempted co-optation. Of course, how one feels about Hizbullah's involvement in this process depends in large part on the extent to which one identifies with and supports not only the party, but the specific understandings of piety and morality that it promotes. For us, the key question is the extent to which the party is in fact able to influence the ideas of pious youth about particular places or how much of this influence is wishful thinking on the part of party officials.

Our conversations with youth suggest it may be more the latter. For example, music conducive to dancing is understood to be "forbidden" by Fadlallah, Hizbullah, and many in the vanguard generation. In the last decade, official opinions on music have shifted, so that today Hizbullah utilizes a wide variety of musical instruments in its compositions, including electric guitar and drums, and Fadlallah emphasizes that the content of lyrics is what matters, and suggests that listeners be alert to the difference between *shawq* (longing or desire), which is acceptable, and *ghara'iz* (sexual instincts), which are unacceptable, in love songs. Yet in the absence of official regulation of music in Lebanon, acceptability is interpreted widely by youth, as well as by the managers and owners of the establishments that they frequent. Most cafes and restaurants in al-Dahiya play soft music but some set their large LCD screens to music video channels, playing Arabic or Western pop music.

What constitutes inappropriate music changes depending on the time of year and on the clientele of an establishment at any given moment. One café owner told us that she turns the MTV channel on if the clientele appears to her like they would enjoy that type of music, but that she would then change the channel if other customers who look more "religious" came in. On an individual level, some

young people refuse to listen to all forms of pop music entirely, others determine appropriateness based on the specific lyrics of songs, some emphasize context and conduct over type of music, and still others publicly shun pop music but listen to it secretly on their mp3 players. Similar differences emerge in relation to whether one would enter an establishment that serves alcohol or not. Time of year is also relevant here, and during Ramadan or Ashura, for instance, people who might frequent restaurants with alcohol on the menu during other months cease to do so temporarily.

With regard to both norms around the presence of alcohol and certain forms of music, what is perhaps most striking is the diversity of opinion among youth and their acceptance of that diversity among their friends and peers. For example, in one of our focus groups, young men disagreed with one another on whether or not it was appropriate to go to restaurants that play pop music. One felt strongly that it doesn't matter what music is playing and noted that his cell phone rang to the tune of a popular song. Another commented that he recently stopped listening to popular music because in his opinion religion tells him not to, but then said, "but it's only me personally, I can't restrict other people from listening. Everyone should change what's in him," again reflecting Fadlallah's views on individual responsibility. A third young man shifted the conversation to the topic of alcohol, and expressed a view similar to that of the first, noting "if restaurants sell alcohol I have no control over that and I have nothing to do with it, I'm not going to drink." In contrast, the young man who recently stopped listening to popular music tries not to enter restaurants with alcohol, but occasional does when family is visiting from outside Lebanon. For others, it comes down to how blatant a violation of moral standards appears to be. In another interview, twenty-year old Firas explained, "It is one thing if there is a table with a few people drinking beer sitting there, but it is another thing when it is a bar, and all there is is people drinking and dressed like that and dancing on the chairs."

With the exception of the red-line violation of actually drinking alcohol, youth are willing to admit their differing standards, opinions, and behaviors to one another. Again and again in our focus groups, young people admitted to listening to pop music or going to cafes that serve alcohol (without drinking themselves) in front of friends, peers, spouses and strangers. And while certainly some do feel pressure to conform, many reported that the prevailing understanding is that faith is something that every individual develops in his or her own way and own time. As long as the absolute redlines are not crossed, there remains space for negotiation, movement, moods, and even day-to-day changes in activities and comportment without accusations of hypocrisy or immorality.

