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Editorial

Palma Journal's special issue on migration aims at contributing to this area of study in a unique manner. By providing a forum for non-veteran scholars in the field to share their current research findings with a broader public, Palma has joined hands with the Lebanese Emigration Research Center in celebrating LERC's sixth anniversary serving international and interdisciplinary scholarly discourse between Lebanon and the rest of the world.

The migration special issue owes its inception to a conversation between Beirut und Buenos Aires, in which Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, an Austrian-American researcher at LERC, and the eminent Argentinean migration scholar, Ignacio Klich, developed the idea for a special migration issue and presented it to the LERC research team. This Libano-Austro-Iberian link laid the foundation for an exciting collection of articles, which I have had the privilege to guest edit. The rest of the story is embodied in the volume at hand, made up of six submissions dealing with the various facets of Lebanese migrants' lives and their relations with their country of origin.

Some of the most insightful work currently being undertaken on Lebanese migration is presented here. This volume is made up of two articles on migration history and four on contemporary topics. The first historical piece, Anne Monsour's *"New century, old story! Race, religion, bureaucrats, and the Australian Lebanese story"*, provides an overview of the history of Lebanese settlement in Australia and discusses these immigrants encounter with racial classification and discrimination. She starts with the current perception, common in Australian society, that the Lebanese community is somehow linked to rape, riots, and the "war on terror" campaign and maintains that this perception rests on a historically transmitted image that painted the Lebanese pioneers as "undesirables" or "enemy aliens." Mansour asserts that these pioneers attempted to overcome this 'categorization' process by emphasizing their "whiteness" at the expense of their "Eastern" characteristics. She argues that the restrictive Australian migration policies of the past continue to play a significant role in the lives of the Lebanese immigrants today.

The second historical article, *"The Transnational Imagination: XXth century networks and institutions of the Mashreqi migration to Mexico"*, by Camila Pastor de Maria y Campos, addresses the issues of networking, institution formation, and role of the Lebanese community in Mexico from its inception until the present. It argues that migration networks and institutions were organized along confessional lines and through colonial ties mainly to the French Mandate, and that, following the founding of nation states in the Middle East, institutions became more sectarian as they became more 'national'. The author reasons that the "shifting boundaries of these networks reflect the overlapping transnational imaginaries and practices of migrants and colonial and

ecclesiastical authorities." She contends that the Lebanese migrants to Mexico, whose loyalties in the past were cultivated politically and ecclesiastically and who were instrumentalized as transnational entities, were being cultivated and used in a similar manner following the end of the Civil War in Lebanon.

The first among the contemporary articles deals with gender. In *"Balad Niswen – Hukum Niswen: The perception of gender inversions between Lebanon and Australia"* Nelia Hyndman-Rizik addresses the issue of gender roles of male emigrants from the village of Hadchit in North Lebanon now living in Sydney. She maintains that their self-perception has been emasculated by the migration process. On the one hand, they are confronted with racism and subjugation in Australia, as well as with war and violence in their country of origin, about which they can do very little. On the other hand, changes in the roles of women within the immigrant communities, due to the education of their daughters and the participation of their wives in the Australian economy, further threatens the gendered status quo. Hyndman-Rizik found that these men "have come to imagine the Australian state as a matriarchal state, which is *"hukum niswen",* ruled by women, as symbolized by the Queen of England as the Head of State.

"Diaspora and E-Commerce: The Globalization of Lebanese Baklava," was written by Guita Hourani. The paper argues that new technologies allow small and medium enterprises in developing countries, especially those with "ethnic" or "nostalgic" merchandise, to carve a niche for their products in the international market. Taking e-commerce in baklava production as an example, this study shows how the main producers of this delicacy used ICT to tap into the Lebanese diaspora, as described in "business to diaspora" theory. The paper argues that shipping across international borders has required the producers to comply with international standards and to be creative in packaging and labelling their products. This process has also created the need for Lebanese financial institutions to facilitate credit card payment and verification. In conclusion, a case can be made for the need for a more enabling legal and telecommunication environment in this sector if it is to expand and thrive in the future.

Rita Stephan's paper, *"Lebanese-Americans' Identity, Citizenship and Political Behavior"* examines Lebanese-Americans' political behavior in order to better understand the correlation between identity politics and ethnic minority citizenship. Stephan surveys how Lebanese, and Arab-Americans as a group, identify themselves and how they are identifies by US society. She illustrates how the self identification of Lebanese-Americans varies according to historical, political, ideological and cultural factors, how Lebanese-Americans vote, how they "frame their activism within the Arab-American framework in promoting their hyphenated community's interest… and [how] Lebanese sovereignty and independence seems to be a common theme among many Lebanese-American organizations". She suggests that "Lebanese-American political behavior offers ethnic studies a linkage between identity politics and ethnic citizenship by

contesting the permanency of individual and collective identities and linking voting behavior among ethnic minorities to their broader social identity."

The final article on contemporary issues *"Pathways to Social Mobility: Lebanese Immigrants in Detroit and Small Business Enterprise"* was written by Sawsan Abdulrahim. Abdulrahim aims at understanding the roots of the Lebanese immigrants' decision to engage in small-businesses in their new home. She reviews the "middle man" and "the ethnic enclave economy" theories and discusses the role played by social, physical, and economic capital as determinants in these decision making processes. Abdulrahim views these decisions in their relation to structural integration. She argues that "structural conditions and the ability to combine capital resources proved to be extremely important" in the Detroit context. She concludes, with respect to Lebanese small entrepreneurs, that while the move into the business world is the result of hard work and determination, it is likewise "an outcome of the structural discrimination they face and their inability to move into the professions they originally intended to work in."

As guest editor of this special issue of Palma Journal, I wish to thank the editorial board for putting these pages at my disposal in order to expand discourse on Lebanese migration. In particular, I would like to thank Palma supervising editor, Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, for initiating this process and accompanying me in the selection of articles and the arduous task of preparing this volume for final publication. I trust that the reader will discover many new insights into the field of empirical migration studies and the ongoing debates on migration theory and that this issue will further dialogue between scholars in the West and those in the Middle East.

