From diaspora to belonging: The paths of early Lebanese settlers in Australia

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of the author's knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

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Abstract

Existing literature on the migration experiences of the Lebanese diaspora in different countries reveals a variety of responses to the process of migration. Under some circumstances, such as in Canada (Abu Laban, 1980), the diaspora community maintained its Lebanese culture. In other instances, such as in the USA (Naff, 1992 and Hitti 1924) and New Zealand (Thornton,1968), the Lebanese community tended to assimilate into the host culture. This poses the question - what were the historical, political and socio-economic conditions which gave rise to these different responses?

This thesis addresses the assimilation patterns of the early Lebanese settlers in Australia. In particular, it assesses how military involvement shaped, and was shaped by, assimilation into Australian society.

Early Lebanese migrants under the White Australia Policy present an intriguing contribution to migration history because the Lebanese saw themselves as 'European', while the host country classified them as aliens, equivalent to the debarred Asian cultural groups (Batrouney, 1992). There was therefore a tension between migrants' self-identity and the host country's accommodation of their differences.

My research finds that, despite this tension, many Australian-Lebanese successfully negotiated the process of assimilation through a variety of processes and practices. First, early Lebanese assimilation often occurred through the adoption of entrepreneurial hawking as their first immigrant occupation, which widened their circle of social participation. Second, many immigrants jettisoned their Lebanese identity or, modified their Lebanese identity in a variety of ways to adapt to the host community. Third, the Australian Armed Forces was an institution that gave many Lebanese migrants the opportunity to 'prove' themselves as Australians, or (for those who did not enlist) their patriotic actions were a means to contribute to the war effort and be perceived as Australians.

The thesis concludes by showing how, after their war experiences, many of the Australian-Lebanese veterans felt more confident in reinforcing their identity with Australia through active participation in civil society and maintaining an allegiance to their wartime battalions or becoming active in community organisations.

My research employed qualitative research methods based on face-to-face or telephone interviews, backed up by document analysis. The evidence in the thesis relied on the memories, personal narratives and first-hand accounts of Lebanese Australian servicemen and women, along with testimonies from the veterans' dependents and relatives.

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1. Introduction

> "I think they've got to learn to be Australian; I think that's the most important thing is learn to be Australian, you know, and they accept us. You can't be a foreigner, behaving like a foreigner all the time. You know, you've got to assimilate and it's a fact, really". (Peter Betros, 2010, pers. comm.)

I had interviewed World War II veteran, Peter Betros on 13 May 2010 at his residence in Melbourne. Peter was responding to a question which I had asked concerning the advice he would give to a newly arrived Lebanese immigrant to Australia. Peter's emphatic response was to encourage the newly arrived immigrant to assimilate. Coming from a family of Lebanese descent, I reflected on his comments and the various migratory histories from the other veterans and dependents I had interviewed, noting that the importance of assimilation was a common theme within the narratives.

These migratory stories also included recollections of the various economic and social experiences after they had migrated to Australia. Often, this involved ways their parents had tried to assimilate into their new homeland through integrating into the Australian economy. These early Lebanese migrants often moved from town to town and city to city selling their wares and, in this way, mixing within the host society. Experiences of hawking were both positive and negative, involving both racism they encountered and hospitality from locals. Every migrant had a migratory family story, and this thesis explores the ways these early Lebanese migrants modified their identity in order to assimilate into their new country. This happened in myriad ways, such as by changing their Lebanese-sounding names to Anglo-Saxon names, by being involved in the community into which they had settled, through attending the local church even though it was not the religion they were brought up in or through assisting various organisations during wartime. As the stories will reveal, through their behaviour and action, the early Lebanese immigrants were illustrating to their children the importance of assimilation and participation in the host country. This entailed negotiating unfamiliar social structures and adjusting to an Australian way of life with the aim of being accepted and showing that they were or could be as Australian as the British migrants. The thesis will thus provide an understanding of the assimilatory characteristics of the early Lebanese migrants to Australia through their migratory experiences and involvement in Australian society and its institutions such as the Australian Armed Forces.

The specific research questions which arose in the course of my thesis were:

1. What early migration experiences and social processes influenced early Lebanese migrants' assimilation into Australia? How did this affect their dependants?

2. To what extent did their involvement in Australian institutions contribute to their successful assimilation?

Aims of the Research

This thesis aims to contribute to the literature on migration and assimilation through examining the socio-economic behaviour and institutional participation of early Lebanese migrants. In terms of its economic dimension, in the early chapters it focuses on the practice of hawking, and in terms of institutional participation, it then moves on to conduct uncharted Australian research on the participation of early Australian-Lebanese in Australia's Defence Forces during World War 1 and World War 2. The research uses the qualitative technique of face-to-face interviews, using a sample survey with World War 2 veterans and their dependants, backed up by an analysis of primary data drawn from early to mid-twentieth century sources.

It is important to address this gap in the literature in order to raise our understanding of the circumstances that gave rise to the tendency among this particular ethnic group at this particular time of history to identify as Australians. More broadly, this study contributes to the broader migrant history of Australia. My thesis will also add to military literature on the various ethnic groups that have participated in Australia's Armed Forces. For instance, my key research questions will be addressed by exploring the social factors that led to so many Australian-Lebanese enlisting in the Australian military.

These early Lebanese experiences can be compared with the early Russian experiences in Australia. Elena Govor's (2005) account of the Russian-born ANZACS who were ethnic Russians and Baltic peoples, *Russian Anzac in Australian History,* explores the sociological conditions that gave rise to Russian and Baltic peoples' willingness to fight for Australia during World War 1. Govor's historical account of the Russians and Baltic people's participation in Australia's Armed Forces suggests that the fundamental reasons for joining Australia's Imperial Force involved feelings of duty and commitment towards their new home (Govor 2005:68-69). A significant number of Russians had recorded on their enlistment papers, under religion, as 'C of E' (Church of England) (Govor 2005:89). Govor concludes that this may have been

due to some Russians converting to Anglicanism, perceiving it as their main religion in their country of adoption. It appears some men claimed adherence to the Church of England to avoid being considered 'different' or alien. Indeed, some Russians who were not successful when they enlisted the first time would enlist a second time, changing their birthplaces to an Australian city and/or their religion as Church of England. My research into the Lebanese diaspora in Australia can be considered part of this ongoing understanding of the conditions and behaviours producing ethnic assimilation.

Assimilation in this research is defined as, '…ways members of an immigrant community became absorbed by the dominant society through various mechanisms such as language absorption, socio-economic mobility, and intermarriage' (Abdelhady: 2013;18). Assimilation in this sense refers to a *social process* relating to the experience of migrant settlement. It is important to distinguish this use of the concept from other ways in which assimilation is used, such as *assimilation-as-government-policy*, or *assimilation-as-a-normative-goal*. As Chapter 2 shows, in the Australian context, the different uses of the term assimilation often overlap due to the fact that for a long period of time post-Federation policy supported assimilation. However, it was a discriminatory policy, as only certain groups of people and nationalities were considered assimilable. Throughout this thesis, the evidence shows how early Lebanese migrants tested the boundaries of assimilation policy. The literature review in Chapter 2 will also describe how assimilation is a concept that has long been debated and assessed within the global literature on the Lebanese diaspora, and my study also makes a contribution to this international literature, in my case using an Australian case study. It reflects on and compares studies across the world involving Lebanese-born migrants in the armed forces of host countries.

The history of Lebanese migration has been documented by various academics in Australia and internationally (see Chapter 2). The Lebanese have settled in Australia since the 1870s, and their participation in Australia's Armed Forces, specifically during World War 1 and 2, has yet to be researched or recorded. Indeed, it is only recently that academics have written extensively about non-British Australians' participation in Australia's Armed Forces. This recent material includes not only Elena Govor's (2005) historical account of the Russian-born ANZACs noted above, but also Govor's (2017) historical account of migrants from Ukraine to Australia who fought in the Australian Army in World War 1, *Falling Stars, The Story of Anzacs from Ukraine.* Steve Kyritsis, (2012) has also undertaken research on Greek Australians who fought in the Australian Armed Forces during both World Wars, and Mark Dapin (2017) has explored the Jewish migrants who participated in Australia's Armed Forces in World War 1, in

his book *Jewish Anzacs: Jews In the Australian Military.* My thesis can therefore also be considered a contribution to this emerging field of historical research, with the specific aim of exploring the impact of this military participation on the process of assimilation.

The social and institutional context of early Lebanese migration

By studying the involvement of the first wave of Lebanese (then labelled 'Syrians', although referred to throughout this thesis as 'early Lebanese') and their dependants in Australia's Armed Forces, I aim to explain the social and economic processes that encouraged the assimilation of these settlers, despite the racism they often experienced during their settlement process. Even though the Lebanese saw themselves as European, the Australian government treated them as alien outsiders, and they were often classified as Asians, a status that the Lebanese strongly rejected (Batrouney 1992). Their process of integration presented a case of identity dissonance in the sense that there was tension between migrants' self-perception and the host country's labelling of their differences.

One reason why the early Lebanese settlement in Australia is a complex migratory phenomenon involved their treatment by many within the host nation as a non-white, non-European, minority group whose business methods were often considered dubious or unfair competition (Monsour 2010). As I will show, many newspapers articles and parliamentary debates prior to World War 1 viewed the presence of the early Lebanese settlers as unwelcome economic competitors and they were often popularly portrayed as possessing a range of undesirable cultural characteristics. Many Europeans actively opposed their presence in Australia. To compound matters, discrimination against the Lebanese was fuelled in a different form during the First World War when Lebanese were classified as 'enemy aliens' on the grounds that they were subjects of Turkey, a nation with which Australia was at war (Batrouney 1992).

The opposition to early Lebanese economic assimilation must be seen in the light of moves in the mid-1880s to introduce a White Australia Policy in the colonies and its reinforcement by the newly founded Commonwealth in 1901. The White Australia Policy was initially targeted against the Chinese and other Asian migrants, but it expanded to a crusade against all non-European immigrants, precisely during the period in which the earliest Lebanese settlement occurred (Batrouney 2006).

In this context, it was not only the early Lebanese settlers who were targeted by racist policies. Any non-white group was targeted as a 'menace', and merchants were more vulnerable in the sense that they were bound by government regulations and depended on the goodwill of their

customers. Their business success depended on their economic integration into the broader community. As this thesis will show, despite the difficult obstacles they faced, early Lebanese immigrants resisted official and unofficial discrimination and were determined to identify as members of local communities. This assimilation was also reflected in the moves of many early Lebanese to adopt Anglo-Saxon names. Furthermore, their livelihood encouraged them to settle in towns in which the population at the time was predominately Anglo-Celtic, rather than congregating as a separate ethnic community. The early Lebanese also inter-married freely and attended local churches.

Furthermore, as my research will show, the Lebanese were active in volunteering for the Australian Armed Forces. As noted earlier, the impact of migration, belonging, assimilation and ethnicity on the attitudes and behaviour of the first wave of Lebanese migration to Australia through their participation in Australia's Armed Forces have not been studied previously. The story of how so many early Lebanese were able to assimilate into Australia in a xenophobic environment, where government policies of the day such as the White Australia policies favoured Europeans and which were anti-Asian, has yet to be told through the stories of Lebanese veterans and their dependants. Such a study can help reveal how migrants learn to negotiate social institutions and stake their claim to belong to a nation, even under conditions that appear less than conducive to assimilation.

To date, there is no study that systematically investigates this involvement of Lebanese settlers' and their dependents participation in Australia's Defence Forces. Andrew and Trevor Batrouney's (1985) history of Lebanese migration to Australia, *The Lebanese in Australia,* dedicated four useful paragraphs to the early Lebanese settlers' participation in Australia's Armed Forces during the World Wars. It was their brief accounts that triggered my interest in exploring the participation of the early Australian-Lebanese in Australia's Armed Forces. Given that many of early Lebanese migrants had experienced racism on entering Australia, I was intrigued to know what encouraged these Lebanese to put their lives on the line for their adopted country.

As I will show in Chapter 2, the international academic literature on this subject also devotes limited attention on the early Lebanese diaspora's participation in the armed forces of their adopted countries such as USA, New Zealand, Argentina and Canada, even though this limited literature does recognise its importance, especially in the USA. Hence, while there is little Australian or international literature on the early Lebanese settlers' participation in their adopted countries' armed forces, that which did exist suggested the need to explore the social

and psychological forces behind the decisions of the early Lebanese to join the military institutions of their adopted homeland.

A more urgent contribution this research performs involves the recognition that if no historical or sociological studies are initiated in the near future, a substantial part of this history will be lost, as many more Lebanese migrants who were born prior to World War 2 and who played a part in shaping Australia's defence and ethnic history are ageing. The stories of these veterans and dependants, and an analysis of their personal and subjective experiences of their settlement process, provides an invaluable source of information to assist us to understand the social forces that influenced processes of integration into Australian society during the earlier part of the twentieth century.

Chapter Outline

The following chapter will provide a brief outline of the history of migration to Australia prior to World War 2. In particular, it surveys the relevant Australian literature relating to Lebanese migration; their experiences of migration prior to World War 2 and the many characteristics of this particular ethnic group. From this, I construct the key research questions that form the central themes of this thesis, allowing me to explore the nature and the specificity of the early Lebanese assimilation process in Australia. Because this Australian process did not happen in isolation, but as part of a wider diaspora, the chapter will also provide a review of the extant literature surrounding the migration experiences of the global Lebanese diaspora focusing on the international academic literature in the United States, Canada, Argentina and New Zealand. This literature provides a useful source of insight into the possible variables that help to guide my own Australian case study.

Next my methodology chapter outlines how the evidence and data was collected. The chapter provide details on the qualitative research methods which were used to collect the data, namely personal interviews using a questionnaire. It explains the reasons why this research method was used and describes the various creative means used to locate the veterans and dependants who were interviewed for this thesis.

Chapter 4, dealing with early *mi*gration experiences*,* describes the early employment practices of the Lebanese settlers. Many engaged in hawking and I explain why these experiences encouraged assimilation, paving the way for the early Lebanese identification with local cultural

practices. This chapter also examines how Australian literature and media at the time portrayed 'Syrian' hawkers in the Australian context. What makes the Lebanese process of assimilation more complex is the negative stereotypes often used in media portrayals.

Chapter 5 presents evidence of the many forms of strong assimilatory behaviour among the early Lebanese diaspora. The chapter examines the various post-hawking assimilation experiences among the early Lebanese immigrants through their changing religious practices, changes of names and other behaviours, often with the aim of presenting themselves as non-alien, and therefore 'non-threatening'. These strong assimilatory practices also led many Lebanese to set aside connections to, and memories of, their birth country (Lebanon) or the country of their parents' birth.

Chapter 6 suggests that the experience of war was a crucible, testing the migrants' presentation of belonging against the host country's acceptance of the migrant. It outlines how military service gave the early Lebanese settlers an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism towards Australia. In addition, this chapter provides evidence that even those who did not enlist found ways to present themselves as Australians and demonstrate their loyalty. Again, the Lebanese case in World War 1 is complicated by their ambiguous status under the White Australia Policy and their former homeland status as an enemy nation under the Ottoman Empire.

While the international context had changed by the beginning of World War 2, the chapter will also show that many Lebanese Australians still felt the need to demonstrate their loyalty to the nation in the face of ongoing racist attitudes towards non-Europeans. Along with first-hand accounts of veterans themselves, the analysis is backed up with evidence from the Australian media and from official war records in order to assess attitudes towards the Lebanese during wartime.

Chapter 7 explores how the Australian-Lebanese interpreted their return to civilian life after being discharged from Australia's military service in the wake of the Second World War and their experiences within their communities upon their return. As Australia entered a new period of mass migration and post-war reconstruction, I present a series of portraits that suggest that the more established Lebanese migrants found further means to fully assimilate into the nation.

The concluding chapter draws together the main themes of the dissertation and discusses themes that emerging from the analysis. The chapter will address the key findings that emerge

from the research undertaken in the light of my key research findings, namely that, to a large extent, the early Lebanese migrants were able to successfully negotiate the various social tensions involved in the assimilation process in two major ways;

1) through their early employment experiences, such as hawking and their participation in Australia's economic growth at the time; and

2) through their social experiences with Australian institutions such as religious institutions and Australia's Defence Forces during World War 1 and World War 2.

2. Literature Review

This chapter begins with a discussion of the literature related to the history of migration to Australia prior to World War 2, including the history of Lebanese migration. Through migration movements, a country develops a national migration history, and it is through this history and development of migration-related policies that a picture emerges of the demographic structure of present-day multicultural societies. While there have been many works that address the evolution of Australia's migration history, this study focuses on literature on the evolution of one particular group – the settlement of Lebanese Australians and the literature on how their social participation shaped their settlement.

While the history of immigration in Australia is diverse, the approach taken in this study will focus on two themes. The first theme is the literature on the early 'White Australia' policy and experiences of the early Lebanese migration to Australia. The second theme analyses the history of the broader Lebanese diaspora, focusing on the international literature as a comparison with the Australian diaspora. These two themes will provide the foundation for an analysis of Lebanese-Australian assimilation and the factors promoting this assimilation.

A brief summary of migration to Australia prior to World War 2

The literature on Australia's early migration history prior to World War 2 is vast, focusing on the story of colonisation, its impact on Indigenous Australians, the various colonial settlements, the effect of booms and depressions, and Government policies at different stages of Australian migration. Such publications include Greenwood (1964), Yarwood (1967), London (1970), Birrell (1987), Clark (1987), Murphy (1993) and Jupp (1998, 2007), among many others. Below is a brief history of migration to Australia as it relates to this thesis on the migration of the early Lebanese to Australia.

Immigration continued to play a central role in the expansion of Australian settlement after the end of convict transportation. The discovery of gold in eastern Australia in the early 1850s provided a strong lure for free migrants, bringing hundreds of thousands of settlers to the colonies, including the British, Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Scandinavians, Americans and Chinese (Millar 1978:379). However, it was the following economic boom in the 1880s that brought the first Lebanese immigrants. During this boom, migration to Australian colonies contributed 41 per cent to a population growth of over 3 per cent increase per year (Millar 1978:379). The subsequent depression of the 1890s, which lasted well into the first decade of the new century,

cut immigration to negligible levels (Millar 1978:379). However, just before World War I, there was a further rush of British migrants – a net gain of 280,000 in the four years 1909-13 (Millar 978:379). Millar (1978:379) observes that this influx of British immigration contributed significantly to the Australian Armed Forces during the war. While British migrants have received attention from historians such as Millar, many other nationalities (such as the Lebanese, Chinese, Greek, Russians, and Jewish immigrants) from outside the Empire also contributed to migration and the subsequent war effort. These lesser-analysed migrants, in particular the Lebanese, are discussed later in this chapter.

Non-European migration had become a controversial issue in the 1840s as settlers sought to overcome labour shortages, and it became more intense with the influx of Chinese migration during the gold rushes of the 1850s. By 1855 over 18,000 Chinese had arrived and by June 1857 there were some 40,000 Chinese in the colonies (Millar 1978:59). The increase of the Chinese was the catalyst that eventually resulted in various colonies imposing racial restrictions on immigration to Australia. Victoria was the first colony to impose such restrictions, first by limiting the number of arrivals by ship and taxing them. Legislation then implemented by New South Wales and Queensland, leading to more uniform Acts which were even more restrictive after violent demonstrations in Sydney in 1888 against the landing of Chinese (Millar 1978:59). This anti-Chinese movement was accompanied by an attempt to uproot the system of indentured Kanaka (Pacific Islander) labour, known as 'blackbirding' in Queensland. Finally, as early as 1896, a conference of colonial Premiers agreed on uniform legislation to exclude all immigration of non-white people (Millar 1978:60). As will be shown later in this chapter, this placed the Lebanese in a curiously ambiguous position.

The Commonwealth of Australia came into being on January 1, 1901, and by June 1901 the Parliament debated its first significant legislation dealing with immigration matters, which was, according to Prime Minister Barton, of 'definite and high policy,' and 'important with regard to the future of Australia' (Younger 1970:434). The subsequent *Immigration Restriction Act of 1901* was enacted to prevent non-white immigration into Australia. This Act was not only directed at the Japanese, Chinese, Indians, Pacific Islanders and Afghans - the wording of the Act, and the way it was administered, excluded other Asians or 'coloured' people more generally (Millar 1978:91).

In the decade after the First World War, despite the participation of many non-Anglos in the Australian Armed Forces during that conflict, Prime Minister Stanley Bruce introduced into the House of Representatives on 25 June 1925 a Bill to amend the Immigration Act 1901-1924,

reminding the House that non-British aliens still posed a threat to Australian society. Bruce argued that the Act would enable Australians to retain their racial purity and remain 'essentially and basically a British people', pointing out that there were in Australia persons of alien race and blood who had refused to become Australians, showing they were not imbued with the spirit of loyalty (Clark 1987:239-240). This debate took place as further Lebanese migrants were settling in Australia. The remainder of this chapter and the rest of this thesis examine how these restrictive policies affected the early Lebanese settlers, and how the Lebanese responded by questioning their exclusionary status.

History of Lebanese migration to Australia

This section outlines the existing scholarly literature on the history of Lebanese migration to Australia, aligning it with the different stages of Australian migration policies.

Tabar (2004) has produced the most exhaustive annotated bibliography on writings on Australians and New Zealanders of Lebanese background. This annotated bibliography documented important aspects of the contemporary state of research across all areas of Lebanese migration in Australia and New Zealand. He found that little serious academic or Government research focusing on the Lebanese community was carried out before the 1980s and provided two related reasons to explain this neglect. First, with the predominance of policies that privileged Europeans in Australia, prior to the 1970s most publications on migration and ethnic communities focused on issues relevant to European assimilation, including discussions on how to overcome barriers to total assimilation of non-Anglo Australians, and means of making the White Australia Policy more effective in achieving its desired objectives (Tabar 2004:5). Second, Tabar claims that 'up until 1980, even though there were substantial numbers of Lebanese migrants in Australia, they had not been there long enough for there to be much academic study on the conditions of their existence in their host country' (Tabar 2004:5). However, Tabar appears to underestimate the pre-1970s migration of Lebanese into Australia, as the Lebanese had settled in Australia since the late nineteenth century (Batrouney et al 1985:20 and Monsour 2010:116-117). Indeed, they were one of the first group of Middle Eastern immigrants to come to Australia (Batrouney et al 1985), and it is this group and their descendants that my research focuses on.

Batrouney et al (1985:20-21) noted that the main reasons for this early migration was the economic changes and religious persecution that took place in Lebanon during the nineteenth

century affecting the Maronite Catholics and the Druze of Mount Lebanon. These early Lebanese emigrants also migrated to the United States of America to escape religious conflict in Lebanon (Khachan 2015:21).

Given this, it is more accurate to suggest that as the second and third generation of Lebanese from this initial migration became more assimilated, and as the White Australia Policy was replaced with that of multiculturalism in the 1970s, writings on Lebanese migrants and their descendants in Australia started to emerge. These writings, which are discussed below, can be broadly divided into historical (such as history of migration), political (such as refugee issues), sociological (such as marriage patterns among the Lebanese community in Australia and Lebanese attitudes and stereotyping in schools) and social services (such as unemployment and education issues) (Humphrey 1984). Furthermore, many Australian-Lebanese writers or academics descending from the pre-World War 2 wave of migration have focused attention on the history of their own families or other specific Lebanese families (Gaha 1988; Monsour 2009, 2012; Nasser 2001; McIvor 2011; Matta 2016 and Brown 2022). For these writers, Lebanese ethnicity is discussed through the prism of family identity, with the aim of exemplifying success stories of migrant family settlement in Australia and New Zealand.

There is also a substantial body of literature on Lebanese migration after the Second World War. This deals a wider range of contemporary issues pertaining to the settlement experiences of the Lebanese community, including its political behaviour in Sydney, its settlement needs (health, schooling, housing, etc.) unemployment, citizenship and belonging, racism, Lebanese youth experience and community building. Such literature includes Burnley (1983), Ghareeb (1992), Hage (2002), Collins (2005), Mansouri (2006), Tabar et al. (2010) and El Khouri (2012). Many Government publications, including Humphrey (1984), also addressed issues of unemployment, and other social problems arising from migration, specifically for the cohort migrating from Lebanon from the mid-1970s onwards. This latter focus helps explain Tabar's earlier claim about the skewed nature of the literature on the Lebanese migrant experience, which he noted focused on more recent issues.

Ghareeb's 1992 welfare survey is an example of the increased focus on social services for recent Lebanese migrants. Under the initiative of the Australian Arabic Welfare Council (AAWC), Ghareeb (1992) focused on the Arabic-speaking community in Western Sydney, specifically in Fairfield. The major aim of the review was to provide a needs assessment and prac-

tical steps to effectively service the Arabic speaking community (Gharreb 1992: 13). This review was characteristic of many that were written for Lebanese and Arab immigrants who settled in Melbourne and Sydney after World War 2, in particular those who settled in the 1970s.

However, this valuable research and assessment does not exist for the experiences the earlier waves of Lebanese migrants during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. These migrants are the focus my research, and therefore different methods need to be employed to understand their settlement process. This issue will constitute the focus of the following methodological chapter.

Another example of the kind of settlement literature written on more recent Lebanese immigrants is a study by Michael Humphrey, funded by the then-Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs in 1984, titled *Family, Work and Unemployment, A Study of Lebanese Settlement in Sydney*. Humphrey concluded that the economic context, along with language, education and discrimination issues, influenced the rate of unemployment among Lebanese immigrants. These important surveys provided useful pictures of the nature of the Lebanese immigration experience during the 1970s and 1980s but tended to present an overall impression of this Lebanese experience as a 'problem of settlement'. It also raises the question whether earlier Lebanese migrants faced similar problems. This forms the context of my research.

Collins (2005) has also examined the more recent Lebanese diaspora in Sydney in his study, *From Beirut to Bankstown: The Lebanese Diaspora in Multicultural Australia*. He concludes that it is impossible to understand the diverse experiences of the *contemporary* Lebanese diaspora in Australia without adopting the lens of racialisation, social class and globalisation. He argued that the Lebanese diaspora in Australia is highly diverse in terms of religion, region and social class. This is demonstrated by reference to labour force data and general socio-economic data within the Australian Bureau of Statistics census data and poverty research (Collins 2005:190;200;203;208). This data in summation illustrated that there was a religious dimension to Lebanese unemployment in Australia in general and Sydney in particular. In the 1991 Australian census data, Lebanese unemployment was about four times higher for Christians and five times higher for Muslims (Middle Eastern born) compared with the total Australian population (Collins 2005:200-201).

What Collins work suggests is that there has been a diversity of outcomes from different Lebanese diasporas. In other words, the various migration cohorts from Lebanon to Australia has led to different social and economic experiences. As Collins (2005: 208) notes: ‘There is no

one, homogenous Lebanese culture or ethnicity *per se* but rather a diverse and dynamic culture that is changing over the generations and the decades of settlement in Australia'. It can be hypothesised that this relates as much to the different historical contexts as to the different cohorts of Lebanese themselves. This would suggest that it is important to understand the broader history of Lebanese migration to Australia in order to understand the contemporary scene of diversity in Australia. Yet, despite this cautionary tale, the experiences of the earlier generations of Lebanese settles remains less explored than later generations, and if a better understanding of the relationship between the circumstances and consequences of migration is to be achieved, then it is important to explore the experience of these earlier generations to see whether their settlement issues were similar to, or different from, later generations. This will help to better understand the factors that influence settlement experiences. This thesis aims to contribute to this task.

The pertinence of this question of historical context becomes clearer when the policy differences between pre-1970 Australia and post-1970 Australia is taken into consideration. In the former case, the cultural environment was far more Anglocentric, and far less supportive of multiculturalism.

The importance of this periodising of Lebanese history has been recognised and emphasised by a number of researchers. The earliest comprehensive history covering immigration to Australia from a given Arab source is Batrouney et al *(*1985), *The Lebanese in Australia.* It deals with the history of Lebanese migration to Australia from 1840 until 1984, and the role played by the early Lebanese in the development of Australia. They describe three waves of Lebanese settlement in Australia: 1880–1920; 1920–1950; and 1947–1974. In each period, Lebanese migrants faced different challenges, and these issues are outlined below.

Another in-depth study that periodises Lebanese settlement is McKay's (1989) *Phoenician Farewell, Three generations of Lebanese Christians in Australia.* McKay's study uses interviews and historical records to trace the changes that have occurred in the Lebanese community across three generations, from Lebanese migrants arriving between 1880 and World War 2; those who arrived between World War 2 and 1976; and those Lebanese migrants who came to Australia after 1976. The major topics McKay explores include 'cultural baggage', patterns of settlement, social mobility, family life and changes in ethnic identities.

McKay's study concluded that the early Syrian/Lebanese migrants during the pre-World War 1 era did not constitute a cohesive *ethnic group* but rather an *ethnic category* (McKay 1989:

117). According to McKay (1989:3), an ethnic group entails individuals interacting meaningfully with one another where a sense of group belonging is present. Ethnic group members manifest a 'consciousness of kind' because they share a similar ethnic trait, attribute or set of symbols that epitomises their cultural and/or social distinctiveness. Examples of such symbols are physical contiguity, language or dialect forms, religious affiliation, phenotypical features, or some contribution of these features. In contrast, an ethnic category involves a certain number of people who can be classified into a specific cluster because they possess certain ethnic traits. In this later case, there does not have to be any sense of belonging among an ethic category, as this common attribute is not perceived as the basis of any sort of meaningful social interaction (McKay 1989: 4). If McKay's argument holds, and the Lebanese were an 'ethic category', then a subsidiary question that my research will explore concerns how a weak sense of ethnic grouping impacted on the early Lebanese settlers' sense of identity and their attempts to assimilate into the host culture.

One significant element of the early Lebanese migrant experience that McKay did not explore was whether their experiences affected their attitudes towards, and their involvement in, Australia's military campaigns. Given how both World War 1 and World War 2 were such consuming national and international issues during the period of early Lebanese migration to Australia, the issue of wartime participation is worthy of exploration. The importance of this military variable will be further explored through international evidence presented later in this chapter.

Another researcher who has recognised the periodisation of Lebanese migrants is Burnley (1982), who traced the historical evolution of the migration and settlement of Lebanese in Sydney. While McKay's research focused on the period before World War 2, Burnley's research was mainly based on interviews with post-World War 2 immigrants and their acculturation patterns.

Burnley surveyed two Lebanese neighbourhoods – the old, predominantly Maronite concentration in Redfern in central Sydney, and the new, predominantly Muslim cluster in Lakemba in Sydney's middle-ring suburbs. The survey emphasised the function, structure and role of the local ethnic concentrations in the process of adaptation to an unfamiliar urban milieu. When Burnley asked interviewees which country they felt they belonged to, the longer-term resident Lebanese (over 10 years) identified more with Australia (53%) than people with resident less than five years (30%) (Burnley 1982:25). In addition, the survey concluded that longer-resident Lebanese felt more identity with their local community than recent arrivals.

The research of both McKay and Burnley suggests that the earlier generations of migrants who settled in Australia before World War 1 experienced different processes of assimilation. In my study, I will be exploring these processes among the earlier Lebanese migrants to make more intelligible the assimilatory outcomes across different periods. Furthermore, Burnley's work was mainly restricted to those who settled in Sydney, while my research considers regional as well as urban experiences of settlement.

This survey of Lebanese research in Australia has raised two main research questions which this thesis will address:

- What migration experiences and social processes of the early Lebanese migrants influenced their, and their dependants, assimilation into Australia?
- To what extent did their involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces contribute to their assimilation into Australian society?

The ambiguity of the status of early Lebanese migrants in Australia

In his general history of migration, Yarwood (1967) noted that despite a continuous presence in Australia since the 1880s, Syrian/Lebanese[1] immigrants and their descendants had been, with a few exceptions, generally ignored in the recording of Australian history. This is consistent with Tabar's (2004) assessment. The reasons behind Yarwood's conclusions partly lie in the political and social history of Lebanon. The first wave of Lebanese immigrants during the 1880s had descended from a people who lacked a nation-state and, as Aboud (2002) notes, English-language literature dealing with Arab-world migrations to and settlement in Australia has been focused on national origin groups. Lebanon was a semi-autonomous district in the Ottoman province of Syria until the French mandate of 1920; no distinctions were made between Lebanese and Syrian/Lebanese. Under Ottoman rule, all emigrants were issued with Turkish documents, regardless of their regional, linguistic or religious origins, which meant that early Lebanese immigrants to Australia (and to the Americas and New Zealand during the same period) were classified as 'Turks' (or Assyrian or Syrian). It was not until after semi-autonomous statehood was achieved in 1926 that individuals began migrating with Lebanese passports, and it was not until 1954 that Australian census officials classified Lebanese and Syrian immigrants in separate categories (Batrouney 2002:46-47).

[1] The Lebanese who immigrated before the 1940s were usually referred to as Syrians. Before the political re-definition of the Middle East after World War 1, the term Syria, quite accurately, included all immigrants from the modern nations of Jordan, Palestine (Israel), Lebanon and Syria. As this study focuses on immigrants who came from the area now known as Lebanon, and those who migrated pre 1920 will be referred to as Syrian/Lebanese.

The evolving colonial and Federation political and social milieu in Australia also played an important role in shaping the identities of the early Lebanese settlers, in particular the *Immigration Restriction Act of 1901,* as noted earlier. This was the first major Commonwealth piece of legislation, which remained in force until replaced by the Migration Act 1958. The Immigration Restriction Bill embodied the principle of the preservation of a 'White Australia' (Willard 1923:120). The Act's sole exclusion provision was the dictation test whereby any applicant for admission to Australia could be asked to write down what was said to them in any European language of the examining officer's choosing; if the applicant failed, they had no right to admission to the country. This method became the principal means of enforcing a discriminatory policy designed to control the sources from which immigrants would be accepted. Being 'flexible', it could be used against anyone whom the Government wished to exclude, including 'undesirable' Europeans (Younger 1982:435).

Despite this, as the following section will show, throughout the diaspora, Syrians and Lebanese shared a common experience of settlement during the nineteenth century that mixed racism with commercial interaction (Humphrey 2005:37). This pattern of petty commerce was a common story of the early Lebanese migration internationally. Indeed, researchers have found the same historical experience among the Lebanese in Australia (for example, Batrouney 1992 and Mansour 2002) as was found in Argentina, where the Lebanese hawkers brought goods to the remotest spots of the country (Valverde 1992: 316). Furthermore, they found that in Argentina and elsewhere, as the Syrian/Lebanese hawkers achieved commercial success, they sought to improve their social status and attain upward mobility and in this way distance themselves from other stigmatised traders (Humphrey; 2005:37).

Humphrey (2005: 31 and 41) also argues that the introduction of immigration policies in settler societies such as Australia and Canada was significant in shaping national identity and composition. According to Humphrey (2005:41) the Lebanese fitted into this spectrum on the cusp of Europeanness, which meant *potential* for full assimilation. As Monsour's (2001, 2002, 2005) research illustrates, the Act of 1901 provided a foundation for the early Lebanese settlers to have a place in Australian society, even in the face of hostility and racism. Monsour (2001, 2002, 2005) also explored how the Australian immigration policies shaped the early Lebanese settlers identities. Her research provides a historical analysis of how the Lebanese in Queensland (1880s to 1947) were affected by changing migration policies. For instance, Section 5 of the *Naturalisation Act* disqualified 'all aboriginal natives of Asia, Africa, or the Pacific Islands except New Zealand' from naturalisation. Consequently, all Syrian/Lebanese immigrants were now excluded from naturalisation. In response to this exclusion, individual Syrian/Lebanese

challenged the application of the term 'aboriginal natives of Asia' to themselves. As evidence, Monsour presents a 1904 letter from Alf M. of Parkes, New South Wales to Atlee Hunt, Secretary of the Department of External Affairs,[2] where the pensioner described himself as being trilingual (able to write and read English, French and Arabic); a Christian; and 'not an aboriginal native of Syria but a white man of good English education' (Monsour 2005:62). Alf M. specifically wanted to emphasise that he should not be categorised as an Aboriginal native of Asia or Syria and rejected the classification as Asian by expressing and providing examples to prove he was closer to European cultures than Asian cultures.

Such research also illustrates how the attitudes of Australian Government officials towards the Syrian/Lebanese were equivocal during this period. Officially they were grouped together with Asians. However, Monsour (2002) suggests that unofficially they were recognised as being different. She notes that Atlee Hunt saw Syrian/Lebanese as suitable as immigrants and settlers on several grounds. First, the high number of Lebanese female immigrants meant that they could not be considered a threat to the safety of Australian women or racial purity. Second, they appeared more similar in appearance and religious culture to Europeans than to Asians. Third, they were considered to have a relatively high educational standard compared with other immigrant groups. Hunt cited the bilingual ability of some of the early Syrian/Lebanese settlers as an example of this educational standard. All this contributed to a sense that the Syrian/Lebanese were a complex case in Immigration Department determinations. Their uniqueness was attributed to their aptitude in Western languages (such as English, French, and Italian) and Western customs owing to the presence of European educational and religious institutions in Lebanon. Because of these attributes, Batrouney (2002:43) concluded that 'it was felt by the Australian Government that the Lebanese migrants could quite easily blend with the racial mix in the young Australia'. It is this ambiguous identity status under the discriminatory immigration laws in early Federation Australia that makes the Lebanese such a complex migratory case study, sitting on the boundaries of Europeanness. My research questions relate directly to this issue of how this ambiguity influenced the settlement experience and identity of early Lebanese migrants, and how Lebanese migrants negotiated this ambiguity.

[2] Mr Atlee Hunt was the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Home and Territories. This Department was for the greater part of Australia's period charged with directing the administration of Australian laws that aimed to prevent the immigration of Asians and other non-European people. Hunt also controlled the officers of the Department of Trade and Customs on matters relating to immigration.

Existing research has therefore found that to gain acceptance as part of Australian society, the early Lebanese immigrants sought to have themselves officially recognised as European. Batrouney (2002) provides another example of these appeals, from William Abourisk, a prosperous naturalised Syrian merchant, resident for eighteen years in Victoria. He wrote to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin in January 1910 urging the removal of the restricted admission of his countrymen on the grounds that 'Syrians are Caucasians and they are a white race as much as the English. Their looks, habits, customs, religions, blood etc. are those of European, but they are more intelligent' (Batrouney 2002:44). Abourisk concluded his plea by stating that the Syrians 'should be treated like other white races' (Monsour 2015:147).

These pleas for European status were occasionally taken up on the behalf of the Lebanese by sympathetic political representatives. On 20 November 1914, the Mayor of Redfern (where a large proportion of the Syrians resided and engaged in shopkeeping, petty textile manufacture and the 'white work' trade) wrote on behalf of a Syrian friend who wished to become naturalised: 'Being put on a level with the Chinese, Lascars, etc. hurts them very much, as they claim they are Caucasians and not Asiatics. Can you help him for his wife and children's sake?' The Syrian concerned in this application urged: 'I cannot view myself but as an Australian since all my interests and my whole life are devoted to the best interests and welfare of my adopted home' (Yarwood 1967:145). These examples reveal that there were tensions between Lebanese self-perception and official Government status and thesis will examine how Lebanese negotiated this tension in their varied social settings and settlement experiences.

Batrouney's (1985; 1992; 1997; 2002; 2006) corpus of work provides a broad historical and sociological foundation for exploring how Lebanese immigrants were affected by various Government policies, specifically during the early twentieth century. For example, like Monsour, he notes how the Lebanese were grouped together with other Asian people (not by race but by region), as they were recognised as being different to the British race (Batrouney 2002:43). Batrouney (1997:152) also noted how many of them applied unsuccessfully for naturalisation until the passing of the Nationality Act 1920, which allowed people who had been resident in Australia for five years or more to become naturalised. While this did not remove the stigmatic otherness of origins, it did provide an avenue for Lebanese to assume official Australian status.

Batrouney also illustrates how discrimination took on an extra dimension during the First World War, when the Lebanese were classified as 'enemy aliens' on the grounds that they were subjects of Turkey, a nation with which Australia was at war (Batrouney 1997:152). Ironically, while their parents were required to report to police stations each week as 'enemy aliens',

some second-generation Lebanese-Australians were fighting the Turks as members of the Australian Imperial Force (Batrouney 1997:152). This irony raises other interesting questions associated with settlement and identity: how did this anomaly of alien status and family participation in the war affect Lebanese sense of identity and security of settlement? And how did it affect the host society's view of Lebanese migrants and their children?

As a result of the *Immigration Restriction Act of 1901*, the numbers of non-Europeans declined as a percentage of the population in the early decades of the twentieth century. Those born in China declined from 37,000 in 1891 to 6404 in 1947. Those born in India rose from 5651 to 8160 over the same period, although many of them were classified as Europeans. Pacific Islanders declined markedly, dropping from 10,000 in 1891 to only 1637 in 1947. The Japanese population was reduced significantly due to post-war deportation, numbering 3554 in 1901 and only 330 in 1947 (Jupp 1998:77). One community, however, which escaped this decline was the Lebanese, who were Catholic or Orthodox Christians and of 'European appearance' (Jupp 1998:77).

While agitation had been directed against Syrian hawkers in the 1890s by sections of the Anglo-Celtic population, they were not normally excluded from settlement (Jupp 1998:77). There were some 1500 Lebanese in Australia by 1901 (Jupp 1998:77), while in 1921 they numbered 1803 (Jupp 1988:668). By 1947 they had increased marginally to 1886 (Jupp 1998:77). Jupp concluded that the Lebanese case showed clearly that White Australia was based on physical appearance rather than geographical origin. One question that remains unresolved is whether the impact of Lebanese agitation and claims put forward to various Government representatives played a role in maintaining their population levels despite their ambiguous status. This thesis will explore this question.