Another crucial aspect of defining particular places as conservative, moral or appropriate are the social interactions that take place within them. The ideal

moral standard of conservative behavior means that unrelated men and women do not touch or sit too closely to one another, though there is no enforced segregation between "family" and "shabab" sections of most restaurants and cafes in Dahiya. Also, "the kind of people who go there" is a primary criteria by which people generally judge places. Cafes and restaurants in al-Dahiya incorporate a sense of *entre-soi* - the security, comfort and validation that come from being among one's peers and community. Yet, ideas about moral behavior may serve to mask other concerns: given the ways that sectarian divisions are spatially entrenched in Beirut, "the kind of people who go there" could also reflect polarized sectarian discourses in Lebanese politics. But we are keen not to overstate the sectarian dimension to the detriment of sheer moral flexibility. As one young woman, Hawra' put it, "You go to places that fit with your values. You can tell immediately, from the place, the setting, you can just tell. And when you are living somewhere, you know about the places." And as evidenced by the diversity of opinion on the specifics of what constitutes a zone of comfort, this space of *entre-soi* is relative to each person's history, position and experiences.

It is crucial to emphasize that, rather than a "morality police" such as those found in Iran or Saudi Arabia, behavior is self-policed and enforced through social convention. In cafes and restaurants, "appropriate" behavior is regulated through a combination of self-disciplining and enforcement by waitstaff, with significant room here for flexibility of interpretation and practice. Café owners declared that "parents feel safe about their children coming here; because they know we make sure the ambiance stays controlled (*madbuta*); even if a girl is with a guy, parents know that they are in a place where morals rule (*fi akhlaq*) and nobody here will allow anything immoral (*ghayr akhlaq*) to happen, because this girl is like our daughter." Yet during our visits to cafes across al-Dahiya, we saw a good deal of mixed sex interaction that this café owner, and the parents to whom he refers, would no doubt find immoral. Most cafés have organized the layout of their tables to provide several intimate spaces for their customers, with dedicated floors for tables of two, private rooms and various corners where young couples can spend time with one another relatively out of sight. We witnessed numerous couples sitting in very close proximity to one another and sometimes making out in the not-quite-private nooks and crannies of these cafes.

Not only have cafes and restaurants have provided new 'public' spaces where young people can hang out with one another, whether as friends or more intimately, but they have also provided new spaces where young people can meet new acquaintances, friends, lovers and partners. Flirtation is an inevitable part of the café experience: young people check each other out, ask each other out, and even use bluetooth technology to pass their phone numbers around. One young man we interviewed met his girlfriend by "accidentally" sending her an image on

her cellphone via Bluetooth while they were sitting at nearby tables in a café. He then approached her, and, after she initially brushed off his advance, he followed her down the stairs, apologized, and explained to her that she now had his phone number and said that he'd like to "talk with her" - a euphemism for dating. While she had at first pretended not to notice the Bluetooth message, she later miss-called him, so that he would be the one to call her first, and they are now in a relationship.

## Debating Youth: tentative conclusions and continuing questions

We have used the example of youth reshaping ideas about appropriate leisure to argue that young people in al-Dahiya today are drawing on an interpretive flexibility in ways that alter moral norms while remaining within a framework of acceptable religiosity. Two key points must be underscored in relation to our argument. First, the strong desire to live a pious and moral life expressed by youth includes the right to *religiously appropriate* leisure. Second, pious youth live in a context where the existence of *multiple* moral authorities is the norm and where there is close proximity and regular interaction with youth who live very different lifestyles.<sup>(9)</sup> Differing perspectives and the flexibility to choose from multiple interpretations and authorities allows youth today to search for interpretations and opinions that most closely reflect their own desires and ideas. By building a bricolage of authorizing discourses, and including their own voices of authority, pious youth are challenging dominant images of Hizbullah's Dahiya, renegotiating its values and morals through commodified settings of leisure and through their chosen intimacies. It remains to be seen how the Islamic milieu may be influenced by the ideas and decisions of today's educated pious Shi'i youth, and potentially shaped by their concerns about moral boundaries in relation to leisure. What is clear is that this is a generation that is bringing its own interpretations, tastes, and desires to the Islamic milieu.

(9) We refer here to the importance of Lebanon's specificity as a "pluralist" society and the mixity of people with different lifestyles in various settings, including universities, work, leisure, and within groups of friends and families.

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