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New century, old story! Race, religion, bureaucrats, and the Australian Lebanese story

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Abstract

The history of Lebanese settlement in Australia shows how understanding the past can inform the present. While racial and religious profiling, character tests, questions of identity and loyalty, English testing, ministerial discretion and bureaucratic bungling are all part of the contemporary Australian landscape, empirical research shows that in Australia, these practices have always played a significant role in the lives of Lebanese immigrants and their descendants.

Keywords: White Australia Policy, Lebanese, Syrian, non-European, police reports

Introduction

In early twenty-first century Australia, the acceptance of Lebanese is under public scrutiny. This is particularly true in Sydney where approximately 70 % of Lebanese in Australia live and where racial profiling by police, politicians and the media has focused negative attention on the 'Lebanese' (Burnley, 2001: 196; Collins, et. al 2000; Poynting et al. 2004).According to Abood (2005: 6), '[t]he relentless depiction of Arab men as criminals, as terrorists and rapists has ultimately resulted in these images being incorporated into the psychological makeup of the broader consciousness'. Similarly, based on her fieldwork in the Hadchiti community, immigrants who are Maronite Catholics from Hadchit, North Lebanon, Hyndman-Rizik (2008: 44) claims the 'Hadchiti experience demonstrates how pervasive anti-Lebanese racism is in Australia and how it cuts across class and religion within the Lebanese community'. The degree of hostility directed towards Lebanese in Sydney was demonstrated by the racial violence at Cronulla beach, Sydney, in December 2005. Cronulla beach is in the Sutherland Shire, 'one of the most exclusively Anglo areas of Sydney' (Redmond, 2007: 337). According to the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) (2005: 1 of 4) on Sunday 1 December, 2005, '[r]acial tension turned to violence' when 'at least 5,000 angry people converged on the beach' as a result of 'simmering anger and disputes between beach users' the previous week. The crowd of mainly 'young Anglo-Australians' were responding to 'rumour, SMS messages and radio broadcasts decrying the

behaviour of Lebanese–Australian youths on Cronulla beach'(Redmond, 2007: 336).Many carried Australian flags and chanted slogans such as 'no more Lebs', 'go home Lebby scum', and 'Aussie, Aussie, Aussie…Oi, Oi, Oi' (SMH 2005: 2-3 of 4; King & Box, 2005: 1). Violence erupted with members of the crowd attacking 'a number of people of Middle Eastern appearance' and clashing with police (Redmond, 2007: 336). The next day, 'a car-convoy of young Lebanese – Australian men' retaliated by going to the Cronulla area and 'smashing residents' cars and physically intimidating and assaulting Anglo passers-by' (Redmond, 2007: 337).

For many Australians, the anti-Lebanese race riots at Cronulla beach were an aberration. However, according to Jones (2003: 126), since 2001, 'racism and anti-Muslim feeling' in Australia had 'become conflated ―beginning with emotive reporting of gang rapes of Caucasian girls by Lebanese Muslim gangs, then the Tampa and other asylum seeker events, quickly followed by the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States and the war in Afghanistan'. So, in trying to understand what had happened at Cronulla beach, commentators looked to the Gulf War, the 'War on Terror' and the perceived problem of Lebanese gangs in Sydney. Indeed, the anti–Lebanese sentiments expressed in the Cronulla beach incident were identified as a continuation of the 'anti-Muslim, anti-Lebanese and anti-Arab sentiment' that had emerged in Australia during the first Gulf War and intensified since then (Hage 2002, 2006; Collins 2000; Poynting et al. 2004, cited in Hyndman-Rizik, 2008: 41-42). Others argued that what happened at Cronulla was a result of the refusal of Lebanese to accept core Australian values and that in contrast to the current situation in the past, Lebanese had not been perceived as 'aliens' and they had, to their credit, become 'largely indistinguishable from the Australian mainstream'(Windschuttle, 2005: 14; Duffy, 2006: 37). Until 1948, in Australia, citizens were 'British subjects' and the term ''alien'' was the official description of a non-British subject (Chesterman & Galligan, 1999: 21 -29). This paper will demonstrate that in Australia, the current marginalisation of Lebanese/Arabs/people of Middle Eastern appearance is not a break with the past. The settlement experience of Lebanese in Australia has never been comfortable and there have always been doubts about their desirability as immigrants.

Australian immigration policy

From British colonization in 1788 until the 1970s, Australian immigration policy was based on two main objectives: to build a community based on predominately British immigrants and to exclude non-European settlers. Indeed, until 1947, Australia's restrictive immigration policies ensured that 99% of Australians were white and 90% were of Anglo-Celtic origin (Jupp, 1988: 26). As a result of the massive scale of non-British immigration after 1947, the official end of the White Australia Policy in the 1970s, and its replacement by a universalist approach to immigration, Australia's population is now not only

more diverse, but also includes people from Asia, Africa and the Middle East who had previously been excluded. Despite this change, in 1996, 71.45% of the population was still Anglo-Celtic and almost 90% of Australians were of European origin (Price, 2001: 82). Not all Australians welcomed an immigration policy, which no longer based eligibility on national and racial origins, and since the mid-1980s, non-discriminatory immigration policy has been increasingly challenged.

In the period of the Howard Government (1996-2007) immigration policy, the ethnic and religious composition of the Australian population and Australian values were subject to intense public debate. In 2006, it was proposed that applicants for Australian citizenship be required to pass an English test and a test of Australian values, and, subsequently, the Australian citizenship test commenced on October 1, 2007. So, for the last decade, racial and religious profiling, character tests, English tests, ministerial discretion, and questions of identity and loyalty have increasingly entered the public discourse in Australia and have often been treated as novel and atypical; yet, using the example of Lebanese immigrants and their descendants in the period 1880 to 1947, it can be shown they have always played a significant role in the lives of non-Europeans in Australia. Then, as now, these measures were designed both as tools of exclusion and as tools of control. Then, as now, the discourses of race and religion were central and set the parameters within which the Lebanese negotiated their position in Australian society.