Thus, it is possible to hypothesise that the White Australia Policy became a catalyst for the early Lebanese settlers' process of assimilation into Australian society. It presented a test for themselves and their offspring whereby they had to demonstrate that they were the same as, or equivalent to, Europeans. To what extent did the Lebanese community shape their identity to fit the mould of these immigration policies? If being European meant gaining rights, privileges and being accepted into Australian society, then to what extent did the Lebanese shape their actions and behaviour to convince authorities that they were European rather than Asian?

The International Literature

In addition to recognising the local Australian historical context of early Lebanese settlement, it is also important to explore early Lebanese Australians as part of a larger global diaspora. The United States of America, Canada, Brazil and Argentina were the destinations of the largest communities of Lebanese emigrants and their descendants, (Hourani 1992:3) while smaller but significant groups moved to New Zealand and Australia. A broader international appreciation of the Lebanese diaspora provides a measure of comparison with the Australian-Lebanese experiences, and therefore affords a broader perspective on the questions this thesis is seeking to answer.

However, any comparative analysis of the Lebanese diaspora in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century needs to be mindful of the fact that the overwhelming majority of emigrants from Lebanon and Syria reached the Americas, and these numbers dwarf those migrating to Australasia. The sheer scale of migration to the Americas (some half a million people) means that any comparison needs to be qualified. The mass migration to the United States, for example, allowed for the greater possibility of group maintenance compared with Australia, and there were better lines of communication between the United States and Lebanon, which facilitated stronger family and political ties than could be maintained by Lebanese migrants in Australia (see Fahrenthold 2019). These differences also suggest that the probability of facilitating assimilation was higher in Australia than the United States, regardless of discriminatory naturalisation policies. As a consequence, the following review of extensive international literature will focus mainly on the principal topic of investigation in this thesis, namely assimilation and participation in armed forces.

Literature on Lebanese migration to the USA can be traced back as early as the 1920s (Hitti 1924). Hitti described the various aspects of Lebanese assimilation in the USA, from their discomfort at being labelled ‘Syrian’ to the anglicisation of Arabic names. He claimed that ‘in their diaspora Lebanese emigrants integrated themselves with their new countrymen more readily than any other people of Near Eastern origin, including Jews’ (Hitti 1965). A scholar who from 1926 introduced Arab cultural studies into the United States, Hitti concluded that the Lebanese emigrants integrated readily, a conclusion that tends to be shared throughout the Lebanese diaspora literature (Naff, 1992; 1985; Valverde 1992; Haddad 2018), including Australia (Batrouney, 2002).

Naff (1992) broadly followed Hitti's account, suggesting that the Lebanese 'assimilation into American life was and is remarkably easy'. Settling across the various regions of the USA, the Lebanese adapted to local social attitudes, manners and regional accents. They became New Englanders, Southerners, Middle Westerners, and so on (Naff 1992:150). In general, their relations with other Americans – on the road and in the communities - were sufficiently smooth that they were only dimly aware of the often-virulent xenophobic movements that swept the country before and after World War 1 (Naff 1992:150). Some Lebanese during the first wave of immigration (1880-1940) Americanised their names, primarily to overcome the difficulties in the spelling and pronunciation of Arabic names (Naff 1992:150). In this way, Naff argues, the Americanised children of the first immigrant wave showed scant interest or knowledge in their ethnic origin. They were, by this stage, more American than Lebanese. If political and economic events (such as France's intervention in Lebanese politics which set the parameters of the Levant of the late 1930s and 1940s, and the depression in Lebanon in 1933-1934 which saw 160,000 workers in 1932 thrown out of work) had not reactivated immigration from the Arab World and reignited an interest in their ethnic roots, Lebanese Americans might have assimilated themselves out of existence (Harris 2012:187-189; Naff 1992:160). Suleiman (1992:93-194) agreed with Naff, stating that 'by the Second World War, the Lebanese community in the United States had assimilated into American society to a very great extent'. He argued that the Lebanese integration into American life was so complete that the only 'ethnic' component recognisable to outsiders was their food, music and festivals. However, one major factor contributing to the revival and reinvigoration of the community as an ethnic group was the post-World War 2 influx of a new and large wave of immigration from the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East, particularly Palestine (after the dismemberment in 1948), and from Egypt, Iraq and Syria, after the rise and collapse of various socialist or dictatorial regimes there (Suleiman 1992:194).

Naff (1985:82) stated that the decision to become a US citizen and to surrender original nationality and native culture may be explained by the immigrant's motivation for migrating. That motivation, in turn, would be expected to exert a powerful influence on how a group assimilates. For Naff, the main theme emerging from her interviews with Syrian/Lebanese who migrated to the USA before World War I was 'that the Syrian pioneers, no more or less than Greeks, Armenians, and other national groups from the eastern Mediterranean, were lured to America by the notion of sudden wealth and the prestige it would confer on their return home' (Naff 1985:82). Furthermore, she claimed that the most fundamental catalyst in this assimilation process of Syrian/Lebanese in America was 'pack peddling' (Naff 1992:145 and Shakir 1997:42). Peddling facilitated the assimilation of Syrian Americans through interactions with

their customers (and their neighbours). In this way, Syrians adopted the English language and developed relationships with the host culture and Americans began to accept their role within communities (Albrecht: 2015:111). Albrecht (2015:111) concludes from these findings that "Syrians had to have contact with the right kind of Americans in order to access the assimilation: they had to have a widespread contact with *white* Americans. If the substantial contact Syrians gained through peddling was with non-white Americans or other non-European immigrants, this would likely not have led to assimilation into white standards, nor would it have likely been considered a sign of their integration into US society." Albrecht's finding draw attention to the importance of the composition of the relationships that migrants make in their new surroundings, and this issue will be explored further in this thesis. It will explore the status of the social groups Australian Lebanese interacted with, and the nature of the relationships that were formed with these groups.

In addition, existing research within both the United States and Australia has suggested that pack peddling or 'hawking' facilitated assimilation. Therefore, the impact of this practice will also be explored in greater depth in my research. However, while in the United States Naff emphasised the motivations of migrants, the Australian and other national literatures also point to the importance of the social, political and economic context within which migrants settle in a country. This factor was also explored in Dalia Abdelhady's research, (2011: 90-91) which approached the assimilation of the Lebanese diaspora through the 'examination of the social, economic, political, and cultural institutions in which immigrants participate'. Abdelhady (2011:90) concluded from her fieldwork that 'most of my respondents emphasized that they do not really belong to these organizations [Lebanese churches or mosques and organisations that focused on Lebanese or Arab social and political issues], which can be assumed as the full assimilation of these individuals to their host societies.' Abdelhady (2011:91) found that 'to a large extent, my respondents had assimilated to their host society by numerous indicators (professional status, high level of education, language proficiency and in some cases intermarriage)'. Elissa Haddad's (2018) quantitative study of Lebanese assimilation in the United States reached similar conclusions. These indicators will also be considered in my research when exploring the migration journeys of the early Lebanese Australians.

The oral interviews conducted by both Naff and Abdelhady and the quantitative research conducted by Haddad reached similar conclusions in terms of the positive assimilation experiences of American Lebanese migrants and their descendants. Yet Akram Khater (2019: 20) qualified Naff's approach to assimilation. Rather than assimilating and becoming "American", Khater argued that Arab immigrants still tended to maintain relations with the Middle East –

via travel, letters, newspapers, ideas and commodities – that allowed them to develop 'transnational identities' (Khater 2019: 20). This more qualified understanding of the nature of American Lebanese A similar definition of assimilation has been supported by Sarah Gualtieri. While she accepted Naff's emphasis on the importance of assimilation, Gualteri (2009: 14) concludes that such emphasis on assimilation 'obscures the intense debates over what it meant to be Syrian in America in the early period of migration and settlement in the United States'. Gualtieri described assimilation as a process in which Syrians actively and simultaneously defined themselves as Syrian *and* American. She argued that a 'more useful category for understanding this process is "ethnicization" - that is, the construction of a sense of peoplehood vis-à-vis outsiders – and not assimilation'. (Gualtieri 2009:14). Gualtieri's observation that individuals from migrant ethnic groups renegotiate their sense of belonging in the context of their everyday relations, as well as their relationships with the state, is a useful way to approach the subject of the Lebanese diaspora, regardless of whether the term 'ethnicization' or 'assimilation' is adopted to describe these experiences.

Another factor mentioned in the previous section that can facilitate or reflect assimilation is participation in armed forces of the host country. In US research, Suleiman (1992:192) concurs with Hitti and Naff that high rates of assimilation among Syrian/Lebanese into US society reflected and was reflected in their participation in the US Armed Forces. For Suleiman, World War 1 marked a watershed for the Syrian/Lebanese in the USA. On the one hand, the community was almost completely cut off from their ancestral homeland. This not only intensified the community's sense of separation from their homeland but also strengthened the tendency to settle permanently in the United States. Furthermore, the USA's entry into the war kindled a strong sense of patriotism towards the USA, some of which was absorbed by the Syrian/Lebanese community. On the other hand, young Syrians/Lebanese born and/or raised in the United States felt a greater attachment to the USA than to their ancestors' homeland. These factors contributed to the fact that a large number of Syrian/Lebanese volunteered for, and served in, the US Armed Forces fighting in Europe (Suleiman 1992:192-193). Suleiman (1992:193) argued that this marked their assimilationist baptism into American society. He considered the willingness displayed by the Syrian/Lebanese to die for their country of settlement as testimony to their assimilationist feelings and their sense of belonging to the USA. Given their similar immigration experience compared with Australian-Lebanese migrants discussed in the previous section, it is worthwhile exploring whether participation in the armed forces of the host country also affected Lebanese migrants in Australia; whether it had an impact in reducing any official or casual racism experienced by the Lebanese; and whether it ultimately contributed to their assimilation into Australian society.

Like Australian scholars, research into the Arab-American experience in the United States has also addressed the problem of race and racism (Gualtieri 2005). Naff (Gualtieri 2005:112) described these 'racial prerequisite cases' as the first "race crisis" for the Syrians. It was resolved by a 1915 Federal Court ruling in Dow vs. United States that declared Syrian/Lebanese to be 'white persons' eligible to become US citizens. Other scholars have interpreted this decision as a righting of a historical wrong inflicted upon a hard-working and highly assimilable community, and a victory over discrimination and prejudice (Gualtieri 2005:113). The significance of racism in the USA against Lebanese migrants reinforces the importance of this issue in one of my key research questions, as it impinges on the study of the migration experiences and the social interactions of the early Lebanese migrants in Australia, as noted in the previous section.

During the period from before the First World War until the 1940s, many other countries adopted highly restrictive immigration policies that limited the migration of certain peoples, and these affected the Lebanese diaspora. In Canada, for instance, as result of the First World War and the depression of the 1930s, a highly restrictive immigration policy was maintained. The policy was applied more or less uniformly to all national-ethnic groups except those from Britain and the United States (Abu-Laban 1992:229). According to Abu-Laban (1992:229), another, perhaps more critical, set of conditions curbing the entry of Syrian- or Arab-origin people into Canada involved the 1908 Order-in-Council, P.C. 926, which placed severe restrictions on the admission of all Asiatic immigrants. The Lebanese immigrants in Canada mobilised to wage a campaign against these discriminatory naturalisation laws and this action echoed the advocacy efforts by Syrian immigrants in the USA who, from 1909 to 1917, waged a campaign against discriminatory naturalisation laws that classified Syrians as part of the 'yellow race' (Naff 1985), which only ended after the above-mentioned Dow v United Sates case. The Syrian/Lebanese in Canada were conscious of the US campaign against discrimination and Aboud (2005) has suggested that this may have shaped their activism, as relations between Syrian/Lebanese in Canada and in the USA were close owing to their economic links, family ties and the cultural influence of the New York-based Arabic language press. Given the questions underpinning my own research, it is worth exploring the extent to which Lebanese in Australia mounted a similar 'campaign' against discriminatory immigration or naturalisation laws, or whether they relied on individual exemption. If, as McKay (1989) suggests, the Lebanese were less of an ethnic group than an ethnic category, then the more individualistic approach might be expected in Australia.

As early as 1913, Syrians in Canada had raised immigration claims against Canadian authorities. They were objecting to the fact that Syrian immigrants were subject to the $200 fee imposed on immigrants of "Asiatic origin" under P.C. 926 OF 9 May 1910. The Syrian/Lebanese community argued against the exclusionary measures on the grounds that the classification 'Asiatics should not be applied to Syrians' since they were not part of the "yellow race" (Aboud 2005). Syrian/Lebanese Canadians made numerous representations to political leaders, requesting that their ethnic group be exempted from the restrictive order. Their arguments centred around two main points: Syrian/Lebanese were Caucasians (white) and, as such should not be debarred from entry to Canada; and P.C. 926 was aimed at East Indian (Hindu), not Syrian/Lebanese, immigrants. Later, following the 1920 San Remo conference, Syrian/Lebanese Canadians further argued that Syrians/Lebanese should be classified as being of European rather than of Asiatic origin, because Syria (i.e., the Greater Syria region, including modern Syria and Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan) was under British and French protection (Abu-Laban 1980). The Syrian/Lebanese community in Canada appeared to be adept at using the 'race card' to order to oppose racial discrimination.

The Lebanese in Canada continued to persevere in their claims for acceptance as part of the European race. They made claims well into the post-World War 2 period, drawing on arguments and counter-arguments concerning their racial background. In summary, the Syrian/Lebanese claim makers contended that since they were not classified as 'Asiatic' according to the racial classification scheme presented in the *Encyclopedia Americana*, they could not and should not be subject to the 'Asiatic' exclusion regulation (Aboud 2005:99). Another element of their argument sought to refute the view that the Syrians and Lebanese were 'undesirable' immigrants according to the immigration bureaucracy guidelines and immigration authorities. The widespread negative stereotypes of Syrian/Lebanese immigrations which were held by Canadian authorities were part of the general attitude of antipathy towards non-European immigrants in Canadian society (Aboud 2005:100), and Lebanese Canadians used these laws to draw wider public attention to their own sense of self-identity.

Drawing on testimonies of Syrian/Lebanese during the mid-century, Canadian researchers such as Abu-Laban (1992) and Aboud (2005) found strong collective efforts aimed at correcting this unfavourable view and characterisation of Syrian immigrants that had been in circulation in Canada since the early part of the twentieth century (Aboud 2005:100). Aboud drew on written statements asserting the various virtues and achievements of Syrian/ Lebanese. For instance, they highlighted the willingness and success of the Syrian/Lebanese to assimilate into Canadian culture and society (Aboud; 2005:100). Furthermore, Aboud (2005:100) drew

on accounts testifying to their attachment to such values as initiative, self-support, and loyalty, including their contribution to Canadian society and economic prosperity, exemplified by their commercial success, high levels of business creation, political involvement and their desire to become Canadian citizens (Aboud 2005:100). Another factor pointed to was the support for and participation in Canada's efforts in both World Wars. In what appeared to be an attempt to satisfy the authorities that they shared fundamental Canadian principles, they also claimed that Syrian/Lebanese were similar to Canadians in their customs, habits and methods of holding property (Aboud 2005:100). As post-war immigration policies became more entwined with the fear of communism, the respect for private property would become an astute card for the Syrian/Lebanese to play.

Earlier Syrian/Lebanese immigrants to Canada were adversely influenced by another factor unique to their ethnic group, but similar to Australian and US circumstances. Though Arab in origin they were Turkish subjects and, in Canada during the first decades of the twentieth century, much to their discomfort, the distinction between Turk and Syrian was often blurred. This issue became critical when Turkey became Canada's enemy, as well as Australia's enemy, in World War 1. At that time, Syrian/Lebanese were regarded as alien enemies on technical rather than substantive grounds. As late as 1920, a senior Canadian official stated that Syrian/Lebanese were 'still regarded as persons who were citizens of Turkey, an alien enemy country, and they would not be given any facilities either by Ottawa, or this office (the London office of the Superintendent of Emigration for Canada), to reach or enter Canada, and if they (were) rejected, they must take their own responsibility' (Abu Laban 1980:87). Even before World War I, some Syrians attempted to correct this characterisation by expressing negative attitudes towards Turkey, the country that controlled their ancestral homeland and was identified as their oppressor (Abu Laban 1980:87). Many Syrian/Lebanese attempted to acquire Canadian citizenship, in part to avoid further association with Turkey. On the eve of, and throughout, World War I, their patriotism was directed singularly towards Canada, according to Abu Laban (1980:87). He uses the example of the case of a Syrian/Lebanese from Montreal, named Salim Boosamra, who purchased a ring at an auction for the Patriotic Fund for $1,000. The full story was carried on the front page of the September 19, 1914, issue of the *Montreal Daily Star,* with the report concluding that 'Mr Boosamra told how he had come to Canada from Syria a poor man and was glad to be able to help the fund' (Abu Laban 1980:87).

Abu Laban (1980:229-230) argued that 'Arab Canadians have been subject to two sets of social forces: one encouraging *acculturation,* or even assimilation, into the larger society; and

the other encouraging *group maintenance* reflected in a moderate degree of institutional development within the Arab-Canadian Community'. In my research, I attempt to understand whether this tension between group maintenance and assimilation manifested itself in Australia and if so, how Lebanese Australian attempted to negotiate these twin social processes.

In reference to *acculturative change*, Abu Laban (1980;229) states that it was effective but as well as unavoidable for Lebanese migrants. Acculturation was unavoidable because the 'Arab-Canadian community, from the start, had been urban, desegregated, relatively small, spread across the country, and hence vulnerable' (Abu Laban;1980:229). Moreover, many of the post-war Arab immigrants were pre-socialised into the Western way of life, in that they knew English and/or French and were familiar with Western culture and institutions before entry into Canada (Abu Laban 1980:229). For the Canadian-born generations, there is the added influence of the Canadian school system, which was another effective mechanism of acculturative change (Abu Laban 1980:229).

Abu Laban's Canadian research can help inform my own research on whether acculturation was a force that also operated with respect to the newly-settled Lebanese in Australia. Whether the process of acculturation operated in Australia remains an empirical question to be investigated, and Abu Laban points to possible facilitators of acculturation and assimilation that can be examined in other national contexts such as Australia.

Inter-war Argentina provides an illustrative example of how group maintenance and acculturation can be mutually supportive forces. In order to demonstrate their respectability and assimilation as Argentinians, the upwardly-mobile Lebanese migrants set up ethnic organisations to perform a supervisory role over the conduct of 'their communities' (Humphrey 1997:172). As the Argentinian state, in line with the US and Canada, became increasingly discriminating over the racialised and politicised 'ideal' citizen, immigrant communities responded by policing their own members. Ethnic organisations such as the *Patronato Sirio-Libanes* assumed the role of guardians of the community's reputation, providers of charity and go-betweens with Government agencies, especially immigration authorities (Humphrey 2005:38). For example, one Argentinian Lebanese community paper in 1936 reassured readers of 'Arab Assimilation', stating that 'the Syrian-Lebanese community has not isolated itself and does not constitute a danger to the Argentine nation' (Humphrey 2005:8). The Argentinian case suggests the plausibility of mutually supportive relationship between the forces of acculturation and group maintenance,

and this thesis will investigate whether this relationship contributed to the assimilation of Lebanese migrants and their descendants in Australia, or whether Lebanese Australians sought more individualistic means of promoting and advertising their sense of belonging.

In Argentina, one of the reasons for the Lebanese immigrants' success was that they made a point not only of learning Spanish but also Quechua, the language of the majority of the Indian population (Valverde 1992:316). The Government argued that the sooner non-Spanish speaking migrants learnt Spanish, and left their own language and culture behind, the sooner they would become part of Argentinian society. As desired by authorities, Lebanese migrants soon tended to adopt the host language (Valverde 1992:320). These experiences in the Americas raise the question: did the early economic experiences of the early Lebanese migrants in Argentina have the same effect and influence on those early Lebanese who settled in Australia in terms of promoting assimilation? If so, how did these processes associated with language acquisition operate to promote assimilation?

The Lebanese immigrants in New Zealand at the end of the nineteenth century, like in Canada, Argentina, Australia and the Americas, were classified as undesirable immigrants and, along with other non-European groups such as the Chinese, were perceived to be a threat to the 'white' social order. They were classified as Asians and various Government discourses described them in a derogatory manner (Farry 2005:257). Furthermore, along with the Chinese and other non-Europeans, they were subjected to prejudice and legal discrimination (Brooking 1995:28). The first references of the Lebanese in the discourses of New Zealand governance appeared in the Parliamentary debates of the mid-1890s. For example, during one of the Parliamentary debates concerning the Hawkers and Peddlers Bill in 1894, the Lebanese - or 'Assyrian Hawkers' as they were referred to - were classified as 'Asians' and were described as 'inferior, barbarous, or semi-barbarous races' that would 'lower the level of intellect, civilisation and prosperity' of the country (Farry 2005:257). Furthermore, in 1896, in a debate over the Asiatic Restriction Bill, Richard John Seddon, the then Premier referred to the Lebanese as 'undesirable immigrants' and 'pests' (Farry 2005:257).

In order to understand why the Lebanese were portrayed in this manner, it is beneficial to summarise the immigration and cultural policies of New Zealand at that time. Like Australia, New Zealand was formed at a time when the globalisation process was dominated by European colonialism and imperialism and, as an outpost of British imperialism, racial assumptions were central to the national-building process (Farry 2005:257). Farry notes that 'from the very beginning, starting with the indigenous people, the nation-building process was based on the

destruction of minority interests and cultural difference and the elevation of "European culture" to a position of superiority'. He argues that 'these particular discourses of nationhood were based on European imperial culture and led to a Eurocentrically constructed representation of national culture and identity, giving birth to ideas of racial purity, homogeneity desirable/undesirable immigrants and assimilation' (Farry 2005:257). As a result, like Australia, nineteenth-century New Zealand authorities were trying to encourage the immigration of Protestant Anglo-Celts and restrict the immigration of non-Europeans. Even Catholic Irish, although technically British, were treated as an undesirable ethnic minority and, in addition, there was overt hostility in the nineteenth century to Chinese, Jews, Lebanese (whether Greek Orthodox or Catholic) and Dalmatians. Successive Governments viewed New Zealand as a utopia for the chosen few; preferably white, Protestant Britons (Brooking et al 1995:23).

Some early Lebanese came to New Zealand from South America and others from Australia. In the 1860s, the gold rushes made Dunedin the commercial capital of New Zealand. For immigrants seeking a new life and financial security and stability, Dunedin was the first choice in the emerging colony. The 1878 New Zealand census lists only 14 males who had been born in Lebanon, and of those only five lived in Dunedin (McDonald 2004:7). During the 1880s a number of Lebanese men began to arrive from Australia and they brought kinfolk and friends direct from Lebanon in a chain migration that would continue throughout the 1890s (McDonald 2004:7). The Lebanese survived as peddlers selling pots and pans and other domestic necessities in the poorer areas of Dunedin and rural Otago (Brooking et al 1995:28). They also hawked their wares on the goldfields and in the rural farming areas, often until they had accumulated the capital to establish commercial businesses within towns (Thornton 1968:25). The Lebanese did not resist assimilation; like the cases of Australia and the Americas examined earlier in this chapter, the first Lebanese immigrants in Dunedin integrated into New Zealand society through economic means. As Thornton (1968:54-55) concluded, Lebanese settlers 'have been intimately involved in the economic life of the city [Dunedin] since its inception in the 1850s. It is therefore not surprising that the Lebanese give evidence of having attained a high degree of integration and stability in the city's economic structure today, on the basis of a well-established economic role, rooted in a local tradition built up in Dunedin since their arrival'. Thornton also found that property ownership among the Lebanese was higher than the Chinese and the Dutch, the two other groups that Thornton investigated. Once capital was accumulated, the Lebanese tended to invest in residential and business properties (Thornton 1968:57). Given the similarities between the Australian and New Zealand contexts, my research will also consider the extent and nature of attempts by Australian-Lebanese settlers to economically integrate into Australian society after their early settlement.

Another social factor that Thornton drew on as an example of the assimilation of the Lebanese in Dunedin was the concept of group cohesion (this concept resembles Abu Laban's concept of 'group maintenance' among Canadian Lebanese, and McKay's concept of 'ethnic group'). The Lebanese in Dunedin retained strong group cohesion due to a number of factors. The main reason was the weakening ties with their homeland, which included a very low correspondence rate with the homeland among group members, the high number of naturalised group members (which suggested they had decided to reside permanently in New Zealand - and as was the case in Australia, Canada and America), a comparatively long period of group residence in the one city (which suggests a sense of local belongingness) and fully-developed kinship networks for most Lebanese families in Dunedin. An example of group cohesion was the large proportion of group members who belonged to the Lebanese (Cedar) Club. As a Club, the institution remained essentially for male members (although Lebanese women were not excluded). It became a common meeting place and the Club provided means to perpetuate and transmit of the traditions and customs of their original homeland (Thornton 1968:93).

Yet despite this, Thornton's survey found that out of the three groups interviewed (Chinese, Dutch and Lebanese), the Lebanese exhibited the highest degree of non-correspondence with their homeland (68 per cent), as compared with 36 and 16 per cent in the Chinese and Dutch communities respectively (Thornton 1968:96-97). This contrasts with Khater's (2019:20) findings in the USA that Arab immigrants always maintained relations with the Middle East. Other factors that could potentially account for such a contrast include the strength of ties of communication with home as well as the contrasting sizes of the diasporic communities. Of the three ethnic groups studied by Thornton, the Lebanese exhibited the highest frequency of English spoken at home (Thornton 1968:97). These survey results from New Zealand again resemble the complex relationship found in Canada and Argentina between assimilation and the maintenance of home culture. This thesis will seek to discover whether the Australian experience was similar to New Zealand's in terms of the relationship between assimilation and group maintenance and will explore the socio-economic, demographic and spatial forces that promoted this relationship.

Farry (2005) provided a contrasting view to Thornton's conclusions that the Lebanese had assimilated well into New Zealand. In contrast, he argued that Thornton's representation belongs to a particular version of New Zealand's history which celebrates a form of difference that is not perceived to be a threat to the dominant 'white' social order. He claimed that this representation is based on the 'successful immigrant story – a sort of happy ending after a tragic beginning' (Farry 2005:259). In this narrative of progress, the Lebanese are positioned

as a group that, through hard work, respectability and a 'love of business', have achieved the promises of prosperity and a better life for their children (Farry 2005:259). It acknowledges that the Lebanese eat different food and have close extended families but positions their 'Lebanese identity' as peripheral to the overarching Eurocentrically-constructed identity of 'New Zealander' (Farry 2005:259). It is the experience of those who have achieved a degree of upward mobility that is most often cited in academic and popular texts.

Contrary to Thornton, Farry (2005:251) concluded that the Lebanese that migrated to New Zealand between the late 1880s and 1930s - along with their offspring - have maintained a strong sense of 'Lebanese identity'. Farry's research material is primarily derived from long interviews with thirty-two 'second and third generation' Lebanese living in New Zealand and the transformations that have taken place between themselves and earlier generations in the way they experience, express, construct and interpret their 'Lebaneseness' (Farry 2005:251). Farry found that the idea of lessening difference and trying to 'blend in' was a distinctive form of identity formation evident in the interview sessions. He stated that it was a common strategy for dealing with the discourses of racism, assimilation and homogenous representation of national identity.

By seeing this 'successfully assimilated migrant' as the dominant experience of Lebanese in New Zealand, Farry argues that these accounts fail to take into account the specific experiences of racism, displacement and exclusion felt by the Lebanese as a whole. Accounts by those such as Thornton reduce the identity of the Lebanese to the ideology of assimilation and see their defining characteristic as upward social mobility within the dominant culture. Farry (2005) concludes his critique of this version of Lebanese integration into New Zealand society by stating that throughout New Zealand's colonial and post-colonial history the one idea that has scarcely varied is that the national identity – 'New Zealander' - was to be forged though the forced assimilation of all cultural and ethnic difference.

Farry's approach leads to an understanding of assimilation that helps appreciate the complexity of the process. He argued that the ideology of assimilation not only requires the migrant to abandon his/her cultural identity, but it also makes the migrant feel inadequate within his/her cultural identity (2005:261). In the New Zealand context, one of the ways the Lebanese lessened the difference between themselves and the dominant culture was by abandoning the external markers of their ethnicity, such as language. Farry provides an example of one of his interviewees in which 'David' explains how his grandparents would speak in English to the customers in the shop in order to attract customers for their business and by speaking English

the customers would feel more comfortable (Farry 2005:261). Farry states that this was not an attempt to assimilate, but rather displays how diasporic identities were beginning to develop among the Lebanese as they struggled on the one hand to maintain their cultural identities and on the other, with the constant process of differentiation, fragmentation, negotiation and hybridisation. Farry concluded that this two-sided nature of diasporic identities has been the dominant force within Lebanese identity discourse in New Zealand.

The contrasting assessments on assimilation by Thornton and Farry in the New Zealand context draws attention to a wider trend within the global research on the early Lebanese diaspora. This trend can be illustrated by returning to the US literature described earlier in this chapter. Naff and Abdelhady echo Thornton's argument that the socio-economic circumstances of the Lebanese migrants facilitated assimilation into the host culture, resulting in a weakened sense of Lebanese belonging. However, Khater (2019) and Gualtieri (2005) approach the process of assimilation in the USA in a manner more reminiscent to that of Farry in New Zealand. From this perspective, the experiences of interaction with host cultures was not simply a deepening linear process of absorbing the host culture and 'shedding' Lebanese culture. As migrants endeavoured to settle in their new environment, they were often forced to negotiate their terms of acceptance in a manner where their alien status was highlighted (whether in terms of language, customs, and official forms of discrimination).

In exploring the complexities migrants deal with in the process of assimilation, Farry's approach, like Abu Laban in Canada and Gualtieri and Khater in the USA, aligns with Castles' concept of 'differential exclusion'. Castles (2000:135) described this as a situation in which immigrants are incorporated into certain areas of society (above all the labour market) but denied access to others (such as welfare systems, citizenship and political participation). This was true for the first wave of Lebanese settlers globally, as not only were they excluded through the legal mechanisms of the host country, such as refusal of naturalisation, but also through informal practices such as racism and discrimination (Monsour 2001; 2002; 2005; Humphrey (2005); Gualtieri (2005); Farry (2005); Aboud (2005) and Mansouri (2006).

To be incorporated into the societies they had emigrated to, the early Lebanese in Argentina, Australia, Canada and the United States tended to learn the language of the host country and adhere to assimilationist policies imposed to encourage emigrants to integrate into their societies (Batrouney 1992; 2002; Abu-Laban 1980; 1992; Jozami 2002; and Naff 1985; 1992). The advantage of Castle's concept of 'differential exclusion' when exploring the Australian context is that it highlights the importance of 'racial power' during periods such as the White Australia

policy and highlights the context of discrimination within which certain migrant groups interacted with the host society. Migrants were essential for these nation-building economic processes, but some migrants were seen as more desirable than others. My research explores where Lebanese were seen to fit into this exclusionary process, and where Lebanese migrants saw themselves in relation to this process.

As illustrated in the international literature above (as well as existing Australian literature), early Lebanese migrants faced challenges in actively participating in their new environments. The integration of these Lebanese into the social, economic and military services where they faced social exclusion and racial discrimination did not deter them from actively contributing to and embracing a new culture. The concept of 'differential exclusion' acknowledges the agency of migrants in achieving success within the host culture while also recognising the discriminatory obstacles placed in their way. In other words, using this concept, the works of both Farry and Thornton in New Zealand) can be synthesised and both can contribute to a more complex picture of the Lebanese migrant experience. In the same way, the different assessments of assimilation in the USA (Naff, Abdelhady and Haddad on one hand and Khater and Gualtieri on the other hand) can also inspire a synthetic approach that accepts the structural challenges that Lebanese migrants faced in their process of settlement while also acknowledging the agency of these migrants and their efforts to build a new life.

Indeed, the international literature above suggests that this complexity with respect to assimilation was a common experience among Lebanese migrants. Tabar (2005:8) describes how Lebanese migrants and their descendants across the world shared similar experiences that constitute the basis for sharing an imaginary diasporic community: they all come from, or are descendants of, the same country of origin. Their shared similar experiences of early migration, whether they went to the United States, Latin America, Australia, New Zealand or Canada. In all these countries they faced social exclusion and racial discrimination, which impacted on the process of their integration into these countries. Ironically, it appears that in many cases the diasporic identity of these migrants was even more solidified and rigidified in the context of resisting discrimination and fighting for inclusion and equality with other members of the host country (Tabar 2005:8).

To assess Tabar’s claim that Lebanese immigrants and their descendants across the world share similar experiences, it is useful to explore more deeply whether the early Australian-Lebanese settlers mirrored the experiences of early Lebanese who migrated to the USA, New

Zealand, Canada and Argentina. This thesis will contribute to such a task, drawing on the literature presented in this section and the questions and issues that it raised.

The Early Lebanese Participation in the Armed Forces

The final section of this chapter will explore research into the participation by early immigrants in their adopted countries' social, political and security institutions, and show that this activity can be an important step in the acceptance by the host country. One such avenue has been participation in the host countries' Armed Forces. This final section explores the form and consequences of such military participation among the Lebanese diaspora.

The international literature provides limited accounts of the early Lebanese experiences in the armed forces of their adopted country. The most researched field lies in the USA. In the United States, Cole (1922:4) explored Lebanese immigrants serving in World War 1. Numerous Syrian youths, naturalised and non-naturalised, prodded by the Arabic press and patriotic clubs, served in World War 1 – over three hundred from Massachusetts alone. Naff (1985:290) also described the patriotism that Lebanese demonstrated by serving in World War 1– 'and while in service, they experienced more directly than their civilian compatriots two effective Americanising forces - living and socialising with Americans and patriotic consciousness-raising'. Naff also found that many believed they were giving their lives in defence of American ideals they had come to cherish as fervently as their American comrades (Naff 1985:290). Civilian Syrians resident in the USA also avidly bought thousands of dollars of Liberty bonds (Naff 1985:290). The extensive involvement in the war service in the USA by the first wave of Lebanese immigrants and their descendants provides one example of the strong assimilative qualities of the Lebanese immigrants.

Hitti (1924:102) provided a more in-depth account of the Lebanese involvement in the US war service, using this as an explicit example of the strong assimilatory qualities by the Syrian/Lebanese into American society**.** He claimed that 'among the foreign born the Syrians hold an enviable war record. In point of loyalty, patriotism and devotion to the institutions of this land, as demonstrated by the war, they have been unexcelled – even by the Americans themselves' (Hitti 1924:102). He illustrated this through media accounts and war reports: for example, according to the reports of the Provost Marshal General and other War Department documents, 'no less that 13,965 or about 7 per cent of the whole Syrian community served in the United States Army'. In 'Portland, Maine, 15 Syrian youth - 100 per cent of those eligible for service - volunteered before the draft laws become effective' (Hitti 1924:102).

Hitti (1924:103) also noted the positive press reports during World War 1 featuring Syrian soldiers, commentary on the estimated Syrians who joined the war service, and on the financial contribution by the Syrians to the war effort. For example, a report from the United States Government Loan Organisation showed that of the Fourth Liberty Loan alone, 4,800 Syrians from the Second Federal Reserve District (the district of New York and its environs) bought $1,207,900 worth of bonds. Hitti (1924:103) concluded: 'If such facts constitute a fair criterion of loyalty and patriotism, the Syrians could certainly not be said to be lacking in these attributes'.

More local research by Sherman et al (2002:221-223) has provided portraits of the wartime experiences of Lebanese settlers of the North Dakota region. This is augmented with a list of North Dakota veterans of World War 1 who were of Lebanese descent. Meanwhile, Magee's (2001) biography, *Victor's War* is a historical account of her Lebanese father's World War 2 involvement in the U.S. Army when he was stationed in Europe and contains his collection of war letters. Khater's (2017) study, 'Lebanese-Americans in World War I' for the Khayrallah Centre for Lebanese Diaspora Studies at the North Carolina State University claims that Lebanese recruitment was driven by a range of factors, including patriotism, a sense of adventure, a desire to assert a modern masculinity, as well as for reasons of conscription (Khater 2017:1).

Apart from Naff and Hitti, however, most of this research, while mentioning the early Lebanese participation in the US Armed Forces, only provide confirmation that the early Lebanese had enlisted in the Armed Forces. However, this does not in itself provide evidence that their experiences and involvement in the US Defence Forces contributed to or was a result of their assimilation into US society.

In terms of the early Lebanese in Argentina, Jozami's (2002:171) concluded that one measure of integration and social mobility of Arabs in Argentina has been the success that they have enjoyed in two areas of public life, namely the military and the Foreign Service. Apart from this historical contextual note, Jozami also makes the geographical and economic observation that most Argentinian-Arabs born between 1905 and 1940 who succeeded in graduating from Military School did not live in the capital city, because their commercial activities led them to settle across the country. Indeed, military service became a catalyst for some Lebanese for deeper participation in national affairs, with some later entered parliament and assumed government positions (Jozami 2002:171).

The conclusions provided by Hitti, Naff and Jozami (although from countries with different cultures, language and histories) provide some evidence of military involvement of Lebanese migrants in their new countries. Yet, it remains to be confirmed whether these experiences in the economic and military spheres provided important platforms for assimilation. My thesis will explore the early Lebanese participation in the Australian economy, community life and its Armed Forces.

In terms of the Australian literature, one of the few sources which provides historical information about the early Australian-Lebanese participation in Australia's World War 1 and World War 2 is Batrouney et al *(*1985), who dedicated two pages towards Lebanese military experiences. In addition, Trevor Batrouney's 2006 chapter entitled 'Arab Migration from the Middle East', in *Australia and the Middle East: A Frontline Relationship,* provided additional claims about the participation of the early Lebanese in Australia's Armed Forces, stating that if the ultimate test of loyalty is to fight for one's country, then membership of Australian-born Lebanese in the Armed Forces during both war and peace met that requirement. He notes that in 1914, out of a Lebanese-born population of 1527 and their descendants, an estimated 80 young Lebanese Australians joined the Australian Imperial Army and fought in the various battlefields of the First World War (Batrouney 2019:340). In addition, he points out that during World War 2 significant numbers of second-generation Lebanese from all states fought for Australia in the Pacific and Middle East (Batrouney 1985: 118).

There is a growing Australian literature on other non-British Australians who participated in Australia's Defence Forces during World War 1 and World War 2, including Ryan's *Chinese in Australia and New Zealand* (1995:59-74), Govor's (2005) *Russian Anzacs in Australian History* Govor's (2017) *Falling Stars, The story of Anzacs from Ukraine,* Dapin's (2017) *Jewish Anzacs* and Kyritsis's (2012) *Greek-Australians in the Australian Armed Forces World War I and World War II*. These publications explore only a small section of broad ethnic composition of the Australian Armed Forces, providing a glimpse of Australian cultural and military history that was until recently barely acknowledged. Govor's research dwelt most explicitly on the issue of assimilation and the reasons for enlistment by the Russian ANZACS. Govor concluded that the feeling of patriotism was the overriding reason why Russian immigrants enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (Govor 2005:68-69). She found that a significant number of recruits recorded 'Church of England' on their enlistment documentation under religion, which Govor speculated could be due to some Russian immigrants who might have decided to convert to Anglicanism, perceiving it as the dominant religion in their country of adoption (Govor 2005:89). In addition, Govor observed strong assimilative feelings among the early Russian migrants

and pride in being part of the Australian society after they had served in World War 1 - 'belonging to the Anzac tradition was at the heart of their sense of belonging to Australia" (Govor 2005:29-240). Govor's observations draw attention to the possibility not only that military involvement was an expression of a sense of belonging and assimilation but also that it could facilitate such feelings. This is an issue that I explore in my thesis to determine the extent to which the involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces contributed to the assimilation of the Lebanese into Australian society.

Conclusion

The literature described in this chapter shows that despite the Lebanese diaspora having been explored throughout the world, and Australia is no exception, various elements of this research remain contentious or underexplored. Internationally, and within Australia, much research suggests that the economic activity of the Lebanese migrants was an important factor in the assimilation process, in particular hawking. In my research, I will examine the extent to which the early migrants' economic experiences influenced their - and their dependants' - assimilation into Australian society and whether their post-hawking experiences had an influential role in furthering their assimilation. To augment this, I also take the claims by Naff and Hitti in the Americas and will explore whether war experiences played a role in the assimilation of the early Lebanese in Australia under circumstances of what Castles calls 'differential exclusion'. This chapter has illustrated that there is a range of different approaches that researchers have adopted on the question of assimilation and exclusion. This picture drew in particular on contrasting perspectives in the literatures in both New Zealand and the United States. My approach to these contrasting bodies of literature has not been to accept or reject any of them when approaching research on the Australian Lebanese diaspora, but to recognise that they shed light on a variety of variables that can be significant when drawing a picture of the social relations that can affect the outcome of migrant settlement. These variables can be applied to my research on early Lebanese settlement in Australia and their significance for my study will be described in the following methodology chapter.

As part of this process of differential exclusion, the study will explore whether the early immigration policies associated with the White Australia Policy (raised by Humphrey 2005; Monsour 2001, 2002, 2005; and Batrouney 2002, 2006) played a part in shaping the way the early Lebanese integrated into Australian society and whether this influenced their participation in the Australian Armed Forces. In this way, my study will draw upon the existing Australian and international literature in order to produce an assessment of the factors that gave rise to early Lebanese assimilation and participation in its Defence Forces. In this manner, I will address

the two main research questions that emerge from the literature review in this chapter: how did the migration experiences of the early Lebanese migrants influence their and their dependants' assimilation into Australia? To what extent did their involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces contribute to their assimilation into Australian society, including that of their dependants?

