Abstract How does international development discourse constitute post-conflict environments? How do such constructions support or undermine the possibility of a positive peace? Professor Hourani seeks answers to these questions through an examination of development industry’s construction of Lebanon in the 1990s as a post conflict environment. Following the work of Mitchell, Callon and others, he shows how the international financial institutions, in pursuit of ‘objective’ knowledges, objectified the complex political economy of the Lebanese wars with normal (and normalizing) economic categories and processes. In so doing the violence, trauma and the politico-economic transformations of the war were reduced to a mere ‘idiosyncratic shock’ and the new, normalized Lebanon became amenable to standardized development interventions. What politico-economic dynamics has this discursive production hide from view? How might they help explain a post war Lebanon seeming caught between instability and politics of paralysis?

Bio Najib Benjamin Hourani is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Global Urban Studies at Michigan State University. With a PhD in Politics his research explores the political economy of urban development and redevelopment with a special focus upon civil war and post-conflict reconstruction. His works have appeared in The Journal of Urban Affairs, GeoPolitics, Human Organization, Middle East Policy and Middle East Critique, as well as in two edited volumes, The Post-Conflict Environment: Investigation and Critique (Monk and Mundy, eds. 2014), and Global Downtowns (Peterson and McDonogh, eds. 2012). He is currently working on a book-length manuscript, entitled Glass Towers and Heritage Trails: Neoliberal Urbanism in Beirut and Amman. Dr. Hourani received his PhD in Politics (New York University, 2005) and holds a Masters in Political Science (Central America) from Tulane University and a Masters in Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies from the University of Michigan. Prior to his arrival at MSU he taught Middle East History at Fordham University and Graduate International Affairs at the New School.