Early Lebanese migration to Australia

While a noticeable number of Lebanese arrived in Australia during the 1880s, due to a mass exodus from the regions of Lebanon, arrivals increased dramatically in the 1890s (Khalaf, 1987: 18). From 1890 to 1900, for example, the number of Lebanese in one of the Australian colonies, Queensland, increased from 31 to 194 (Monsour, 2004: 50). From its inception Lebanese immigration was predominately Christian and included a significant proportion of women (Monsour, 2004: 52 & 60). Furthermore, from the earliest days of settlement, Lebanese immigrants characteristically dispersed throughout the Australian colonies. As they initially came from the geographic region known as Greater Syria, immigrants who came to Australia from the area now known as Lebanon were identified as 'Syrians', and prior to the defeat of the Turks in World War One, 'Syrians' in Australia were officially classified as Turkish subjects. Although the use of the term 'Lebanese' slowly increased after Lebanon was created as a French Mandate following World War One, in Australia it was not until the early 1940s that 'Syrian' and 'Lebanese' were commonly used as separate categories (Commonwealth Statistician, 1938).

Officially, 'Syrians' were classified as Asian and their arrival in increasing numbers in the last decade of the nineteenth century coincided with a period of economic insecurity and burgeoning nationalism, which resulted in the

broadening of anti-Chinese legislation to include all Asiatic and coloured persons. It is particularly within the context of this legislative discrimination the early Lebanese Australian story occurs. Significantly, the dramatic increase in Lebanese arrivals throughout the 1890s was effectively reversed by the implementation of the Immigration Restriction Act in 1901(Monsour, 2004: 51). As a consequence, the number of people born in Lebanon and living in Australia before 1947 was always relatively small, for example, 1,498 in 1901 and 1,886 in 1947 (Mackay & Batrouney, 1988: 668.). So, regardless of the push factors in their homeland, after 1901, it was primarily Australia's exclusive immigration policy that determined the character and pattern of Lebanese migration to Australia. Furthermore, the practical implementation of the White Australia Policy reminded all non-Europeans, including the Lebanese, in a tangible way that their presence in Australia was not welcome and that their acceptance was tenuous.

Non-European traders in a 'white Australia'

In the period 1880 to 1947, the majority of Lebanese in Australia were self-employed in trading enterprises, particularly hawking and shopkeeping. Lebanese immigrants were able to develop and sustain this occupational pattern, because they were marginal economic activities that did not directly threaten the employment prospects of white Australians (McKay, 1989: 39; Wilton, 1987: 8 & 46-47). However, early Lebanese traders were identified as a non-white, non-European, minority group and were attributed a range of undesirable characteristics. Hawking, in particular, was a despised occupation, and throughout the 1890s, there were growing concerns in all the Australian colonies regarding increasing numbers of non-European hawkers (Wilton, 1987: 8; Monsour, 2004: 244-246). In New South Wales, for example, there were continual protests against the influx of 'Syrian' or 'Assyrian' hawkers and calls for their licences to be revoked (McKay, 1989: 41). Comments in various parliamentary debates repeatedly describe Asiatic hawkers as a menace and as a threat to white women (Monsour, 2004: 240). In the Queensland Parliament in 1905, for example, it was noted that 'Syrian and Afghan hawkers intimidate women in lonely places to make them buy their goods, and they are a great nuisance' (Queensland Parliamentary Debates (QPD), 1905: 1220.). It was also claimed police had reported that 'these men were a nuisance and a danger to peaceable people' (QPD, 1905: 1133). Whether accurate or not, the image of the menacing Asian hawker was persistent. In 1906, for example, the *Sydney Bulletin* (7) in an article about 'Syrians' insinuated that hawking was a form of begging and that sales were often obtained dishonourably:

> Some of the women, usually the aged and ugly, do a little hawking with baskets of cheap rubbish. They will never take "No" for an answer, and when they cannot make a sale they become abusive.

As well as being an unfavourable occupation, from the early days of settlement, hawking and shopkeeping gave Lebanese a public visibility, brought them into direct contact with the police and, at times, led to trouble with the law. As 'aliens', they were already under constant observation. The following extract is representative of the sort of details obtained through police inquiries:

> ....applicant has been carrying on business as a Draper at Stanthorpe for the past four years. He is a married man with one child, and is a respectable law-abiding citizen. He is a white man, with a good education, and of loyal disposition. His father also resides in Stanthorpe. Applicant arrived in Sydney by the S.S. "Polynesian" on the 30th April, 1897, from Post Said, his age being about 20 years. He remained with a Mr. Jacob Moses, then of 209 Elizabeth Street, Redfern, for a few months, and then came to Brisbane to join his father who was a hawker. He stayed with his father for about twelve months, and then took out a license for himself at Toowoomba. He continued hawking for about four years, and then went to Goondiwindi, where he conducted a store for about two years. After leaving Goondiwindi, he went to Warwick, where he kept a store for twelve months. He then went to Sydney for a few months, and afterwards obtained a hawker's license for twelve months at Bathurst. From Bathurst he came to Stanthorpe, where he has lived ever since. (Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 1912)

The monitoring of Lebanese 'aliens' was more intense if they were hawkers because hawking was a licensed activity:

> ...it has been ascertained that the applicant has been known to the police at Gayndah for the past six years during which time he has made periodical visits, with a Hawker's wagon, to the district and has borne a good character…
> During the time that this man has been under the observation of the police in the Gayndah district, he has borne a good character. (Chief Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 1909)

Any breaches of the law were reported in the newspapers, inevitably contributing to a negative image of Lebanese traders. The most common offence was probably hawking without a licence. In 1901, for example, after allegations that 'Syrian' women were hawking without licences, police throughout the Brisbane area were alerted and asked to report on this matter and a plain clothes police constable was appointed to watch 'Syrian' women in South Brisbane for several mornings (Reports from Police Sub-stations, 1901). However, earlier, in the late 1890s, it was charges for defrauding customs that generated the most publicity and authenticated a negative representation of Lebanese traders.