3. Methodology

The previous chapter explored the Australian and international literature as it pertains to various elements of my thesis including: the history of Australian migration prior to World War 2; the history and experiences of Lebanese migration to Australia; the global literature on the earlier Lebanese diaspora; and the Lebanese participation in the Defence Forces during World War 1 and World War 2 The topics explored in the literature review provided the foundations to examine various claims and unanswered questions surrounding issues of Lebanese-Australian identity and its relationship to various government policies of the day, such as the White Australia Policy.

From the review, this research project emerged from a need to explain how the experiences of the first wave of Lebanese migration to Australia impacted on their sense of identity with the nation. Methodologically, one way to undertake this study is through their participation in Australia's Armed Forces in World War I and World War 2. Other researchers noted in the previous chapter noted how the experiences of war can project and reflect the ideals of nationhood and belonging. Participation in Armed Forces can also unite people from all walks of life in a common cause and, through this, the members of Defence Forces reinforce their collective bond to the nation. Lindsay (2003:5) for example noted how in Australian mythology the Digger is defined as the "an Australian Everyman".

More broadly, underlying my research aims to better understand the factors that impacted on the assimilation and identification of the Australian-Lebanese. Involvement in Australia's Armed Forces is one such possibility. In terms of research participants, I chose to focus the study on World War 2 veterans as well as the dependants of World War 1 and World War 2 veterans. The methodology I chose had to address the research questions raised from the literature review above. These research questions were as follows:

1. What migration experiences and the social processes of the early Lebanese migrants influenced their, and their dependants, assimilation into Australia?
2. To what extend did their involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces contribute to their assimilation into Australian society, including that of their dependants?

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodology used in this research and discuss the rationale for selecting the chosen methodology. This chapter details this journey from the original broad research questions to the methodology used to explore these issues, through to

the arrival at revised hypotheses. It looks at how this research methodology was designed to help shed light on the processes of assimilation into Australian society during the period being investigated. I discuss the research agenda, the fieldwork as well as the data analysis used to understand the experiences of the participant group.

The chapter is divided into four parts. The first part looks at preparations for the fieldwork. The second part describes the process of finding World War II veterans and their dependants, including the dependants of World War 1 veterans, and getting access to people's life experiences, which involves gaining the trust of participants. The third part details the methods used, including interviews. The fourth part explains the interpretation and employment of the data as they relate to my research questions.

Methods and the Purpose of Interviews

Through my secondary research, I had noted that researchers, including those in the Australian-Lebanese Historical Society) (ALHS), were invariably dealing with the lives of early migrants who left little or no written evidence of their own. Such researchers have tended to turn to techniques of fieldwork such as interviewing. For example, in his study of a Lebanese immigrant family, Trevor Batrouney (1979) found that research techniques using secondary sources, such as academic texts and journal articles were inadequate because of the lack of written personal family documents. While it was possible to obtain accurate details of births and deaths from government records, for other information that made the lives of participants intelligible Batrouney found he had to rely 'almost exclusively' on 'two sets of unstructured interviews' with 'surviving, third-generation family members' (Batrouney, 1979).

Similarly, a review of other Lebanese historical literature revealed that a notable feature of studies of Lebanese immigrants has been the use of face-to-face interviews, questionnaires and participant observation to collect necessary information (see Abu-Laban 1980; Jabbra 1984; Naff 1985; McKay 1989; Mansour 2005; and Hyndman-Rizk 2011). Two main reasons for adopting these methods are, first, that many of the relevant primary sources have not been preserved or documented, and second, migrants were often inaccurately classified in official documents. Furthermore, research of any genre or academic pursuit on the Lebanese Diasporas' involvement in the Defence Forces has never been undertaken in Australia. As noted in the previous chapter, this can be also said for much of the international literature, which provides only brief accounts of the early Lebanese experiences in the Armed Forces of their adopted country.

Thus, data for this research is based on qualitative face-to-face interviews using a sample survey. In addition to the reasons stated above, the face-to-face interview permits a more thorough level of personal expression and recollection by participants in their own terms and own environment. In addition, the qualitative interview allows the participants to be active parts in the interview. Sharing details of their experiences secures 'their active involvement in the construction of data about their lives' (Korac, 2001:15).

Thus, data was collected using qualitative research methods, and a standard set of questions was developed, comprising of one set for the veterans and other set for the dependants (see Appendix 1 and 2). Although both sets of questionnaires had the same format, I altered some of the words in the questionnaires to reflect the participant group I was interviewing. The questionnaires had three sections: section 1 involved *Demographic Information;* section 2 was entitled *Growing up in Australia;* and section 3 was called *In Defence of Australia*.

The format of the questions in sections 1 and 2 of the questionnaires were constructed by using some variables in Abu-Laban's (1980) survey on the Canadian experiences (see Chapter 2). These variables are discussed below. Section 3 of the questionnaire contained questions were produced uniquely by me and will also be discussed below. I chose Abu Laban's 1974 survey '*Survey of Arabic-Speaking Communities in Canada'* as it appeared a good fit with the existing literature on Australian-Lebanese migration experiences in terms of background characteristics, reasons for migration, social adjustments and attitudes about the host country (Batrouney 1985; 1992; 2002; Monsour 2002;2005). In addition, Canada and Australia had an early migration wave of 'Syrians' and other non-British migration to their shores and had formulated migrant policies to deal with them. In addition, both nations had similar political systems and were major immigrant-receiving nations. Also English-speaking Canada and Australia both identified themselves as British nations during this early period of Lebanese migration and identified as members of a worldwide British Empire. Furthermore, Canada and Australia also adopted discriminatory immigration policies, which aimed to create white, British societies and both countries had non-British migrants who sought to assimilate into the Anglocentric culture (Mann, 2016).

Following Abu Laban (1980), Section 1 of the questionnaire collected the demographic information on the participants, beginning with personal information, such as the participant's age, place of birth, town or region in Lebanon, citizenship status, religion, marital status and connections to Lebanon. This section was a useful starting point to engage the participant, as it invariably set a conversational tone whereby the participants shared historical memories. It

was a valuable means of helping participants relax and it built a connection between interviewee and participant.

The second part of the questionnaire, *Growing up in Australia,* also following Abu Laban, focused on the participant's experiences of growing up in Australia in an attempt to reveal information about their experiences of settlement. Although Section 1 *(Demographic Information)* of the questionnaire added to the overall statistical information for the research, such as the birth places, religion etc., the main questions in Sections 2 (*Growing up in Australia*) and Section 3 (*In Defence of Australia)* of the questionnaire were pivotal to the overall research findings as they specifically addressed the research questions mentioned above. Section 2, for example, provided information on the participant's early experiences growing up in Australia. It also sought an explanation for whether their Lebanese culture affected their experiences. Furthermore, it sought to determine whether the discriminatory government policies of the day affected their experiences, or their families' experience, while growing up.

The third section of the questionnaire, *In Defence of Australia*, explored their reasons for enlisting in the Armed Forces (or relatives' reasons), their roles in the military, their feelings being a member of the Australian Defence Forces and whether their Lebanese background affected their time in the military. The questions in this section were designed to provide a unique personal account of military involvement from a non-British background, using stories from their exposure to the Armed Forces as it related to their Lebanese heritage. Section 3 of the questionnaire focused on reasons for joining the Defence Forces, their roles in the Armed Forces and their experiences in the Armed Forces, as it related to their Lebanese background. This was the main section in the questionnaire, which captured how the veterans felt about Australia and their place in Australian society. In addition, personal recollections were provided by veterans and dependants, and this assisted me to reach conclusions as to whether the involvement in the Australian Armed Forces contributed to the early Lebanese assimilation into Australian society.

The Research Participants

Those whom I interviewed for the research were World War 2 veterans and dependants of World War 1 and World War 2 veterans – all of whom, by birth or ancestry, traced their roots to Lebanon and whose families and ancestors had migrated to Australia from the first wave of migration between the 1880s to 1920s. The interviews were organised by writing to or e-mailing the subjects and providing them with background information on the research. A consent

form and my contact information was included in the correspondence. The following section of this chapter is devoted to the process of locating the relevant participants.

The overwhelming majority of the interviews were undertaken face to face. There were a small number of exceptions to the interviewing technique. One interview was conducted by posting the questionnaire to the participant and three interviews were conducted by e-mailing the questionnaire directly to the subjects for their completion. Two further interviews were conducted by administering the questionnaire by phone.

The interviews began with an explanation of the consent form (Appendix 3) and the research information brief (Appendix 4). The participants had the opportunity to ask any question they might have of the project, and the fact that the participants could withdraw from the interview at any time was also highlighted. I used a digital recorder for the interviews with the consent of the participants. The oral interviews on average took between one to two hours and I uploaded the interview as a digital audio file on my laptop. Due to the number of interviews, the interviews were professionally transcribed, and recordings were kept safe in a locked filing cabinet. A qualified transcriber, accredited by the Oral History Association of Australia, New South Wales (NSW) Branch, was chosen. The interviews were in-depth and open-ended as my intention was to let respondents tell their stories. While the interviews were guided by the pre-set questions, I was open to any change of structure or change of focus with an aim of letting the conversation flow and being open to any new information that could potentially prove important to the development of my findings and my argument.

It was often the case that one-to-one oral interviews turned into a family affair around the kitchen, formal dining-table, or the lounge room, reflecting the practices of the Lebanese extended family and hospitality. Also, I found that when the spouse was present during the interview, or other members of the family or relatives, the additional family members or relatives would often express views of the past or events. The presence of a spouse or close relative would often stimulate a participant's memory by asking them questions about the past or by providing historical information, which prompted the memory of the participant. Alternatively, a spouse or relative would sometimes correct a response.

Initially, I thought the extra participation would be a hindrance during the interview, and worried that extra participants might influence the interviewee's answers to be socially acceptable, hindering the participant from being able to speak their mind. However, I often found that the extra participation provided additional people to interview. Also, the additional participants

were mainly family members or close relatives who were able to add more depth to any responses by the prime interviewee about their Lebanese family background. They also provided new angles to my questions, which the veteran or dependant may have forgotten or were not aware of. This enhanced my research findings through augmenting, sharpening and detailing the participant's responses. In addition, I found that the additional family participants helped relax the interviewee and helped build their confidence during the interview and at times helped stimulate their memories. Overall, I found that this surrounding support network allowed them to be more open, franker and confident with their answers, enhancing the quality of my data.

I endeavoured to let the voices of the participants come through and 'to hear the description of their experiences and the impact of those lived experiences on their daily lives' (Baker, 2007:36). While I used the questionnaire as the foundation for my questions in the interview, I also found that diverted discussions during the interview led to additional questions to be asked which were not in the original questionnaire. This enhanced my findings, as additional and relevant information was provided which I had not anticipated. For example, in Section 3 of the questionnaire, *In Defence of Australia,* diverted discussions led to examples provided by the veterans about their detailed experiences while in the Defence Forces because of their Lebanese background, such as working as translators or spies for the Australian Army or anecdotal stories about their comrades while posted to Lebanon.

As mentioned above, a large majority of the interviews took place in the homes of the veterans or dependants in the place where they lived or in which they had grown up. Two interviews took place in cafés, while one interview occurred at an RSL club in Sydney and another interview took place at the Australian National Library in Canberra. The impression I gained was that when World War 2 veterans were interviewed in their homes, their response was more informative and detailed, compared to those interviews conducted outside the homes. I speculate that this was because the veterans were in an environment that activated memories, as some had lived in the home and area for most of their lives, or in the same home since they married. Also, the veterans and some dependants had memorabilia of their war years around their home, and they were surrounded by family photographs which helped stimulate recollections of their past.

After the interview, I would occasionally follow up some aspects of the participant's responses through a phone call, e-mail or letter if I felt I needed clarification or additional information, or I would request a second interview, to which all participants willingly consented. This occurred eight times.

To prepare myself for the oral interviews I undertook the following briefings and training sessions:

- On 12 and 15 January 2010, I contacted the Australian War Memorial, Canberra to provide me with guidance on conducting oral history interviews and formats with World War 2 veterans, including form templates for the use of the interviewer, process for recording the interviews with World War 2 veterans and the appropriate way to gather information from the interviewee.

- On 27 January 2010, I met with Rosie Block, Curator, *Oral History Association*, NSW branch to discuss and confirm the appropriate format of my questionnaire and provide advice and guidance on conducting oral history interviews.

- On 19 October 2012, I attended a one-day oral history training workshop, *Capturing Memories Oral History in the Digital Age*, run by the Oral History Association of Australia (NSW) on subjects which included pre-interview preparation, the interview and post interview contact for oral interviews. The workshop offered an introduction to oral history and practice with experienced oral historians.

- On 22 October 2012, I attended an afternoon session on *Managing Your Collections Workshop*, run by the Oral History association of Australia (NSW), which provided information on how to manage the oral interviews and recordings.

Locating Participants

In order to find participants, I had to undertake creative search methods. All of my participants were sourced in Australia and no participants came from overseas, as my focus was Australian-Lebanese early settlers. It helped my search that Australia has excellent record-keeping institutions relating to its history, whether it involves migration, war or politics, such as the Australian War Memorial, National and State Archives, and National and State Libraries. There are also local historical institutions, which keep excellent records on the local towns or cities such as Clarence River Historical Society Inc., Grafton NSW and the Albury Historical Society.

However, the greatest difficulty in locating Australian veterans of Lebanese descent occurred because during the periods of conflict that I was studying (World War 1 and World War 2), there was no requirement, or a section on any form, to state ethnic background, as the main requirement was that one had to be a British subject to join (Gary Oakley, personal Communication, 10 October 2014).

As a result, it was difficult to determine the ethnic background of those who enlisted simply from their war records alone. However, some of the war records contained the name on the next of kin on the enlistment papers, and often this would be the parent with a Lebanese first name or surname. I could therefore research their migration history to confirm their ethnic background to find whether they had originally come from Lebanon. In other cases, the enlistment papers would state that the participant could speak Arabic (although these cases were very few).

To assist with locating veterans of Lebanese decent, I liaised with the Returned Services League (RSL) National Headquarters in Barton, Canberra, seeking their assistance to advertise my research project in the various RSL publications across Australia. The RSL is a support organisation for people who have served or are serving in the Australian Defence Force. Along with its National Headquarters in Canberra, licensed clubs were formed to provide hospitality for war veterans and a place of comradeship. The RSL publications such as *The Signal*, *Reveille (*the journal of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia – the predecessor of today's Returned and Services League or RSL) - *and Mufti* all printed an advertisement about my research, from which six subjects contacted me as a result. The advertisement stated:

Veterans and Dependants Required for Interview
Geraldine Khachan, a PhD candidate at the Australian National University, Canberra, is currently seeking veterans and/or dependants of Australian-Lebanese descent who served in Australia's Defence Forces during WW 1 and WW 2. The research is part of a sociology/history dissertation looking at the first wave of Lebanese migration from the 19th century up to WW 2.

For any further information or names of potential participants please contact her on e-mail: g_khachan@yahoo.com.au or ph 0438 647 821 or Dr Alastair Greig (Supervisor) Head of School, School of Social Sciences, ph (02) 6125 4913 or e-mail: Alastair.Greig@anu.edu.au

In addition, my knowledge of the surnames of early Lebanese migrants to Australia assisted me in locating veterans from the Australian War Memorial and the Australian National Archives along with written histories of the early Lebanese to Australia such as Batrouney (1985), Convy (2008), and Monsour (2010). These latter books also helped me locate where and when they settled in Australia, as well as assisting me to form an understanding of which state or town they may have lived, and thus where they might have enlisted in the Australian Armed Forces. I also undertook searches for veterans using the databases of the Australian National Archives and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra by inputting into their online databases common

Lebanese surnames and places of birth of people who had migrated to Australia from the 1880s to 1920s. Also, I accessed over 100 early naturalisation records from the NSW State Archives and Australian National Archives with names of the early Lebanese immigrants. Using these names, I was able to locate any veterans from those early Lebanese families stated on the naturalisation records.

Once the full names of the subjects were confirmed and located, I was able to undertake a search on the *Internet White Pages* and locate addresses and phone numbers for potential World War 2 veterans or their dependants. I was able to confirm whether the person found in the White Pages was the same person or veteran as stated in their birth or residence address in their original war records. In many cases, World War 1 and World War 2 veterans and their dependants had returned to the region or town which their families had first settled upon arrival to Australia, or their relatives still lived in the same town – this made it easier to connect the veteran to their World War 2 records. Contact by telephone or letter was made to confirm that the person found in the White Pages corresponded with their war records or was related to a World War 1 or World War 2 veteran. Once the veteran or dependants confirmed their status and agreed to be interviewed, I would send them information about my research project and the Ethics Form sheet, and once agreement was reached interviews were organised.

It was also helpful for my research that the *ALHS (NSW and Victoria branches)* had recorded aspects of the history of the early Lebanese to Australia (Batrouney 2000; 2004; Shapely 2006; Convy 2009; Monsour 2009; 2012). As a result, many of the dependants and veterans were members of this organisation. I thus became a member of these organisations. From this, I was able to locate participants, and relevant sociological, demographic and historical information about the early Lebanese migrants by accessing their libraries. I also presented a seminar on my research project to members of the Australian-Lebanese Historical Societies of NSW, on 24 November 2009 and in Victoria on 15 May 2010. From these experiences, I met some attending veterans and dependants, and as a result of meeting one person, this often snowballed, as the subjects themselves would provide me with names of others who had not attended. I was also interviewed about my research interests by radio SBS Melbourne Radio Ethnic channel in 2010, the Arabic news program (this segment was broadcast in Arabic and English) and this resulted in other members of the community calling into the radio station wanting to be part of the research, or they provided information pertaining to the research. I also received correspondence from an Australian-Lebanese veteran who had served in Korea with the Australian Army and a dependant of an Australian-Lebanese who had served in World

War 2. Although I did not interview the Korean veteran, he provided me with encouraging words about my research. I was, however, able to interview one of his dependants.

Participants were also found through personal networks, word of mouth and the various other Lebanese communities in Australia (such as Lebanese Maronite and Greek Orthodox Church records and through contacting Lebanese village organisations such as the Australian Kfarsghab Association and the Lebanese Druze communities in South Australia). Having parents of Lebanese descent and growing up within this culture proved to be an advantage while undertaking the research as I was able to appreciate the backgrounds of potential participants, I knew how to address and relate to them, and empathised with many of the challenges they had experienced migrating to Australia. In addition, when I met with the participants or the various organisations mentioned above, I would ask them whether they knew of any other names and contact details of other veterans or dependants. In this manner, my range of participants snowballed to 80 participants. This was a reasonable 'strike rate' considering the demographic profile of the population group.

Interviewing Participants

The first phase of this research involved interviews with World War 2 veterans of Australian-Lebanese descent. Dependants or immediate relatives of World War 2 veterans were also interviewed because they had first-hand knowledge and life experiences which had been passed on and could have been relevant to the research. The second phase of the research, involved second face-to-face interviews or phone or e-mail interviews with the same participants in order to clarify information or ask follow-up questions

The participants were not chosen according to any specific variables such as religion, gender, age, class, occupation, or specific region of migration from Lebanon. They were chosen based on their family association with early Lebanese migrants and their descendants in Australia between 1880 and World War 2, regardless of any other specific variable. For reasons discussed in Chapter 2, these migrants were classified by authorities as “Syrians”. In this study I concentrate exclusively on these people and their descendants. Thus, I was able to contact Australian-Lebanese of two main religious faiths, namely the Christian (either Maronite, Orthodox, Melkite or Presbyterian) and Druze faith. They came from various social classes and included those who had been born overseas and Australian-born and lived in a wide variety of regions and states in Lebanon and Australia.

The reasons why my participants belonged to these two religions, rather than Lebanese Muslim or Jewish religions, was because the overwhelming majority of Lebanese who settled in Australia between 1880 and 1920 were Christians (Batrouney, 1985:45). In contrast to the Christian emigration to the Americas and Australia from the late 1880s onwards, Muslims did not migrate on a large scale until the second half of the twentieth century. There were exceptions – Shia Muslims fled agricultural depression in southern Lebanon and set up small traders in West Africa, a few arriving in the Ivory Coast before 1900, while Druze reached South Australia (Harris, 2012:24). My research sample is consistent with Harris' assessment of the Druze during this period setting in South Australia, as all my interviews for the Druze religion and a great majority of the Druze faith who served in World War 2 came from South Australia. In terms of locating Lebanese Jews who served in World War 1 and World War 2, extensive research was undertaken on Jewish participation in World War 1 and World War 2 by Margaret Beadman, a volunteer researcher at the Australian War Memorial, who discussed her results with me, confirming that she could not locate any who were originally Lebanese Jews. This is not to say there were none, but it was not possible to find any such participants for my research, given the search techniques discussed earlier.

The interviews and data collection were mainly focused around five states and territories of Australia, namely NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, where the majority of of Lebanese had settled. T. While there is evidence suggesting that Lebanese had settled in Western Australia (*West Australian* 1905, and *The Western Argus* 1917; and NAA: A1; 1922/6880) and Tasmania (*The Australasian*, 1885 and *The Mercury*, 1892 and *Examiner*, 1912) during the same period, time and finance made it impractical for me to include these two states.

A total of 80 subjects were interviewed comprising twenty-two World War 2 veterans (twenty men and two women) and fifty-eight dependents ranging in ages between early 50s and 95 years of age. I did not provide a limit on the number of participants who agreed to be interviewed, and the number increased as the interviews progressed and snowballed, while ongoing searches revealed other possible participants.

Rather than aiming for a specific number of participants, the goal was to have interviewed as many representatives as possible from the targeted population. Although I would have liked to have interviewed more World War 2 veterans, the fact that many had passed away or declined to be interviewed when found, and the time-consuming task in trying to locate them, made it

possible to interview 22 veterans and 58 descendants of World War 1 and World War 2 veterans.

The interview phase of this research was a complex logistical juggling act as I had to rely on the times and dates when I could take leave due to my full-time employment and my parental duties. Indeed, the interviews were conducted while I was on recreation leave from work or on weekends. Agreeing to an interview, the participants were asked to suggest a convenient time and place for the interview to take place after I was able to provide them with the dates when I was available.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed by adhering strictly to the ethics and conduct procedures set out by the Ethical Committee at the Australian National University, the same Committee that provided me with the ethical approval before any fieldwork could commence. I completed the application form outlining the nature of the research, the study design, methodology, data analysis and ethical considerations, including risks. The participant information sheet and consent form were also reviewed by the Ethical Committee as part of the ethical clearance process.

Tindell (1994) and Wiles et al (2005) have both noted that participants are in a position to give informed consent only when they are fully briefed about the research beforehand. Thus, an information letter outlining the key elements of the research and its aims was sent to those identified by me as potential participants in the research prior to the interview taking place, and at least a week ahead of the scheduled interview. In order to comply with the Ethical Committee guidelines, participants were asked to sign a consent form in order to participate in the research project. Before beginning the interviews, I also verbally briefed all the participants fully about each element of the research in order to gain informed consent. I made it clear to participants that they did not have to answer questions that they were uncomfortable with and that they could withdraw from the interview at any time should they wish to do so.

While the project was approved (without any requirement for revisions to my Ethical application), there were two main risks I had to address during my research. The main risks associated with this research were psychological and legal risks. In terms of psychological risks, participants may have needed to recall certain events when they were growing up in Australia or their experiences during their participation in World War 2. Some of these events and experiences could have been traumatic and emotionally upsetting for the participants. In terms of

legal risks, participants were at risk of divulging information that they have held since their time in the military which may be potentially incriminating, confidential or otherwise sensitive in nature. However, I was able to minimise the above risks and any potential risks the participants or researcher might encounter during my research because of the following four reasons:

1) My own Lebanese cultural and linguistic heritage and Australian background assisted in developing an early rapport, and establishment of early trust relations, between the researcher and the participants. As a result, I was able to understand the cultural dimensions and sensitivities of their circumstances. In addition, as a majority of the participants were of Christian descent, given the nature of the timing of their initial migration, we shared a commonality, which made it easier to transition into the interview and break down any initial barriers.

An example of such cultural familiarity is the hospitality dimension of the Lebanese culture whereby I was often asked certain initial questions about my personal background, questions such as: how is the family? Are you married? No? and will you get married? How many children do you have? These questions might appear intrusive and overly personal to someone who is not familiar with Lebanese culture and it would be unusual for such questions to be asked [especially in the first meeting] to someone who is not of Middle Eastern descent. Also, part of Lebanese hospitality involves bringing a gift to the house if invited for the first time. Understanding such cultural dimensions and being able to engage in 'personal conversation' assisted me to quickly to build rapport and trust with the interviewees.

Hynes (2003) suggests that trust between the researcher and the researched is crucial in qualitative research in order to gain access to the participant's experiences. I took advantage of the fact that I was able to build trust and rapport quickly due to my own Lebanese background. Also, I had previously met many of the dependants and veterans during my attendance at ALHS events, and those participants I had interviewed provided positive feedback on my research when they spoke to other veterans or dependants. In addition, I consented that the participants could have their spouse or family members or friends present during the interview. Furthermore, for two of my veteran interviews, I asked a community member if he wished to accompany me, as I knew that these two particular veterans would be at ease if he were present as they had known each other for many years as part of their Orthodox community. In this manner, during my interviews, I gained further respect and trust among the participants.

2) I also managed to further minimise the risk of the participants wanting to withdraw from the interview process by emphasising the voluntary aspect of their participation in my research. My consent form, which I had to provide to each participant as part of the ethical requirements,

specifically mentioned that they *'may withdraw from the research at any stage, without providing any reason and that this will not have any adverse consequences for me. If I withdraw, the information that I provide will not be used in the research'.* I was fortunate enough not to have any of my participants withdraw, even though, consistent with paragraph 2.2.20 on the *National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, participants were instructed that they could withdraw from the research at any given time without consequence.

3) Disclosure of information made by the participants about events or specific individuals, which may be confidential, or incriminating was not solicited during the interviews. This is because the questions posed in the interview questionnaires were largely subjective in nature and asked only about general perceptions about participants' experiences in Australia. For example, such questions included, "what three things did you like most about Australia growing up?" or 'How did you feel being a member of the Defence Force?". In addition, my questions concerning their time in the military focused on their personal reflections. Even their military stories were focused on the more sociological aspects, such as their feelings of identity rather than details from war stories. For example, I was more interested in how they felt being of Lebanese decent while fighting in the Middle East, or their experiences as being translators in the Middle East with the Australian Armed Forces.

4) Finally, if the interviewee became upset or emotional during the interview, I was prepared to cease the interview to give the participant time to recover and only continue the interview once the participant gave me the authority to do so. This only happened once during the course of my interviews. In this sole case, I was interviewing a World War 2 veteran about his time in Darwin. He became emotional while describing the condition of the Australian soldiers on return after their experience in Japanese prisoner of war camps. I paused the interview and continued when he was ready. I was fortunate to have his son, wife and cousin present during the interview, as they provided additional support to him, reinforcing the value of the presence of family members.

With the risk, legal and psychological dealt with in this manner, I was able to focus my questionnaire on the topics and questions outlined in the first section of this chapter, such as their role in the Defence Forces, reasons for enlisting, profession prior to joining and whether conscription played a role in their enlistment. These types of questions minimised ethical risks and dilemmas.

Despite these checks and balances, early in the interviews I realised it was difficult to avoid discussing people's past and their experiences during their time in the Armed Forces; after all,

such discussions were the foundation of the thesis. The veterans interviewed brought up these issues while discussing their military experiences – and they voluntarily contributed information to me about their life experiences outside the Armed Forces. This voluntary contribution helped confirm my hypothesis that there was a connection between the participants' prior experiences in Australian society and their decision to join the Australian Armed Forces. Their references to their military experiences were mainly focused on issues pertaining to their Lebanese background, such as working as interpreters or intelligence officers during World War 2. However, as most of the veterans also provided war stories out of interest, and although some of these stories did not reflect my thesis topic, it assisted me to understand the veterans' lives better and illustrated the level of trust these veterans had invested in me. In terms of the legal risks associated with telling me such stories, no such military stories of that nature emerged. However, should military stories of incriminating nature have surfaced, I would have sought the guidance of the Department of Defence without revealing sources and would not have published the information.

After the interviews, most participants agreed that it had been a positive experience for them to discuss their migration history and their life in Australia. They often stated that they appreciated speaking to someone was interested in their lives, and also appreciated that I had come to visit them from another state in order to listen to their stories. In addition, some of the dependants, who were sitting in on the interviews, recalled their own experiences of growing up in Australia, and commented that they had not heard many of the stories about their parents' experiences in Australia, especially as it pertained to assimilation.

Data Analysis

The aim of the data collection was to collect the fullest information possible, from which the interview responses was analysed and interpreted to form the basis of the findings of the thesis. The data was analysed using the results of the interview questions by reading the transcripts and then inputting the responses in the form of a simple table format I had developed in association with my interview schedule. Two tables were drawn up once I had a strong sense of the interview trends: one for the veterans' responses, while the other was for the dependents' responses. Headings in the tables included: names of the dependents or veterans; their serving backgrounds; assimilation characteristics, assimilation stories; employment history, and in particular whether they had any family members or themselves hawked; advice to immigrants on how to settle in Australia; religion on defence records; religion brought up in, and reasons for joining the Armed Forces.

Analysing the responses in this table assisted me to reach conclusions on the various questions that formed the basis of my thesis. As certain themes kept emerging, I could apply them to my research questions.

Furthermore, by analysing the data gathered through my interviews, along with the analysis of primary material and engaging with the literature, new conclusions about the early Lebanese settlers began to emerge. These themes helped me organise the structure of the thesis. Such themes included the importance of hawking for the early Lebanese settlers in Australia and how this occupation had a significant impact on the process of assimilation. This early finding provided the foundation for the rest of the chapters in the thesis, and provided conclusions to the first of my research questions: 'what were the early migration experiences and the social processes of the early Lebanese migrants, that influenced their and their dependents to assimilate in Australia?'

In addition, the oral history offered by the subjects provided me with first-hand assimilation stories and their military experiences, both as members of Australia's Defence Forces and for those who contributed as civilians. The responses by the participants, and the primary and secondary research undertaken, provided further chapters that assisted me to reach conclusions on the research question, 'to what extend did their involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces contribute to their assimilation into Australian society, including that of their dependants?'

Other Data Sources

In addition to the above secondary data sources, primary data was derived from several sources and collected from the five states and territories examined. The data was collected from both the capital cities and the country regions of each state. Data was also collected from Australian Government Departments and organisations such as the Australian War Memorial, Australian National Archives, Australian National Library and NSW State Archives, NSW State Library, Australian-Lebanese Historical Society – NSW and Victoria Branches, regional War Memorial buildings and regional historical societies, such as the *Clarence River Historical Society*, *Grafton and Albury-Wodonga Historical Society* and the Returned Services League (RSL).

The historical information, which was utilised from the Australian institutions and associations included the following sources:

- Shipping lists and naturalisation certificates from the NSW and National Archives;
- Commonwealth Government information relevant about the early Lebanese settlement in Australia found in the Australian National Archives relating to Australia's policy and participation during World War 2, immigration and Federal Government records during the periods of World War 1 and World War 2;
- Miscellaneous pamphlets and newspaper clippings from the Trove database of the Australian National Library relating to historical articles at the time on the early Lebanese settlement to Australia and articles about their participation in Australia's Armed Forces during World War 1 and World War 2 and their contribution to the war efforts.

Internationally, comparative data was obtained from the British and New Zealand National Archives using research undertaken online or via e-mail, in order to ascertain whether other Lebanese who had migrated elsewhere had participated in their respective host Armed Forces, thus testing whether the Lebanese diaspora's experiences overseas was similar to the Australian case.

This information was compared with the historical information provided by the participants during the interviews. In addition, it assisted me to provide a historical and sociological picture of when and how the early Lebanese had migrated to Australia, their experiences in the early years of their migration, the political fabric of Australia at the time of their migration and background information of their war participation.

Other secondary research undertaken for is thesis included collections of documentary materials such as Australian newspaper articles dated from the late 1800s onwards on subjects such as the early Lebanese in Australia, their participation in World War 1 and World War 2 and more generally throughout Australian society. These Australian newspaper articles were obtained electronically from the website on the Australian National Library using the research engine *Trove.* For example, I found many newspaper articles beginning from the late 1800s in local newspapers from country towns across Australia, such as *The Barrier Miner* newspaper in Broken Hill, NSW and *The Advertiser*, South Australia which discussed the early Lebanese in Australia and their hawking lifestyle, along with many debates associated with cancelling Syrian hawking licenses and halting their immigration.

I also examined primary sources derived from the Australian National Archives, Canberra, researching the World War 1 and World War 2 war files of the early Lebanese veterans, archival

materials such as naturalisation records and passenger lists, photographs, letters written during the war and family manuscripts and Government-of-the-day correspondence. Other secondary sources included academic and non-academic publications and journals, which were studied to form and revise the basis of my research questions, and lines of questioning, and ultimately my argument.

In addition, I undertook searches at the Research Centre of the Australian War Memorial and met with senior researchers, such as Gary Oakley on 10 October 2014 whom I interviewed about Australian war history, enlistment requirements and the social milieu during World War 1 and World War 2. I also met with a research volunteer Margaret Beadman, on 3 April 2017, who provided me with information on researching World War 1 and World War 2 veterans and background information on her own research of Jewish participation in World War 1 and World War 2. From these sources I was able satisfy myself that my lines of inquiry were valid and appropriate. They also provided me with historical background information pertaining to migration and Armed Forces participation, which I was able to utilise during my data analysis.

Conclusion

The research methodology in this thesis allowed for the stories in the chapters ahead to be told. In this chapter, I have presented the participants and the exploration of the data for this research and I have explained the various steps towards the process of interviewing as well as ethical and the risk considerations I encountered.

Chapter Two outlined the Australian and international literature as it pertains to assimilation experiences and theory. Also, the characteristics, experiences and history of migration by the early Lebanese settlers pre-World War 2 from an Australian and international perspective was described. The literature review also considered the participation of the early Lebanese in Australia's Defence Forces and the comparison of the early Lebanese diaspora in their adopted countries Defence Forces. Out of Chapter 2 a series of research questions were designed (reiterated above), and this chapter has explained how those questions were approached methodologically.

The rest of the thesis is split into four chapters, each focusing on different aspects of the assimilation process.

The chapters consist of:

Chapter 4 *Early Migration Experiences*;
Chapter 5 *Assimilatory Behaviour*;
Chapter 6 *Lebanese in Armed Forces* and
Chapter 7 *Post War Experiences*.

Each chapter focuses separately on the aspects of assimilation using the oral stories of the subjects as the main data source and as their stories relate to each theme in the chapters. The flow of the rest of the chapters, and the findings in those individual chapters followed quite faithfully my interviewing schedule as discussed in this chapter. The richness of the qualitative face-to-face interviews allowed me to use them as the foundation for the four following chapters.

4. Early Migration Experiences

As we saw from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, the study of migration encompasses the process of migration as well as expectations and experiences in the countries to which people migrate, and how such experiences shape the way migrants think and interact with the society in which they settle.

Firstly, this chapter will build on the literature on migration experiences of the early Lebanese settlers presented in Chapter 2 by providing a historical overview of the economic activities practiced by the early Lebanese settlers to Australia. The second section explores a range of recollections of the dependants of Lebanese hawkers in order to explore the extent to which these early Lebanese migrants' economic experiences in Australia (during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century) affected assimilatory behaviour. In this way, the chapter will illustrate how experiences of parents and their ancestors was important for the way the dependants of migrants viewed, and engaged in, the host society. I stress how the early Lebanese hawking experiences were the catalyst that encouraged and assisted many early Lebanese immigrants to assimilate into Australian society.

Overall, a large number of participants in this study felt that assimilation was the catalyst to their family's establishment in Australia. I begin by reviewing evidence from other studies that also show how these strong mercantile behaviours were shared with the Lebanese experiences in other diasporas (Hitti 1924; Naff 1992).

Early Hawking History

A principal prerequisite for adaptation by any individual immigrant is to settle in a new country and find work (Koivukangas 1986:275). From the late nineteenth century, the majority of the early Lebanese settlers not only adapted but as will be shown in this chapter, often also assimilated into the Australian society through the process of economic integration.

Although a large majority of early Lebanese settlers came from rural areas of Lebanon, in Australia they were not attracted to farming as a long-term concern. Even though Australia possessed relatively cheap farmland during the late nineteenth century (Trevor Batrouney, personal communication, 5 December 2018), only a small number of the early Lebanese settlers took advantage of this opportunity (Trevor Batrouney, personal communication, 5 December 2018). The main reason for this lack of interest in rural pursuits was that the early emigrants were, on the whole, fairly young, unattached and unmarried males, with relatively low levels of skills or formal schooling. Although there was a small group of educated immigrants who had

gained some schooling, and an even smaller group who had attended university, most of the new ‘Syrian’ arrivals had little disposable income, spoke little English, and possessed no marketable employment skills. In addition, the types of farming practiced in Lebanon and Australia were markedly different; Lebanese farms were generally small holdings worked by families and formed only part of the family income, which they supplemented along with paid employment (Trevor Batrouney, personal communication, 5 December 2018). The same could be said for those early Lebanese who migrated to Brazil between 1908 and 1939, where they ‘were less likely than members of other ethnic groups to become involved in agriculture’ (Truzzi 1995:20).

Moreover, not only were they considered 'aliens', not being from the British Isles and therefore not British subjects, but they were also seen as having come from ‘Asia’, as Lebanon is on the eastern side of the Mediterranean. Various forms of official and social discrimination meant that it was extremely difficult for them to gain employment in the industries dominated by the Anglo-Celtic labouring classes (Backes 2006:4). Thus, instead of working as farmers, rural or urban labourers or miners (typical occupations for many early European immigrants, such as the case with the early Finnish immigrants to Australia during the period 1893-1920 (Koivukangas 1986:177-178), their Phoenician heritage played a pivotal role in the type of work the early Lebanese chose, namely independent traders and entrepreneurs.

According to Philip Hitti (1924:46) ‘the Syrians have ever since the Phoenician time shown marked mercantile proclivities’. Hitti describes the Syrian/Lebanese as the ‘perennial merchants of the Levant’. These characteristics provided a direct link with the modern Lebanese, either through historical continuity or ethnic relationships. The Phoenicians established the ports of Arad, Byblos, Tyre and Sidon. They were seen as adventurous navigators and were considered the most prodigious sailors of ancient times, exploring the length and breadth of the Mediterranean Sea and beyond (Murray 1974:15). The main Phoenician industries were textiles and glass, and they traded precious metals and products such as olive oil, wine and timber from the cedars of Lebanon (Moscati 1973:112-118). The Phoenicians inspired the Lebanese, adding an important mercantile dimension to the self-perception and identity of the Lebanese people (Murray 1974:15).

Sowell (1996:19) notes that the Middle East has also produced migrants whose cultural endowments reflect the geographical circumstances in which their societies evolved. Lacking both the natural abundance of food found in parts of the tropics and the natural resources for modern industry found in Northern Europe, the peoples of the Middle East have historically

had to struggle to make a living, whether in the nomadic pattern of the Bedouins of the desert or the irrigated farming of others, or - perhaps most striking of all - in the middleman traders who originated in this region and spread throughout the world (Sowell 1996:19). Sowell argues that the economically strategic location of the Middle East, for centuries a crossroads of trade between Europe and Asia, fostered the development of many trading ports and many trading cultures, of whom the Jews, the Armenians, and the Lebanese have been particularly prominent, not only in the Middle East itself but also in other continents. Middleman minorities have historically been hawkers and peddlers on a mass scale; for example, Jews in nineteenth-century USA and Argentina and, as will be shown below, the Lebanese in Australia and elsewhere (Sowell 1996:19).

In the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, this trade was termed 'hawking' in Australia (in the USA, it was referred to as 'peddling') and it is noteworthy that in comparable societies like the United States of America, hawking or peddling was also the most common early occupation of Lebanese migrants (Batrouney, 2018). As Matthews (1974:161) stated, as late as the 1970s, '... even today Lebanese descendants of the Phoenicians carry on as entrepreneurs in practically every capital of the world'. This was also the case with the late nineteenth century Lebanese Diasporas in New Zealand, South America, Canada, the United States and Africa. In the United States, for example, prior to 1914 at least 90 per cent of the Lebanese immigrants (including women and children) were engaged in the trade of peddling (Naff 1983:15). Peddling was a lucrative occupation for many early American-Lebanese. Orfalea (2006: 89) explains how the average per capita income in the USA in 1910 was $382. For the Syrian peddler, it was three times that, at least $1,000 per annum. This annual income was four times that of the US farmer, and slightly less than twice the income of a factory worker, a coal miner, or a salesman in a shop (Orfalea 2006:89).

In Brazil, by 1900 the Lebanese were widely identified with peddling, where it was a catalyst of both Jewish and Syrian-Lebanese economic integration in Brazil (Lesser 1992:400). In Argentina, most of the Syrian-Lebanese engaged as hawkers and peddlers in big cities or in the countryside. By 1900 they had already become familiar figures in Buenos Aires, and in the countryside they were, as Valverde (1992:315-316) describes, among the first hawkers that took trade to the remotest spots of the country. In New Zealand, many immigrant Lebanese took up hawking, travelling throughout Otago and Southland selling smallgoods, haberdashery, toiletries, and other goods. Many of these original immigrants continued hawking all their working lives (McDonald 2004:7-8).

From the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, a large percentage of the first wave of Lebanese immigrants to Australia worked as hawkers. How and where they conducted their hawking will be discussed during the course of this chapter. According to Batrouney (1988:670), almost all early Lebanese migrants were engaged in commercial activities, such as shopkeeping or hawking. Others moved into business as wholesalers, importers and small manufacturers. In 1901, 80 per cent of Lebanese in NSW were concentrated in commercial occupations. Table 1 below illustrates the occupations of the early Lebanese settlers in New South Wales at the time of receiving their naturalisation certificates during the years 1896 to 1903.

Table 1 Occupation of Lebanese immigrants in New South Wales as listed under their Certificate of Naturalisation (Certificates issued during the years 1896 - 1903). The migrants had arrived in Australia between the years 1885 – 1897 (Colonial Secretary of NSW office record of naturalisation for the years 1849-1904, Volume 16 & 17; NSW State Archives & Records).

Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
Hawker	78	Gardener	3
Dealer (hawker)	16	Clerk	2
Peddler (hawker)	1	Labourer	2
Carter (carries goods in a cart – old English occupation).	1	Market Gardener	1
Storekeeper (Shop-keeper)	87	Boot maker	1
Storekeeper's Assistant	3	Fruit Merchant (Fruitier)	2
Merchant	8	Grocer	1
Farmer	4	General Importer	1
Draper (retailer, and wholesaler of cloth)	3	Tailor	1
Storekeeper and Hawker	1	Settler	1
Miner	1		
TOTAL	**218**		

In the case of the occupations 'Storekeeper' and 'Hawker', it was not uncommon to have Lebanese immigrants owning a store and also working parts of the year as hawkers. Such was the case of Mr Chaker Abood, who during the early 1900s was a storekeeper in Charleville, Queensland. He would also be away from his family four months of the year, working as a licensed hawker, while his wife, Mary, looked after the shop and family (QSA, COL/73). Prior to settling in Charleville, Chaker and Mary were both hawkers in Orange, New South Wales, and hawked by horse and cart in 1894 from New South Wales to Queensland (QSA, COL/73.).

Table 1 shows that a large majority of the early Lebanese worked as hawkers (other names for hawking used on the certificates were peddler, dealer and carter) while the second largest occupation was storekeeper (including draper, merchant, grocer and fruiter). Although only 218 NSW naturalisation certificates were recorded, the occupations appear to be representative of the Lebanese who settled in other states of Australia. For example, the majority of Lebanese immigrants in Queensland who applied for naturalisation between 1885 and 1947 were self-employed and one quarter (25%) listed hawking as their sole occupation (Monsour 2010:86). Thus, the Australian-Lebanese diaspora in the late nineteenth century was consistent with other Lebanese diasporas of the time.

History of Hawking in Australia

While researchers have explored retailing and shopkeeping throughout Australian history (Kingston 1994), much less research had been conducted on the history of hawking or those who hawked in Australia. However, evidence of hawking can be gleaned through various newspapers at the time. The *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (1804:3) published a series of local Sydney news items, one of which concerned the fruit for the season and how 'peaches are already sold by the hawkers at two-pence per dozen, and they complement themselves upon being conscientiously contented with a moderate profit of only one hundred per cent'. Under Lachlan Macquarie's Governorship of NSW after 1810, his statement of revenue for the year ended December 31, 1820, lists one of the colonial revenues coming from *License to Hawkers* (Younger 1982:118). In New South Wales, *Licenses to Hawkers and Pedlars* was still listed as a form of public income in the Revenue statements for 1843 from the Auditor General of the Colony of New South Wales (Lithgow, 1843). It appears, however, that the general public did not look at hawkers in a favourable light, especially those hawkers who were unlicensed. On the 20 January 1843, a member of the public had written a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* concerning the issue of unlicensed hawkers stating:

> I beg leave to call your attention to street hawking without license - anything can be bought in the streets, from a needle to an anchor, and it holds out a great inducement to thieving - if hawking is to be allowed, the license ought to be made heavier. There are upwards of five hundred unlicensed hawkers, which would create a fine sum for the Corporation chest and would protect the shopkeepers. (*Tradesman* 1843)

It is clear that the author felt a sense of injustice over having unlicensed hawkers roaming the streets selling a variety of items and, as a result, they believed that unlicensed hawkers were taking business away from honest hawkers and shopkeepers through unfair competition. They supported the strict licensing of hawkers and felt that if the license price was increased it might deter and limit the number of hawkers around town. These feelings from the general public continued for decades and, as will be shown during the course of this chapter, early Lebanese hawkers often bore the brunt of these negative sentiments.

Hawking was a prominent occupation among non-European migrants during colonial Australia and various states enacted their own legislation to control hawking. Many of the hawkers in Victoria were Indians, Afghans and Syrian. As they provided competition for white merchants, they were resented (Huttenback 1973:286). In 1892, the County Traders' Association of Victoria asked the government to act against such hawkers. Consequently, after a Cabinet meeting, the Commissioner of Police was ordered to issue no further hawkers' licences to 'Asiatics' (other than Chinese), while corporations and district councils were invited to follow this example (Huttenback 1973:286). Victoria Act I097 of 1896 provided statutory machinery for this restriction through the establishment of a licensing procedure complete with fees and fines (Huttenback 1973: 286).

Western Australia was similarly concerned by the 'Asiatic' hawkers, including Syrian, Indian and Afghan hawkers. Charles Harper, representing the seat of Beverley, moved a motion in the Western Australian Legislative Council on 29 January 1892 stating: 'That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that legislative action should be taken to prohibit the granting of hawkers' licenses to natives of India or other Asiatic countries.' Frederick H. Piesse representing the seat of Williams supported his colleague Harper, arguing that '…these Indian peddlers were the scourge of the regular traders of the colony, and competed with them under conditions that were altogether in favour of the alien race … They paid neither rates nor taxes and what money they made they took out of the country … one could quite understand the power of intimidation exercised by these swarthy aliens, these dangerous-looking bravos, upon lonely

women and children in the outlying parts of the colony …' (Huttenback 1972:287). This language of protecting women and children from aliens was common rhetoric throughout the era of the restricted immigration in Australia and was part of the narrative supporting a 'White Australia'. The Western Australian Attorney General, the Honourable S. Burt, pointed out that until 1882 there had been no act to cover the issuing of licences to hawk or peddle. He proposed the repeal of the legislation of 1882 (*Hawkers Act 1882* which replaced the *Hawkers and Pedlars Act 1861* [WA legislation 2018:18) with a law that simply outlawed hawking. Thus, *The Hawkers and Pedlars 1892* (Act 35) was introduced outlawing hawking altogether and consequently defined the term as meaning: 'Any hawker, peddler or other person who, with or without any horse or other beast bearing or drawing burden, travels and trades and goes from town to town or to other men's houses, carrying to sell or exposing for sale any goods, wares, or merchandise' (Huttenback 1972: 287).

During the sitting of Parliament in the Western Australia Legislative Council on 17 March 1892, when the Parliament debated the *Hawkers and Pedlars Bill,* the Colonial Secretary moved the second reading of the Bill and provided the reasons why it was being introduced, namely 'owing to representations made of the great nuisance these men were the country districts.' He also stated that no further licenses would be granted, but the present license would continue to be in force until their term expired (*West Australian*: 1892:2). It was assumed throughout the debate in Parliament that this Bill was entirely confined to Asiatic and 'coloured' hawkers. Many Parliamentarians were pleased with the Bill, such as James Morrison, member of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, who stated during the debate that 'the sooner they did away with the Asiatic hawkers the better. If the Bill could be amended so to affect only Asiatic hawkers it would be well, but if this could not be done, he would vote for the Bill as it stood' (*West Australian* 1892: 2).

Subsequent to 31 December 1892 no hawking was to be permitted under threat of heavy penalty. The Act did, however, exempt the following classes of commercial persons: sellers of vegetables, fish, fruit, newspapers, brooms, game, poultry, matches, butter eggs, milk, or any victuals; sellers of goods of their own manufacture, persons selling in any public market or fair legally established and commercial travellers or other persons selling or seeking orders for goods, wares, or merchandise to or from persons who are dealers or selling or seeking orders for books or newspapers (Huttenback 1973:287-288). However, the 'Asiatic' hawkers in Western Australia were not happy with *The Hawkers and Pedlars 1892* (Act 35) and in January 1983, petitions were presented to the Western Australian government and in turn, Mr John

Monger, representing the seat of York had formally submitted them during the Legislative Assembly on 11 January 1893. The petitions had '45 Syrian and Afghan hawkers and 129 of other residents of the colony, praying for a repeal of the 55th Vict, No 35, which prohibits hawking' (*West Australian*: 1893:2). Although the petitions were 'received and read and ordered to be printed' by the Legislative Assembly, it was not until 1991 that this Act was repealed by the Western Australian government (*Table 3 – Acts that ceased to be in force,* 2018:18).

The Western Australia example on the hawking experiences and the political debates surrounding hawking suggest a wide prejudice against non-British hawkers at the time among the Western Australian parliamentary members and those they represented. They were looked at unfavourably as dangerous, 'swarthy aliens'. Legislative action made it more difficult for the early Lebanese (and other non-British nationals) in Western Australia to carry on their hawking trade and to be accepted within Western Australian society.

This discriminatory colonial legislation was met with other forms dissent by some hawkers in other states. On Saturday 17 July 1897, in South Australia, a deputation of 'city councillors, members of Parliament, businessmen and street hawkers' waited to meet Frederick Holder, an MP and member for Burra. They were protesting against the wish to prohibit hawking 'in all the streets of Adelaide' so to 'protect the shopkeepers who paid extensive rent and taxes and were damaged in their business by the competition of hawkers' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1897:9). Their protest may have been successful because even though in 1898 South Australia moved against Asian hawkers and peddlers the government did not prohibit hawking in the state. Instead, the government introduced, *Act 710* requiring an 'alien' applying for a licence to prove he had resided in South Australia for two years and had an adequate command of English to conduct his business. However, no licence was to be required for those dealing in fish, dairy products, or vegetables that they had themselves grown (Huttenback 1973:287-288).

The eastern colonies of Australia faced similar legislative pressures. In January 1893 the Premier of New South Wales replied to a question in Parliament regarding Syrian Hawkers. He responded that 'the Syrians were not a desirable class to have in the colony', and that he would be glad to see them go (*Wagga Wagga Express* 1983:2). On the 31st October 1901, Act No. 28, 1901 *Hawkers and Pedlers*, was enacted to consolidate the Acts relating to hawkers, including an earlier Act of 1849. Under this new Act, hawkers were required to obtain a licence to trade, but these were sometimes withheld from Lebanese hawkers in NSW because authorities feared that too many foreigners were engaging in this activity (Convy 2009:7). However,

one way around this discriminatory issuing of hawking licences was for Lebanese to relocate their hawking activities north of the border and gain a state hawking licence in Queensland (Convy 2009:7). These examples of state control suggest that many Lebanese found hawking lucrative enough to resist or circumvent legislation through a variety of counteractions.

While hawking was not dominated solely by the Lebanese in colonial Australia (it was also an occupation practiced among many Europeans such as Greeks, Germans, English and non-Europeans such as Afghans, Egyptians, Chinese and Indians), the Lebanese settlers tended to retain strong links with the hawking profession over subsequent generations. They continued this occupation until they were financially stable enough to establish associated businesses including shopkeeping, warehousing, drapery store or manufacturing (Batrouney 1985:36).

As noted in this section, hawking as an occupation was often looked down upon within colonial society, and the legislation passed throughout the colonies revealed underlying racial undertones during legislative debates, in the writing of the Acts and in newspaper articles. In particular, Acts discriminated against 'Asiatics', and the Lebanese were classified within this 'undesirable' category. Yet these early hawking experiences did not deter the early Lebanese from continuing in their economic endeavours and, as the following sections will demonstrate, this occupation often became a platform for the Lebanese to successfully assimilate into Australian society.

Early Lebanese hawking experiences

Hawking was such an important way of making a living for the early Lebanese settlers that a well-organised Lebanese trade network emerged across many different regions in Australia from the late nineteenth century onwards (Collins 2002:93). Hawking could not have expanded without an accompanying system of wholesale merchandising, and these merchants were important figures in the early periods of Lebanese settlement. For the newly-arrived Lebanese immigrants, the local wholesalers (mainly situated in the Sydney suburb of Redfern) were often the first point of contact for employment, providing new recruits with goods on credit and advice on where to sell (Collins 2002: 93). The merchant could provide them with the goods to start their hawking, organise their hawking routes, mediate between them and the local authorities, and provide financial assistance required to start as hawkers. The Redfern warehousing businesses, for example, often gave a suitcase of goods to Lebanese hawkers on credit to get them started (Backes 2006:4). Redfern had a number of fabric manufacturing and warehousing businesses which prospered from the late 1880s and became large well-known institutions

around the Elizabeth Street area. Many were owned by the early Lebanese settlers, a large majority of whom started as hawkers. For instance, by 1900, Nicholas ("Stanton") Melick's manufacturing business in Redfern was one of the largest and most established suppliers to the Manchester trade in Australia, while his contemporaries included the Dans, Maloufs, Cooreys, Lahoods, Hannas and Solomons. Many of their dependants and children later served in the Australian military during World War 1 and World War 2, as will be discussed in later chapters (ALHS 2015).

An example of such Lebanese networking involved Anthony Coorey, who arrived in Australia in 1892 and worked as a hawker until 1903, when he established his first wholesale business in Redfern. As a successful merchant, along with his wife Katherine, he would wait at Sydney ports to meet new Lebanese immigrants. After the Lebanese immigrants disembarked, Anthony and Katherine assisted them to establish themselves by providing them with accommodation, teaching them the fundamentals of hawking, providing stock, before sending them hawking to different country towns that did not compete with other hawkers (Betros 2012). This suggests that Lebanese merchants such as Coorey were knowledgeable about local economic and social conditions and were influential in establishing well organised trade hawking networks across the country. For the Lebanese merchant to be knowledgeable about local economic and social conditions, they would have had to socialise with and be engaged in a broader section of contemporary Australian society, economy and culture.

The early Lebanese settlers hawked mainly in the rural areas of Australia, as these regions of Australia, unlike the cities, did not have the stores to supply a wide variety of goods. Hawkers were especially welcomed on the remote farms and in country towns, where locals did not have easy access to a store for purchasing their everyday items, or else where existing shops within towns were unable to service residents' every day or discretionary needs. Many such towns consisted of little nothing more than an inn and a general store. Henry Lawson (the Australian writer and poet) describes such a town in New South Wales in the 1890s:

> There is sometimes a small, oblong, weather-board building - unpainted, and generally, leaning in one of the eight possible directions and perhaps with a twist in another - which, from its half-obliterated sign, seems to have started as a rival to the Railway Stores. This building was empty with wooden shutters covered its front windows. It was a sign of how perilous the trade of shop was keeping. (quoted in Blainey 2003:409)

More specifically, with respect to the owners of such establishments, Barnard (1980:152) states that '... the first shops of the bush were the Afghan or Syrian hawkers'. The Australian-born children of Lebanese immigrants, and some of the older immigrants who were interviewed in this study, noted that the hawkers among them did not confine themselves solely to Australia's rural town communities. They carried their business wherever there were opportunities, and this meant moves to the commercial, mining and outback communities. By hawking in different communities, the very act of trading meant that they would also need to integrate and socialise with the different members of the communities, from the Anglo-Saxons and other Europeans, and from Indigenous Australians to the South Pacific workers such as the Kanakas.

Typical examples of such a hawker undertaking business in the mining communities included Dib Hambour and Michael Jacob Rawady. The Hambour family from El Mina, Tripoli, were the first Lebanese immigrants to settle in the South Australian mining town of Kapunda. Dib Hambour migrated to Adelaide in 1899 and hawked from Adelaide to Kapunda. Dib settled permanently in Kapunda, opening a successful drapery business which catered for the miners and farmers, selling mainly clothing and materials for dress-making (Hambour 2012).

Michael Jacob Rawady also hawked the mining towns of South Australia. He applied for naturalisation in 1922, thirty years after his settlement in Australia on 20 December 1892 (NAA: A1, 1923/1257). His occupation on his naturalisation certificate stated that he was a hawker, and he had hawked from the time he arrived in Adelaide at the port of Largs Bay. He lived in Adelaide for nine years but spent the rest of his hawking life in the various mining towns of the Mid North and York Peninsula, hawking from Kapunda, where he lived for thirteen years, through to Wallaroo where he lived for eight years (NAA: A1, 1923/1257). Michael continued hawking throughout the Mid North and York Peninsula until he died on 30 August 1945.

Dib Hambour and Michael Rawady exemplified the way the Lebanese moved from their culture of origin into other host cultures. The Mid North and York Peninsula of South Australia during the late-nineteenth century was settled by Cornish miners and their families (Primary Industries and Resources SA 1998). Cornish miners left Cornwall by the thousands and created distinctive Cornish communities at numerous mining locations, in particular Burra, Moonta and Kadina (the Wallaroo Mines). The Cornish played a central role in the development of South Australia's early mining industry. Even after the end of Cornish immigration in the 1880s, this influence continued and Cornish customs and traditions flourished (Primary Industries and Resources SA 1998). Dib's initial hawking in Kapunda provided the gateway into the Kapunda

community for early Lebanese settlers, such as the Rawady's, by interacting with the locals and building strong business networks with other businesses and the local workers. For Dib to be able to settle in Kapunda and have a striving business at a time when the community was predominately inhabited by the Irish, Scottish and Welsh migrants meant he had to successfully integrate and assimilate into the Kapunda community.

Dib Hambour and Michael Rawady were able to assimilate into the strong Celtic mining communities through their hawking occupation. Their successful integration into such communities paved the way for their children and grandchildren to identify with Anglo-Australian customs. Dib's strong assimilatory experience was evident in his report for naturalisation in 1922. Under 'general remarks', it stated 'Applicant took a very keen interest in all patriotic functions during the late war also gave freely towards such functions '(NAA D1915 1922/1950). This example of assimilative behaviour adds weight to Albrecht's (2015:111) argument from his US research when he concluded that "Syrians had to have contact with the right kind of Americans in order to access the assimilation: they had to have widespread contact with *white* Americans". Hambour, Rawady and the some of the above hawkers we read earlier had their only contact with *white* Australians and this assisted them to assimilate and integrate into the wider Australian society. However, as we will discover during this thesis, as a result of their occupation, the early Lebanese hawkers were exposed to a a wide range of people beyond *white* Australians. Their commercial success did not rely on any particular social group, and they practiced their trad indiscriminately across race, cultural, class and gender divisions.

Dib Hambour's six children (Eli, Angelina, Gabriel, Martin, Evelyn and Saleem Hambour, along with three of their cousins, being Roy Douglas Hambour, George Hambour and Hedley Gordon Hambour) all later served in Australian's Armed Forces during World War 2. Furthermore, Dib's grandson Bruce Hambour (who was the son of Saleem) served in Vietnam and Borneo with the Australian Defence Force. Michael Rawady's two sons, Eli and Jack Rawady also served with Australia's Armed Forces in World War 2, along with their cousins Jacob, Reginald and Alexander Rawady. This relationship between assimilation and military involvement will be discussed in greater detail later in the thesis.

Other examples of Lebanese hawking in mining towns included the Gaha and Shalala families, who hawked at Cobar (where copper was first discovered in 1870), central western New South Wales and Gulf Creek, near Barraba in northern New South Wales where copper was discovered in 1889. The Cobar settlement was founded with Australia's European and Asian immigrants - with the Great Cobar Copper Mining Company Limited being established in 1878. In

the 1880s, gold, silver, lead and zinc were also discovered in the area and Cobar resembled a Cornish town. On 7 July 1892, Joseph Gaha arrived in Sydney on the steamer *Armand Behic* with family from the town of Zahle, Lebanon (Gaha 1988:1-2). They settled in Barraba, where Joseph started hawking around the town with his eldest son Khalil. By 1904, Joseph had bought a general store in Barraba, which he operated with his son Khalil (Frank), who was 22 years of age at the time, delivering goods from his store to outlying farms and stations as well as servicing his new hometown of Barraba (Gaha 1988:31).

The Shalala family (George and Marie Shalala) arrived in Sydney in 1884 from Baalbek, Lebanon with their infant daughter Sarah. They settled in Cobar, initially working as hawkers before opening a local fruit shop between 1908 and 1910. Hawking around the Cobar district continued into the second generation of the family with Khalil (Frank) Gaha and Sarah Shalala, who married in Cobar on January 31, 1905 (Gaha 2010). Khalil's two sons (Edward and Francis Gaha) eventually served with Australia's Armed Forces in World War 2, while his three grandsons also served in Australia's Armed Forces. Sarah's brother, Edward George Shalala, served in Australia's Armed Forces during World War 1. These stories illustrate how migrant families often assimilated and maintained strong connections with local communities over generations.

In outlying areas, Lebanese hawkers also came in contact with Indigenous Australians, with whom they traded haberdashery and other accessories (Batrouney 1985:35-36). In addition, during the period when they were trading in the north of South Australia, 'Syrian hawkers' were often mentioned in Australian literature, such as the Indigenous stories under titles of "The Cruel Syrian', 'Mansur' and 'Sayyid Ali' by L.A. Hercus (1981:39). Hercus' (1981:65-66) tales record how Muslim and Christian hawkers from Syria came to the north of South Australia after the appearance of Afghan camel drivers. Most of them came in the first decades of the twentieth century, particularly before World War I. They were labelled 'Abigana' by the Arabana people who were nevertheless well aware of the difference between these new 'Abigana' and the camel drivers because the commercial-mindedness of these new traders caught the attention of the Arabana people (Hercus 1981:66) For the Arabana people to be able to distinguish between the early Afghan camel drivers and the 'Abigana' people through the way the early Lebanese had conducted their trade with them shows that the early Lebanese were adept at associating with Indigenous peoples.

Two works of non-fiction by Louise Anna Hercus, a linguistic and specialist in Australian Aboriginal languages, illustrated two different Indigenous perspectives on the Syrian hawkers. In

the story *The Cruel Syrian, the siblings* Mona Merrick and Arthur Warren from Finniss Springs describe the type of goods the Lebanese hawker would sell: '...he came to Finniss Springs selling soap, handkerchiefs, and combs ... he came with just one camel, and we bought handkerchiefs, soap and combs, for one shilling'. The story was titled *The Cruel Syrian* because of the way the hawker treated his camel: '...He had put an enormous heavy chain on this camel, a railway chain. The camel was covered in sores, and it dragged this big chain on its foot'. The story then describes the dire state of the camel: 'Crows were sitting on this camel, on its back, it had a rough bullock hide (in lieu of a saddle) and the crows were devouring the camel where its back was full of great sores from this saddle. He went back to Marree and the Marree policeman took him and put him in gaol because of the camel: Cruelty to animals!' (Hercus 1981:67-68).

On the other hand, in the story *Mansur,* Merrick and Warren speak of the hawker Mansur with more fondness:

> Mansur was a really good man, he had clothes and hats for sale and he took photos for people. I used to see him (at Finniss) occasionally when I was a little girl. Mansur was a workingman at Beltana. But he came at shearing time (when there was plenty of money about) and he used to get a lot of money; all of us, my mother and us children bought dresses, hats, clothes and combs, and my father bought shirts. Mansur had a big motor car, and he sold pretty dresses. (Hercus 1981:68)

The above stories illustrate different perceptions of Syrian hawkers at the time, with the first story labelling the Syrians as cruel to their animals, while the second story perceived Syrian hawkers as good, hard opportunistic workers and traders. In addition, the stories suggest that the Syrian hawkers operated at different levels: there were those who could afford a motor vehicle and those who still used animals to transport and sell goods. These stories, recalled by Merrick and Warren, reveal how the Syrian hawkers were entrepreneurs who were prepared to associate with a wide range of people across Australian society, from the Indigenous communities to farmers and businesspeople. This experience mirrors those of the early Lebanese peddlers who settled in Brazil. As Truzzi (1995:23) stated, 'Syrian and Lebanese businesses spread their roots in virtually every region of the country, including the nineteenth-century rubber campaigns in the Amazon'.

Apart with trading with the Indigenous communities, Australian-Lebanese hawkers also associated with labourers from the Pacific Islands, the Kanaks, who worked mainly in Northern

Queensland. A prime example of such integration was George Dan, who changed his name from Nicola Doumani to assist his assimilation into Australian society. He came from a family of tanners in Zahle, Lebanon and in 1884, at the age of 17, paid five pieces of gold to join the sailing boat *Oceania* and travelled from the port of Beirut to the 'new world'.(Dan 2010). He landed in Melbourne where he was told: 'Here is the new world, off you get.' Upon arrival, he had nowhere to live so he started to hawk clothes and goods to people on farms, walking all the way from Melbourne to North Queensland. Morven Dan (2010) recalls the story of his father's hawking experiences among Kanaka workers:

> At North Queensland he used to deal then with the Kanakas, who were indentured from various islands to work in the sugarcane industry and he used to sell them rings for their noses, they put on their noses and in their ears and they were paid – they had full board, these Kanaks, and they were fed and they had smokes and everything and every fortnight the pay was half a guinea, seven and six. So he used to wait till they came out and sell them these rings. "How much?" "Ten and six". He used to collect the half guinea; they had nothing else to do. Mostly they cost him sixpence.

George Dan hawked for a few years until he saved enough money to set up a thriving clothing factory in Elizabeth Street, Redfern, the heart of Lebanese wholesaling in Sydney. His son, Dr Morven Dan joined the Australian Army during World War 2 on the 17th May 1942.

The Australian novelist Patrick White's third novel, *The Aunt's Story,* first published in 1948, also described a child's encounter with a Lebanese-born hawker in the 1890s in a New South Wales bush town. The story provides a short and vivid portrayal during the late 1890s depression of the reception a typical Syrian hawker received when arriving in an Australian country town. According to White, such a visit by a Syrian hawker could shatter the torpid atmosphere of a typical country town. This portrayal of a Syrian hawker illustrates the negative side of how some were perceived in the earlier years of hawking. In White's account, the Syrian hawker was viewed by the town people as struggling, uneducated, unclean, untrustworthy and sharp with money. While his arrival in the town was welcomed by the locals, as it broke the monotony of country life, he was not welcomed as a citizen.

> Down the road from the direction of the hills the Syrian came from time to time. He came into sight at the bend of the road, where his wheels thrashed, splashing the brown water of the ford. From a good distance you could see the dirty canvas swaying and toppling above the cart and there was time to shout a warning, to call, 'The Syrian! Here comes the Syr-i-urn!"
> This made everyone run out of the house, everyone from the back of the house - that is...Everyone ran out. It made quite a scattering of fowls.
> Gertie said the Syrian sold trash, but everybody liked to buy, and Gertie even, to touch and choose. It was exciting as the cart grated through the yard. Turkeys gobbled. Dogs barked. The day was changed, which was once had been flat as a pastry board. Now it was full of talk, and laughing, and the whining of the Syrian's mangy dog, and the jingled harness of his old blue horse. Now there was no question of work, now that the Syrian had come.
> The Syrian himself was dry and brown, with blue tattoo marks on his hands. The eyes were deep and dark in the bones of his face. But they did not tell much, nor did his voice, in the language that he talked. When the Syrian became intelligent he spoke in shillings, or with his brown hands. He uncovered his brown teeth in a clockwork smile. Out of the cart, from under the old tarpaulin, he brought the openwork stockings, the ribbons, the shawls, the mouth organs, the safety pins and the pen-knives that he sold.
> Once there was a silver shawl. Horiental, said Gertie Stepper. He tossed it out for everyone to see. How it blew in the winter wind! It streamed like a fall of silver water from the Syrian's hand.
> 'Oooooh!' everybody cried. Ad, 'Oo-*er*,' said Pearl Brawne.
> But Gertie Stepper, she got red, all except her pinched-up mushroom nose, and she hit at the brown knuckles with an iron spoon.
> 'Hey, you,' said Gertie. 'You no good. No good shawl. You think I no see, eh?'
> And now it was a fact. The splendid shawl that everyone had pushed to see was a poor, ragged, flapping thing that fell. It lay exposed on the hard ruts. The Eastern shawl had a hole in the corner, which the Syrian had held hidden in his hand.
> 'Cheap.Very cheap.' He smiled and pointed.
> 'Yairs, yairs' said Gertie. 'That may be, Mr Ali Baba. You can keep that to tell in court.'
> Then everybody laughed, even Gertie Stepper; almost, from behind her tin-rimmed spectacles that were mended with a piece of string.
> Once when the Syrian had left, Theodora went with him some of the way. Afterwards, trailing through the shrunk yard, there was no external evidence that the Syrian had been. 'Where everv you been, Theo?' asked Gertie Stepper.
> 'I walked some of the way with the Syrian'
> 'That dirty Syrian hawker man! Don't you never do that again!' (White 2008:24-27).

This account is typical of the way many Syrian hawkers were treated. Documentary evidence suggests that some hawkers were treated roughly and suffered insults, jibes and occasionally physical violence (Backes 2006:5). In 1892, 21-year-old Peter Antonio, was working as a hawker along the East Coast of Tasmania, selling jewellery (such as silver rings and chains, brooches, watch chains), silk handkerchiefs, pocketknives, and smoking pipes (*The Mercury* 1892:4). He was conducting his business through the coastal towns of Swansea and Llandaff and heading towards Launceston where he was to meet his brother, Annem Antonio and mother, who were also hawkers. He had stayed two nights at the house of a local resident by

the name of Alfred John Amos and on Monday 3 October he had left before 6am to continue hawking. However, before he could reach his destination, he was murdered at Llandaff (*The Mercury* 1892:4). His murder case and the trial of the accused (17-year-old Phillip Davern) created headlines throughout the colonies at the time and in 1893 Davern was found 'guilty of the murder of a Syrian hawker. Sentence of death was recorded' (*Argus* 1893:6). There was no discussion in the press over the motivation for the crime: whether Peter Antonio was murdered for his money or stock; or whether it was racially motivated? Regardless, this experience illustrates the hardship, danger and risks that the early Lebanese had to endure when conducting their business across communities. Some early migrants began with little English while having to navigate an unfamiliar culture and geography.

Hawking was not only dangerous but also an arduous occupation. Frank Samayia arrived in Sydney on 18 January 1928 from the village of Kfarsghab Lebanon and immediately started hawking. His grandson Allan Samayia records one of his grandfather's hawking experiences:

> My grandfather did it (hawking) in the district up on the north coast; there are a couple of river districts. Like, Kempsey is in the Macleay District – that's the name of the river. The next one up is Maxwell and the Nambucca River. My grandfather was known in those areas because he would take his truck; sell material and that to people. He used to come to Sydney regularly and buy the material and he would then drive around and sell it. He went to Kempsey; he went to all the villages in the Macleay District and the villages in the Nambucca District. He died at age fifty-six from a stroke. He was away from home, out doing his job, and he was found on a road, on a dirt road and someone found him. He'd had a stroke, he was just lying there … that's what happened to some people in those days. He passed away in the year 1956 and so was hawking since his arrival, all his working life. (Allan Samayia personal communication, 2 July 2010)

As noted in these various accounts, integration into Australian society was made more difficult for some Syrian hawkers as they were perceived as different, 'alien' and outside mainstream Anglo-Saxon society. Physically, their colouring, mannerisms, dress and language were different. Yet, even with limited language skills they still endeavoured to integrate into the various communities to sell their goods.

However, not all Syrian hawkers were perceived or treated in the harsh manner found in White's account. John Koorey's (2013) detailed account of his father's hawking years provides

a record of the early Lebanese settler's economic activities. His experience also provides an example of successful migrant entrepreneurship and assimilation. George Koorey was born on 9 January 1900 in the village of Bterran, Lebanon, and arrived in Sydney in 1924. Upon arrival, he obtained his hawking stock from another early Lebanese settler by the name of Mr Stanton Melick, a warehouseman based in Redfern, Sydney (mentioned earlier in the chapter). George kept all his hawking records in English and would list all the goods which were sold along with the sale prices. His detailed bookkeeping records the profits some Lebanese hawkers could make immediately prior to the Great Depression. For example, between the years 1925 to 1927, George made £3,680, 8 shillings and 11 pence. With these profits, he was able to purchase a car, calculating that he could sell his goods further afield. Like most hawkers in New South Wales, George had initially hawked by foot and railway, from country town to country town. His goods included baby clothes, knitted ties, razors, combs, stockings, business shirts, gloves and sewing materials, which he hawked mainly along the NSW inland towns. His hawking records show that on one of his usual trips, he hawked from Sydney towards Goulburn, Wagga Wagga and the Riverina. On average, he would stay a few days in each town selling his wares. For example, while hawking in Moruya he stayed for six days and made sales up to £31, while in Bega he stayed for four days and made sales up to £19. Considering that in 1927 wages at the time varied between approximately £19 and 5 shillings a week for federal politicians to £5 and 5 shillings for waiters at the newly built Parliament House in Canberra (McIntosh 2001), the sales that George was generating from hawking during the same period were equivalent to an Australian politician's income. This suggests that hawkers could prosper and thrive.

George, however, also experienced some of the negative sides of hawking discussed earlier. For example, he was occasionally greeted by signs on doors stating: "Beware of the dog. No Hawkers or Canvassers allowed". Yet, according to his son, he did not interpret this as racially motivated discrimination: '...there was discrimination, but it was natural, it was discrimination of anybody that came into town that were strangers, they were often treated with a certain amount of suspicion, so they really did have to be very diplomatic, very entrepreneurial' (John Koorey, personal communication, 9 January 2013). Despite this wariness from some locals, George's hawking experiences brought him prosperity and success. He saw his success as a result of his ability to partly communicate in English, his fair complexion, his strong entrepreneurial skills, and his well-dressed appearance. All these features suggest that the process of assimilation was linked to a recognition that assimilatory behaviour promoted business. In this way, George's confidence in his hawking profession encouraged him and assisted him to con-

duct business with senior business leaders in the various towns and the more affluent members of the communities he passed through. For George, assimilation and business success became a virtuous circle.

For five years George hawked across NSW, until he settled in Wagga Wagga with his family, where he rented a shop in the town in 1929 at the beginning of the Great Depression. Two years later, he opened a store in another southern NSW town at Temora (John Koorey, personal communication, 9 January 2013). For George to strive in business and open another store in the middle of the Depression suggests that he had enough confidence in his community standing in order to feel confident that his businesses would thrive even in such dire economic circumstances. In 1956, the family sold the Temora business and moved to Manly in Sydney where they established a menswear store called 'Kooreys', where the business thrived. The family sold the business in 1972.

George Koorey's story is emblematic of the assimilated migrant success story that Thornton (1968) emphasises among New Zealand's Lebanese community (see Chapter 2). George learnt through his early days of hawking that, in order to succeed in Australia, he would need to demonstrate assimilatory behaviours. Through adopting the language of the host country, writing his bookkeeping records in English, maintaining a well-dressed appearance and possessing a fair complexion, George sought to break the perceived mould of a 'Syrian' hawker which, as we read earlier in the chapter, was portrayed in the press and in folklore in a negative, stereotypical manner. As Farry (2005) noted in a critique of Thornton, this narrative fitted the host government's assimilatory narrative, but George Dan's story shows that it was also a trope used by migrants to build the foundations of a new life for themselves and their children.

The various hawking experiences of the early Lebanese settlers outlined in this section reveal a range of factors that account for why many succeeded in their migratory shift. As we have read, hawking for many early Lebanese was an early introduction to the local economy and local culture. Through hawking, many early Lebanese were able to improve or acquire the English language, familiarise themselves with the regions and associate within a variety of Australian scenes and cultures. As a result, this occupation was a catalyst that encouraged and influenced assimilatory behaviour. This endeavour, however, was not a smooth transition. It was often conducted in the face of discrimination.

Perception of the Lebanese Hawkers in the Australian Media

Earlier in this chapter we explored the legislative regimes that evolved in colonial Australia restricting the practice of hawking, and this legislation was often targeted at non-Anglo hawkers. We also noted that non-Anglo hawkers found ways of resisting such legislation. We then explored the importance of hawking among Lebanese migrants and noted the way it encouraged their assimilation into local ways of life, especially in rural areas, even though they were sometimes perceived as outsiders. In this final section we explore in more detail how people reacted to the presence of the Lebanese in their midst, and how, in turn, Lebanese migrants responded to such reactions.

As hawking became a significant occupation amongst the Lebanese from the late nineteenth century onwards, they came into competition with local stores in various country towns. As their numbers increased and as they became perceived as a threat to local businesses, they were not looked upon favourably by authorities and many others within the community. This was observed earlier through exploring legislative debates as well as through local folklore. However, from the 1880s onwards, the local, national media and country journals in Australia provided accounts of the Lebanese-hawker 'problem'. An analysis of the Australian media during this period illustrates the complexity of public and government attitudes on this problem of hawking.

The main focus of contemporary newspaper articles was the persistent calls for the Syrian hawking licenses to be cancelled and their immigration stopped. In these accounts, the Syrians were usually classified along with other 'Asiatics' such as the Chinese. Popular hostility to Chinese was expressed in the late 1850s and 1860s in Australia not so much in the language of race, as in the USA, but in relation to Chinese conduct and customs (Fitzgerald 2008:37). However, the Chinese still experienced anti-Chinese sentiment and demonstrations (*Evening News* 1879: 2 and *Sydney Morning Herald* 1878: 3). Many anti-Chinese meetings were held 'to protest against the Chinese and insist upon their exclusion' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1880: 6). The main rationale for this Chinese hysteria involved the perception that they did not see the country as a place of permanent settlement but as somewhere they could improve their fortunes in a short time and to return to their family villages richer than when they left (Huck 1968:2). In other words, they were accused of not being an assimilatory group. James Carroll, a NSW politician stated during an anti-Chinese meeting at the Guild Hall in Sydney on 5 May 1880: 'Of what good were the Chinese as colonists when they came here for a few years to amass money and then go back to their own country' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1880: 6). As

with the early Chinese, there was also anti-Syrian hysteria in the late nineteenth century, as illustrated in some examples below:

- In 1890 objections were made in the NSW Parliament against the 'influx of Asians other than Chinese' into the colony (Collins et al, 1995:41). *The South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register* provided an account from a sitting session in the NSW Assembly during 1893 where several members of the Assembly were taking active measures to deal with the immigration of Afghans, Syrians and other Asiatics in the Bourke district. The NSW Assembly reported that these men practically monopolised the 'carrying trade', and an endeavour was being made to get the western towns to join in the agitation with a view of pressing on the Government the necessity of restricting the importation of Asiatics (*South Australian Register* 1893:5).

- *The Barrier Miner* newspaper in Broken Hill, NSW in 1895 published an article featuring the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, Mr James Nixon Brunker. It stated that he had 'at last' taken a stand on the alien question. Mr Brunker determined to refuse letters of naturalisation to the Syrians and was taking steps to prevent them holding hawkers' licences (Barrier Miner 1895:3). Mr Brunker told a deputation of Labour members that he had instructed the police not to issue hawking licenses to Syrians who were not naturalised (*The Brisbane Courier* 1895:5).

- In 1893, *The Argus,* a Melbourne newspaper, published an article on the NSW Premier Sir George Dibbs, who had sent telegrams to the Premiers of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, explaining that the Government of NSW '... has under consideration the question of dealing with the influx of people of coloured races - Syrians, Afghans, 'Hindoos', and others, who are becoming a cause of increasing annoyance and trouble' (*The Argus* 1893:5).

- The *Singleton Argus* in NSW published an article in 1896 on renewing hawker licenses. It said that 110 Syrian and Indian hawkers applied for their licenses to be renewed at the Redfern Police Court in Sydney. However, only sixteen of the number, who were British subjects, were granted renewals, while the balance were refused. The reason given by stipendiary magistrate, Mr George Henry Simthers was that he considered that '...these Syrian hawkers were a curse to the country'. He trusted that the magistrates in the country districts would follow his example and refuse such applications when submitted to them. Smithers considered that the '...Syrian's hawkers as a class

> were a low brutal type of humanity, and they were enlarging their operations to such an extent that they were becoming a menace to the peaceable residents of the country districts'. Furthermore, he adopted the language (noted earlier) of protecting the 'unprotected', claiming that: 'It is a well-known fact that some of these men terrorised unprotected women in the country and by threats and other means virtually compelled them to buy their goods' (*Singleton Argus* 1896:6).

These four newspaper articles, all published in the 1890s, ten years after the first early Lebanese settled in Australia, are representative of the many cases of anti-Syrian hysteria that spread across Australia during the early settlement of the Lebanese. All four articles presented common themes noted earlier in this chapter. The early Lebanese were reflected in a racist manner, as settlers who were monopolising the local trading economy. They were also seen as untrustworthy citizens. Furthermore, they were a public menace and 'terrorised' women. Such anti-Syrian hysteria did nothing to assist in the assimilation of early Lebanese settlers, and indeed presented them as an undesirable 'ethnic grouping' (see Chapter 2) that defied assimilation. The majority of state representatives who spoke of this 'problem' gave official sanction to such popular prejudices.