Targeting Lebanese traders

Early in 1897, Customs officials raided at least six 'Syrian' stores in South Brisbane (Monsour, 2004: 268). Targeting Lebanese traders throughout Queensland, Customs authorities followed up their Brisbane action by raiding Lebanese storekeepers and hawkers in Rockhampton and Townsville. In Rockhampton, Customs raided 'all the Syrian places of business with one exception', while in Townsville, they acted against three 'Syrian' storekeepers (Brisbane Courier, 1897: 6). The raids by Customs authorities were carried out with maximum publicity:

> Nearly all day yesterday vans were employed by the customs authorities in removing the goods from the shops to the Queen's warehouse..., the transfers being watched with interest and amusement by a crowd of spectators. (Brisbane Courier, 1897: 6)

In Rockhampton, fourteen Lebanese shopkeepers and hawkers were investigated for breaches of the Customs Duties Act (Monsour, 2004: 270). Five were subsequently charged with using falsified invoices. Four of the five cases were dropped. One storekeeper was convicted and fined (Capricornian, 1897: 35). For this storekeeper, the penalty for breaching the Customs Act may have gone beyond paying the fine. When he applied for naturalization, this conviction was noted in the police report, so, despite being described as 'a respectable citizen' who lived with his wife and family, and made a living hawking drapery, his application was unsuccessful (Mellick, 1902).

Evidence given in the Rockhampton court cases show Lebanese traders were being specifically targeted by Customs Authorities. It was disclosed that at the port of Rockhampton, it had been 'the usual practice' since July 1895 'to add fifteen per cent on all goods imported by Syrians from Syrian houses' (Capricornian, 1897: 33). The Sub-Collector of Customs added the fifteen per cent because he believed the goods were undervalued (Queenslander, 1897: 447). Based on Section 5 of the Customs Duties Act of 1888, the Sub-Collector of Customs was acting within his powers when he added fifteen per cent to the invoices; yet, arguably, the practice of treating 'Syrian' importers as a group and not as individuals was unjust and discriminatory (Monsour, 2004: 271). During the trial, the Sub-Collector of Customs admitted he had at times decided some Europeans were undervaluing goods and had added a percentage to their invoices (Capricornian, 1897: 33). Undoubtedly, this had not resulted in the same action being taken against all subsequent European importers. Indeed, some contemporaries criticised the collective treatment of Syrians by Customs officials in Rockhampton. George Shaw, a Custom's House agent, for example, claimed he had told the Sub-Collector of Customs that adding the extra per cent was unfair:

> ...because he believed the Syrians were straight men; if he had thought the invoices were incorrect he would not have accepted them; he always found the Syrians were very straight men. (Capricornian, 1897: 33)

Similarly, Robert Harvey-Allen, another Custom's House agent, said he had 'frequently protested' against the fifteen per cent being added on (Capricornian, 1897: 33).

Colonial Customs officials continued to pursue Lebanese traders until the colonies federated in 1901. The outstanding cases against Lebanese in Brisbane were heard later in 1897, and in 1899 and 1900 at least seven Lebanese in Warwick and Toowoomba were charged with customs fraud (Monsour, 2004: 272). To provide evidence against the Lebanese, an experienced fancy-goods trader was sent to Sydney to investigate the operations of all the Lebanese traders in Elizabeth Street, Redfern. In his report to the Collector of Customs, the investigator portrayed Lebanese traders as the 'alien' 'other', totally incapable of doing business honestly:

> The total amount of undervaluation is not proportionately great owing probably to the recent prosecutions being still fresh in mind yet the inclination to defraud seems to be too strong to be resisted. Some goods are correctly charged others are slightly altered and a few grossly undervalued altogether… [I]t is hard for Europeans to understand the foolishness of risking so much for such little gain. Evidently their commercial morality is not of a high standard and they probably consider that by charging some goods correctly others will be allowed to pass unnoticed. (Millengen, 1900)

It is possible that Lebanese traders were acting fraudulently. However, it is also possible they were targeted because the relationship between the Lebanese warehouses in Sydney and Lebanese hawkers and shopkeepers was vertically integrated, and hence, was an almost exclusively non-European enterprise. Furthermore, while the close scrutiny of Lebanese traders by Customs officials may have been justified, the subsequent publicity encouraged the racialization of the alleged offences, reinforcing a negative image of Lebanese traders and emphasising their outsider status.

The White Australia Policy

The purpose of the Immigration Restriction Act (1901), which was overwhelmingly supported by the majority of members of the first national parliament regardless of their political allegiance, was to exclude 'undesirable immigrants' from entry to Australia. Repeated references to the desire to maintain white racial purity throughout the Immigration Restriction Bill debate

make it clear that in this context 'undesirable' meant coloured and/or non-European (Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPD), 1901). Reluctantly, due to pressure from the British Government, the Act did not exclude any nationalities or races by name. But in the debate on the Bill, a discourse of race revealed the preservation of the dominance of whiteness as central to its intention. As one parliamentarian put it, 'I am here to vote on the coloured question' (CPD, 1901: 5135). Dismissing Aboriginal Australians as a dying race, the debate focused on the most effective way to achieve the 'absolute prohibition' of 'every…class of coloured 'alien' immigration' and hence exclude 'all coloured peoples' (CPD: 4805 & 4813). The 'whole of Australia' was to be preserved 'for the white races' (CPD: 5173). Racial mixing was adamantly opposed and 'not a matter on which there [was] any room for discussion' (CPD: 5168). Race was openly the dominant concern and the 'us' and 'them' parameters clearly drawn: '[w]e have resolved that we cannot blend with coloured aliens' without a deterioration to our own people' (CPD: 4803). The words of Australia's first Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, encapsulated the parliament's unequivocal position:

> There is no racial equality. There is that basic inequality. These races are, in comparison with white races –I think no one wants convincing of this fact – unequal and inferior. (CPD: 5233)

Because they were non-European, the status of early Lebanese immigrants in Australia was determined by this racial discourse.