However, not all the press was prejudiced against the Syrians. They also had supporters, and some articles published during this period countered the negative publicity that Syrian hawkers received. An article in *The Advertiser* (1893:7) entitled '*Asiatics and Hawkers Licenses, A Plea for the Syrians*', argued that Syrian hawkers in Adelaide were unfairly treated and that no hawkers of Syrian background had ever been found guilty of insulting behaviour to women. An *Advertiser* reporter interviewed Mr T.N. Coory, of Coory Bros. Hindley-street, who summarises the hardships that Syrian hawkers living in Adelaide had to endure:

> We think is very hard, that Syrian hawkers should be thus treated in a Christian country, and especially in a colony of Great Britain, which is regarded all through the East as the protector of the weak and the upholder of justice throughout the world. In Beyrout and in other parts of Syria from which we come we suffer many hardships under a Mohammedan Government, and we hoped that in coming to Australia we had left all that sort of thing behind. We are there burdened with special taxes, and a Christian's evidence in a court of law is of no account even though he has sustained the grossest injuries. Some of us are naturalised here, but the greater number are still Turkish subjects. Looking at the matter, however, even from this standpoint, I would like you to

> remember that in Syria British subjects, although not naturalised there, are allowed to carry on any business they choose without any hindrance on the part of the authorities.
>
> I should think there are 50 or 60 Syrian hawkers in South Australia. They buy their goods from us and from Messrs. G. & E. Wills, D. & W. Murray, and other large firms, and carry them for sale into the furthest parts of the colony and are a great convenience to outlying settlers. They go far into the bush and some of them as far as Queensland and New South Wales.

This statement from Mr Coory provided a vigorous defence of the Syrian hawkers, whom he describes as willing to work hard and who were respectful of the locals. Furthermore, they performed a vital service, venturing into the Australian bush and outlying parts of the country. In other words, he stressed their assimilatory characteristics. He also points out that a large majority of Syrians became hawkers due to the fact that they would not be able to obtain employment from Europeans. This made renewal of their hawking licenses, not only crucial for their livelihood but also beneficial for Anglo-Saxons, with whom they avoided labour-market competition. While we noted earlier that some researchers have stressed the mercantile heritage of the Lebanese/Syrians, it can also be claimed that another significant reason why Syrians took to hawking upon their arrival was as an opportunistic adaptation to the economic circumstances in Australia of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These circumstances largely precluded their employment in a period when they were discriminated against by political and popular agitation through trade unions, the press and social groups such as the *Australian Natives Association* (Trevor Batrouney, personal communication, 5 December 2018).

Regardless of the reasons why hawking was popular among the Lebanese (whether as a result of Lebanese heritage or prevailing socio-political conditions), they often faced a further level of discrimination regarding their fitfulness for mingling within local communities. As noted above, local media often reflected on their social and moral conduct, providing commentary from opponents on their unwelcome presence.

However, the Lebanese migrants were able to turn to influential supporters who not only rejected the negative stereotypes, but also focused on their valuable local contribution to the community. Among the latter was a late-nineteenth century inspector from Redfern '...whose district most of the Syrian and Indian Hawkers lived when they were in the metropolis, reported

that a large number of Syrians resided in his division. They were orderly and law-abiding people, and chiefly Christians...so far as the inspector was aware no complaints had during the last two years been made at his station by Europeans against either Indian or Syrians' (*Northern Star* 1896: 2). Furthermore, a Government Minister, The Hon John Hughes, M.L.C, supported the granting of licences to the Lebanese, stating that '... he appeared for a large number of the applicants - he believed about 100 - as undeserved suspicions had been cast upon Syrian hawkers he had caused enquiries to be made, and he believed within the last 10 years not a single case had occurred of a Syrian being charged with having committed an assault upon a women.' The police raised no objection to any of the applicants and all the applicants for renewals were granted by the court (*Northern Star* 1896:2). These authorities and parliamentary representatives refuted the negative perceptions of Lebanese hawkers and the allegations that they had treated locals in an uncivil manner in various country towns.

In early 1896, the *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* published an article regarding prevailing views of Syrian hawkers in the country region of Orange in NSW. It claimed that magistrates had '...no objection to the presence in their midst of what Mr. Smithers calls a curse, for hawkers' licenses...' In the week of 6 January 1896, thirty-four applications were approved hawking licences, of which half were Syrian applicants (*Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* 1896:2).

Local country newspapers that published positive articles on the early Lebanese reflected the fact that many of the early Lebanese had settled in country towns, after they had hawked around these towns. Sometimes, they became wholesalers rather than retailers, like the Debs family who settled in Bathurst, setting up a formal frock manufacturing business that serviced over 100 Lebanese shops in the regional area (Convy 2008:25). Once such families had established roots and built successful local businesses, the local media tended to refrain from negative racial stereotyping.

The various media examples cited above are among many that reveal the complex connections between Syrian migrants and the host nation during the late nineteenth century. These political and social debates concerning the treatment and perception of Syrian Lebanese hawkers in NSW were repeated across Australia, as noted earlier in this chapter. The Syrian Lebanese emigrants were initially regarded in some parts of the colonial society as suspicious and untrustworthy. Racist sentiment was clearly evident in some of these communities. This stemmed from the fear that the Syrian Lebanese hawkers were taking away jobs from white

settlers and locals. To reinforce these accusations, it was alleged that the migrants used underhand means of gaining custom, such as terrorising women to purchase their wares.

Many attributes of the Syrian Lebanese hawker (their appearance, their accent, the refusal by some courts to renew or issue their hawking licenses, their portrayal in the local press) seemed to undermine the likelihood of them establishing cordial relations in Australian towns. Yet, despite this, many Syrians continued to hawk and found means to resist such stereotyping. Ironically, in turn, hawking provided the economic and social means experiences to establish themselves in such communities across the vast landscape of regional Australia.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the migration experiences of the early Lebanese settlers in Australia. While the Australian and international literature acknowledges that the main form of economic means upon migration practiced by the Lebanese was hawking or peddling, the literature, especially in Australia, has not explored in any detail how this activity of hawking related to the process of assimilation. The stories presented in this chapter reveal a complex relationship between hawking and assimilation in which negative stereotypes were counteracted by Lebanese efforts to succeed in business and social recognition. Hawking activities tended to militate against any 'ethnic grouping' emerging and towards economic interaction with other non-Lebanese settlers and Indigenous Australians.

This chapter has established that hawking, for the early Lebanese settlers, was a profession which provided an avenue for entering into the dominant host culture. The benefits to the early Lebanese settlers of the hawking profession were two-fold. First, it provided financial security and a means to provide for their families. Second, it laid the foundations for the early Lebanese settlers (both men and women) to integrate culturally into their adopted society. Likewise, Naff claims that the most fundamental factor in the assimilation of Syrians in the USA was 'pack peddling' (Shakir 1997:42). Abraham (1983:17) concurred, concluding that 'peddling hastened acculturation' in the USA for the early Syrians. This chapter has demonstrated that this characteristic can be broadened to include the early migration experiences of early Lebanese settlers in Australia. The social practices that the early Lebanese migrants were engaged in encouraged their and their dependants' assimilation into Australian society. As with the Lebanese diaspora in the USA (Abraham 1983 and Shakir 1997), hawking was a catalyst for the assimilation for the early Lebanese in Australia. Their business encouraged assimilation, and assimilation was good for business. Furthermore, their success in hawking often led to their further

social advancement in Australia as they established their own family businesses in the cities and towns out of which they had earlier hawked. In this sense, the findings from this chapter echo the research conducted in the United States by Naff, Abdelhady and Haddad as well as Thornton in New Zealand.

It is helpful to return to McKay's (1989) concepts in order to understand the significance of hawking in the process early Lebanese migration in Australia. Recent migrants would often rely on mercantile Lebanese 'ethnic groupings' in Sydney and Melbourne to supply them with the wherewithal to make a living in their new environment. Yet the very sustainability of these transactions depended on the recent migrants spreading across the regions, finding geographic niches within which they could hawk their wares. Thus, the assistance provided by urban Lebanese merchants produces a centrifugal tendency in which the Lebanese diaspora became more of a demographic 'ethnic category' dispersed throughout country towns, rather than an 'ethnic grouping'. The success of such ventures militated against the creation of ethnic groups and the economic practices of hawking promoted assimilation, as retold by the descendants of the early Lebanese migrants.

Along with opportunities for business success, the early Lebanese migrants also faced discrimination and racism. Yet, resisting such negative stereotyping meant that they would seek other means available to demonstrate that they also belonged to their land of settlement. Some of the means by which this was undertaken will become evident in the next chapter as the various assimilatory behaviours by the early Lebanese and their dependants are explored assimilatory behaviours by the early Lebanese and their dependants.

5. Assimilatory Behaviour

"...it's in our culture that wherever you go you must not be the black sheep that you must assimilate". (David Andary, OBE, 2010, pers. comm.)

The previous chapter showed that the early Lebanese experience in Australia from the late nineteenth century often involved the adoption of entrepreneurial hawking as an initial immigrant occupation. This required that the Lebanese acquaint themselves with a range of Australian people and local cultures, and this promoted assimilatory behaviour. Furthermore, these early Lebanese hawked in different regions across Australia as well as different types of locations (in the city, and in rural, mining and outback environments). They were visible throughout Australia and within different landscapes. Hawking was a path that encouraged the early assimilation of Lebanese immigrants in Australia. This background partially helped answer the initial question this thesis posed, namely, to determine what migration experiences and what social processes influenced their (and their dependants) assimilation into Australia.
This chapter will explore in greater detail the various assimilatory behaviours exhibited by the early Lebanese to Australia and their dependants, often on the foundations of these early hawking experiences. While hawking was the catalyst for the assimilatory road taken by the early Lebanese settlers, it also influenced later aspects of their migratory experiences, from establishing businesses in country towns to shedding their religion and changing their Arabic names. This chapter will begin by exploring the early Western European influence on Lebanon and will explain how this early westernisation helped the early Lebanese diaspora to assimilate when migrating to western countries. This provides further insight into why the early Lebanese assimilated so quickly into Australian society. It also explains why they regarded themselves as European rather than Asian, as they were often treated according to Australian law.

The chapter then uses primary sources from oral testimonies and my questionnaires, and sources from archival works and newspapers, to provide examples of how the early Lebanese assimilated into Australian society after the hawking period. Various rural towns in NSW will be used as case studies. Such assimilation included the dispersal of the Lebanese across regional towns; establishing businesses and erecting major buildings in such towns; changing their surnames; and adopting local religions. The chapter begins with a case study of one early Lebanese settler in country NSW which encapsulates the assimilation experiences of many early Lebanese settlers discussed during the course of this chapter.

An illustrative story of assimilation

George Najar left his hometown Bechmezzine, Lebanon at the age of nineteen in 1891 and migrated to Australia with three other relatives (his brother Latouf and two of their cousins with the surname of Mufarag) on a vessel named *The Polynesian*. Upon settlement in Goulburn, NSW, George began hawking around the town as well as Barooga and the rural properties around Taralga and Mittagong and possibly also Bathurst (Peter McGuire, personal communication, 23 November 2010). Not long after they arrived, all four boys changed their surnames to McGuire, a name they took from an established hide and tanning business they had bought in Goulburn (Peter McGuire, personal communication, 23 November 2010). It is not known why all four boys changed their name, but it is possible that they felt that it would help identify them with their newly-acquired business in a town which was dominated by people of British origin. Peter McGuire (personal communication, 23 November 2010), the grandson of George Najar, surmised that changing the surname to an anglicised name helped them to assimilate and also because of the wide discrimination at the time against the “wog” (Peter McGuire, personal communication, 23 November 2010). The two brothers, George and Latouf both married Australians of English descent. George married Matilda Horton and they had two sons from the marriage, first Neville Khalil McGuire who was born in Barooga on 2 March 1907, and another son by the name of Stefan.

George was brought up in the Eastern Orthodox religion. However, upon migrating to Australia he changed his religion to Church of England, as there was no Orthodox Church in New South Wales at the time of his migration. As a result, his sons were raised in the Church of England. The first son, Neville, grew up in Goulburn with both parents until the age of four when his mother passed away. His father then left Neville and his brother in the care of his Goulburn brother Latouf, because George had married again to an Australian woman who was not keen to take the two boys and they moved to the New South Wales town of Taralga where George ran two shops in the main street (Peter McGuire, personal communication, 23 November 2010). At the age of fourteen, Neville ran away from his uncle’s home, by stealing a bicycle and cycling down the Southern Highlands Mountain range to Jervis Bay. With his Intermediate Certificate, which he acquired at the age of ten, he joined a naval training ship where he commenced a traineeship. Neville was one of two hundred boys undertaking naval training and out of his cohort the Navy took one boy each year into the Royal Australian Naval College. Neville was the successful from his cohort ((Peter McGuire, personal communication, 23 November 2010). He later married Mary Mackie an Australian of Scottish-English descent who was born in Broken Hill on 28 January 1907, and they had three children.

Peter McGuire (personal communication, 23 November 2010), one of Neville's sons, believes that his father felt like an outsider while growing up in country New South Wales, as at the time Goulburn's population was almost homogeneously British in origin, surrounding the small cluster of Lebanese families in the town (ALHS 2006:2). Peter believed that his father's act of riding his bicycle away to the Navy College represented his removal from his Lebanese past:

> PM: He was always secretive about his Lebanese origin, and I had no communication about that with him at all, he wanted to be secretive.
>
> GK: Why do you think he was secretive about it?
>
> PM: I think it was dated from the days of discrimination against people from Lebanon. I think he was probably scared by the people recognising the fact that he was Lebanese, or from an Asian country and I think they hated the idea of being Asian. He concealed his second name from the navy; all the twenty-eight years that he was in the navy he concealed his second name
>
> GK: And his second name was Khalil and he went to that extent of concealing his middle name, which is really his Lebanese identity?
>
> PM: Of course, it is, yes.
>
> GK: Imagine living your life like that.
>
> PM: Well, he was so secretive about it, as I've told you, we almost came to blows about it because he kept on saying to me "My family begins with me".
>
> PM: When he rode his bicycle away to the naval college or to the ship first and then got promoted to the naval college – I think the idea was to leave all things Lebanese behind and "Won't use my Lebanese name" etcetera. And I don't think he looked back.

I asked Dr McGuire what kind of advice his father would have wanted to give Lebanese immigrants in order for them to settle in Australia:

> I think – see things have changed so much but I'm sure that he would be saying things like: "Forget it all and become an Australian, integrate, forget it. Leave the past in its past. That's what he did, and he did it very well." (Peter McGuire, personal communication, 23 November 2010)

Neville's decision to join the Navy eventually allowed him to study at the Royal Naval Engineering College at Kyham in England. He qualified as a mechanical, electrical, and marine engineer. After serving with the Royal Australian Navy for twenty-eight years (including war-

time service in World War 2), Neville became the chief engineer at Conzinc, Rio Tinto in Broken Hill.

Neville's assimilation process into Australian society commenced when his father, uncle and cousins adopted an Anglo-Saxon surname. At the earliest opportunity he chose to fully abandon his Lebanese heritage entirely, including the decision to conceal his middle Arabic name for the duration of his time in the Navy.

This illustrative case describes an early Lebanese settler in Australia who was intent on assimilation. The remainder of the chapter will suggest that this case was common among many early Lebanese. As shown in the previous chapter, hawking was an occupation and lifestyle that encouraged the early Lebanese settlers to assimilate. Eventually, once they accrued sufficient income, most exchanged this more nomadic hawking life for stability for a lifestyle in a country town. Hawking provided the foundations for the newly-arrived immigrants to assimilate. Yet, once they settled in towns, these Lebanese migrants still found, or felt, that they had to demonstrate their sense of belonging. Batrouney (2002:57) has listed many assimilatory characteristics of the early Lebanese, and in this chapter these behaviours will be explored through my interviewees. They include changing religious denomination, changing Arab names to Anglo ones, and engaging in host-society cultural practices.

Assimilation characteristics of the Lebanese diaspora

As noted in Chapters 2 and 4, the Lebanese hawking experience was similar to those throughout other Lebanese diasporas during the same period. For example, the period of migration to the United States by the Lebanese during the late nineteenth century has been described as one of rapid assimilation as it transitioned from an itinerant peddling group to a middle-class minority concentrated in the commercial enterprises of dry goods and groceries (Gualtieri 2009:12). Meanwhile in Brazil, peddling was a feature of both Jewish and Syrian Lebanese economic integration (Lesser 1992:400).

The previous chapter also showed that, in Australia, Lebanese hawkers became familiar with the country and its inhabitants because of the nature of their trade and its daily interaction with customers. Once they gained competency in the English language, the hawkers also became conduits for the spread of local and regional information, transmitting news from one farm to another (Batrouney 1985:35).

Entering Australian homes and communities also familiarised Lebanese with the details and tone of the local domestic culture and milieu. An example of this assimilation process involved Brhaime Abikhair, who settled in Victoria in the 1890s (Frederick Abikhair, personal communication 14 May 2010). Brhaime (known as Abraham) hawked by wagon around the goldfields of Rushworth and the rural communities of Murchison and Violet Town, as well as from Seymour to Lamba and along the Goulburn Valley. While hawking, many farmers knew that Brhaime would be camping for the night, so they would invite him into their homes where they would play cards and share a meal (Frederick Abikhair, personal communication 14 May 2010). This socialisation with European settlers provided Brhaime with a first-hand introduction to Australian hospitality and culture, which assisted him in learning the English language and assimilating more readily into the Anglo-Saxon culture.

Apart from the early Lebanese migrants congregating around Redfern in Sydney, Carlton in Melbourne and Wayville in South Australia, the Lebanese immigrants did not tend to form close urban Lebanese communities, or what McKay (1989) called 'ethnic groupings'. As Perkins (2001:20) notes, the itinerant nature of their employment as hawkers took most of them to country areas where they mixed with other cultures rather than with their own culture. In other words, the form of assistance early assistance Lebanese gave to one another created a centrifugal tendency among the migrant group to spread out, rather than any centripetal tendency to remain a closely-settled community. Greg Melick's (personal communication, 24 May 2010) description of his grandfather's experiences throughout New South Wales during the early 1920s concluded that 'the early Lebanese population tended to integrate in those days, they didn't live in enclaves'. According to Melick, his grandfather and his grandfather's brother would assist other early Lebanese immigrants in business and hawking, which resulted in the Lebanese being dispersed around different communities and towns across New South Wales:

> ... they'd say to the new hawkers, look, you go to Casino, and they used to stake them for about six months, give them six months' worth of supplies and send them off and they populated a lot of coastal cities and country towns in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, and that's why you've got, you know, Melicks and Azars and, all over the place. They set up businesses in haberdashery and things like that. See, our family always integrated. We never lived in communities, in Lebanese communities.

GK: So all your family integrated because they wanted to live in Australian society?

GM: Oh, yeah. We regard ourselves as Australians first, you know.
(Greg Melick, personal communication, 24 May 2010)

The same conclusions have been reached about the early Lebanese settlers in Nova Scotia, Canada. Jabbra (1984:158) concluded that the early Lebanese did not live in 'ghettoes', meaning 'that they are fairly well assimilated'.

However, this dispersal throughout country towns did not preclude episodes where some Syrian hawkers were treated as outsiders by the locals, as shown in Patrick White's fictional account of the Syrian hawker recounted in Chapter 4. White's story corresponds with various other negative media accounts of the day about the Syrian hawkers recounted in Chapter 4.

Despite this, there were countervailing factors which promoted Syrian hawkers' assimilation into Australian society. These were often associated with their cultural characteristics. A description of these features was published in the November 19, 1892, *Illustrated Sydney News,* which printed a seven-page article about the development of a Syrian 'colony', entitled '*Syrians in the South. A Colony at Redfern'*. The article described the assimilationist characteristics of the early Syrian Lebanese within Sydney society, specifically in the suburbs of Redfern and Surry Hills, where many Lebanese had established homes and businesses. This long article is worth an extensive citation to illustrate the Syrian tendency towards assimilation:

> Many persons are, perhaps, unaware that there exists in one of the suburbs of Sydney a rather large colony of Syrian men, women, and children ... the Syrians are located in 23 shops, which comprise a number of businesses in which Europeans are frequently engaged. There you find the ingenious watchmaker, the useful cordwainer, the self-sacrificing draper, the dealer (hawker) in fancy goods, the hospitable boarding-house-keeper, and the general merchant. This list of pursuits will, at once, suggest that the Syrian is not an undesirable colonist, and that he is able and willing to promote the general trade and industry of the community in which he casts his lot. There is a maxim of British law, which says that nothing can be tolerated that "is restraint of trade". It has been well said that English law is the essence of common sense; and if this be so, the Syrian colony in Redfern is something which should give satisfaction to the utilitarian mind of Englishmen. Some of the Syrian traders in Redfern are married to English-women and have thus give earnest of their desire to settle down in this colony and become good and permanent citizens. The people dress well, in ordinary English style, and have thoroughly adapted themselves to their neighbours and fellow citizens. The visitor to a house in the Syrian colony is entertained with Arabic hospitality. The choicest fruits and most refreshing drinks are placed before him, but nothing which can impair his reason or destroy the rational enjoyment of a merry meeting. At Redfern you

> find only the politeness of the English gentleman, colored, as in that case, by a gentle humor, which is very striking. The church is fitted up in the usual style of one in communion with the Roman Church. In conclusion, one word should, in justice, be said respecting the Syrians in Sydney, who are sometimes erroneously called Assyrians. Something has been said in certain quarters respecting the pertinacity of their women in endeavouring to make sales: the idleness of the men; and the danger of the introduction of disease by the agency of these Eastern immigrants. These representations and apprehensions appear to be exaggerated or unfounded. In the first place the women who sell goods in the city and suburbs [referring to Syrian female hawkers] are as apart from the Syria colonists as any old English women who sells fresh eggs at one's door. The allegation of the idleness of the men is disposed of by a visit to any of the shops in the Redfern colony, and the fear of the introduction of disease is allayed by mention of the important fact that the unhappy Syrians are frequently credited with the nationality of Afghans, Indians, Greeks, Italians, and other peoples, "whom," in the words of the Apocalypse, "no man could number". (*Illustrated Sydney News* 1892:4)

The hidden subtext of this long article hints at ongoing debates at the time over the issue of whether the Syrians were a desirable addition to the population in Sydney. The article concluded on the side of acceptance because it considered the Syrians to be industrious, temperate and hospitable, terms the press associated with the British, or at least the English. It presented evidence that the early Lebanese settlers had assimilated into Australian society through commerce, inter-marriage and social interaction outside their community. Furthermore, they were considered similar to British Australians in mannerisms and dress. The depiction of these early Australian-Lebanese as 'suitable' settlers, bears a resemblance to those found in Abdelhady's (2011) research in the United States. these indicators of successful assimilation included professional status, high level of education, language proficiency and in some cases intermarriage. The socio-economic circumstances of both American-Lebanese and Australian Lebanese migrants assisted the process of assimilation for the migrants and eased their acceptance into the host societies.

This similarity between early Lebanese in Redfern and British had a historical basis that had made them overwhelmingly 'European' in outlook and character (Batrouney 2006:54). Batrouney has noted that the first Commonwealth Secretary for the Department of External Affairs (period between 1901 – 1916), Attlee Hunt stated that the Syrians or Lebanese 'appeared more similar to Europeans than Asians and because of these attributes it was felt that they could quite easily blend with the racial mix in the young Australia' (Batrouney 2006:54). One

reason for this acceptance was the tendency for Christian Lebanese to be more familiar with western ideas. This was a result of French, British and US political, economic and religious influences that had entered Lebanon during the nineteenth century. The following section explores these social forces.

The Early Westernisation of Lebanese Society

The late-nineteenth century Lebanese settlers' knowledge of, and attitudes toward, Western society had been strengthened over the previous decades by US and Europeans settlement in Greater Syria. While this thesis is not the forum for an extensive discussion on the Western influence in Lebanon, it is necessary to explain briefly it's in order to understand the factors promoting strong assimilatory behaviour among the early Lebanese diaspora in the Australian colonies. In doing so this section will prepare the argument presented later in this chapter to explain forces facilitating the early Lebanese assimilation into Australian society. This argument involves the propensity for the early Lebanese diaspora to regard itself as part of Europe rather than Asia.

The influence of Western thought in Lebanon is well documented. For example, the first printing press in the Middle East was introduced in 1610 at the Lebanese monastery of Qazhayya, printing Psalms in the Syriac language and in Arabic, written in Syriac characters (Hitti 2002:676). Missionaries were introduced into Lebanon as far back as 1634 when the French Jesuits arrived at Mount Lebanon and established religious schools (Gaspard 2004: 46). In 1652 other Jesuits formed a monastery at Dayr Ayn Tura (Harris 2012:109). In 1780, the French Lazarist religious order were the first institution to offer secondary education in the region (Gaspard 2004: 46). A Presbyterian mission school set up the first Arabic printing press in Beirut in 1834 (Coleman and Almond 1960:382), and from the 1840s onwards, British and US Protestant missions and schools were established in Lebanon (Harris 2012:152). For instance, in 1866, US Protestant missionaries established the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut, later to become the American University of Beirut, while in 1875 the Jesuits founded the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut, with an attached French Faculty of Medicine in 1883 (Hourani 1991:303).

In addition, Russian Orthodox, German Lutherans, and the Ottoman government began to create their own schools along Western lines (Naff 1985:36-37). The spread of Western ideas, the rediscovery and publication of the Arab classics by Western orientalists, the introduction of the printing-press and the establishment of newspapers and periodicals led to the revival of Arabic literature (Hourani 1968:36).

The influence of these institutions is illustrated in the example of the Lebanese town of Zahle, from where many of the early Lebanese who settled in Australia originated:

> By the 1890s, Christian Zahle, with a population of about fifteen thousand had two Jesuit boys' schools, a Roman Catholic girls' school, a Russian Orthodox school, a British Anglican school and one American Protestant school; it also had a Jesuit college and one Catholic and one American library. (Naff 1985:37)

The spread of Western education, the growth of commercial relations with Western countries and other encounters brought into existence a class of people who knew French, English and other European languages (Hourani 1968:36). Hourani (1991:307) states that during the 1860s and 1870s there was a rise of a new western-educated class in the region. For most of the Arabic-speaking Christians of Lebanon and Syria who played a large part in intellectual life during this period, Western influences did not appear alien. They could embrace such influences without any sense of losing their Arab identity. Thus, the Arab-speaking Christians of Lebanon were able to retain their culture because their own Christian beliefs were compatible with the introduced Western religions. Those Lebanese who migrated to Australia, were familiar with the dominant religions practiced in their new environment (such as the Church of England, Presbyterianism and Catholicism) and this eased their process of assimilation.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, Lebanon, with its established Western churches and education system, became an important commercial and intellectual centre in the region, with a reasonably literate population that was amenable to modern capitalist culture. Though agriculture was still the dominant activity, domestic and foreign trade flourished. The French *Regie de Tabac* dominated the Lebanese tobacco industry and although French capital had started the Lebanese silk industry in 1840, most manufacturing and trading capital quickly became owned by locals (Gaspard 2004:45-46). Much of the silk was exported for sale in the silk market of the French city Lyons (Cobban 1985:52). As early as 1827, 21 out of the 34 commercial firms trading with Europe belonged to Lebanese nationals (Gaspard 2004:45-46), and as late as the 1930s Lebanon was exporting goods to Iraq, Palestine, France, Transjordan, Italy, the United States and Egypt and importing from Great Britain, France, Japan, the United States, Germany, Italy and Romania. Foreign revenue also came from the many foreign tourists who visited Lebanon throughout this period (Hourani 1968:90).

Thus, Lebanon had already established trading markets throughout Europe, throughout other parts of the Middle East (which at the time was under French or British mandate), as well as

Asia. In addition, international tourists visiting the country exposed Lebanese to different cultures and languages. The tastes and habits of the population were profoundly influenced by the inflow of goods from the West, and their beliefs and ways of thinking were still more profoundly affected by the spread of Western culture and education (Hourani 1968:34).

While the previous chapter explored the consequences for hawking on the assimilatory experiences of the early Lebanese settlers, this section has drawn attention to another factor that promoted assimilation to western settings. The prior contact within Lebanon with western education, commerce and religion facilitated a predisposition towards the dominant practices they found in their new environment.

Lebanese Diaspora – Assimilation

Albert Hourani (1968), who was a specialist Middle Eastern historian, presented an insightful account of how the early Lebanese assimilated into hosts societies, and his general analysis provides a foundation for understanding Lebanese assimilation into Australia. It will then be tested using the findings for my Australian interviews.

> The Syrian Egyptians are numbered in tens of thousands, but those who have followed the other road, to North and South America, to Australia and to other of the more distant parts of the world, must be counted in hundreds of thousands. The great majority of them started as retail traders on a small scale, but many took to wholesale trade and to the manufacture of textiles and other goods. The process of taking root was harder for them than for those who went to Egypt, since it involved learning new languages and acquiring new ways of life; but they have already assimilated to a considerable extent and the large Syrian colonies in the United States, Brazil, and the Argentine, with smaller ones in other countries, have become prosperous, loyal and respected elements in the communities in which they are living. Most of them have given up all but a sentimental attachment to their country of origin, and there seems to be no obstacle to their ultimate complete assimilation, the more so since the flow of emigrants to the countries of the New World has greatly diminished during the last two decades. (Hourani 1968:34-35)

Hourani (1968:35) also noted that the consequences of this diaspora was mixed for the emigrant country:

> They were bad in so far as it was the more talented and enterprising of the country's youth who went abroad, during the period of their greatest energy and often forever. On the other hand, the level of prosperity was raised by the remittances, which successful emigrants sent home to their relatives, and by the savings they brought back with them. Also, they introduced new ideas, and what was even more important, the example of a new and in many respects attractive way of life. These ideas, this example and the bare fact that Syrians were prosperous and happy in foreign lands, deeply influenced the attitude of Syria to the West. All this was especially true of Lebanon, since it supplied so large a proportion of the emigrants.

Hourani's assessment of the Syrian or Lebanese experiences migrating to Western societies projects an image of the early Lebanese successfully assimilating into the Western lifestyle and way of life, and, in turn, the positive Lebanese diaspora experiences had encouraged other Syrians to live abroad. Throughout this chapter the evidence presenting from Australia can be compared with Hourani's assessment.

Willard (1923:107) stated that by 1901 Syrians and Afghans in Australia showed fewer tendencies than the Chinese to congregate in larger towns. As noted so far in the thesis, the main reason that the early Lebanese immigrants did not congregate in large towns was because a large majority of the Lebanese opted for employment that took them outside major metropolitan areas. As McKay (1989:41) noted in the case in New South Wales, in the period 1901 to 1947 the majority of Lebanese in New South Wales lived in country towns. In order to minimise economic competition when hawking or establishing their shops, 'they seldom congregated in substantial numbers throughout the state, and it was rare to find more than one or two Lebanese families in each country town'.

While this demographic pattern observed by McKay holds true in general terms, it was possible to find cases of early Lebanese businesspeople concentrating within a particular rural area where they built small communities. Such communities grew in southern New South Wales areas such as Goulburn, Crookwell, Braidwood, Cootamundra and Cooma (ALHS 2006:48). This pattern of settlement was similar for the early Lebanese immigrants in Queensland during the late 1800s onwards. As Monsour (2010:116) concluded, although numbers fluctuated, there was a continuous Lebanese presence in many towns and cities throughout Queensland, and in many areas, settlement occurred in small locality clusters.

Generally, these settlement clusters occurred because family members or friends from the same village did not settle in the same town but in separate towns in the same area (Monsour 2010:116). Monsour (2010:116) explains this pattern of settlement as a result of family members wanting to be close to each other. However, while most were occupied as small traders, it was often not economically viable to live in the same town. Thus, contact with other Lebanese was intermittent for many non-metropolitan inhabitants. They lived in environments that were, except for other ethnic minorities and Indigenous Australians, overwhelmingly Anglo-Australian (Batrouney 1992:421).

For example, Baheege Assef (who changed his given name by deed poll to Bert) was born 28 April 1923 in the town of Bterram, Lebanon and migrated with his mother and brother John (born Fawad) in 1926. His father had migrated to Australia earlier in 1923 and worked initially as a hawker for at least three years, using the NSW country town Quirindi as his base, hawking across that region. His brother-in-law had a shop and after saving sufficient money, Baheege bought the shop (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010). In 1953, Baheege married Laurice Yarad**,** a second-generation Australian-Lebanese and settled in Quirindi and had four children. His son Richard recalls that while his father had a small number of Lebanese friends, he also had many Australian friends and had 'assimilated exceptionally well' (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010):

> Living in the country in Quirindi especially, and to a lesser extent Taree, there weren't many Lebanese people there. I mean, we were the only Lebanese family – no, there were two Lebanese families in Quirindi at the time so they had no alternative if they want to make friends they had to make friends in that community – and I think, you know, maybe that was, one of the reasons that they did join the Armed Forces was to, assimilate and, you know, assist them in making friends and obviously fighting for the country too, it was so sacred to them and the family. (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010)

Baheege Assef's socialisation within the Anglo community was maintained and expanded even after he moved his family to the larger NSW country town of Taree around 1966, where there was a stronger Lebanese presence: 'We moved to Taree in I think 1966 and even though there were more Lebanese families in Taree, dad and our family, we did mix with them, but we also mixed a lot with the general community' (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010).

This story of the Assef family suggests that the earlier Lebanese did not experience many inhibitions settling in towns where they were the only Lebanese family. In fact, their settlement experiences and economic activities encouraged them to assimilate into Australian towns as their businesses grew.

The Symbolism and Security of Bricks and Mortar

Many early Lebanese who settled in towns across the country developed an affinity towards, and an abiding sense of belonging within, their adopted community. This was evident during the course of my research where many of the interviewees still lived in the towns or suburbs where their families first settled. Others who moved away from their initial town still retained connections with it, through buildings named after their family members, names being engraved on war memorials (Michael Deeb, personal communication, 9 November 2010) or significant town monuments such as the town clock (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). This search for belonging experienced by the first wave of Lebanese settlers is explored in this section. The stories of the early Lebanese settlers recounted by family members during my research provided insights into how the family assets from their village and connections to their birth country or descendants' country were less important than 'building' connections in their newly adopted country.

The Sarroff family, who migrated to Albury, NSW in 1891, illustrates this sentiment of attachment to new places. The family had extensive properties in the village of Kosba, which was handed down from one eldest child to the next. John Sarroff's father, Harold Sarroff, was next in line to inherit the properties. John Sarroff who, like his father Harold, was born in Albury, provides an account of the connections between Lebanon and his ancestors:

> There were seven parcels of property in Lebanon that were to be under his control for the family and he (Harold Sarroff) spoke to some of the others and he had no intention of going back and they found out who was the least wealthy of the family of the Sarroffs over there and signed over the seven properties to them and I believe they're worth millions. One was right in the centre of Kusba, five acres of an orchard at the time, an olive orchard at the time - right in the middle of Kusba, they were all there. And my brother went over in 1972 and 3 – no, 1973, I think my brother went over – and he went back again a while back, about, I forget how many years ago, maybe eight years ago, and they treated him like royalty when they found out who he was because his father had given them all this property. And some Lebanese people locally told us afterwards at the time, they said, "What'd you do, Harold?" and he said

> "Oh, it was no good to us". He said, "The others were all well-to-do but this side of the family were in need, so we gave it all to them". "It was worth X" and dad says, "Who cares?" he said "It's over there; it wasn't of any interest to us. (John Sarroff, personal communication, 12 June 2010)

What this story illustrates is that the attachment to country of origin had become far less relevant than attachment to the country of migration. As far as John was concerned, his father had limited attachment to Lebanon because he had already built his life in Albury. John's mother was more concerned about the families in Lebanon and those relatives who migrated to North America, but his father had no connection with his family and did not even correspond with Lebanon (John Sarroff, personal communication, 12 June 2010).

Another interviewee, Gordon Jabour, born in South Grafton, NSW on 20 December 1923, also had no interest in visiting or corresponding with relatives in Lebanon. Gordon was principally interested in what was happening around him, 'after all it is the place where one is living now'. His closest friends were 'Australians' and, as Gordon put it, 'I couldn't give a bugger what's in Lebanon or Syria' (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). Another such example of a Lebanese descendant who felt little connection with Lebanon was Dr Morven Dan who had been unaware that he had inherited land and olive groves in a town called Daraya, Lebanon. Although he had travelled to Lebanon for a holiday after he discovered that he had inherited this land and olive groves, he eventually gave the property away:

> Stanton Mellick had already died, and he owned part of a vineyard in Lebanon and according to Lebanese law at that time that part automatically went over to his wife and in her will she left me everything there. And unexpectedly some Lebanese came out to me and said that I owned some part of olive trees in Lebanon and they said they'd like to buy it from me. It was news to me (laughs) and I said "You take it as far as I'm concerned" and they eventually got the papers together and I signed it and I didn't know that I actually owned some ……. (laughs). (Morven Dan, personal communication, 27 February 2010)

While these interviewees were of Lebanese descent, they did not feel any connection to the country of their parents' birth, or even the land their relatives had cultivated. They had become so assimilated into Australian society that their family properties and relatives in Lebanon were of little concern to them. These are examples of descendants the early Lebanese whose parents had built their future in Australia, starting with hawking, followed by involvement in their

communities through local businesses, the finally settling permanently in their adopted town. These gestures were the symbolic equivalent of cycling away from their Lebanese families, like Neville Khalil McGuire did from Goulburn.

Another example of this symbolic gesture of assimilation is Michael Deeb who was born in the NSW country town of Narromine on 2 May 1927. His parents Elias and Elmaza had migrated from Lebanon in 1923 from the towns of Beshmezzine and Fahlorta respectively. Elias and Elmaza initially settled in the NSW country town of Wellington before moving permanently to Narromine in 1926. When asked why his parents had settled in Wellington rather than Sydney, Michael responded:

> Well, mum and dad were very intelligent people. Basically, they came to Wellington because they knew you couldn't buy clothes, ready-made clothes in many rural towns at the time and mum could sew well and she could do anything, really. Mum could cook, sew or do this, anything. And they came to Wellington and she'd make the clothes with elastic in the bloomers and all this business, underclothes, frocks, and she'd sew sheets by the – she'd buy unbleached sheets, sheeting by the ton and make them up into sheets and pillowcases and dad pack the ports and put them in – they had a little old tourer and he'd take off for a week out here to Narromine or Dubbo and of course in Narromine there was only about six or seven hundred people but Dubbo was about a couple of thousand. He would hawk from one town to the next in this tourer with curtains on its side windows and full of suitcases, selling mum's hand-made linen and clothing. ((Michael Deeb, personal communication, 9 November 2010 and 23 May 2015)

Elias and Elmaza later rented a shop in Narromine, which they established as a general merchant shop. Elias would continue hawking on and off for a number of years selling the clothing and linen that Elmaza sewed. They settled in Narromine because they saw the commercial opportunities there, even though there were only a few Lebanese families who had settled in the town (Michael Deeb, personal communication, 23 May 2015). Although their son Michael had an opportunity to move to Sydney after he married, he preferred to live in his hometown of Narromine (Michael Deeb, personal communication, 9 November 2010). When he had been discharged from the Army in 1947, he returned to Narromine and lived in the two-story house his mother had built from the earnings of the rented shop. Elmaza had bought a building from a Chinese family and also built the two-story home and business on the surrounding land. It was built on Dandaloo Street, between 1954 and 1955 and named 'Elmaza House'. The two-

level building was used as residence and business, with the top level being the residence and the bottom level rented for the Narromine business communities. In 2015, Michael at the age of 88 sold the building after 61 years being in the family (Michael Deeb, personal communication, 23 May 2015).

For Michael and his parents, Narromine had become their home and their community. Michael never had a desire to visit the country of his parents' birth, and when asked why, he stated: 'I became Australian and stayed Australian' (Michael Deeb, personal communication, 9 November 2010). With the names of the two brothers, who served in World War 2, engraved on the Narramine 'Wall of Remembrance' and Mrs Almaza Deeb naming the building 'Elmaza House', the family is another example of how members of the Lebanese diaspora established strong and permanent roots in new communities where they worked and gained the respect of the wider community. The markers of assimilation, symbolised in brick and stone, had become more important than the relatives, as well as the fields and olive groves, left in Lebanon.

Brick and Mortar in Albury - A case study of a Lebanese settlement in rural Australia

A similar process evolved among many early Lebanese settlers who settled in the town of Albury in southern New South Wales. Albury is a useful case study, as it was distinguished by a significant settlement of Lebanese migrants from the late-nineteenth century onwards, and they 'played a significant role in Albury's business life for a century' (Jones 1998:145). This provides an opportunity to observe the ties such migrants developed within the town.

The extension of the Great Southern Railway connected Sydney and Albury in 1880 and when the Albury Railway Station was completed in 1881 this 'gave Albury an economic boost and attracted people, including many early Lebanese small business entrepreneurs' who were in search of opportunities to establish drapery, manchester, and clothing businesses in the town (ALHS 2006:45).

The early Lebanese who settled in Albury after 1880 worked as hawkers in the Victorian countryside before venturing into the Riverina districts of NSW (ALHS 2006:45) and many worked as a traders in the clothing field, supplied by Lebanese friends in Melbourne (Jones 1998: 146). Among the first Lebanese migrants to settle in Albury in the mid-1890s were Messrs Sarroff, B Abicare and S M Abikhair who 'became wholesalers or manufactures who supplied hawkers including Lebanese, Indian and Chinese' (Jones 1998: 146). They were followed in turn by the

Elias family, A M Abikhair, Salamy family, Mary Haddad, Galleti, David and Nadar families. Later arrivals to the Albury-Wodonga area were the Bounaders, the Corbans, Farrah, Assad, Azzi, Maloufs, Nash, Dihood, Batrouney, Mellick and Dobley families (Perkins 2001:24-25). Also arriving during early-to mid-1900s were the Wessen, Beca, Bacash, Nasser, Sedawie, McConnell, Mannering, Jabour and Metry families (Jones 1998: 146).

Sid (Saad) Milham Abikhair was born on the 15 January 1878 in the Lebanese village of Choueir. He arrived in Australia on the ship *Kaiser Wilhelm II* at the port of Melbourne, when he was just 14 years old on 19 April 1892 (NAA B6531:1939-1945/Abikhair Sid). Around 1895, Sid moved to Albury and there is evidence to show that Sid and his brother Nicholas were hawking from town to town and to large farms or stations around the Eastern Riverina, Southern NSW, such as the Mahonga Station in the Rand district (*Wodonga and Towong Sentinel* 1909:3), around Wagga Wagga and in the town of Tarcutta (*Daily Advertiser*: 1914; 2). They renewed their hawking licenses every year at the Albury Police Court (*Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* 1915, 1916, 1917: 32, 43, 31). By 1910, Nicholas had established a store in Townsend St, Albury with his brothers, selling everything from clothing, hardware and jewellery to groceries (*The Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times*; 1910:4), even though he continued to hawk for many years as well as run the family business. As late as June 1938, Sid attended the Court of Petty Sessions to be granted a hawking license (*Wodonga and Towong Sentinel* 1938:3). This story reinforces the importance of hawking for the early Lebanese (as illustrated in Chapter 4), and how it provided a vital bridge to the local business establishments that facilitated their assimilation within a community.

Sid also built up a business in Albury in the 1920s that became a purpose-built emporium. The premises were opened in 1928 on the corner of Swift and Olive Streets. The Abikhairs created a one-stop shop with an extensive range of goods, ranging from girdles, work trousers, children's toys, cuff links, saucepans, blankets, skeins of wool, lace gloves, silk stockings, hats, men's bowler hats, stockings, clothing, household supplies, beauty supplies, toiletry supplies, sewing supplies, shoes, hats, and other items of haberdashery (Perkins, 2001:28).

The building still stands and the name *S.M. Abikhair* remains clearly visible over the front doorway. Sid built the family home at the same time as the store a few doors down the street complete with a kookaburra filial and Australian flag. This symbolism adorning the family home building spoke volumes about the family's sense of belonging. The native bird, the Australian flag and the name on the front of his shop down the street, was a demonstration of Sid's feeling of attachment to the Albury community and his determination to build a future in the town.

His cousin Betro Abicare also established a successful business career in Albury. He arrived in Australia from Lebanon in 1891 at the age of 17, with little money and no English, from the town of Choueir, Mount Lebanon (*Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* 1938:46). After his arrival in Australia, Betro spent the first twelve months travelling around Victoria and the south of NSW as a hawker. From Melbourne he drove his wagon and horses as far as Broken Hill and Tumbarumba prior to settling in Albury, where he worked as a general draper (*Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* 1938:46). Like Sid, Betro for a time continued to hawk, but after a few years he restricted his enterprise to retail drapery and supplying goods to Indian and Lebanese hawkers (*Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* 1938:46). In 1903, at the age of 29, Betro married Julia Malouf also of Lebanese descent from Sydney and they had four children.

By 1912 Betro had assigned builders from Melbourne, W. March and Sons, to erect a two-storied premise at the corner of Dean and David Streets, Albury, which he named the 'Australian Buildings'. *The Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times* (1912:4) dedicated a whole page to a story entitled '*Messrs. B. Abikhair and Co's New Premises'.* The article described in detail the architecture and design of the new business premises and residence, noting in particular how 'the exterior of the building is beautifully embellished with cement facings, and set off with an Australian coat of arms, which alone, we are told, has cost £60.' The article also described the frontage of the building:

> High up on the wall of the upper storey, as it circles from one street to the other, have been conspicuously planted the Australian coat of arms, and the name, 'Australian Buildings.' The lettering is in gold, relieved by red - a coloring that is highly effective ... It is worthy of note that the designing of the shop, residences, fittings, etc… was done by Mr. B. Abikhair. He has been his own architect from beginning to end. (*The Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times* 1912:4)

While there is no record of why Betro named his building 'Australian Buildings' or why had an Australian coat of arms erected, it is possible to speculate on the basis of the evidence so far that he wanted to demonstrate to the Albury community the strength of his feelings of belonging to his adopted country and his pride that he was now Australian. It should be noted that he was building at a time when 'federation architecture' was popular, a style that used many local motifs. Yet, despite this, his choice of the local vernacular illustrated his attachment to his new community and his desire to follow contemporary Australian trends. Either way, the design and the symbolism spoke of assimilation.

Albury bucked the trend whereby Lebanese tended to demographically disperse. In Albury, many Lebanese settled and established similar businesses (such as in drapery and manchester). This anomaly can be explained through the fact that at the time Albury and the surrounding areas such as the Manning district had established large and growing populations, lessening concern over competition. More importantly, although there was a large Lebanese community in Albury, this did not deter them from assimilating into Albury's broader community. The stories above illustrate this. Another example involves a number of Syrian residents of Albury in January 1900 who combined together and forwarded to the treasurer of the district hospital 'the handsome sum of £10', accompanied by the following letter:

> Sir,
> We the undersigned natives of Mount Lebanon, better known as Palestine, Syria, have felt that it is our duty to contribute a little help to the Albury Hospital. Mr Abikhair invited a few countrymen to a meeting for that purpose, and the gentlemen who attended have given the amounts here with and have all expressed a hearty desire to assist in the future: - B and S Abikhair £5 10s, A. Abikhair 15s, Anthony Abikhair 15s., A Nicholas 15s., J. Nader 7s 6d., K. Nader 7s 6d.: total £10. **(***The Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* 1900:23)

Despite these proclamations of community engagement, and the desire to contribute to building a local future, the Lebanese could still experience discrimination and cultural hostility, especially during periods of international conflict. For example, on the 11 September 1916, Betro Abikhair (who was naturalised in 1898, and had become a respectable businessman in Albury), attended the electoral revision court at the Albury courthouse on the 11 September 1916 to defend his status as a naturalised subject rather than a person of enemy origin. After Betro argued that 'he was born at Mt Lebanon and was naturalised in 1898', his case was postponed to permit him to procure his papers of naturalisation. However, the court did not wait for Betros to obtain his naturalisation certificate. Once the court established that all the Abikhairs were 'natives of Mt. Lebanon', it was ordered that they be struck off the electoral rolls. They included the Abikhairs (Betro, Shefia and Sid) and Saad, Nassim Sarroff and Julia Sarroff (*The Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times* 1916:2). Unfortunately, we do not know how this decision affected the early settlers or the community. However, Chapter 6 will demonstrate how far these early Lebanese settlers would go to be counted as 'assimilated friends', rather than 'enemy aliens' of Australia.

We do know that Betros' Abikhair's negative experiences during World War 1 failed to discourage his expressions of civic-mindedness in Albury. The *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* (1938:46) noted that his 'passion for his hometown, and business continued when in 1927, he decided to bring in more trade to the eastern end of town, further enterprise was deemed necessary to achieve this'. This was expressed in his decision to construct the Regent Theatre in Dean Street at a cost of £30,000. In addition to the Theatre, Betros also established a service station in the town. Betros' vision was to develop and increase business activity and community interest in this eastern part of the town (*Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* 1938:46). Once again, like their contribution to the hospital fund, many Lebanese desired to be seen as engaged in building the future of their adopted town.

Carl Farrah was another early Lebanese settler who found his way to Albury. He migrated with his father from the town Shweir, Mt Lebanon, landing in Fremantle, before disembarking at Melbourne in February 1927 aboard the *Oranto*, before settling in Albury (NAA: A446, 1961/3997). By the time Carl applied for naturalisation on 5 August 1932, he had been living in Albury for five years and had established a drapery business on 471 Dean Street selling leading ladies fashion. 'Farrah's Building 1930' still remains engraved above his original building where he conducted his business. On his *Report on Application for Naturalization,* Carl stated his reason for applying for naturalisation as 'Desirous of staying in Australia and becoming a British subject'. The clerk who conducted the naturalisation interview recorded: 'Applicant states he has no intention of leaving the Commonwealth in the near future' (NAA: A446, 1961/3997).

Carl remained in Albury during the momentous events of the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War 2. In 1941 he gave an interview to the *Albury Banner, Wodonga Express and Riverina Stock Journal* (1941:80) also picked up by the *Daily Advertiser* in Wagga Wagga, 1941:3). The *Albury Banner* titled the article 'Syrians Strongly Pro-British', while the *Daily Advertiser* proclaimed, 'Syrians are Pro-British'. Such a headline would not have been necessary if there was no doubt among the population, and the headline implied that there remained people who were suspicious of the Syrians' allegiance. Carl was clearly a model citizen who could alleviate any such fears. The article describes him as 'a well-known Albury businessman' and he was specifically interviewed about his political opinions regarding the political environment of Lebanon during the war. Carl reassured readers that 'the majority of Syrians would welcome British intervention if the Vichy Government made the concessions to the Axis partners'. Carl also demonstrated his patriotism to the Allied cause through his efforts through his role in organising charity dances in Wagga Wagga and Albury. The Wagga Wagga-based-

Daily Advertiser (1940:4) also printed a feature article on these charity dances, emphasising Carl's central involvement while ignoring his ethic origins:

> Mr C. Farrah of Farrah's "Shrine of Fashion", Albury and Wagga has leased the Cocoanut Grove for every Wednesday night for the duration of the war for the purpose of providing the fighting forces with good entertainment and helping the various worthy charitable institutions financially. These dances, which will begin from tomorrow should meet with great approval from dance patrons and the general public. Mr Farrah has similar dances well organised in his hometown Albury and since he started about three months ago about £140 has been cleared for various charities. So real is the demand that these dances have been booked ahead five weeks by various charities who seek the proceeds of the dances to aid their cause. The opening of these weekly dances in Wagga will take place to-morrow under Mr Farrah's personal organising and the proceeds will go to the W.V.S and the Wagga Mayor's Patriotic and War Fund. Mr Farrah will be very glad to hear from any charitable institutions in need of assistance, so that a night may be arranged for their benefit. (Daily Advertiser 1940:4)

The wartime press reported other patriotic gestures by Lebanese residents of Albury. Mrs Abicare (of Olive Street) donated clothes for bombing victims to the Albury Red Cross, (Albury Banner Wodonga Express 1941:4) and also donated scones for the war effort (*Albury Banner Wodonga Express* 1941:15). Many other descendants of these early Lebanese settlers served with Australia's Armed Forces during World War 1 and World War 2, such as Harold and Arthur Sarroff, Jamiel Abikhair, Claude Joseph Abicare and Alexander Abicair. These experiences will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 7.

The early Lebanese settlers made generous donations to the Albury community, took part in broader community organisations, bought real estate in Albury and around the district, erected commercial buildings and leisure facilities and supported and stocked the hawkers who served the region. They advertised their dedication to the town and to their new homeland by naming many buildings after their family or their newfound country and decorated the buildings or their homes with Australian flags, Australian birds or the Australian Coat of Arms. These settlers sought to project their sense of belonging to their new community. They sought to identify with Australian culture and advertised that here they were 'building their home'.

Harry and Kathleen Saad's Story

As the previous section alluded, another means that early Lebanese migrants found to express their gratitude for settlement was through acts of local charity. The story below shows how these actions transcended wartime offerings. Harry and Kathleen Saad, originally from the village of Kfarsghab, Lebanon, arrived in Sydney on the 10 January 1924 on a French steamer, with their two-and-a-half year old son Jamil (James). James recalled how every Sunday during the 1930s Depression he would walk with his mother into town to attend mass. As they walked home, they would always find unemployed or homeless people lining up for food. James explains his mother's reaction (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010):

> GK: Did you try and make an effort to assimilate?
>
> JS: Oh, yes big effort, big effort. My mother, we used to walk into town, we used to go into mass – this is ten mile every week – and we were coming from town. My mother said people were lined up in the street, wanting food. 'Why do they want food?' They said, 'No food'. And she'd go home, two old kerosene tins, we had an open fire; she used to cook stew for two weeks. Once a fortnight she'd take it down to the bottom of the mountain where people were lined up for food, till the day, everything, they grew up, and they said 'Only for your mother we'd have died'– these are all Australians, not the foreign, the Australians. (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010)

For James, his mother's kindness in feeding the less fortunate 'Australians' was her way to feel a sense of assimilation into the Australian society - to perform an act of solidarity. She also wanting to demonstrate to her children that they also belonged within Australian society. Those that Kathleen had fed never forgot that kindness and James expressed his pride that his mother had become part of local folklore (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010). This example of mutual assistance influenced her dependants' feeling of assimilation into Australia.

Thus far in this chapter, the evidence has suggested that hawking was only one factor in the early Lebanese assimilation process. This economic integration was augmented and cemented with other social engagements and symbolic demonstrations within the local communities where Lebanese settled.

Early Lebanese settlers and religious denomination

Another important variable implicated in the assimilation process for the early Lebanese settlers was religion. An earlier section described how the Lebanese had been exposed to western religious influences in their country of birth. However, more generally, Simons (2011:6-9) has also explored the importance of religion for the process of assimilation:

> Immigrants find refuge within churches as they seek a sense of belonging. Religion provides a universal system of belief, as well as a safe environment where immigrants can assemble and create social networks that provide mutual support. Further, churches and temples offer opportunities for fellowship and friendship in familiar cultural environments that are not otherwise easy to find. As such, religion becomes an avenue for discovering refuge from the physical and emotional strains, hindrances, and struggles that accompany the complexities of living in a new country. Religious groups and organisations give immigrants access to information and resources needed to adapt to a new place.

During the course of my research, there were many instances where respondents recalled how this institution played a part in the early Lebanese settlers assimilation process.

One example involved David Andary, who was born on 11 December 1924 in the village of Abadia, Lebanon. On the 13 January 1930, he arrived in Australia at the age of five with his mother and sister. David explains how his parents encouraged their assimilation process into South Australia:

> When I came out here at the age of five, I was the only foreign boy in Berri – we went to a place in the Riverland. My father had gone up there – that's where his uncle who was the first one that came here, had a fruit property there. My father had a store, a grocery store, at Berri because he came out three years before us. And at first, I think he had an Australian girl working for him in the shop who was a member of the Church of Christ and I think from about the first or second week I arrived in Australia at the age of five I had to go to Sunday school. I was in the Scouts from about twelve till I – well, till I was about twenty-four, twenty-four because I was in the Scouts and then during the war years, I became acting Scoutmaster. (David Andary, personal communication, 22 February 2010)

Although David was of the Druze religion, he remained ignorant of his Druze heritage until he was thirteen, when his father sat him down on his birthday and said to him, 'I think you're old enough now to know what your heritage is'. His father then explained to David the Druze religion and his Lebanese heritage. David asked his father why he had brought up David in a different religion and culture. David's father's response was: 'Well, we must always go with the majority. You must never be the black sheep but you don't ever want to lose your culture if you can but you must join and affiliate with the majority' (David Andary, personal communication, 22 February 2010). This story is illustrative of how many early Lebanese settlers tended to negotiate the process of assimilation, by drawing closer to Australian institutions such as dominant religious denominations. David's father wanted his son to be accepted into Australian society and therefore enrolled him in Sunday School, as well as the Scouts.

The religious experiences of the Andary family were not unique amongst the first wave of Lebanese immigrants. The great majority of Lebanese who settled in Australia between 1880 and 1920 were Christians (Batrouney 1985:45). Christian Lebanese were divided into Syrian (later Antiochian) Orthodox, Melkite Catholics and Maronite Catholics (Batrouney 1985:45). The remainder of the immigrants consisted other Eastern Christian and Protestant groups, as well as Druze and a small number of Muslims. Batrouney (1985: 46) noted that because their own churches were not yet established in Australia, the Christian Lebanese attended churches of other denominations on festival days to participate in familiar religious rituals such as weddings and baptisms. The Maronites and Melkites tended to attend the Roman Catholic Churches, while the Orthodox attended the churches and Sunday schools of Anglicans, Presbyterians, and other denominations.

Another example of how the early Lebanese settlers adopted host-culture religions is that of Baheege Assef (who was discussed earlier in this chapter). He was from the Lebanese Orthodox religion but attended mass with his family at the local Anglican Church, as there was no Orthodox church in Quirindi or Taree (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010). Baheege's son Richard recollected his religious upbringing while growing up in Quirindi:

> I think the traditions of the Lebanese culture were stronger on my mother's side of the family than on my father's. My father, my father's family seemed to just assimilate very well in the community, in the country and, interestingly, all my father's brothers' children attended Anglican churches and they never went to the trouble of bringing the Orthodox priest to the country to baptise their children or to christen their children whereas we

> were christened Orthodox and that strong connection came from my mother's family. (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010)

The strength of assimilation is not necessarily a result of the characteristics of immigrants alone but is also dependent on the reaction of the host society. According to Gordon (1964:65), it involves a relation of reciprocal interaction. Had Australian churches not accepted the early Lebanese immigrants into their congregations, schools and communities, assimilation would have been far weaker. For the majority of the early Lebanese immigrants, one of the few familiar institutions were religious institutions. Many of my respondents echoed the claim that religious institutions, such as the Anglican Church, the Church of England and the Catholic Church, welcomed the early Lebanese settlers. Through their socialisation among the congregation, they were able to participate more deeply in the local community. Consequently, the early Lebanese and the Anglo-Saxon communities were able to feel more comfortable with one another and absorb themselves into each other's communities. This experience mirrored that of the early Italians in Australia and their associations with the Catholic Church (Furlan and Faggion: 2016).

This process of Lebanese assimilation has been recorded elsewhere among the diaspora. Hitti (1924:120-121), discussing the early Lebanese diaspora in the United States noted: 'The more immigrants enter into the religious life of America, the better and quicker they become Americans.' He provided the following example: 'In the case of the Syrians, those of them identified with American congregations make the best Americans. On asking a young man from Norfolk, Va., as to whether he knew of any Syrians in his town, the reply came after some hesitation that there was a Syrian member of a Baptist Church but that he was never looked upon as a foreigner'. Hitti was suggesting that this migrant felt so assimilated into the Baptist Church that he was viewed as more Baptist than 'foreign'.

In Canada, during the early period of Syrian settlement (1880s and 1890s), the spiritual needs of migrants were met by Eastern (Russian) Orthodox rite, Latin rite, and even Protestant churches and clergymen (Abu-Laban 1980:129). Abu-Laban (1980:130) concluded from his research that '…there was perforce an ecumenical spirit among the early Syrian immigrants … there was a considerable amount of crossing of lines among the Orthodox, Melkites, and Maronites. No less important, however, was the absorption of an undetermined number of Syrian immigrants into Canada's established Protestant and Catholic churches'. Like Hitti's research in the USA, Abu-Laban's findings suggests that religious participation allowed migrants to be

seen as part of a more universal community and this was an important vehicle for their broader assimilation.

Like their counterparts in the US and Canada, the integration of early Australian-Lebanese immigrants into the institutional religions of Australian society was a means to feel more integrated into local culture. For example, the parents of Gordon Colin Jack Jabour (who was discussed earlier), Osma and Rose Jabour, settled in Grafton, New South Wales in 1899, after arriving from Beirut, Lebanon. They worked as storekeepers, selling haberdashery, clothing, groceries, 'anything you could make a quid out of' (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). Their strong assimilatory characteristics into the South Grafton community were facilitated through their association with the local Church of England. Rose taught activities in the Church and the local public schools, which assisted her integration into the local Grafton community (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). This strong Church of England association was passed on to their eleven children, all born in South Grafton.

Another example of the strong religious assimilation practices of the early Lebanese settlers involved a Maronite priest, Father Budaweel, who came to Australia from Lebanon. However, he was unable to establish a strong following amongst the Lebanese Catholic community and eventually returned to Lebanon in 1927. From the findings thus far in this chapter, we can speculate that one reason for this failure was that many Maronite and Melkite children were raised in the Catholic Church and attended Catholic schools (Batrouney 1985:48). Thus, the non-orthodox Lebanese immigrants had ready access to parts of Australian culture through their adopted religion (Batrouney 1985:48). These local opportunities further discouraged the Lebanese from becoming an 'ethnic group' rather than an 'ethnic category' (see Chapter 2).

Father Budaweel's experience was not unique within the early Lebanese diaspora. The first Lebanese priests to visit Argentina were Father Youhanna Ghosn and Father Michel Hajjar in 1901. They established a Maronite school and church, St Maron, in 1902 (Father Antonio Elfeghali, personal communication, 9 and 13 October 2015). A later Maronite Lebanese monk, Father Ignatius Khachan travelled to Argentina from the town Ebrine, Lebanon on a missionary visit in the early 1950s to establish another Maronite Church in Buenos Aires for the early Lebanese settlers. Upon arrival he found that a large majority of the early Lebanese and their descendants had changed their given names or surnames to Spanish pronunciation and were well established in the Argentinian Catholic churches and community. He also found that the

early Lebanese Maronites were dispersed across different locations throughout Argentina and thus did not congregate in one particular area, which made it difficult for priests to visit them.

Although, there was a Lebanese Maronite Church and school established prior to the arrival of Father Khachan, a large number of the early Lebanese settlers and their dependants had already assimilated into Argentina society. By changing their Arabic names to Spanish names and attending the Argentinian Catholic churches and settling across different towns and regions in Argentina, they had assimilated into different parts of Argentinian society rather than forming Lebanese enclaves. This is consistent with the strong assimilatory behaviour of the early Lebanese settlers throughout the diaspora, as observed earlier in this chapter by Hourani (1968).

The Australian Catholic and Protestant churches played a decisive role in the ethnic and religious life of many Lebanese Christians (Batrouney 1992:424). As noted earlier, the Melkites and Maronites scattered throughout Australia tended to attend the local Catholic Church, while the Orthodox attended either Protestant (usually Anglican) or Catholic Churches (Batrouney 1992:424). For example, on Nicholas John Sisson's application for naturalisation in 1921, under the section 'General Remarks' the clerk stated: 'Questioned as to his religious persuasion's applicant states he is "Orthodox". He and his family attend the Catholic Church at Temora' (NAA: A1, 1921/17080). Sisson's application supports Batrouney's (1992:424) conclusion that 'this involvement in Australian churches rapidly desocialised the ethnicity of the Antiochians, Melkites and Maronites since Latin or English replaced the Arabic language and liturgy'. The early Lebanese settlers and their dependants attended mass in Latin or English and thus this facilitated the social integration and a sense of belonging of migrants within the Australian society – they no longer listened to mass in their native tongue or experienced the various church traditions in the Maronite or Melkites masses.

Support for Batrouney's argument can be found in the case of Richard Assef (discussed earlier). Although his father was Orthodox, Richard recalls his experiences attending an Anglican Church instead of an Orthodox Church while growing up in Qurindi, country NSW, as there was no Orthodox Church in Quirindi or Taree ((Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010).

> To the generation like myself where I don't speak Arabic, going to the Orthodox church was magnificent in its splendour and the beautiful cathedrals but I couldn't understand a word that was said, so in terms of spirituality I was lost. So obviously I would get more

> out of attending an Anglican service than I did an Orthodox but, you know, I did understand the foundations and a lot about the Orthodox Church but in terms of spirituality probably not much. (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010)

A strong sense of religious assimilation was also experienced by Lionel Edward Frederick Sarroff, who was born on 9 November 1904 in Newcastle, NSW, and whose grandfather Charles Sarroff had migrated to Australia from the town of Kusba in Lebanon. Charles Sarroff (who anglised his given name from Khalill), a brother, their father and uncle had travelled around the world. They were intending to travel to Sydney but as they were very seasick, they decided to rest in Melbourne (John Sarroff, personal communication, 12 June 2010). On their overland journey from Melbourne to Sydney during 1901 they reached Albury and decided to settle there as they liked the town.

Upon settling in Albury, they worked as hawkers around the district. When Charles had saved enough money, he opened a drapery and fine craftwork shop that sold items for stitching, crochet and such like (John Sarroff, personal communication, 12 June 2010). Charles married Julia (also from Kusba and who had migrated to Australia as a young girl). Charles and Julia had two sons who were born in Albury, Harold who was born in 1906 and Arthur who was born in 1912. The Sarroff family was of the Orthodox religion. However, as there was no Orthodox church in Albury or surrounding towns, the early Lebanese there attended either the local Catholic or Anglican Church (John Sarroff, personal communication, 12 June 2010). Most of the Sarroff family became Anglican, although other family members who moved to Maitland became Roman Catholic. There was no family prescription on the church of choice. When Arthur moved and settled in Cessnock with his sons, Lionel became a well-known Anglican priest. A number of church libraries held parts of his extensive library collection after he died (John Sarroff, personal communication, 12 June 2010). In 1923 Lionel's entry into the Ministry of the Church of England was mentioned in *The Maitland Weekly Mercury* (1923:4):

> Mr Lionel Sarroff, eldest son of Mr Arthur Sarroff, one of the pioneer business men of Cessnock, has entered upon the 'duties', which are preparatory to joining the Ministry of the Church of England. Prior to proceeding to work in Dubbo, *(*at the *Bush Brotherhood* – a body connected with the Anglican Church for country work, he was entertained by members of the local branch of the *Independent Order of Oddfellows*, and made the recipient of a collar, having attained the office of past noble grand. Very complimentary references were made concerning the guest who had always taken a prominent and genuine interest in most of the movements destined for the benefit of the

> town. He took a keen interest in athletics and amateur sport. His many friends will wish this popular young townsman all success in the work he is undertaking. (*The Maitland Weekly Mercury 1923:4)*

Five years later, *The Cessnock Eagle and South Maitland Recorder* (1928:7), mentioned that Lionel was moving to England 'to study amongst his seminaries of the Old Country'. The article also described Lionel Sarroff as the 'son of Mr A Sarroff, a well-known pioneer of Cessnock', rather than someone of Lebanese heritage.

The two newspaper articles above illustrate how fully the Sarroff family had assimilated into the Cessnock community. Lionel later joined the Australian Military Forces on 3 June 1943 as a Chaplin. His father Arthur also served in World War 2 and their experiences will be touched on in Chapter 6.

The Sarroff's assimilation into the Albury (and later Coalfields) communities occurred not only through religion, but also through business and their social interaction within the local communities. For example, Charles Sarroff was known endearingly as "Dad" Sarroff around Albury (The *Corowa Chronicle* 1926:3), while his son Arthur was known as "Uncle Arthur" to the people of Coalfields (The *Cessnock Eagle and South Maitland Recorder* 1952:3). These descriptors emphasise how the Sarroff's had become part of a larger 'family'.

A further example of religious assimilation among the early Lebanese involved The Rev. Beshara Abotomey, who influenced the assimilation of many early Lebanese into the non-mainstream religions of Adelaide. He migrated to South Australia in 1897 from Shweir, Lebanon as a Presbyterian Minister. Beshara and his brother Amin had attended Shweir's American Presbyterian school (John Abotomey, personal communication, 21 February 2010). In 1898, Beshara joined the Adelaide City Mission (ACM), a non-sectarian organisation formed in 1867 after various city evangelical churches met at the Flinders Street Presbyterian Church to form a mission with a focus on serving the material needs of the underprivileged (South Australia State Library 2015).

The ACM ministered to minority ethnic groups such as the Chinese, Syrian and Indigenous communities and, according to Petersen (2002:60), was very 'multicultural and harmonious'. In 1898 the mission employed George Gee Wah to work with the Chinese population and Beshara Abotomey to work with the local 'Syrian' (largely Lebanese) community **(**sa.gov.au, 2015). Beshara worked mostly with the Maronite and Melkite population that were employed

as 'fancy-dealers', or hawkers from Lebanon, including some Syrians of the Druze religion. Rev. Abotomey would visit Lebanese homes and conduct services at the ACM in Arabic (Petersen 2002:60). This is another example of how religious communities of the host country helped meet the material and spiritual needs of non-Anglo migrants, using faith as a means to reach across cultural barriers. It is also another example of how the Western and U.S. influences in Lebanon (as discussed earlier in the chapter) reached across the world.

In summary, the first-hand stories from Australia, as well as research from United States, Argentina and Canada, reinforce the argument that religion played an important role for the early Lebanese immigrants' assimilation into their host society. These stories mirror Abdelhady's (2011:91) findings, in which she observed that the early American Lebanese tended to attend non-Lebanese church services, rather than Lebanese churches, understanding that this would be interpreted by the host culture as an indication of their will to assimilate. This will to assimilate extended to attending Latin Mass and English-spoken church services, even when they did not understand or were not proficient in these languages. Despite this disadvantage, these Lebanese migrants had an acute sense of local community norms and practices.

The stories in this section show how the early Lebanese in Australia played a pivotal role in encouraging the assimilation of their children into the Australian Catholicism, Anglicanism and Presbyterian religions where they experienced Latin and English services. This religious experience was influential in their dependant's assimilation into Australian society, and it also helped parents integrate into local communities, helping to minimise their outward and spiritual appearance of otherness.

What's in a name?

The spread of Western influence in Lebanon from the nineteenth century onwards not only brought Western education, politics, and religion, but also played a more personal role in influencing the names chosen for children. For example, from this period onwards, many Lebanese within Lebanon and throughout the diaspora were given European names, such as Janette, Frederic, Antonio, Pierre, Victor, Michel, Cecile, Simone, Rita, Marie, and Lucy to name a few. Many common Arabic names were also easily transferable to Western names such as Youseff (Joseph), Butros (Peter), Tanios (Anthony or Antoine), Warde (Rose) and Hanna (John) to name a few. As a result, for many early Lebanese who settled in Australia or another non-Middle Eastern country, having a Western sounding name was a means to ease the process of cultural assimilation.

A majority of the Lebanese migrants before World War 2 in Australia changed their first names, or else the parents ceased giving their children Lebanese names, instead choosing English or 'Australian' Christian names, or names from Australian landmarks, streets or places. For instance, Richmond Dan Koorey, who was born in 1913 in Queanbeyan NSW and served with Australia's Armed Forces in World War 2, was named after the Richmond River, the principal river of the North Coast district of New South Wales (Albert Koorey, personal communication, 10 May 2008). His descendants do not know why he was named after the far-away Richmond River. Other names given to those I interviewed included Gordon Jack Colin Jabour; William Norman Bookallil; Walter Abotomey; Sydney Charles Kardachi; Doris Imelda Karam and Frederick Hackel Abikhair, all born in Australia to Lebanese parents. Had it not been for their Arabic sounding surnames, one would not have been able to identify them with Lebanese descent. Giving their children familiar 'Australian' first names helped forge a link with their new homeland and symbolised their sense of belonging.

Importantly, it was also a means of trying to avoid the racism prevalent at the time, which was more acute in the country towns where many of the early Lebanese settlers lived. For instance, Joseph Malouf arrived in Australia in 1886 from the town of Zahle, Lebanon. He owned oyster leases on the Manning River of New South Wales and would travel between Sydney and Melbourne to sell his oysters by the bag to fish shops. Later he established a business and settled in Albury, New South Wales. He changed his surname to Manning (after the Manning River) prior to World War 2. His nephew Kenneth Malouf provides an explanation as to why his uncle had changed his name:

> GK: Why do you think he changed his name to Manning?
> KM: Well, he wanted my father to change his name too (laughs) at the same time. Evidently in those days, you know, being a migrant wasn't like it is today … the fact is a lot of derogatory names were used about the migrants, i.e., dagos, wogs and they were in business, so he changed his name. (Kenneth Malouf, personal communication, 22 November 2010)

Many early Lebanese settlers who had been in Australia for many years prior to taking up naturalisation changed their given or surnames before applying for naturalisation. For example, the 17 November 1902 *Certificate of Naturalisation* for Hanna Elias stated that he was 'commonly known as John Elias McGuire of Gundagai'. Hanna had arrived in Australia in 1890, and at the time of his naturalisation worked as a storekeeper (NSWSA). In another case, the 16 July 1897 *Certificate of Naturalisation* for John Stephen Yazbeck stated that he was 'known

as John Canon of 195 Elizabeth Street Redfern'. John was a storekeeper at the time of his naturalisation and had arrived in Australia in 1888 (NSWSA).

As late as the 1940s, it was still common for Lebanese to change their names prior to naturalisation. For example, Jamil Selim Said, a warehouse assistant in Adelaide, was known as James Said on his 1940 naturalisation record (NAA A714/13/6161); Fareed Baisseri, a radio mechanic living at *The Entrance*, NSW was known as Fred Bicerey on his 1941 application (NAA A714/13/6263); Donmith Sleiman a labourer living in *Taree*, NSW was known as Donald Solomon on his 1942 application (NAA A714/13/6402); and Habib Dabbak, a hawker living in Abermain, NSW was known as Herbert Debeck on his 1942 application (NAA A714/13/6456).

The early Lebanese settlers in the United States of America also anglicised their first and /or last names, or else accepted the anglicisation of their names by American bureaucrats. Naff (1985:263) argues that this practice was not done intentionally to disguise their ethnic identity but to overcome the difficulties of spelling and pronouncing Arabic sounds that were alien to Americans. For a large majority of the interviewees in my Australian research, however, it was not only the given names that were 'anglicised'. Many early Lebanese settlers changed their surnames to English names because it assisted them in their businesses, or helped deflect racist behaviour, or, as will be explored in the next chapter, helped them enter the Australian Defence Forces.

The former Premier of Victoria, The Hon Steve Bracks' great-grandparents on his paternal and maternal side first migrated to Australia from Lebanon in the early 1890s. They provide another case of early migrants who anglised their name (Steve Bracks, personal communication, 27 August 2013). Upon arriving in Australia, his maternal side settled in the Victorian country town of Ballarat. They had migrated from the town of Bkfaya, north of Beirut. His father's family had migrated from the town Zahle, situated within the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon (Steve Bracks, personal communication, 27 August 2013). They settled in Sydney for a short while before moving in the early 1900s to the small NSW country town of Nimmitabel. Bracks' grandfather on his maternal side changed his surname from Debos to Davis. When asked as to why his maternal grandfather changed his name to Davis, Bracks responded:

> What has been passed down to me is that it was to assimilate more quickly and readily into Australian life. They migrated to a provincial town in Victoria and Ballarat and Ballarat's an old gold mining town. In the 1890s it was just the aftermath of the gold boom and so there was people from all over the world there, really, but predominantly

> Anglo-Saxon/Celtic, a big Irish contingent, a large British contingent but they did have migrants from other parts of the world because of the gold rush. And I think all migrants found the same thing, that if you could assimilate quickly and readily, well then life was much easier and changing the name to a common Australian name, Davis, was one of the ways they did it. (Steve Bracks, personal communication, 27 August 2013)

Other examples of name changing include that of Elias Doumany who arrived in Australia in 1886, also from Bracks' paternal grandfather's town of Zahle, Lebanon. Elias changed his name to George Dan upon arrival to Australia as he found the anglicised name easier for business and helpful for assimilation into Australian society (Morven Dan, personal communication, 27 February 2010). After hawking for many years, Elias established a large factory in Elizabeth Street, Redfern manufacturing pyjamas and men's shirts. He named the factory 'George Dan'. Later, his son Dr Morven Alexander Dan was named after the house he was born in at St Leonards, North Sydney – Morven.

In conclusion, the process of anglicising ethnic names was a common part of the larger migration experiences followed by the early Lebanese settlers and their dependants. It was a symbol of assimilation. Penick (2019:19) has explored the ramifications of emigrants changing their names in US society: 'The anglicizing of an ethnic surname is a very significant way to demonstrate a commitment to American identity'. Although Penick was referring to the US experience, my findings support her statement and suggest that it has a broader application. The examples above provide further primary evidence of the extent to which the early Lebanese went to demonstrate their assimilation into the host society. They often altered their given names as well as their surnames, and they often chose 'non-ethnic' names for their children or changed their names upon arrival to avoid discrimination and help them feel a stronger sense of belonging to the host society. Adults would also change their names to assist with their business ventures. These actions were an important part of the process the early Lebanese settlers and their dependants underwent to assimilate into Australian society.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 explored how the activity of hawking acted as a foundation to economically integrate early Lebanese migrants into local Australian cultures. However, at the same time, fears of otherness and fears of economic competition meant that they were also the target of racial discrimination and prejudice. This chapter has explored means through which the Lebanese

settlers sought to reinforce their assimilation and demonstrate their sense of belonging to their new country and make themselves more 'familiar'.

These acts and behaviours included attempts to take root within local towns by building businesses using the proceeds of their hawking days; donating generously to efforts to build the future of their town; demonstrating a concern for those in need, thereby establishing a universal bond of compassion; attending the churches of the host society, thereby committing themselves to a. more universal community; and removing other signs of otherness by adopting Anglo-Celtic names. The experiences and first-hand stories described in this chapter have illustrated the strong desire many early Lebanese to Australia possessed to successfully assimilate into the host society.

The narratives presented in this chapter suggests that, like Thornton's (1968) assessment of early New Zealand Lebanese migrants and like Abdelhady's, Haddad's and Naff's depiction of United States' Lebanese migrants, those who landed in Australia can be considered to be a 'success story' in assimilation. This chapter has documented a range of means such migrants employed to assimilate into unfamiliar communities, and the attributes they brought to such encounters. Yet, Thornton's, Naff's, Abdelhady's and Haddad's depiction of 'success' is tempered with echoes in the narratives that these journeys were undertaken in the face of state-imposed restrictions and discrimination from state authorities, and policies that attempted to exclude Lebanese from the process of nation-building. Such restrictions emerged in the form of employment practices and naturalisation barriers. In addition, many of the stories involved racist encounters in everyday life.

In order to understand how the early Lebanese responded to these circumstances, it is useful to synthesise the narratives of success with the more critical assessment provided by Farry (2005) and Gualtieri that acknowledges the constraints and obstacles imposed on non-Anglo migrants during the period of the White Australia Policy. The family-history narratives presented by respondents in Chapters 4 and 5 include accounts of such exclusion and rejection *as part of* the overall story of success. In other words, a more nuanced approach to the process of assimilation needs to extend beyond the socio-economic circumstances of the early Lebanese migrants and take into consideration some of the more institutional and official practices that these migrants faced. As Khater pointed out in Chapter 2, such circumstances underpin migration experiences, in particular through the ways in which the migrants themselves respond to offical, institutional and political stances towards them.

In order to explore this field, the following chapter examines the role of war in the early-Lebanese process of integration. In this arena, they would experience other forms of discrimination that questioned their belonging and their loyalty, while also offering them an opportunity to make the ultimate sacrifice of fighting for Australia. This episode will reveal that Lebanese settlement was not a simple story of 'absorption' through socio-economic synergies and the acceptance of host practices by the Lebanese. These important processes have been explored in Chapters 4 and 5. Yet, this process of assimilation also entailed negotiation between settlers and the state, where similarities and differences between the Lebanese and the 'ideal' Australian were contested. This is the focus of Chapter 6.

6. Defence of Australia

Why did you join the Australia's defence force?
" …because the Australian soldier fighting in Lebanon to keep it free, so I will fight for Australia to keep it free (sic)." (George Shalhoub, 2010, pers. comm.)

As shown in Chapter Four, many of the early Lebanese settlers entrepreneurial hawking was a means that assisted their initial assimilation into Australia. Their hawking took them across the land, from the remote outback to cities, and from rural to mining towns. Being traders, they tended not to distinguish between customers, nor limit their assimilation to just one cultural group. They were prepared to trade across social boundaries. Furthermore, as shown in Chapter Five, these early Lebanese settlers and their dependants symbolised their assimilation into Australian society through a variety of cultural practices, such as anglicising their given and/or surnames and changing their religious affiliation to Anglo-Saxon congregations.

This chapter asks whether the Australian Armed Forces presented migrants and their children with an opportunity to promote themselves further as Australians or, for those who did not enlist, to demonstrate their patriotic fervour. In order to answer this question, I rely on the memories, personal narratives and first-hand accounts of Australian servicemen and women of Lebanese heritage who served in World War 2, as well as the children, siblings and relatives of the veterans who fought in World War 1 and World War 2. Primary sources from international and Australian archival sources have also been utilised, including Australian newspaper articles.

This chapter will also explore the various social and political obstacles the early Lebanese encountered when enlisting, and how they responded to these obstacles. This tests the commitment respondents made to the act of assimilation. In this manner, the chapter further contributes to another of the principal research questions of this thesis, namely, to what extent did the involvement and experiences of the Lebanese in the Australian Defence Forces contribute to their assimilation into Australian society, including that of their dependants? In addition, this chapter will also contribute to an understanding of whether Australia's immigration policies supported or hindered the ability of early Lebanese to enlist in the Australian Defence Forces.

The Lebanese Diaspora and the Armed Forces

As shown throughout the previous chapters, Lebanese diasporas across the world had a common theme; it often included hawking and establishing profitable businesses. However, the contribution of the various armed forces of host countries in which these migrants settled is yet to be fully documented. Yet, as noted in Chapter 2, it is possible to find evidence of their participation in various armed forces in incidental comments in histories of early Lebanese settlement and migration, or through undertaking a random search of names in various national or international archives and war memorials.

As we read in Chapter 2, Naff (1985: 290) had concluded that the extensive involvement in the war service in the USA by the first wave of Lebanese immigrants and their descendants provided an exemplary demonstration of the strong assimilative qualities of the Lebanese immigrants. Such evidence from the USA leads to questions about whether the Armed Forces in Australia provided similar 'naturalising forces'.