'Undesirable' immigrants -Lebanese and the White Australia Policy

As Asians, Lebanese were 'undesirable' immigrants and as a result were under constant scrutiny. After 1901, for example, due to the Immigration Restriction Act, Lebanese leaving Australia and intending to return needed a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test (York, 1992: 2). The application for exemption included a statutory declaration, character references and photographs of full face and profile (Sedawie, 1930). According to Wadiah Abourizk (1910), a spokesperson for 'Syrians' in Australia, it was 'unfair' and 'humiliating' that, like criminals, 'Syrians', when leaving the Commonwealth, had to provide handprints and be photographed in four different positions. As the following instructions show, the process of verifying an applicant's identity was thorough:

> The photograph submitted should be shown by the police officer to the persons giving the certificates of character, and be certified by such persons as that of the applicant, and further, whenever the applicant is personally unknown to the police, an endeavour should be made to arrange for her presence at the interview between the police and the person giving the certificates, so that there is no doubt as to the identity of

the person under discussion. A statement to the effect that the photograph has been shown should accompany every report. (Customs and Excise Office, Melbourne, 1930)

Lebanese who left Australia without obtaining a Certificate of Exemption or who had left before federation were required to prove prior domicile in order to be re-admitted without passing the dictation test. After fulfilling the bureaucratic requirements, some were successful. Jacob Mahboub and his family, for example, were granted re-admission to Australia in 1903, after the birth certificates for three of his Australian born children were accepted as satisfactory proof of former domicile (Hunt, 1903).

However, it was not always so straightforward. After eighteen years of residence in Australia, Kessian Assad had gone to Mount Lebanon in 1907 without obtaining a Certificate of Exemption and subsequently sought re-admission in 1913. As well as verification of his departure from Australia, Atlee Hunt, the head of the Department of External Affairs (1913) requested a copy of Assad's photograph, full inquiries by the police regarding his previous residence and his character, and, if possible, his identification by 'any well-known European residents'. The police investigations were satisfactory and Assad was granted permission to land subject to being satisfactorily identified and paying the one pound fee for a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test (Hunt, 1913). Not all Lebanese who failed to obtain a Certificate of Exemption before leaving Australia were so fortunate. George Coorey, for example, returned to Syria/Lebanon in October 1899 because his father was ill and he was needed to attend to family affairs (Moses, 1908). He remained away longer than anticipated and on his return to New South Wales in December 1907 was declared a prohibited immigrant (Moses, 1908). When Jacob Moses, a 'Syrian' merchant, and Joseph Dahdah, a 'Syrian' priest, were accepted as sureties for the obligatory £100 bond, Coorey was granted a three-month Exemption Certificate (Collector of Customs, Sydney, 1910). The Government expected Coorey to sort out his business dealings and then leave for New Zealand (Collector of Customs, Sydney, 1910). However, Coorey had lived in Australia since 1892 and wished to remain permanently (Moses, 1908). Yet, despite evidence confirming his former residence, good character and continuing business connections and appeals on his behalf, he was not granted an exemption and was ordered to leave the country. When he did not comply, he was declared an illegal immigrant and given a deportation order (Deakin, 1908).

Race, religion and the implementation of exclusionary legislation

Race and religion were primary considerations in the implementation of the various Acts created to ensure a white Australia. When assessing an individual's suitability for citizenship, police routinely commented on skin colour and religious affiliation (Monsour, 2005a).). In regards to skin colour, in most cases,

individual Lebanese were described as white or not coloured. However, some were identified as coloured and this could result in the failure of their application (Monsour, 2005b: 70-71). In 1909, for example, Lutoof who was described as 'a coloured man' whose parents 'were probably Syrians' was refused citizenship (71). It is obvious from the official records that racial classification of an individual by the police was quite arbitrary and often ambiguous (70-71). George, for example, was reported to be 'a coloured man, but not a full-blooded foreigner'; Salim 'was described as being 'the ordinary colour of the Syrian, but not what I would term a coloured man', and Richard was considered to be swarthy in complexion 'but not darker than many natives of Europe or some individuals of the British race' (Monsour, 2004: 186). Being Christian was evidently a positive attribute and was often highlighted as such by the immigrants and those advocating on their behalf in naturalization applications.In 1903, for example, Joseph Abdullah was refused naturalization because he was a single, Asiatic male. Subsequently, in a letter to the Home Secretary, Abdullah (1903) disputed the correctness of this classification on the basis of his religion:

> Although I am termed an Asiatic 'alien', I would respectfully point out that I am of the Christian Religion, the same as the rest of the people of Australia.

Similarly, another Lebanese immigrant excluded from naturalization because of his birthplace, responded with the following:

> Sir, the External Department says that I am not eligible to become a subject of the King in the 'Commonwealth' of Australia on account of being born in Syria. I am a Christian and I think I am eligible to become a subject of the King…. (Morad, 1907)

During World War One, religious affiliation was even more important for Lebanese as religion was used to distinguish between the predominately Christian Lebanese and Turks, who were more likely to be Muslim, and after 1920, the police consistently reported the religion of an applicant for naturalization (Monsour, 2007: 126; Monsour, 2004: 204-205).

Negotiating within the dominant discourse of race, Lebanese, both as a group and as individuals, sought to position themselves on the white/Christian side of the colour line. Advocating on behalf of 'Syrians' in Australia, Wadiah Abourizk (1910), for example, argued that:

> Syrians are Caucasians & they are a white race as much as the English. Their looks, habits, customs, religions, blood, are those of Europeans, but they are more intelligent.