In New Zealand, McDonald (2004:88-89) documented Lebanese-New Zealanders from Otago/Southland communities who served during World War 1 in New Zealand's Defence Forces. For example, Sam Saleem Abdo, who was born in 1895 in Boskonta, Syria, joined the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces on 15 April 1918. Prior to his enrolment he worked as a miner (ANZ: 18805, R21897318). Neavie Isaacs Coory, was born on 19 September 1895 in Dunedin New Zealand and worked as a hawker prior to enlisting on 6 September 1917 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His father, Tobias Isaacs Coory, had migrated to New Zealand from Mount Lebanon in 1894 and also worked as a 'traveller' (hawker) (ANZ: 9068, R22059216). Neavie's parents (mother: Hala Isaacs Coory) were naturalised in Dunedin in 1902 (ANZ:18805, R21897318). After assimilating into New Zealand society, they joined the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces and fought for their newly-adopted country. The backgrounds of these early Lebanese settlers to Otago/Southland, New Zealand are similar to the Australian settlement experiences described in the previous two chapters.

Evidence from the United Kingdom National Archives shows that the British Lebanese also served in World War 1. Isaac Mansour worked as an interpreter with the Corps Regiment and was awarded a service medal (NAUK; 372/13/109706). Also, Second-Lieutenant Gabriel George Anthony Coury, who was born in Liverpool in 1896, the son of Lebanese immigrant parents who came to England in the early 1890s. His mother, Marie Dagher, was a French-speaking Maronite Christian, born in Lebanon in 1871, the daughter of a successful silk trader. His father, Raphael, was born in 1860 in Alexandria, Egypt where the Coury family of Coptic

Christians made a livelihood in the cotton trade. Raphael travelled extensively throughout the Ottoman Empire, successfully trading in cotton and silk before he migrated to Liverpool, England in 1893 (Murphy 2008:133). Gabriel Coury enlisted at the age of 18 in the 6th Battalion, 'eager to do his duty and serve his country' (Murphy, 2008: 134 and NAUK, AIR/76/108)). Four months after enlisting he joined the 1/4th Pioneer Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment. Gabriel was awarded a Victorian Cross for gallantry after rescuing a wounded man under fire while repelling a German attack. At the age of 43, Coury was still fit enough to make an active contribution in the Second World War (Murphy 2008:130-137). His brother, Maurice Nicholas Coury also served in World War 1 with *The Lancashire Fusiliers, 3rd Battalion* (NAUK, WO/372/5). While this British evidence is anecdotal, it is consistent with the evidence of active Lebanese war participation in host-country armed forces in the USA and New Zealand.

These examples raise the question whether the Lebanese diaspora in Australia responded to military appeals in the same way during the first half of the twentieth century. The statistical evidence that contributed to identifying my respondents suggests that significant numbers of Lebanese migrants and descendants did respond to call-ups. Australian-Lebanese had also previously enlisted with Australia's Armed Forces during the Boer War (*The Mail* 1940: 4) Furthermore, it has been estimated that 80 Australians of Lebanese decent enlisted in World War 1 (Batrouney 2019:340) and 600 in World War 2 (Trevor Batrouney personal communication, 12 May 2008).

However, Kenneth Malouf (personal communication, 24 February 2012) recalled that his mother informed him that Lebanese participation in World War 2 exceeded 800 recruits. Mrs Malouf's estimates were based on her extensive involvement and socialisation within the early Lebanese community in Sydney whereby she would regularly visit friends and relatives and attend various church events such as mass, prayers, and functions such as weddings, funerals or charity functions held by early Lebanese settlers. During these events, she would receive news of the various families members had who enlisted. It can be assumed that 800 Lebanese enlistments in the Second World War is a conservative figure. The exact numbers of Australian-Lebanese recruits in Australia's Armed Forces during World War 1 and World War 2 remains unknown, as many early Lebanese settlers anglicised their names (as noted in Chapter 5). Also, there are many surnames which are common in other nationalities, such as Hanna, Jacob and Stephen and the biblical surnames of Moses, Solomon and Abraham. In addition, during enlistment, ethnicity was not necessarily listed on recruitment records (Gary Oakley, personal communication, 10 October 2014).

The participation of Australian-Lebanese in Australia's Armed Forces during World War 1 consisted either of men who were born in Lebanon and had migrated to Australia from the 1880s onwards (NAA: B2455 Various World War 1 files) or else those were born with Lebanese parents and heritage. They were recruited in various country towns or cities across Australia. In terms of their employment prior to enlistment, a enlistment records record dealers, commercial travellers, storekeepers, shop assistances, woodcutters, salesmen, printers, jockeys, manufacturing workers, dental mechanics, horse-drivers, farmers, clerks, electricians, motor mechanics and a large number of labourers (NAA: B2455 World War 1 files).

Yet, many of those who served in World War 1 were the product of parents who were hawkers (as we read in Chapter 4) and some of these hawkers had established thriving businesses in country towns (and some cities prior to their sons enlisting for World War 1. For example, Herbert Mahboub, who was born in Cobar, NSW, enlisted at the age of 21 on the 19 April 1917 (NAA: B2455/Herbert Mahboub). Herbert's mother, Mary J Mahboub was his 'Next of Kin' on his enlistment papers and worked as a hawker around Lithgow in the early 1900s (*Lithgow Mercury* 1911:2). Richard George Saleeba also served in World War 1, and his father, Nicholas Saleeba, also hawked between Melbourne and Ballarat, selling, and buying gold and jewellery from 1890 onwards (Alex Saleeba, personal communication, 26 March 2011).

The composition of the Australian-Lebanese enlistment during World War 2 continued to include men and women who also came from a wide variety of regions of Australia. While many came from cities, the majority came from country towns such as Warwick in Queensland, Albury, Cooma and Grafton in New South Wales and the mining town of Kapanda in South Australia (NAA: B883: B884 Various World War 2 files). They also continued to came from a wide variety of trades, professions and industries, such as coal miners, theologians, steelworkers, business owners, soprano singers, draughtsman, chef, grinder, medical practitioners, nurses, farmers, schoolteachers motor mechanics, legal professions, public servants and travelling salesmen. Some were still students as young as 18 (NAA: B883: B884 Various World War 2 files). Those who enlisted during World War 2 had more tertiary education than those who enlisted in World War 1, suggesting that some of the children of the Lebanese diaspora had availed themselves of educational opportunities (NAA: B883: B884 Various World War 2 files).

Australian-Lebanese recruits also served in many military roles. During World War 1, they could be found in intelligence, or working as gunners, troopers and fitters (NAA: B2455 World War 1 files), while during World War 2, the Australian-Lebanese were stationed in all types of

units, including combat infantry, intelligence, transport, communications, medical units, fighter and bomber squadrons and support units (NAA: B883 and B884 World War 2 files).

In order to understand why Lebanese Australians heeded the call to fight for Australia during these campaigns, it is necessary to search beyond official war records and official statistics. The remainder of this chapter will rely on interviews with veterans and descendants of veterans in order to add intelligibility to their wartime experiences, and in doing so seeks to answer the thesis questions associated with their sense of belonging to the country. In doing so, it returns to issues of contested identity raised in Chapters 4 and 5.

Enlistment and contested identities

Throughout modern history, patriotism has often been considered a motivating force behind the reasons for people enlisting to fight for their country. Yet, as this section will demonstrate, in the case of Lebanese Australians during World War 1, it was precisely their patriotism that was questioned by recruiting officers. In order to appreciate the ambiguous position in which Lebanese Australians were placed, it is necessary to recall the socio-political and cultural milieu in which they found themselves. The economic and cultural forces of assimilation described in Chapters 4 and 5 clashed with Government policies and the status of Lebanese migrants was complicated by the fact that their place of birth was occupied by Australia's wartime enemy, Turkey.

A 1916, *article in The Sydney Morning Herald* (1916:10), entitled *'Recruiting – More Good Figures The Flying Corps*', captured the dilemmas facing Lebanese Australians, or Syrians:

> Mixed with hundreds of applications for military service were a number of Syrians. They, like the Russians, were very keen to join the forces, but there was a hitch. It was explained to them by the enrolling officer that a little uncertainty existed with regard to whether the Commonwealth could accept their service, and the whole question had been submitted to Melbourne. Each man's name and address would, however, be taken, and if headquarters reply favorable (sic) they would be notified and could then come up and join the Australian Imperial Force". (Sydney Morning Herald 1916:10)

This 'hitch' mentioned in the article that many Syrians faced (as well as other non-British subjects from Africa, Polynesia, and Asia), involved two Acts of Parliament - the *Naturalisation Act*

1903 and the *Defence Act 1903.* These two Acts were passed by the Commonwealth Government soon after Federation. They discriminated against non-European residents, restricting their rights and social participation. During the First World War many Lebanese Australians had to justify their status as Australians and demonstrate their loyalty to the country prior to enlisting. Under the *Defence Act 1903*, in order to join Australia's military forces, the applicant had to be a British subject. However, the *Naturalisation Act 1903* denied non-Europeans the right to apply for naturalisation.

The *Defence Act 1903* gave the Commonwealth the power to conscript for the purpose of home defence. The Act also stated that in order to join the Australian military one had to be of European origin or a British subject. However, as Gary Oakley (personal communication, 14 October 2014) noted, 'the *Defence Act 1903* was not strictly enforced' and the troops that landed at Gallipoli contained a broad range of Australian-born and non-British born soldiers. The *Naturalisation Act 1903* also denied non-Europeans the right to apply for naturalisation.

Lebanese immigrants were subjected to further indignity, being classified as 'enemy aliens' due to Ottoman control over Lebanon during the First World War. Many Lebanese applied for citizenship but were unsuccessful until the *Nationality Act* was passed in 1920, which permitted naturalisation to non-British residents living in Australia for five or more years (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 5). This denial of naturalisation significantly affected Lebanese immigrants' formal sense of belonging. For instance, they were not allowed to buy real-estate (Monsour 2010:11-31). More importantly for the purpose of this chapter, they were not allowed to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force during World War 1, because of the naturalisation requirement. In addition, both parents needed to be naturalised prior to enlistment (NAA: A705/231/14/2345 & Gary Oakley, personal communication, 14 October 2014).

However, in June 1917, as the Army needed more recruits, the Australian Government relaxed the policy of enlistment. The Minister for Defence approved the enlistment of 'friendly aliens', with the exception of Italians and Aboriginal natives of Asia, in the Australian Imperial Force without the requirement of naturalisation (NAA: PP14/1; 4/7/440) This opened the door to more Syrian-Lebanese enlistment (and other nationalities, from 'Russia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Montenegro, Servia, America, Switzerland, Holland and Roumania') (NAA: PP14/1; 4/7/440).

This change of policy was published widely in the Australian press, and its consequences for Lebanese Australians were noted. For example, the *Daily Herald* (1917:4) stated that the 'definition of friendly aliens, will be persons belonging to allied or neutral powers other than Aboriginal natives of Asia, excepting Christian Syrians'. Even though the 'Syrians' were now an 'exception' to the exclusionary ruling of 'Aboriginal natives of Asia', the Australian Government still classified them as 'Asian', which conflicted with the self-identification of the Lebanese. The *Western Argus* (1917:28) newspaper of Western Australia also noted the impact of the change of policy on the Lebanese: 'Persons born in an enemy country cannot be enlisted but this will not be interpreted to include Christian Syrians. For instance, Lebanese may be enlisted'. This qualification was highly significant to the Lebanese, as at the time Turkey had ruled Syria and Lebanon.

Prior to the 1917 amendment of the *Defence Act 1903,* many Lebanese immigrants found enlistment difficult. For example, Said Tannus Samaha had not been naturalised when he tried to enlist in the AIF. He was born in Mount Lebanon in 1882. Prior to migrating to Australia, he had lived in the USA for five years and in Egypt for nine years. He arrived in wartime Australia at the port of Fremantle, WA in 1915 (NAA: A1; 1922/6880). A qualified pharmacist, he soon found work in his profession in Perth. Two years after settlement, he sought to enlist in the AIF. On the 24 May 1917, just prior to the amendment of the Defence Act 1903, he wrote a letter to Captain George Burkett, the Secretary of the Western Australian Recruiting Committee, and later Inspector of Recruiting for the Commonwealth, stating his case as to why he should be considered for enlistment (NAA: PP14/1, 4/7/440). It is not known why Said had written his typed letter, as he had provided his qualifications to the recruiting officers prior to the letter being written, but it seems from the content of his letter it was because he wanted to justify his claims for enlistment.

> Sir,
>
> The undersigned respectfully solicits through you, to the Camp Commandant, the following: -
>
> - That this case be taken on its own merits, if the "Lebanese questions" cannot be reconsidered.
> - I maintain that the fact that Lebanon is my country ought not to debar me from enlisting in the A.I.F. because:
>
> (a) My countrymen are fighting in the armies of the allies. Kheiri has a V.C. Dahduh won the "Medaille Militaire" etc.
>
> (b) My race is unquestionably a white one. History, Phrenology and Christianity prove this without a doubt. This has also been proved in British Modern Courts of the South African Government.

(c) This does not conflict with the “White Australia Policy”, at least, with the spirit of the policy.

- That this war is more mine than any Britishers because I am striving for a complete independence for my country and I ought to be given a chance in the complex machinery of the organization of the allies.
- Qualifications have already been given to the recruiting officers.
- A satisfactory answer, negative or affirmative is earnestly requested within reasonable time.

Hoping that this matter will be seriously considered.

I remain, Respectively Yours
S.T. Samaha Phar. S (NAA: PP14/1; 4/7/440).

After the Recruiting Committee received the letter, it was supported by the Hon. Secretary of the Recruiting Committee in Moora, WA, Mr A Hayton. Hayton wrote a letter to Captain Burkett stating: ‘Said was well known in York and had been very anxious ever since the outbreak of the War to enlist in the AIF. He is a respectable, well-educated man, and by profession a Chemist, holding American Diplomas. He is a Lebanese by birth. Kindly give the case your consideration’ (NAA: PP14/1; 4/7/440).

Captain Burkett considered Said’s letter. However, on Said’s naturalisation records, it stated that he was offered enlistment in the AIF but was rejected as medically unfit for active service (NAA: A1; 1922/6880). Rejection of service during World War 1 did not deter Said. During World War 2, on the 20 March 1942, he successfully enlisted with the Swanbourne Volunteer Defence Corps 3 Battalion (NAA B884).

There were other Acts that the early Lebanese needed to negotiate in their effort to fight for Australia during World War 1 apart from the *Naturalisation* and *Defence Acts* of 1903. Indeed, they were forced to prove their loyalty more so than Australian-born soldiers. Under the *War Precautions Act 1914*, Syrians were ‘listed as enemy aliens and certain restrictions had been placed upon them, restrictions which fall somewhat short of those relating to Germans, Austrians, or Turks, but which, it is said, nevertheless, interfere with their freedom and privileges ’ (*The Daily News* 1916:4). Such restrictions listed in the Act included prohibiting aliens from certain places, restrictions from landing or embarking in the Commonwealth; deporting aliens from the Commonwealth; requiring aliens from residing and remaining within certain places and districts; inability to be naturalised; and preventing money or goods being sent out of Australia except under conditions approved by the Minister (War Precautions Act; 1914). The

Western Australian *Daily News* appeared to sympathise with the 'Syrians', noting their acts of patriotism to the war cause:

> The Syrians in Australia are officially listed as enemies. The Syrians in Australia are certainly in an unfortunate position. Many of them have subscribed to the war funds and have sent their sons to the front with the Australian forces. Some days ago, the Syrians of NSW waited upon the Attorney General, and asked that the restrictions upon them be removed. (*The Daily News* 1916:4)

A *Tamworth Daily Observer* (1916:2), under an article entitled 'Syrians Want Vote. Object to Alien Enemy Classification', reported the deputation of Syrian residents from Sydney to the Attorney-General, David Hall: 'Technically they were alien enemies, having been born within the Turkish Empire, but as Christians their sympathies were with Britain and against Turkey. Nevertheless, they had been defranchised in spite of their naturalisation by the Act passed last session'.

On the same day as Western Australian *The Daily News* article, *The Cairns Post* (1916:7) published an article on the same deputation of Syrians. It noted how the Syrians had stated that they had given repeated evidence of their loyalty to Britain, subscribing liberally to the different patriotic funds, while their sons had volunteered in large numbers for the Australian forces.

The Syrians were asking that all restrictions, military and political, should be removed (*Cairns Post* 1916:7). Attorney General David Hall responded that:

> It was unfortunate that the Syrians should be treated as enemy subjects in Turkey and as enemy subjects in British possessions. It was certain that within the few days of the session that remained he would have an opportunity of amending the law to meet the desires of the Syrians. If he could do it, he would include in the Electoral Amending Bill, a clause removing the political disabilities in respect of Christian Syrians, so that they would be able to vote at the next elections. (*Cairns Post* 1916:7)

The Lebanese were demonstrably prepared to act as an 'ethnic group' (McKay 1989) and petition official channels and the highest authorities to state their case that discriminatory barriers to their military and political participation be removed. It is also clear that by 1916 many local papers were sympathetic to their cause.

One factor that facilitated their cause was that, as the war contained, the need for recruits became more critical. By 1916, enlistment officers would often 'look the other way' and simply record Lebanese as "darker Australians"' (Eric Carpenter, personal communication, 2 May 2022). Since ethnic or even cultural background was not recorded on service records, the only trace indicating that a recruit originated from Syria or Lebanon would have been their name, physical appearance or religious denomination. If the latter was recorded simply as Christian (or Church of England or Roman Catholic), particularly if someone had long resided in Australia, then it was more likely that they would be accepted into the Forces (Eric Carpenter, personal communication, 2 May 2022).

While the amendments were made in 1917 to ease the entry of Lebanese Australians into the Armed Forced, many discriminatory Acts hindering the ability of Australian-Lebanese to join the Australian Armed Forces were still present during World War 2, One such case involved Anthony (Leo) Clement, who was born on 12 March 1916 at Mount Gambier, South Australia. He and his brother Vincent Raymond Zed, applied for enlistment in June 1941 with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). They were rejected because their parents (Anthony and Suzanne Zed) had not been naturalised (NAA: A9301/47604), one of the 'hitches' that hindered Lebanese from enlisting during the previous war. On 29 October 1941 a confirming letter was sent to the Recruiting Centre RAAF, North Terrace Adelaide, from Group Captain Tunbridge, Air Force Headquarters Melbourne headed 'Applications for Enlistment–Aliens' advising that 'V.R. and L.C. ZED are not to be accepted for service in the RAAF' (NAA: A9301/47604).

Leo had applied twice to the Royal Australian Air Force and was rejected each time for an unspecified reason (NAA; A9301: 47604). On the 12 November 1941, he wrote a letter to Mr Drakeford, Minister for Air, seeking his assistance to intervene on his behalf (NAA: A9301/47604). Leo's three-page letter has been produced below as an example of his discriminatory enlistment processes as well as Leo's determination to join the war effort:

> Dear Sir,
>
> I would like to bring my case before your notice, and to ask you to intercede on my behalf.
>
> I am an Australian, 25 years of age. Name: Leo Clement Zed. My father was born in Egypt 60 years ago, and my mother was born in Syria, 57 years ago. They migrated to Australia some 50 years ago and have been living here ever since.
>
> In June of this year, I enlisted at the R.A.A.F at the Adelaide Recruiting Depot. I was medically examined the same month and passed the test for Air Crew, without a hitch.

> Enrollment was held up because my father was not naturalized. Father immediately took steps to become naturalized, so that I could be enrolled. I kept in constant touch with officials at the RAAF. Depot, and at the end of October, I was told that everything was fixed up; and I was enrolled and sworn in as a Wireless Mechanic Trainee. I was told that I would be called up about the end of November, so I made arrangements accordingly. However, about a week later, I received a letter from the Adelaide Depot stating that I was taken off the reserve, and to return my badge. I was given no reason and I am sure there can be none.
>
> I have worked and paid my taxes and have contributed nearly £300 my life's savings to the war loan. Surely, I have the right to fight for my Country, in the branch of the Fighting Services, which I prefer? Other chaps of varying nationalities, have been allowed to join the RAAF why shouldn't I be allowed the same privilege? As I have mentioned I have made all arrangements for my departure, all my friends and business associates knowing that I was to leave soon, and I haven't the heart to tell them that I have been taken off the reserve for no reason at all.
>
> My position is very humiliating and disappointing, and I consider that I have been harshly and unjustly treated by the Air Board.
>
> I appeal to you, Sir, to make representation to the Air Board, so that I can be put back on the RAAF reserve. I am anxious to do my bit.
>
> Trusting that you will prosecute this matter immediately,
>
> Yours Sincerely,
>
> Leo C. Zed.

Leo Zed went to great lengths to convince the Minister for Air that he was worthy enough to join Australia's Armed Forces and his letter demonstrates his eagerness to serve his country. Undeterred, after receiving the rejections, Leo helped his father, Anthony Zed, complete all the necessary paperwork to ensure his parents were naturalised. Five months later, on the 22 December 1941, after his applications for enlistment were rejected, his father Anthony Zed was issued with a Certificate of Naturalisation in which he formally renounced his allegiance to the Republic of Syria and pledged his sworn allegiance to His Majesty King George VI his heirs and successors (NAA; A714, 13/6338).

Both brothers 'persistence, helped by their parents' naturalisation, eventually paid dividends, as they were able to enrol with the Defence Forces and both served in the RAAF. Leo's brother Vincent Raymond Zed, worked as a grocer and driver prior to enlisting with the Army on 26 April 1943 and was discharged on 29 July 1946, after serving with the *2/9 Australia Commando*, in New Guinea, Rabaul from 27 December 1944 to 15 May 1946 (NAA:

B883/SX19494). Leo enlisted on 17 February 1942 and was discharged on 29 January 1946, after serving four years as a wireless mechanic, reaching the rank of Sergeant. On the 14 February 1947, Leo was sent a letter by the Department of Air, Melbourne asking whether he would consider further service in his former trade or another trade in view of his exemplary service with the RAAF (NAA; A9301: 47604). Leo's response is not known, but his story reveals the travails that he underwent in an effort to 'exercise his right' to join the RAAF, as well as his preparedness to relinquish his business and life savings to help with the war effort.

Others from the Lebanese diaspora had similar experiences. Neville Samyia also discovered that the requirement of naturalisation hindered his ability to join the Australian Armed Forces. His parents, Frank and Rosa Samyia had left the port of Tripoli in Lebanon with four year old Neville and their two daughters. On 18 January 1928 they arrived in Sydney on the ship *S S. Otranto*. Frank then worked as a hawker before settling in West Kempsey, where he hawked around that locality (NAA: A659/1943/1/3390).

Neville worked as a butcher and also a grinder before enlisting in the Australian Army on 20 February 1942. His son, Allan Samyia recalls his father's motivation for joining:

> He told me that it was the proper thing to do, you know because he was brought up here. Even though he wasn't born here, he was brought up here and he thought it was the proper thing to do, to join the army to help assist the country. (Allan Samyia, personal communication, 2 July 2010)

While serving in the Army on the 24 May 1943, Neville wrote a letter to the Department of the Interior because, as he put it, 'I am in a bother of registration' (NAA: A659/1943/1/3390). He explained that two of his cousins had to report to the nearest police station for photos to be taken as part of the production of their Alien Identity cards. Neville's sergeant advised him that he too came under this rule. Neville accepted the sergeant's advice and reported to the police station, informing them that his parents were naturalised. However, he was advised that as he was over sixteen years of age, he had to obtain naturalisation on his own. Neville's handwritten letter to the Department of the Interior stated that he approached a different police station about his situation and they advised him to contact the Department of Interior. Neville made it clear in the letter that his father was naturalised and as a result, he wanted his status to be corrected:

> So it is a matter I would like to be corrected. I want this Alien Identity card and registration cancelled and be produced with and (sic) British subject identity card if the matter is a mistake. (NAA: A659/1943/1/3390)

It took until well after the war, 21 June 1948, before a letter was sent to Neville confirming that the authorities had made a mistake. His father had been granted naturalisation on 4 January 1936, and as his name was included on his father's certificate, he was deemed to be a naturalised British subject (NAA: A659/1943/1/3390). Despite being in the Defence Forces, it was important to Neville that he was identified as a British subject rather than an alien. Given the difficulties other Lebanese had faced when labelled an 'alien', it was understandable that Neville consumed so much of his war-time effort attempting to clarify that he belonged to the country he was fighting for, rather than its enemy. Although Neville's confirmation as a British subject was not confirmed until 1948, he continued to serve in the Australian Army until he was discharged at the end of the war.

Another example of contested identity during the Second World War involved Thomas Alexander Abourizk. He was born in Carlton, Melbourne on 7 March 1922 to Elias Abourizk, who was born in Beirut, Lebanon and Helena Saleeba who was born in Melbourne to Lebanese parents. Thomas was working as a public servant with the Federal Taxation Department as an income tax assessor and was completing his Bachelor of Commerce degree at Melbourne University with three subjects remaining when he decided to enlist with the Royal Australian Air Force as a Wireless Mechanic in 1942 (NAA A9301:56899). Although his enlistment papers stated that he was a British subject and was 'found suitable in all respects at the centre as a Trainee Wireless Mechanic', his enlistment was delayed because his father was born in Syria and, although he was naturalised in 1921, approval still needed to be sought from the recruiting centre for Thomas to enlist in the RAAF, even though his father had been deceased for nine years (NAA A9301:56899).

To support his application for the RAAF, Thomas wrote a letter on 19 March 1942 to the Air Force Recruiting Centre in Melbourne attaching it to his *Application for Enlistment as an Airman*. Below is an extract from his letter:

> Although a general exemption covers employees of the Taxation Dept. until the 30 June, it is understood that the position is subject to review and that the exemption may actually be withdrawn before June next. However, it is my desire to have my application given consideration when the next vacancies for metrological assistants occur, and to

> undergo medical examination and take all necessary preliminary steps, so that I may commence service at the earliest possible date. (NAA A9301: 56899)

Thomas's application was positively assessed as he was formally enlisted on 4 June 1942, and on 8 June 1942 he attended a five-month course as a Trainee Wireless Mechanic at the Melbourne Technical College to join the RAAF. The course included a theoretical and a practical component. In the theoretical component, Thomas had to provide a written answer from three questions. Two of the three questions asked about defence issues while the third question concerned the White Australia Policy. Thomas chose the third question. In his response he defended the implementation of the White Australia Policy, which he argued was needed because of 'geographical position of this young southern country.' Following earlier Lebanese migrants, Thomas pointedly implied that the White Australia Policy did not affect him or his family, as 'the White Australia Policy can be narrowed down to the yellow-ban', meaning Asian immigration. As far as Thomas was concerned, he and his family were not part of 'the Asian immigration'. He concluded his essay by stating:

> Even though Australia has been held back in world power by this so much discussed policy, it has today without a doubt the finest mode of living in the entire world, which can only be attributed to this policy. (NAA A9301: 56899)

Thomas was clearly eager to demonstrate his support for the Government's immigration policies in his efforts to join the RAAF. He chose the topic on the *White Australia Policy* in order to proclaim his allegiance to the dominance prejudices of the era, emphasising that the policy did not refer to his family circumstances. In other words, Thomas not only identified as Australian, but felt the need to advertise this identification. As reflected in earlier chapters, Thomas' views were consistent with a long-held sentiment among Australian-Lebanese that the Lebanese diaspora was a European phenomenon, and not part of an Asia migration. As a consequence, the Lebanese tended not to see themselves as 'aliens', even if Australian authorities had a history of classifying them in this manner. In this manner, many Lebanese migrants attempted to turn the discriminatory and restrictive immigration policies to their advantage through redefining their identification. The interview board observed that Thomas was: 'Well recommended and is keen conscientious type' (NAA A9301: 56899). He was discharged on 16 October 1945 at the rank of Corporal and returned to work with the Federal Taxation Department (NAA A9301:56899).

However, naturalisation was not the only barrier for Lebanese seeking to join the Australian Army. More direct and personal forms of racial or cultural discrimination could affect their intentions to enrol. James (Jimmy) Saad, introduced in Chapter 5, was initially denied enlistment in the Australian Army during World War 2. The enlistment officer did not enrol James because of his Lebanese background, even though he and his parents were naturalised subjects. He recalls:

> When I went to join up there wasn't conscription. They're volunteers, you volunteer. That's me, I go up and do something where no one's asked me to do it. I went to the enlistment place in Lismore and the fellow there at Lismore had a very racist tint. He says "How old are you?" I says "So and so". "O.K, yeah "Where were you born?" and I says "I was born in Lebanon". "Oh", he says "we don't take them". I says What?" I said, "I come out here when I was two and a half years old!". I said, "Well, I can speak Arabic and everything". Then he turned around and says "We don't take dagos". So if that's the case I went and enlisted in another place called Casino. That was in January 1941. (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010)

James 'account shows that not only was he determined to join the Australian Army, but that he had sufficient confidence that not every recruiter would have a 'racist tint'. At Casino he was successful. The enlistment officer there also asked James where he was born. James responded *Kharsghab* a village in Lebanon. As the recruiting officer could not understand or spell the name of James 'birth village in Lebanon, he then asked James where he was living, to which James responded Bathurst. The recruitment officer then wrote down his birthplace as 'Bathurst', the town where James had lived with his family. When I asked James how he felt having Bathurst stated as his birthplace, James said he felt very upset, as that was not the place he was born (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010). While the Casino recruiting officer failed to understand the pride James felt in his dual identity as both Lebanese and Australian, he also understood the recruitment conditions and chose to circumvent them by altering James 'birthplace, thus helping him enrol. The dual identity of James corresponds with Khater's (2019) depiction of a 'transnational identity' in which James was intent on rejecting any binary form of national identity and believed that his Lebanese and Australian backgrounds were both legitimate grounds for being accepted into the Armed Forces. Although James had to negotiate his status as an Australian and prove his sense of belonging. Eventhough he faced racism in this recruitment process, he overrode this by believing that his dual backgrounds were consistent with his desire to fight for Australia's freedom. He was participating, after all, in a transnational conflict.

For many early Lebanese, like James, the Armed Forces was the crucible for them, a test of their self-identification as Australian, but they did not necessarily want this identification to mask their more complex transnational history.

Racism did not deter James from wanting to volunteer:

> That's right, I wanted to prove a point. I've had to drop nearly half me wages. I mean, you don't jump out of the frying pan into the fire – this is what I did, you see, to jump in, and the reason "Why do you want to go to war?" I say "To help out". They wouldn't take me because "We don't allow dagos". That's what it was; they kept bringing that up all the time. They didn't want you into the army, yet I'm not going for my benefit, I'm going for their benefit! (James Saad, personal communication 22 January 2010)

Even though James was concerned about leaving behind his mother and the rest of his family, he was driven by his desire to show 'that I am Australian just like you' (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010). On 26 June 1941 he joined the *2/1 Australian Infantry Battalion* which left Sydney on the *Queen Elizabeth* and landed in Egypt on 31 of July 1941. He served on the front line five times.

A year later, the *2/1 Australian Infantry Battalion* fought two campaigns in the South-West Pacific. James spent ten days on the Kokoda track, after which he and several other officers were pulled out and taken to Port Moresby where they were flown to Wau to protect the airstrip. In December 1944 he was sent with his Battalion to Aitape-Wewak to prevent the Japanese from invading that section of New Guinea. James was only twenty years old when he was placed in charge of a section of twelve officers (some more senior than himself), a position he retained for the remainder of the war.

Another example of the tensions associated with Lebanese identity involved Alex Ayoub, who joined a long list of family members who participated in the Australian Defence Forces during World War 2 (*Gilgandra Weekly* 1943:2). His paternal uncle, Stanton Ayoub, who worked in his father's (Nayef Ayoub) coach and stables business as a horse driver (Castlereagh 1907:9), had enlisted in the previous war at the age of 19 on 5 June 1915 in the *8th reinforcement of the 1st Light Horse Regiment – 1st Australian Infantry Battalion* (NAA: B2455, Ayoub S) along with six other cousins.

Alex decided to enlist with the Australian Defence Force during World War 2 because he felt 'it was the right thing to do at the time' (Alex Ayoub, personal communication, 24 April 2010). He enlisted under the name of his friend Alec Frederick Andrews, 'who didn't want to join up'. He did not use his real name for the reason that his father did not want him to enlist because he had just lost a close relative, his cousin, Bruce Stanton, in the 2/*33 infantry Battalion* in Port Moresby (Alex Ayoub, personal communication, 24 April 2010). Bruce's mother had changed her son's surname from Ayoub to Stanton after they divorced. Alex did not know why the surname was changed but assumed that it was to assimilate in Sydney, a possibility consistent with the experiences of other Lebanese migrants discussed in Chapter 5 (Alex Ayoub, personal communication, 29 April 2015). *The Gilgandra Weekly* (1943:3) had reported the death of Bruce Stanton as follows under the title 'Coonamble Boy Makes the Supreme Sacrifice':

> Mr Stan Ayoub of Coonamble, received official news last week that his only son, Bruce Stanton Ayoub, had been killed in New Guinea. The late Pte Bruce S. Ayoub was with the forces for two years in the Middle East, was wounded in New Guinea and returned there after spending time in hospital. Deceased was 23 years of age and one of the nine members of the Ayoub families serving in the war. His father, Mr Stan Ayoub served in the 1914-18 war. Very sincere sympathy will be extended to the sorrowing father. (*The Gilgandra Weekly* 1943:3)

The report of the death of Bruce Stanton Ayoub in the local papers and the title of the article clearly demonstrates that this Australians-Lebanese migrant (whose parents had settled in a local country town) was identified as a local Australian boy. No mention was made of the Lebanese heritage, while their father's *military* heritage in the Australian army was mentioned.

Bruce Stanton's story mirrors that of Nicholas George Koorey, one of four brothers and a cousin who all served in World War 2. He was the first Australian to die during the Syrian Campaign, in the now-Lebanese town of Jezzine. Nicholas was 26 years old when he was killed in action on 20 June 1941 while serving with the Australian artillery, *2/5th Field regiment, 7th Division*. *The Daily Advertiser* (1941:2) had previously published a report about the Koorey brothers under their column, '*With the Forces',* noting how four of the Koorey brothers (Albert, Kelvin, Richmond and Nicholas) 'were in business in Queanbeyan at the outbreak of war'. Determined to enlist with the Australian troops, the Koorey brothers immediately disposed of their business and left with the Australian Forces which went to the Middle East. (*The Daily Advertiser* 1941:2).

Six days later, Nicholas was killed in action and the same publication, the *Daily Advertiser* (1941:2), along with many others, reported his death. For instance, The *Cootamundra Herald* (1941:3) mentioned that 'the sad news is received of the death in action of Nicholas Koorey son of Mr George Koorey, of Stanmore, Sydney' and noted that he 'was killed in fighting in Lebanon, which is the birthplace of the Koorey family'. The *Northern Star* in Lismore, NSW (1941:4), also reported the death of Nicholas, while *The Goulburn Evening Post* (1941:4) described that Nicholas was respected in the Queanbeyan and Goulburn communities:

> Bombardier Koorey resided in Goulburn for several years, assisting his father in the conduct of a drapery business … possessed of a bright disposition he made many friends as he also did in Queanbeyan where he had resided for about two years prior to enlistment. While in Goulburn he joined the militia while he was also a very active member of the old Amateur Athletics Club and the Goulburn Amateur Bicycle Club. He rode on the track and road, and for some time was also an official. Later he was one of the keen cycling enthusiasts responsible for popularising amateur cycling in Queanbeyan. (*The Goulburn Evening Post* 1941:4)

In conclusion, many early Lebanese family members faced racism and other forms of discrimination when attempting to enrol. Even though some had changed their surnames to Anglo-sounding names, they still encountered discriminatory government policies and restrictive Acts of the day, as well as the more casual racism of certain recruitment officers. However, the anecdotes reported above reveal how the early Lebanese continued to identify their heritage as 'European' (Batrouney 1992) and identified themselves as Australian Yet, despite the obstacles they faced, many managed to enlist and successfully negotiate these hurdles and participated in Australia's Defence Force. In the family narratives recounted above, many felt that they had to exert extra effort to prove that they were Australian. This determination would not have been present without the prior process of assimilation discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Cultural Background as a Military Asset

Many of veterans interviewed for this research told stories of their time in the Australian Defence Forces that reflected their combined Australian-Lebanese identity. For many, this heritage became an asset during their time in the Defence Forces. Even though, as the previous section showed, this heritage had initially been a hinderance for some when attempting to join the Forces, ironically it was later used to demonstrate their loyalty to Australia.

Edmond Haddad was born in Richmond, Melbourne in 1923. His father Callil Francis Haddad, arrived in Melbourne from the town of Zahle, Lebanon in 1895, on the ship *Ormuz* from the port of Port Said in Egypt. On 12 August 1901, at the age of 25, he was naturalised and was working as a tailor's cutter (NAA A712:1901/07520). As part of his naturalisation process, Callil required written proof of 'his ability to speak English intelligibly'. The Victorian police wrote a character letter to the Chief Secretary's Office confirming his English proficiency, occupation, address, and his character, noting that he 'has always been a very good character since his arrival here, is in fair financial circumstances and is able to speak and read the English language well' (NAA A712: 1901/07520).

His son Edmond could not join the Australian Air Force during World War 2 because he was colour blind, so in 1941 he joined the Australian Army, elevating his age from seventeen to nineteen to conform with age limits. In addition, Edmond's brother Stanley was conscripted during World War 2. Edmond was eager to join because the Germans had taken his sister's husband as a prisoner of war. Furthermore, he recalled that: 'I used to see soldiers about my height and weight on the trains and trams in Melbourne and I would think, I should be there' (Edmond Haddad, personal communication 13 June 2010). This suggests that he felt an identification and empathy with fellow Australians.

Many of the veterans and dependants that I interviewed did not consider that their Lebanese descent or of Mediterranean appearance affected their allegiance to Australia. Edmond Haddad for example, summed up his experience in the Army by saying:

> I think the paramount thing was I didn't recognise that I was of Lebanese descent when I joined the army and during my army career, I was Australian. I didn't think I was a Lebanese, fighting for Australia, I thought I was Australian at the war. (Edmond Haddad, personal communication 13 June 2010)

After the war, Edmond stayed with the Australian Defence Force for a further thirty-three years, reaching the level of Colonel. During his time in the Defence Forces he visited England in 1964 to undertake a course. The course participants included three Australians and one Indian national. Due to security reasons, the Indian participant was not allowed to visit certain places in England. When the Indian national was excluded, he turned to Edmond and said: 'And you're included too. You're an Indian too, aren't you?' (Edmond Haddad, personal communication 13 June 2010). Edmond recalled his response: 'No, I'm not, I'm Australian – bloody Australian!'

(Edmond Haddad, personal communication 13 June 2010). By this stage of his career, Edmond had no difficulty being identified as Australian by authorities, even if other nationalities considered him otherwise

Edmond's sister Norma Therese Mary Haddad also volunteered during World War 2 and joined the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force as a clerk stores assistant on the 12 February 1945. When filling out her 'Airman's Record Sheet', Norma listed 'singer - soprano' under special qualification. Norma was discharged on 9 October 1945, after spending 8 months in the Air Force. On her application for enlistment as an airwoman, in the section 'for official use only', the enlistment officer had written that Norma was a 'very good type and very keen' (NAA A9301:174748). By this stage of the war, it appears that people of Lebanese descent were being encouraged to enlist in the war, regardless of sex. Like the First World War, there was a correspondence between the duration of the war and tolerance of difference.

Following this family tradition, Edmond had three sons who followed his footsteps and joined the Australian Defence Forces. His son Peter Haddad, a General in the Australian Army, was later hailed as an example of 'cultural diversity' within the Defence Forces. This surprised him, because he regarded himself as an Australian and felt fully integrated into Australian society. Peter recalls that a representative of the Army stated: 'We've got a General in the army with a Lebanese background'. Peter's internal reaction was: 'What are you on about?' (Peter Haddad, personal communication, 14 May 2010). This dissonance was a result of Peter's upbringing as 'Australian' and his father's assimilation into Australian society (as we read earlier), an attitude which had been passed down from generation to generation. Although Peter's grandparents on his father's side were of Lebanese descent, he had always felt Australian and was never interested in researching his family history (Peter Haddad, personal communication, 14 May 2010). Like other cases discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, Peter's grandfather, Callil Haddad, was determined from the beginning of his immigration experience that his family would assimilate as Australians. Even though Callil could speak seven languages, he and his wife and family only ever spoke English at home. As Peter reflected: 'He's the one who obviously set the pattern: you know, you were just Australians, end of story' (Peter Haddad, personal communication, 14 May 2010). Peter's dedication to the Australian Armed Forces reflected these earlier intentions of his grandfather, and his own father, paternal aunt, and uncle before him had all previously served in Australia's Defence Forces.

Like Edmond Haddad, Joy Najar (nee Aboud) and four of her siblings did not think that their Lebanese background should be a hindrance when joining the Armed Forces during World

War 2 (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010). Her three brothers and one sister (Louis, Joseph, Alfred and Lila Aboud) all enlisted in the Australian Army. The oldest brother Nicholas also wanted to join, but the Government rejected him because he was employed in the 'essential services' industry. Nicholas worked in his family's factory in Sydney, manufacturing underwear for the army (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010). As noted in previous chapters, tailoring and apparel manufacturing was an industry that many Lebanese migrants moved into after hawking. During wartime it was considered an 'essential service' to the nation.

Joy's response to any gratitude she received for serving Australia has always been one of surprise, because as far as she was concerned there was no need to be thanked for protecting Australia: 'Who are you saying thank you to? You just do what you do, it happens in front of you and you go through it. They're not Lebanese people, they're just all friends that were around. That was the sad part, those who didn't come back' (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010). Joy considered recruits with a Lebanese background as 'just friends' like other non-Lebanese recruits. This again suggested a different level of assimilation than the others who had a 'point to prove'. Individual Australian-Lebanese from the diaspora underwent their war experiences in different ways, depending on their past experiences and encounters.