Abourizk (1910) also claimed he was a supporter of a White Australia but 'in a wider sense'. He believed Australia should be kept free 'from the Mongolian and black races', from 'base Europeans' and from the 'undesirable' and 'low class of Syrians', and advocated the use of a strict selection process which would allow young, well-educated Syrians with some capital to immigrate to Australia. As well as effectively excluding Lebanese from citizenship based on their classification as 'aboriginal natives of Asia', section 5 of the Naturalization Act of 1903 pushed them to consciously position themselves within existing racial classifications. When Alf Moses (1904) was refused naturalization, he insisted he was 'not an aboriginal native of Syria but a whit[e] man of good English education'. Furthermore, describing himself as trilingual (able to write and read English, French and Arabic) and a Christian, he argued that the term aboriginal which obviously referred to 'the blackes [sic] and not to the educated residents of a nation or state', clearly did not apply to him. Richard Saleeby (1904) also rejected his classification as 'an aboriginal native of Asia', arguing that modern Syrians were considered to be white or Caucasian and no coloured stigma had 'ever been attached' to them 'in any era'. In support of his bid for naturalization, Saleeby also claimed to be the descendant of Crusaders. In another example, in 1919, a solicitor acting on behalf of Joseph Mansour, argued that the Syrian people were not aboriginal natives of Asia but were 'a civilized Christian race' and 'descendants of the Crusaders, from Europe'. Realising the Government was using the term 'aboriginal native' to distinguish between Europeans and non-Europeans and that to gain access to citizenship it was necessary to be European, Lebanese insisted this was their real identity.

White, European and Christian

Although officially classified as Asian, because of their 'European' appearance and preponderant adherence to Christianity, the early Lebanese immigrants quite obviously did not fit neatly into the contemporary stereotype of the 'Asiatic 'alien''. The *Illustrated Sydney News* in 1892, for example, noted that while 'Eastern' in origin, the 'Syrians' in Redfern, Sydney had in their conduct and style of dress 'thoroughly adapted' to their new environment and, furthermore, were actually Christians (4). In 1906, the *Bulletin* described Syrians as one of the three 'non-fusible Asiatic races'; yet, noted that unlike the Chinese and Indians, Syrians were 'less distinctive in personal appearance and unmarked by peculiar dress', and hence, were less easily identified (7).Furthermore, according to the *Bulletin* (1906: 7), in contrast to the Chinese and Indians, these Asians were Christian, white, and had migrated in family groups. More importantly, in bureaucratic deliberations regarding the status of 'Syrians' both appearance and religion were consistently raised as positive attributes (Monsour, 2005a). In 1914, for example, the Chief Clerk of the Department of External Affairs noted that in addition to being similar in appearance to southern Europeans, 'all' of these Syrians were Christian. Similarly, Atlee Hunt (1914), who had been the permanent head of the Department of External Affairs since its inception in

1901, noted that not only were Lebanese more European than Asiatic in appearance, they were also 'practically all Christians' belonging to the Greek Church or a Church affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.

In Australia, the functional definition of 'Asiatic' for legislative purposes was based on geography. The conventional boundary between Europe and Asia is drawn at the Ural Mountains, south along the Ural River to the Caspian Sea and then west along the Caucasus Mountains to the Black Sea. The Bosphorus Strait separates Turkey in Europe from Turkey in Asia. Countries east of this line, including modern Lebanon, were, therefore, in Asia. Based on the geographic definition, Lebanese were clearly Asian. Yet, in a letter to the Australian Natives' Association, Egerton Batchelor (1911), the Minister for External Affairs, expressed his belief that there was nothing to fear from granting 'Syrians' citizenship because they were 'of a race not far removed from our stock' and their 'religion is very often the same as ours'. Then, in 1914, Atlee Hunt claimed that the question of how to deal with 'Syrians' had been problematic since the Act had come into force in 1902. In contrast to the 'unanimity' regarding 'the black, brown and yellow races', there had been, according to Hunt, 'considerable divergence in decisions relating to the admission of Syrians'. Hunt did not seem to include Syrians in 'the black, brown and yellow races' and in regards to race and colour considered them to be more European than Asian:

> They are of swarthy appearance with dark hair, and in most cases sallow complexions, but approximate far more closely to the European types than those of India or parts of Asia further East. So far as general appearance goes they cannot be distinguished from the people of Southern Spain, Italy or Greece and in fact are considerably lighter in complexion than the Turks.

This was also the view of the of the Department's Chief Clerk (1914), who observed that some Syrian women 'were as fair-skinned as any women to be met in our cities' and that although 'dark', Syrian men were 'not more so than the Italians, Spaniards and Greeks, and if it were not for the fact that the Syrians disclose their race on going on board ship enroute to Australia, they would easily pass muster with nationals of the countries just mentioned'. Ultimately, Lebanese were treated differently to other Asians because the bureaucrats and politicians responsible for implementing the plethora of anti-Asian legislation were uncertain about their racial categorisation and consequent status. However, these concessions came at a cost. To be acceptable, Lebanese immigrants in Australia de-emphasised their Eastern characteristics and insisted they were white, Christian and European (Monsour, 2007).

Under scrutiny

Currently in Australia who should or should not be accepted for citizenship is under review and testing an applicant's knowledge of English and of Australian values are favoured strategies for evaluating acceptability. These strategies have historical precedents and demonstrably, whatever their stated intention, act as effective forms of control. For Lebanese who, despite the many obstacles placed in their way, were keen to settle permanently in Australia, the implementation of legislation that complemented the Immigration Restriction Act resulted not only in racial discrimination such as exclusion from citizenship, but also in constant surveillance. Police reports, for example, were fundamental to the naturalization process (Monsour, 2005b: 67-70). Police were required to report on an applicant's character and suitability, and the accurateness of their statements. Records show police inquiries were comprehensive and that, as part of the verification process, they interviewed the applicant, other Lebanese, local residents and the character witnesses (Monsour, 2005b: 68). False information in an application put people close to the applicant, particularly other family members, in a difficult position and reinforced for Lebanese an awareness of being monitored (Monsour, 2005b: 68-69).

The case of Massoud Nowham(1903) illustrates the type of routine inquiries made by the police. Nowham, who applied for naturalization in 1903, arrived in Queensland in 1899 and had lived in Bundaberg and Gympie. The police in Bundaberg interviewed Mr McLeod, a jeweller, who stated he had known Nowham for about two years and believed him to be a person of good character. As the applicant was known to have transacted business with John Isaac, another 'Syrian', he was also questioned regarding Nowham's character. Concluding there was nothing against the applicant, the police constable noted that although Nowham spoke English 'fairly well', he could not read or write in English. In Gympie, the police constable interviewed the applicant. He also made 'very careful inquiries around the neighbourhood of Caledonian Hill' where Nowham was living, and interviewed four 'well known residents', all of whom knew Nowham and vouched for his good character. A Gympie resident, who had been the licensee of the Scarborough Hotel, Pialba and knew Nowham because he used to stay in his hotel when he was hawking in the area, said he was a 'sober, steady man' and that he had 'never heard anything crooked against him'. The constable concluded that as far as could be ascertained 'this man's character is very good' and also observed that 'the applicant is unable to read or write English but speaks it fairly good'. Evaluating the character of an applicant within the context of contemporary concerns has been a constant aspect of the naturalization process.

Fulfilling citizenship requirements and the pressure to conform

As in the preceding example, it was common for official reports about an applicant for naturalization to comment on character, educational standards and

English ability. In 1905, the Postmaster in Charters Towers, for example, described Richard Arida in the following way:

> He is well educated, has travelled extensively and speaks several languages, is on the committee of the School of Arts and other local institutions. In every respect he is regarded as a good citizen.

When he applied for naturalization in 1912, Joseph Mansour was reported to be 'a white man with a good education and of loyal disposition' (Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 1912). However, by 1917, literacy in English had become a mandatory requirement for citizenship, and after 1920 the standard report included the two questions:

> 4. Can the applicant read and write English?
> 5. If not, can he speak it and understand it when spoken? (Monsour, 2004: 321)

From 1919, English competency was evaluated by the Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CIB) of the Attorney General's Department, which was also responsible for internal security. An applicant's inability to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of English could result in exclusion from citizenship. Jacob, for example, was unsuccessful because, although he understood 'practically everything said to him', he could not 'speak the English language fluently' (*Report on Application for Naturalization*, Jacob Mahboub, 1931). Jacob arrived in Australia in 1887 and was naturalized in Queensland in 1890. In 1931, when he was eighty-four, he applied for naturalization because Colonial naturalization was not transferable so his status as a British subject had been cancelled when he left Queensland to live in New South Wales. Jacob was refused naturalization because:

> ...applicants are now required to be able to speak the English language fluently, and as it has been ascertained that you are unable to comply with this requirement, it is regretted that your application cannot be granted until you are in a position to do so.

As he was 'very old' and 'rather deaf', it would have been quite obvious Jacob's English would not improve; however, it seems there was a concern that he was only seeking naturalization in order to get the old age pension. This was a rather misplaced concern as even naturalized Asians were ineligible to receive the invalid or old age pension (Monsour, 2004: 197).

In some cases, the process of being interviewed to test English ability was nerve-racking. In June 1931, Mulachy Coorey's application for naturalization was deferred because it was ascertained she was unable to speak English fluently

(Quinlan, 1931). She immediately asked for this decision to be reviewed because she 'truthfully' desired 'to become a citizen of the Commonwealth', and had 'the necessary qualifications':

> I understand the English language, and have no difficulty in conversing with people in this country, and above all I am a hard working woman, and support myself, and my wish is to remain in Australia. (Coorey, 1931)

Indeed, when Coorey was reassessed, it was found that:

> ...she has now improved in her ability to speak and understand the English language, and although she has not attained to fluency, she is quite capable of speaking with evenness and proper meaning in the construction of spoken sentences. (Lloyd, 1931)

Eager to correct the initially negative assessment of her English ability, Coorey (1931) explained that her 'poor' performance when previously interviewed had been due to 'excitement and nervousness'. In another example, when Michael Asmar, a tailor who had established his own business in South Brisbane, applied for citizenship he was informed that:

> ...one of the requirements of the Nationality Act 1920-1930 is that an applicant must possess an adequate knowledge of the English language…. As it has been ascertained that you cannot comply with this requirement, your application is being deferred until such time as your knowledge of English is sufficient to enable you to comply with the requirements of the law…. (Quinlan, 1930)

> Determined to meet the required standard he reapplied about nine months later and offered the following explanation:

> …the above-named applicant…, explains that at the time of previous report he was teaching one of his children his own language, and had probably got somewhat out of practice, and was rather nervous and flustered when questioned. He has since been speaking English only, and he has improved wonderfully, and can now speak the English language fluently. (Mackiehan, 1931)

Arguably, immigrants seeking naturalization were placed under considerable pressure not only by the requirement to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of English, but also by the involvement of the CIB and police in the evaluation process. A case study of Lebanese settlement in Queensland (1880 to 1947) (Monsour, 2004) shows that the need to speak English to survive economically and to be granted citizenship, isolation from other Lebanese, and a perceived

intolerance towards the use of any language other than English in public, all contributed to the relegation of Arabic to the domestic sphere and to its loss as a viable language for the second and third generations.

'**Asiatic' and 'enemy aliens'- increased surveillance and an intensification of outsider status**

Although the Australian Government clearly knew Lebanese did not support the Turkish regime, Lebanese in Australia were classified as 'enemy aliens' during World War One. The following observation by Atlee Hunt in March 1916 confirms that the Government definitely understood the position of Syrian/Lebanese:

> Syrians are technically Turks and our enemies, though they are recognised, at any rate those from the Mount Lebanon region, as having no sympathy with Turkey and in consequence have received special concessions in the way of reporting, carrying on business etc.

As already demonstrated, being under scrutiny was not unusual for Lebanese immigrants, but their classification as 'enemy aliens' generated unwanted attention, and restrictions imposed on 'aliens' reached into ordinary activities. Many had already been refused naturalization despite a long period of residence in Australia. Now, they, and even their Australian-born children, were required to register at the local police station and to notify the police if they were leaving town or changing their address. Thomas Rey of Innisfail, for example, registered as an 'alien' of Syrian origin in December 1916. Subsequently, Rey (1916), an itinerant labourer, was required to notify the police every time he moved seeking work. Between 1918 and 1921, he submitted eleven Notice of Change of Address forms as he moved between Innisfail, South Johnstone, Gordonvale and Babinda. Australian-born women who had acquired Syrian nationality by marriage were also obliged to register as 'aliens'. So when Elsie Malouf (1918) moved from one Brisbane suburb to another, she was required to notify the police of her movements and to report to the police station in her new locality.

If any Lebanese had taken their classification as 'enemy aliens' lightly, the internment of Nicholas William Malouf of Gatton in 1917, would certainly have confirmed the seriousness of the situation (Acting Sergeant, Gatton Station, 1917). Nicholas Malouf lived in Gatton, Queensland, and it seems his internment was the result of his friendship with an Australian-born, German solicitor and the fact that he sold Buick cars to several German farmers in the district (Correspondence files, 1914-1922). There was some suspicion that if the allied position in Europe faltered, the Germans in and around Gatton would organise to damage the railway line and to delay reinforcements getting away, and it was thought the Buick cars were part of this plan. At the time, the Australian population was quite evidently encouraged to alert the authorities of

any suspicious behaviour on the part of the non-British population. Similarly, the recent 'Be Alert not Alarmed' campaign and the advertisements urging Australians, in the interests of national security, to report any suspicious activity to a central hotline number encourages contemporary Australians to be wary particularly of 'others' who do not look 'Australian'.

Throughout World War One, Lebanese opposed their status as 'enemy aliens'. In August 1916, for example, representatives of the Lebanese community attempted, unsuccessfully, to send a deputation to the Prime Minister and then to the Minister for External Affairs to present their position regarding restrictions on enemy subjects and persons of enemy origin (Fawaz, 1916). The Consuls for France and the United States had agreed to accompany this deputation (Maloney, 1916). An inquiry from the New South Wales Premier's Office to the Prime Minister regarding the employment of Syrian Christians was probably also the result of lobbying by the Lebanese community:

> The question has been raised as to whether such persons should be refused employment on the ground of their being enemy subjects, seeing that they are so against their will, and only desire to be freed from Turkish rule. (Hoyle, 1916)

Although initially excluded from enlistment, after consultations with the British Government in April 1917, Christian Syrians resident in Australia were finally accepted into the Australian Imperial Forces (Prime Minister's Department, 1917). Police reports in applications for naturalization in the years after the war indicate that the behaviour of individual Lebanese during the war was viewed as exemplary and that they gave generously to patriotic funds and to the Red Cross (Monsour, 2004: 204). Under the presidency of Sir John Hennessy and supported by a strong committee of prominent citizens and clergy, the Lebanese community in Melbourne raised £4,000 which it contributed to the British fund in aid of duties in Lebanon and Syria (Jaboor, 1942). This was noted in their collective favour as early as 1915:

> It may be mentioned that the Syrian community of Melbourne has during the recent war crisis shown considerable public spiritedness, some of the younger Australian born members of the community having joined the expeditionary forces while others have contributed large sums towards the relief funds. (Department of External Affairs, 1915)

Although the Commonwealth Government acknowledged Lebanese were actually opposed to the Turkish regime and consequently exempted them from some of the restrictions applied to 'enemy aliens', overall, their status as 'enemy aliens' increased the necessity to hide their differences and to prove their absolute loyalty to the British Crown (Monsour, 2004: 204-205). Indeed, the questions asked about

applicants for naturalization during the 1920s show that the surveillance of 'aliens' continued and consequently, so did the pressure to conform (205). The police were required to note whether an applicant had been registered as an 'alien', and if so, of what nationality and at what place (205). If the 'alien' had not been registered, an explanation was necessary. The police report also included a comment regarding the conduct of the applicant during the war and an account of any evidence the applicant had 'shown himself by act or speech to be disaffected or disloyal to His Majesty the King' (205). For the members of the German-Australian community, who until the war had been favoured immigrants, their transformation from 'citizens with full civil rights to outcasts' was alarming (Fischer, 1989: 66). In contrast, Lebanese immigrants had never been granted full citizenship status and their treatment during the war simply reinforced what they already knew. Their acceptability as immigrants and citizens was both conditional and tenuous.

Conclusion

The current marginalisation of Lebanese in Australia is not new and nor are questions about their 'desirability'. In Australia, the early Lebanese immigrants were identified as non-white, non-European, and hence, as 'undesirable'. Officially classified as Asian, they were subject to a wide range of institutionalised discrimination imposed on 'aliens' and non-Europeans by colonial and then State and Commonwealth legislation. The White Australia Policy intended both to exclude and to control 'undesirable' immigrants and to cement Australia's character as a white, Christian society. For non-Europeans, such as the Lebanese, the implementation of legislation designed to ensure a white Australia resulted in racial discrimination and in the experience of being under surveillance; hence, emphasising their status as outsiders. However, because of their physical appearance, adherence to Christianity and migration in family groups, Lebanese were perceived to have more in common with southern Europeans than with other Asians. Hence, in their bid for acceptance as equal and full citizens, Lebanese immigrants de-emphasised their Eastern characteristics and insisted they should be accepted because they were white, European and Christian. The experience of early Lebanese immigrants in Australia demonstrates that, historically, racial and religious profiling, character and English tests, and the close scrutiny of potentially 'undesirable', non-white immigrants are strategies which have been used to protect and privilege white, Christian Australians.

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