According to Joy, her enlisted brothers:

> ... felt that they were there and they had to look after their friends, and one another. They have this feeling of they're all soldiers and they've got to take care of one another. Mateship, that's the word. I feel that is a great thing about Australians, that they have a great feeling for one another; we don't sort of discard it. (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010)

When asked why she and her siblings decided to enlist with the Australian Defence Forces, Joy responded with incredulity:

> Australia? Australia is magical to us. Australia was magical to my father. I mean, he was Lebanese, sure, but there was no country – he reckoned this was God's own country. Dad used to tell us how magical everything was here, even though he was a businessman and he loved that and we were brought up with this, that Australia was heaven. Our parents, they were very good, they were very – they brought us up as Australians and I think that they half expected us to do what we did. We're fighting for

> our land, our livelihood and whatever happens. (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010)

Joy's experience with the Defence Forces, on the foundations of her feelings of assimilation into Australian society, differed from some the other stories in the previous section in one important way: Joy was not aware of encountering much racism while growing up in Australia and her parents always spoke highly about Australia and the opportunities it offers. Her parents brought her up 'to fit in, there was no difference, you didn't even think about being different, really, it didn't occur to you' (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010) This strong encouragement by their parents to assimilate and 'fit in', along with the gratitude that their parents felt living in Australia, had such a positive impact on Joy and her siblings that they had no sense of any 'point to prove' when they joined the Defence Forces. They simply joined to 'protect my country'.

One important test of belonging for Lebanese Australian soldiers involved participation in action on the Middle-Eastern front. Yet while many Australian-Lebanese soldiers found themselves in the land of their ancestry, they did not necessarily see themselves in the land of their loyalty. For example, Albert Koorey (2008) did not feel he was 'going home' when he went to Lebanon with the 2/3rd infantry battalion during World War 2. When I asked Albert whether he had visited Lebanon his response was:

> Yes we occupied a whole lot of Lebanon and Syria. The thing about this you know, patriotism you feel it or you don't and as far as I was concerned, we had to stop the Japanese. I thought they wanted to invade Australia so you felt you were doing the right thing. (Albert Koorey, personal communication, 20 April 2008)

Furthermore, when asked about his feelings of being of Lebanese descent when he was in Lebanon with the Australian Defence Force, Albert replied:

> Oh, it was all part of the business. I didn't feel I was going home or anything, if that's what you mean, no. Remember my mother was Australian born (of Lebanese descent) so, you know, we were just an Australian family. That took precedence. (Albert Koorey, personal communication, 20 April 2008)

Although some might have experienced racism during their enlistment process, especially among those who 'had a point to make', for others such as Joy Najar and Albert Koorey it was

not a factor. In fact, during both World Wars, 'Lebanese' background could be turned into an asset for Australia because they could perform unique roles in actions fought in the Middle East. A number of those who enlisted were called upon to act as intelligence officers or translators because of their ability to speak Arabic and their knowledge of local culture.

An example from World War 1 involved Faig Nassoor, who was born in Mount Lebanon in 1880 and worked as a salesman prior to enlisting in World War 1 as a trooper with the 7th Light Horse Regiment Expeditionary Force on 17 August 1917 after the enlistment restrictions were relaxed. He served in Egypt and Beirut, Lebanon. During his placement in Beirut, from 21 August 1918 to 18 June 1919, he worked as an intelligence officer, attached to the Political Section of the Intelligence Unit (NAA B2455: Nassoor Faig).

During World War 2, Lebanese-Australians also found their heritage was of value to the Australian war effort. On George Steve Stephen's military records, the enlistment officer stated on his *Personal Record Of Service* form and his *RAAF airman's record sheet*, under special qualification, that George possessed 'Lebanese Language' (NAA A9301:153384). Similarly, Arthur Sarroff was born in Albury NSW on 26 January 1912, and enlisted with the Royal Australian Air Force on 9 March 1942. He was a clerk by profession prior to enlistment. His *Personal Record of Service Form* stated 'Arabic' under special qualifications (NAA: A9301 2002:51810). Likewise, Victor Peter Shady, who was born in the village Sebhel, Lebanon on 19 June 1925 was also a clerk with the Federal Taxation Department prior to joining the Royal Australian Air Force on 24 September 1943. On Shady's *Personal Record of Service Form* and *Airman's Record Sheet*, 'Speaks Arabic' was written under the Special Qualifications sections (NAA A9301:137324). Therefore, while some enlisters viewed Lebanese heritage as a barrier to enlistment and recruitment, others found it a specific advantage, grooming them for important military roles. There was an arbitrariness to recruiters' understanding of the threats and assets held by Lebanese enlisters. It is notable how many of those who enlisted were not ashamed to state their Middle East background on their enlistment papers. This is consistent with Khater's (2019) depiction of a sense of 'transnational identity'. By refusing to hide their Lebanese backgrounds, such migrants and descendants would have known that they were potentially exposing themselves to a complex, frustrating and sometimes humiliating process of negotiation with state officials and administrators who were not always open to cultural differences and who sometimes held a very limited picture of an 'acceptable recruit'. As we will see later in the thesis, the cultural differences possessed by Lebanese recruits, especially their knowledge of Arabic language and culture, would often serve a positive purpose in assisting the war effort.

Sydney Charles Kardachi had a similar experience. He was the eldest son of Beshara William Kardachi, who initially settled in Adelaide in 1898 from the town of Masser-El-Chouf, Mount Lebanon, before moving to Keith, a small town in South Australia. At the time of his naturalisation application on 22 June 1921, Beshara stated that he worked as a draper and hawker (NAA A1:1921/13237). His son Sydney, one of five children, was born on 24 January 1912 in Adelaide under the name Assad Charles Kardachi (NAA A1:1921/13237). It is not known when or why Sydney changed his given name from Assad to Sydney, but it is possible to conclude from Chapter 5 that changing his name to Australia's largest city was done to assist his chances of assimilation. Sydney moved to Melbourne to look for work during the 1930s Depression and he enlisted for the war effort on 1 July 1940 (NAA B883: VX33471)**.** He saw action in the Middle East and attained the rank of Warrant Officer. His Lebanese looks and ability to speak Arabic helped him rise to prominence as an Australian Army intelligence officer throughout the Middle Eastern campaign (Batrouney and Batrouney 1985:117). He would be disguised in Arab clothing and mixed with locals to gather useful information. He was later killed in Bougainville, New Guinea by a Japanese sniper three weeks before the war ended (Batrouney and Batrouney 1985:118).

Sydney Kardachi's story reinforces the argument made in previous chapters concerning the extent to which many Lebanese migrants went to assimilate into Australian society. He changed his Arabic name to Anglo Saxon name, and his experiences in the Australian Army reinforced his feelings of assimilation, ironically using his Lebanese cultural background, working undercover as an Australian army intelligence officer.

Like Sydney Kardachi, James Saad (mentioned earlier in the chapter) also worked as an intelligence officer during World War 2. During his time in the Middle East, his Lebanese background was an asset to the *2/1 Australian Infantry Battalion*. On many occasions, during his deployment in Palestine and Syria, James was called upon to go undercover as a local to obtain intelligence information. He would dress in Middle Eastern attire, utilise his Arabic language skills and Lebanese looks and would socialise with the locals to find out certain war information to assist the Australian Army and its allies (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010). One such example occurred in Palestine, as James recounts:

> Throughout the war, they'd send me down to find out like a spy, to go and find out what's going on. A lot of the prisoners after they got captured in Greece and Crete, the battalion, half of them got captured prisoners, the other half killed and there was only about a handful left and a lot of them they'd escape. British warships would be waiting

> out in the sea for them. They'd swim out to the submarines and they'd bring them over. All of a sudden the cut off stopped, the line cut off, so when I got there they said, “You can speak Arabic?” I says “Yeah”. They said, “We’re the front”. I said, “Mind you, I’m only nineteen”. I said, “Well, what’s the trouble?” They said, “Well, there’s been so and so”. I said “Yeah”. They said, “We want you to try and find out where the cut out is”. “Well, what do you want me to do?” They said “Go up there and mix with them up there. No one knows who you are. Get dressed in Arab. There’s a gap somewhere, there’s a spy somewhere not letting the prisoners come through. Went back and told them, I said, “I think I know the fellow”. They said, “Are you sure?” I said, “I’m not a hundred per cent sure but pretty right”. They went up to him, took him away; after that the lines opened, not only Australians but for Allied prisoners. That’s one of my assets, to speak in Arabic (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010).

This was the same James Saad who was informed by a Lismore recruitment officer that Lebanese were not wanted for the military effort.

Albert Koorey was also called upon to utilise his Arabic language skills to mingle with locals while the Australian Army occupied the village of Bterram, in the North of Lebanon. Albert was asked to seek information on who resided in the properties that the Australian Army was occupying, asking the locals for their names and residential details. Once the Australian Army knew the names of the owners of the properties, they put money aside in addressed envelopes so when the owners came back home, they found the Australian Defence Force had paid them rent for residing in their properties (Albert Koorey, personal communication 20 April 2008).

Another case involved Dr Keith Cameel Basheer, who was born in Adelaide on 10 December 1924. His father, Adnan had migrated to Australia in 1898 at the age of seventeen from the town of Beit Mery in Lebanon. His mother, Salwa Naim was nineteen in 1924 when she migrated from Choueifat in Lebanon after marrying Adnan (Keith Basheer, personal communication, 24 February 2010). Their son Keith was studying Medicine at Adelaide University when his studies were cut short by wartime conscription in 1944. This occurred after he was rejected as a volunteer for the Air Force. After his training, he was made a stretcher-bearer, then a medical orderly. Like Albert Koorey, Basheer was called upon to use his Arabic language skills among Arabic prisoners of war during the end of the Bougainville campaign. The information he obtained from the prisoners of war on their living conditions and treatment by the Japanese and how they came to be prisoners was invaluable to understand the Japanese treatment of prisoners of war. Dr Basheer recounts this experience as follows:

K.B. So once peace was declared some four thousand of us were taken by ship to another island in the Solomons called New Britain and the capital is Rabaul. And we were taken there and Rabaul has a wonderful harbour but it was riddled with sunken ships because the Australians had it first, the Japanese came and took it, then the Australians came and took it away from the Japanese again, so there were sunken ships all through the harbour and there was no wharf or anything like that. And we landed there to help with all the prisoners the Japanese had. They'd got them all – or lots of them – there were I think about four thousand prisoners – I've forgotten the number. There wasn't a building standing, they all lived in tunnels in the hills and you could look at the hills and you'd see this honeycomb of tunnels that they had built or dug out over the years and once peace was declared all these prisoners were taken from there and taken down to what's called the Casualty Clearing Station and we even had about half a dozen nursing sisters there.

G.K Did the Japanese build those holes in the…..

K.B Yeah, honeycomb of tunnels. What do you call them? Yes, yeah. They didn't do them, the prisoners did them, that's what I was told. And this is where I met the Arabic speaking people. I was allocated this ward of injured prisoners who were mostly underfed. Mostly Indians but there were mixtures of Asians and people and various languages spoken. And I had very interesting experiences there but because of the few interpreters that there were - and we had to share them – I heard one fellow talk in his Indian language and he said a word which sounded like "hameese" to me, which it was "hameese". So I inquired to find eventually two lovely fellows, young fellows, who spoke Arabic and I didn't know whether I could speak Arabic or not but I thought I could and I felt confident that I could, not ever having spoken a word of it before, and every night after work I'd have these two fellows waiting for me to stay outside in the moonlight and talk Arabic and they'd ask me questions all about Australia and - Well, one of them was a lovely young fellow – in fact they were both lovely fellows. The young fellow I'm talking about came from Aden and the other fellow who came from an island in Indonesia called Ambon, he was educated in Egypt so they could both speak Arabic but not English. I would ask them all questions about their prison periods, war experiences, and life and so forth and they would ask me all about Australia and where I'd been and everything else. (Keith Basheer, personal communication, 24 February 2010)

Many Australian-Lebanese who were enlisted were thus able to utilise their cultural background and foreign language skills to assist the Australian campaign. Given the racism and recruitment barriers that some Australian-Lebanese encountered, as discussed in the previous section, there is more than a hint of irony in these stories. Despite those negative experiences, the stories in this section also suggest that the Australian Government trusted other Australian-Lebanese officers enough to work in the most sensitive areas of the military, such as intelligence, even though they were not British born nor had a British cultural background. Many Lebanese Australians recalled this cross-cultural work effort with pride and as a badge that signified an important contribution they made to the war effort and part of their further confirmation as someone who 'served their country'.

These first-hand stories and archival information help understand the complex and varied Australian-Lebanese involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces. Overall, they identified with Australian culture and wanted to contribute to the war effort. This was invariably built on a parental foundation whereby parents had encouraged their children to assimilate into Australian culture.

Sporting participation prior to and during war

For many Australian-Lebanese, a passion for sport helped them assimilate into the Australian lifestyle (Morven Dan, Gordon Jabour, Kenneth Malouf, personal communications, 2010). The role of the Lebanese in the field of sport during war remains unexplored academic territory. Recent publications in the area of sport in the Armed Forces include Mason's (2010) *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880-1960,* McCrery's (2014) *Into Touch, Rugby Internationals killed in the Great War* and Blackburn's (2016)*, War, Sport and the ANZAC Tradition.* However, the Australian-Lebanese in Australia's Armed Forces also participated in this field of sport. For some enlisted early Lebanese, sport was an avenue for them to demonstrate not only the extent of their assimilation, but also to build wider friendships, on top of engaging in the sporting activities they enjoyed. The following section provides accounts on the role sport performed for Australian-Lebanese prior to and during their time in the Armed Forces. Overall, the aim of this section is to demonstrate how sport played a pivotal role for many early Lebanese in their assimilation into Australian society.

In 1917, due to concern over falling Australian enlistment, a Sportsmen's Recruiting Committee was formed to target sportsmen directly as prime candidates for service. The committee attempted to raise a unit made up entirely of Australian sporting men (Britt 2006:11). One such officer who was encouraged to enlist a second time with the AIF as a result of this recruitment

campaign was Private Harold Gabriel, a prominent Australian Rules footballer whose career spanned the West Adelaide and Norwood football clubs (Southern Cross 1945:9). Harold Gabriel was born on 4 November 1892 in Adelaide, to Salem and Mary Gabriel who were married in Victoria in 1887 and moved to Adelaide soon after. Prior to Harold's enlistment with the AIF, he was an Adelaide cabinetmaker and well-known West Adelaide footballer. On the 31 August 1914, Harold enlisted with the AIF and joined the 10th Infantry Battalion on transport duty (NAA B2455: Gabriel H). On the 25 January 1917, he was discharged on medical grounds. However, on the 22 May 1918 he tried to enlist for a second time with the AIF but was again discharged a month later on the 18 June 1918 having been found medically unfit for further service (NAA B2455: Gabriel H).

Harold's popularity in Adelaide on the Australian Rules sporting field earned him the nickname "Kewpie" (Southern Cross 1945:9). Kewpie was a doll produced in Germany in 1912 and which remained popular during the war due to the production of soldier-themed Kewpie dolls – it is characterised by a large head, big eyes and chubby cheeks. Harold's popularity was so great that during his wartime engagement he was featured in the Adelaide papers, The *Register* and The *Observer.* A war photographer from the *Observer* took Harold's photograph while he was serving in the Dardanelles. The picture also features a Turkish sniper, and the caption stated that the Turkish sniper was 'covered from head to foot with a Jack-in-the-green arrangement of foliage, and in charge of two sturdy Australians' (The *Register* 1915:4). One of those sturdy Australians was Harold. The article explained that the 'young soldier was formerly a popular West Adelaide footballer. He enlisted soon after the outbreak of war and left for action with the 10th Battalion on transport duty (The *Register* 1915:4).

Many Australian-Lebanese, like Harold Gabriel, found sport to be of paramount importance in crafting their Australian identity. For Dr Morven Dan (whose early migration family experiences were recounted in Chapter 4), sport was the avenue that assisted him to integrate into the prestigious private Kings School, in North Parramatta, Sydney. Kings School at the time of Dr Dan's attendance was predominately populated with students of English descent and he was bullied because of his Lebanese background. However, his involvement in school sports, especially athletics and rugby football, assisted Dan in proving himself a valuable asset to the school. As he stated during his interview:

> When I was youthful, before the war I didn't like anything about Australia because as being a half Lebanese I was like everybody else considered second-class citizen. I suspect looking back that it didn't do any harm because it made me work harder to

> prove myself. Particularly at school – but fortunately I proved to be a good athlete at school. I won for the school athletics and played first grade football and was the youngest in the team – and, well I began to be looked at favourably. There was nothing wrong with the school except as being English and unless you were of English descent you weren't acceptable. And like I say I was lucky I proved to be a good athlete. (Morven Dan, personal communication, 27 February 2010)

For Dan, sport was the avenue that helped him break down the racial and racist barriers at his school and helped him gain acceptance. In 1939, he graduated in medicine from Sydney University and during World War 2, while in his second postgraduate year at the Prince Henry Hospital, he was called up for the Australian Army. On the 17th May 1942, Dr Dan boarded the troopship *Van Heutz* sailing from Sydney Harbour for Port Moresby. He was Regimental Medical Officer of the *3rd Infantry Battalion* AIF and served in Port Moresby, on the Kokoda Track, Oivi, Kumusi River and Gona. Dan was discharged from the Army on the 8th February 1946. He then worked at Paddington Barracks medically examining returning prisoners of war before continuing medical practice in Sydney.

Another example of an Australian-Lebanese veteran during wars benefitting from their sporting prowess was Gordon Jabour (whose family migration history was discussed in Chapter 5). He was born on 20 December 1923, in South Grafton, NSW. Prior to enlisting in World War 2 he played a variety of sports. *The Daily Examiner* (20 September 1941) had produced an article on the South Grafton Cycle Club in which it listed 30 members of the club who had volunteered for active service, including two of the Jabour brothers, Gordon and his brother A. Jabour**.** Their father Osma Jabour 'supported practically every sport in Grafton' and encouraged his children to get involved in sport as a way to assimilate into the Grafton community (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). For Gordon, playing sport was 'a good way to get along with the local children in the area', and he played football, rugby league, cricket and rowing.

During World War 2 while stationed in Western Australia, Gordon was captain of his unit rugby team, the *15th Light Regiment,* armoured division, playing in the position of scrum half. When he was sent overseas in the Papuan Infantry Battalion, he volunteered to play cricket one day and, because there were no teams in that Battalion, Gordon volunteered to recruit a team to play against the engineers. After the war, he continued his involvement in sport, playing competition Rugby League and was Captain of the reserve grade team in South Grafton (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010).

Gordon's passion for sport, which was encouraged by his father from an early age, assisted him to assimilate into the Grafton community. Two popular Australian sporting pursuits in particular, rugby and cricket, helped foster his social relations with the Anglo-Saxon (and other officers) members of the military. Overall, sport prior to and during his war service, helped to shape and solidify his identity as an Australian and it was a means through which he was able to manifest his loyalty to his unit and to the larger defence culture as a whole. For Gordon, sporting prowess eventually overshadowed his Lebanese background.

He volunteered to join the army 'to assist, if possible, saving Australia. The enemy needs opposition and I wanted Australia to remain a free country' (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). Like other interviewees introduced earlier, he was part of a larger military family grouping, being one of five brothers and four sisters. All five brothers had enlisted in World War 2, but only four were accepted with the fifth brother unable join on medical grounds (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). Prior to serving overseas, Gordon was stationed in Western Australia, where he supervised the intelligence unit, mapping and surveying creeks, lakes and roads.

His other brothers who served included Eric Jabour, who was an instructor in Morse code, and Dr Louis Jabour, who became a medical officer. The eldest son, Louis, initially enlisted during World War 1 in 1916 at the age of 14 as a cadet in the Light Horse but was not old enough to go to war. When World War 2 broke out, he volunteered and was posted to hospitals around the country (Gordon Jabour, personal communication, 5 July 2010). Another brother Roy John Jabour at the age of 22 was killed on operations at Port Ellen, Isle of Islay, Scotland on 24 January 1943. Roy had enlisted in the RAAF on 11 November 1940, and after his training in NSW in Lindfield and Narromine and then Canada, he flew to England in a Lockheed Hudson bomber. Roy's death was reported in the local newspapers (*Daily Examiner* 1943: 2 and *Tweed Daily* 1943:2*)* which noted his military record before mentioning his sporting record: 'During his term at High School, he participated actively in sport, and represented the school in athletics and football for several years running. He also represented the school in cricket.' In 1949, St Matthews Church (his family's involvement in the Church was discussed in chapter 5) dedicated a new Bishop's chair which was 'donated to St. Matthew's by Mrs Jabour and Family in memory of Roy Jabour who was killed on duty during World War II' (*Daily Examiner* 1949:3).

This family history is an example of the many early Lebanese settlers and their dependants who engaged sport as a way of assimilating into Australian culture and subsequently found this a useful means to integrate into the Army. Furthermore, it has been noted already that

many local papers reported members of the Lebanese diaspora on the basis of their local achievements, rather than their cultural heritage. Local sport was an important marker of community assimilation.

The history of the Malouf family also encapsulates this assimilating role sport played for many Lebanese Australians. Five Malouf brothers (Michael, Brian, Bernard, Mervyn and Joseph Malouf) enlisted with Australia's Armed Forces during World War 2 and were also keen sportsmen. They were five of nine children born to Lebanese parents George and Veronica Malouf (nee Thomas), who by 1921 owned a drapery and haberdashery shop in Coffs Harbour. There were only a few Lebanese families in Coffs Harbour at the time. This tendency for the diaspora to spread out was noted in Chapters 4 and 5. Yet, Brian Malouf (who was born in Coffs Harbour) recalls he and his siblings never felt like outsiders while growing up (Brian Malouf, personal communication, 4 January 2010). For Brian, he and his siblings mixed very well with everyone and sport was a contributing factor to this assimilation (Brian Malouf, personal communication, 4 January 2010). Brian, Bernard and Michael were active members of the Coffs Harbour Surf Lifesaving Club. Brian was awarded a Bronze Medallion by the Coffs Harbour Surf Lifesaving club on 18 February 1940 and awarded life membership in 1948. He was also Vice-Captain, instructor, and social secretary at the club (Coffs Harbour Surf Lifesaving Club). In addition, he also found time to play football during the war for his battalion, and after he left the army he continued playing football for Coffs Harbour for a further six years (Brian Malouf, personal communication, 4 January 2010). His brother Bernard (Bernie) was a keen gymnast and fisherman, as well as a talented footballer, playing rugby union for the Army during the war and rugby league with his brothers in Coffs Harbour in the 1950s. Joseph was also an excellent footballer, as well as a golfer and tennis player, while Mervyn was involved in cricket and was a talented ten-pin bowler (Joan Lawler, personal communication, 18 March 2010).

Brian Malouf joined the army after his eldest brother Michael was killed in the Australian Armed Forces with the 53 Australian Infantry Battalion in New Guinea on 29 August 1942. Michael was only 22 years old and had reached the rank of Corporal by the time of his death. Brian was eager to join the Armed Forces and to help win the war: 'I'm going to win the war on me own, I'm going to settle everything!', he recalls thinking (Brian Malouf, personal communication, 21 March 2010). Brian enlisted straight from school and did not wait to complete his School Leaving Certificate. His father George Malouf was not happy with Brian's decision because, although he encouraged his sons to join the Army, he would have preferred his sons to

finish school first. However, George had said to Brian: 'it your duty to sign up and it's everybody's duty to join the army' (Brian Malouf, personal communication, 21 March 2010). So, George could understand his younger son, Brian, and his enthusiasm for enlisting.

Like the Maloufs and Jabours, Kenneth Saleeba combined his love of sport with his war experience. He lived in Melbourne and was called up to join the Australian Army on the 15th March 1943 at the age of nineteen. He was with the 7th Australian Water Craft Workshop - Australian Mechanical Engineers as an armourer, repairing small arms and other Defence equipment, and later served in Japan, New Guinea and parts of Australia. While serving in Japan for fourteen months he was put in charge of his unit's Australian Rules football team which he named '7th Australia Workshop', playing against other Australian units. To Kenneth's delight, they won a lot of games. He also successfully competed in many inter-unit athletics competitions while in the army and, while serving in New Guinea, he also played rugby union (Kenneth Saleeba, personal communication, 17 May 2010).

Kenneth was discharged from the Army on the 4 June 1947 with the rank of Corporal. When asked during my interview what three things he liked most about Australia while growing up, his response was: 'The freedom, the culture and the sport – I love sport' (Kenneth Saleeba, personal communication, 17 May 2010). The fact that sport was mentioned so often during my interviews when recalling wartime experiences is testimony to the feeling of camaraderie it generated.

Like Gordon Jabour, Kenneth George Michael Malouf (no relation to the earlier Maloufs) was born in Albury, NSW, in 28 October 1922 and also fondly recalled participating in sporting pursuits during his time in the Army. His father and mother had migrated to Australia from Lebanon in 1886 and 1900, from the towns of Kusba and Zahle respectively. Kenneth started playing sport when he was at school, representing NSW at football, captaining several cricket teams and representing cricket teams at Centennial Park, Sydney. Kenneth also played football for his battalion during the war and expressed pride in his achievements, as he was one of fifteen or so players to represent his battalion from about 1200 or 1500 members (Kenneth Malouf, personal communication, 10 February 2014). Kenneth recalls: 'I enjoyed sport so much before the Army but enjoyed it more playing with my battalion. It maintained that mateship during the difficult times in war' (Kenneth Malouf, personal communication, 10 February 2014).

After the war, Kenneth gave up football and played cricket as well as first grade tennis. At 34 years of age, he took up squash and reached the rank of eighteenth in the state. At 42 years

of age, he had won the State Veterans Championship. For Kenneth, 'sport was the way to get involved in the Australian way of life - it was the Australian lifestyle – it was not only because it occupied your leisure time but was enjoyment also' (Kenneth Malouf, personal communication, 10 February 2014). This story encapsulates the experiences of many interviewees, who believed that sport was the avenue along which they could be accepted as Australians and participate in part of Australian culture and its 'way of life'. Another example from the Lebanese diaspora (one I was unable to interview) is the case of Eddie Richard Scarf who was born in Quirindi, NSW on 3 November 1908 (NAA: A9301). Prior to World War 2, Eddie was an Olympic bronze medal holder in freestyle wrestling at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic Games. He also competed in the 1936 Olympic Games and 1938 Empire Games. (ALHS: alhs.org.au). On 29 April 1941 he joined the Australian Air Force (RAAF) leaving behind his three butchery businesses and his positions at the Dee Why Surf Club as a 'physical training instructor' and at Wilkes Gymnasium as a 'physical instructor'. His service record stated that Scarf was 'exceptionally keen to serve' (NAA: A9301).

The role of sport described in this section formed another part of the assimilatory behaviours practiced by Lebanese Australians discussed in Chapter 5. Many Lebanese continued to play sport as a means of establishing and maintaining camaraderie in the Australian Armed Forces. Gary Oakley (personal communication 10 October 2014) has summed up the sentiments of the many of the experiences of Lebanese in sport in Australia: 'if one wants to play Aussie Rules and you are from Lebanon or China, the reaction by Anglo Australians would be, Oh, this person wants to be part of us and our culture – it was another way of becoming accepted'. The stories recounted in this section reinforce Oakley's point. It also reinforces the findings in Chapters 4 and 5, which described the socio-economic and cultural accommodations Lebanese migrants made that facilitated their assimilation. The reason why sport has been included in this chapter reflects the important role sport performed in martial morale and camaraderie. Their prior sporting assimilation helped integrate many Lebanese into the Armed Forces.

Defence and Religion

While Defence documentation in World Wars 1 and 2, such as Attestation papers, among some other documents, do not reveal the cultural or ethnic background of recruits, they do include a compulsory question on religious denomination. How did the early Lebanese settlers self-identify when it came to religion?

Table 2 presents the findings of my analysis of 143 members of the Australian Armed Forces whom I was able to identify as being of Lebanese origin. I have listed responses to the question

of their religious affiliation. In the case of the early Lebanese settlers who enlisted with Australia's Defence Forces in both wars, Table 2 suggests there was a strong religious identification with Roman Catholicism followed by the Church of England.

Table 2 Analysis of 150 World War I & II Australian defence records for Australian veterans of Lebanese descent: breakdown of religions as stated on the veteran's defence records (NAA, various World War 1 & World War 2 Defence Records).

Religion as stated on World War 1 & World War 2 Defence Records	**Number**
Roman Catholic	80
Church of England	40
Orthodox (includes Greek, Eastern & Syrian Orthodox)	12
Presbyterian	8
Druze	4
Methodist	1
Church of Christ	1
Christian	1
Religion not stated	3
Total	**150**

Govor (2005:89) also found that a significant number of Russians were also recorded as 'C of E' (Church of England), surmising that the reason for this could be that 'some Russians decided to covert to Anglicanism, perceiving it as the main religion in their country of adoption' and 'to avoid being different'. The findings by Govor in relation to the Russians can be compared with the early Lebanese. As Table 2 demonstrated, the early Lebanese also recorded familiar religions such as 'C of E' and R.C on their enlistment papers. This could be because they feared that their unfamiliar origins might make them appear as alien persons. As Gover concluded, they feared being seen as different and therefore unsuitable for the Armed Forces.

While it is possible that the high numbers of Roman Catholic and Church of England enlistments from Australian-Lebanese backgrounds was due to the fact that many enlistment clerks had little knowledge of the Eastern Orthodox, Druze or Maronite religions, it is probable, given the findings from the previous chapter, that these early Lebanese had already assimilated into

these religions prior to enlisting. It is significant that the Maronite religion was not listed on any of the 150 defence records analysed. Instead, Roman Catholic, or 'RC' was stated. Furthermore, in my interviews, those who descended from families who were Maronites, whether they were born in Lebanon or Australia, described themselves as Roman Catholics or Catholics rather than Maronite. This suggests strong assimilatory behaviour by these early Lebanese and their dependants into the Australian religious institutions and communities.

Monsour (2010:136) concludes that during World War 1, 'religious affiliation became increasingly important for Lebanese as religion was used to distinguish between the predominantly Christian Lebanese and Turks, who were more likely to be Muslim.' As enemy aliens, Syrians were required to register at their local police station, and then to report at designated intervals during the war (Batrouney 1985:27). However, Turkish subjects who were Christian could be exempted from certain requirements applying to enemy aliens (Monsour 2010:136). What this meant was that Lebanese Maronites and Lebanese Orthodox would have rather affiliated with the predominately Roman Catholic or Church of England religions when enlisting so that they would be more acceptable to the Defence Forces and less likely to be perceived as 'enemy aliens'.

It can be concluded that the early Lebanese settlers and their dependants sought to find acceptance in Australian society through their shared Christianity with the host society. As noted in Chapter 5, it is easier to assimilate and feel a sense of belonging in a new society through a universal religion than a different ethnicity. As ethnicity is harder to change, so the early Lebanese through their shared Christian religion were able to use dominant religions as a bond that identified them with the host society. This applied particularly at a time when there was discrimination and hostility against certain non-Anglo cultures (as we have already seen through the course of this thesis). To be accepted into the Armed Forces, many Australian - Lebanese were able to utilise religion as an institutional factor in order to demonstrate their solidarity and loyalty with the dominant British culture.

Australian-Lebanese civilian participation during World War I and World War II

Not only did the early Lebanese men and women fight in the wars, but those Lebanese at home who did not join the Armed Forces attempted to participate through assisting the civilian war efforts of their new homeland. Acts of loyalty by Lebanese civilians during both wars featured regularly in various regional and State newspapers.

A fortnight after the outbreak of World War 1, *The Sydney Morning Herald* (1914:10) published an article entitled '*The Syrians Will fight for Great Britain'*. It reported that on Friday 14 August 1914, a deputation of Syrian residents, which was introduced by the Mayor of Redfern, Alderman Leitch, waited for the Lord Mayor of Sydney to arrive to inform him that the following resolution had been unanimously carried by the Syrian residents of NSW:

> That we, the Syrian residents of New South Wales, while regretting the calamitous state of war now raging in Europe, fully recognise that Great Britain is justly and righteously championing the cause of freedom and humanity, and that her efforts in such cause and her attitude in this colossal war, has our heartiest sympathy and support. That we, as resident citizens of this great Commonwealth, enjoying the fruits of justice, freedom, and protection, and who have learned to love, esteem, and honour the land and the flag that shelters us, feel in duty bound, and as a grateful acknowledgement to the nation's ideals and noble motives, beg to offer every available man amongst us, and to pledge ourselves to assist the authorities with men and money, and every possible way in our means and power. (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1914:10)

The very fact that the Syrian community as an 'ethnic group' felt the need to make such a demonstration of support for the British cause suggests they were concerned about their status as 'outsiders'. They therefore sought to offer their friendship, rather than be seen as hostile aliens. Mr Abraham D. Aboud, a prominent member of the Lebanese community in Sydney *(The Daily Telegraph* 1924:14 & *Sydney Morning Herald* 924:14), along with other Syrian speakers, informed the Lord Mayor that they would contribute to the war fund (*Sydney Morning Herald* 914: 10). This action was intended to reinforce the loyalty that the local Syrian/Lebanese population felt for Australia. Despite the discriminating aspects of the Naturalisation Act discussed earlier, they signalled their willingness to fight for Australia and assist in any way possible through enlistment of men during the war and by contributing in monetary form. The resolution had been carried unanimously all the Syrian residents as a declaration of their appreciation of living in Australia, which they identified with 'security, freedom and justice', making them 'feel in duty bound' to fight for the British cause. Given the political and cultural climate at the time, the various Acts regarding Aliens, and the suspicious they embodied, the early Lebanese settlers felt it was necessary to demonstrate their loyalty unanimously by such a formal resolution.

Such community declarations and manifestations of loyalty among the Lebanese were repeated after the outbreak of World War 2. Various organisations and committees were formed

across Australia to raise funds to assist Australian soldiers and the war effort more generally. These organisations and committees held functions, such as balls and competitions, to raise funds. Local 'Syrian' communities across Australia joined the war effort by supporting such functions and donating money to the organisations for the war effort. These contributions and functions were reported widely across Australia in country and national newspapers. These were historical moments when the ethnic category morphed into an 'ethnic group', with the aim of demonstrating their subservience to the Australian flag and the British cause.

In 1940, *The Sydney Morning Herald* (1940:5) published an article with a title that echoed that at the beginning of World War 1 ('*Syrian Lebanese in Sydney. Loyalty to Britain').* It also expressed the same sentiments: The 'general meeting of the Australian Syrian Lebanese in Sydney resolved to place on record the community's unswerving loyalty to the British Commonwealth of Nations and its determination to render full assistance in the present conflict to the extent of its financial resources and man-power' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 40:5). It observed that 'a subscription list was opened in aid of patriotic funds and in 10 minutes more than £300 was subscribed, notwithstanding that many present had already subscribed to patriotic funds'. It then listed other Lebanese Australian organisations, such as the United Lebanese Association, which had issued circulars appealing for further subscriptions to the fund from their compatriots. In addition, two other organisations in the community – the Lebanese Ladies' War Comforts League of Australia and the Lebanese Ladies Association – 'also have substantial amounts for distribution to patriotic funds, the former's balance amounting to over £400' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1940:5).

In South Australia, *The Mail* (1940:4) also published an article in 1940 entitled '*Syrians Give Liberally to War Charities*'. Mr Alick Basheer, (whose son Keith Cameel Basheer later volunteered for the RAAF in 1944), President of the Syrian Community of South Australia, and other members of the Syrian community presented to the office of *The Mail* a cheque of £1119/9 for the fighting forces' comforts fund. The article recalled that earlier that year, the Syrian community had made a substantial donation to the Red Cross Society and intended to support patriotic funds throughout the year. The Syrian community had also carried a resolution of unswerving loyalty to the British Empire and of their determination to do their part to bring victory (*The Mail* 1940: 4). Newspapers at the time were the most visible means to reach an audience and by presenting the cheque to the newspaper, the community hoped to gain a sympathetic audience among its readers. Such publicity not only described the generosity of the Lebanese but gave assurance to others of their loyalty to the nation.

In 1943, A Lebanese Queen Competition Ball was organised by the *Lebanese Ladies Association* in Sydney, in which over £2000 was raised by 'six queens', with the money used to purchase mobile canteens for the Army. The event attracted around 600 people including Australian Ministers and senior defence personnel (*Nepean Times* 1943:3). Other Associations contributed to the war effort such as the Mount Lebanon Social Club in Adelaide, which raised £1,505 for the Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund (*The Advertiser* 1944:4). The *Australian-Syrian Lebanese Association in NSW* also raised £500 for the Lord Mayor's Patriotic and War Fund (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1940:5) and £1,000 to the British Centre Appeal Fund, which was raised after an evening at the Sydney home of Mr D. Aboud, the president of the Australian-Syrian Lebanese Association (*Barrier Miner* 1945:2).

In addition, The Lebanese Ladies War Comforts League of Australia played a prominent role in fundraising throughout the Second World War. Its president was Mrs. Therese Alam, the wife of Anthony Alexander Alam who was born in Wallsend NSW on 2 January 1896 to Lebanese storekeepers. Anthony Alam was one of the longest serving members of the New South Wales Legislative Council. Anthony and Therese were instigators behind many charitable endeavours during the war. One of their notable efforts was raising funds to purchase ambulances to transport Australian troops and other injured personnel. *The Lebanese Ladies War Comforts League* presented a fleet of 10 ambulances to the Australian Army and raised more than £15,000 during the war years (*The Advertiser* 1947:11) and £3,000 for renovations to Royal Naval House (*Barrier Miner* 1945:2).

In 1944 The Lebanese Ladies War Comforts League wanted to donate an ambulance to the Royal Australian Air Force but were advised by the Maintenance Group that a cheque would be more acceptable for the purchase of a mobile X-Ray plant or similar medical equipment (NAA A705: 225/1/168). The Royal Australian Air Force expressed their appreciation of the donation through a letter to the League stating their 'grateful thanks and appreciation of the Commonwealth Government and the Royal Australian Air Force for this magnificent gesture of patriotism'. The Royal Australian Air Force eventually bought X-Ray equipment with the donation (NAA A705: 225/1/168). These are further demonstrations that Lebanese Australians were most visible as an 'ethnic group' during times when they wished to show their support for the nation as a whole, rather than advocating for any particularistic ethnic cause.

Individuals, as well as community organisations, expressed their patriotism and their support for the war. On 17 May 1943, Fred Habib a local Syrian resident from Adelaide, wrote to Prime Minister John Curtin (NAA M1415/224) listing all his family's names and their dates of births,

noting that he had hoped to call their fourth child John Curtin Habib, but he had passed away. Fred informed the Prime Minister that one of his contributions to the war effort was returning a considerable number of ration coupons to the government that the family had refrained from using so that the Government was able to redistribute the rations for other needy Australians (NAA M1415/224). This gesture and the encouraging, supportive, and patriotic prose was Habib's humble way of demonstrating his family's allegiance to their adopted country. Habib, however, did adopt a somewhat partisan political tone, registering his support for the Federal Government:

> Sir,
>
> This is just one of many your humble contributions to the war effort from a true Australian family to the greatest Prime Minister Australia has ever had. Here is wishing and hoping that there will always be a Labor Government while Australia breathes.
>
> Sincerely-
>
> Fred Habib

The *Northern Star* (1942: 4) newspaper also reported, under the title '*Syrian Resident Aids War Effort'* that 'a well-known Syrian resident of North Lismore (Mr W. Bouckillil) has forwarded to the Commonwealth Government the sum of £55 as an interest-free loan for the duration of the war and six months afterwards'. Like those who attempted to enlist, these 'civilian Syrians' wanted to 'prove the point' that although they could not enlist, they could still make a contribution and be counted as Australian fighting on the side of British allies.

The press throughout Australia during World War 2 featured stories about the Syrian-Lebanese contribution to the war effort and their participation in Australians Defence Forces. These newspaper articles also featured civilian Syrians making a positive contribution to Australian society, one that contrasted with the more negative media coverage of Syrians during the earlier hawking period described in Chapter 4. These changes occurred within a generation, from previously portraying Australian-Lebanese as alien and non-white, to being committed members of the community who were integrated into Australia's war efforts and into Australian society more generally. As individuals and as an 'ethnic group', Lebanese Australians encouraged such presentations of the Lebanese in Australia.

Conclusion

The Australian–Lebanese portrayed in this chapter overwhelmingly presented themselves as loyal Australians. They participated across all arenas of war, in Egypt, Gallipoli, Lebanon, France, Belgium and Papua New Guinea, as well as on the home front. This chapter has explored the relationship between these forms of participation and the process of assimilation. The evidence suggests that experiences prior to the war influenced the rationale for wartime participation.

Their previous experiences at work and experiences in educational, sporting and religious institutions as well as with state authorities, influenced their degree of assimilation and the degree to which they felt like insiders or outsiders. Some Lebanese Australians were so assimilated by World War 2 that they did not even consciously think of their Lebanese heritage when enlisting. For others, military participation was an opportunity to prove their allegiance and sense of belonging. For the latter, entry into the Australian Armed Forces enhanced their sense of belonging. While some Lebanese Australians experienced racism and rejection in their efforts to enter the military, most respondents spoke warmly of the camaraderie they experienced when after they joined their battalions.

Some participants even found means to use their Lebanese heritage to further the country's war effort. Such efforts could be made at an individual level (such as volunteering for intelligence duties at the front where their language and cultural knowledge was useful), or else as an 'ethnic group', where Lebanese Australians came together to demonstrate their solidarity with the aims of the Australian state. Lebanese groups were adept at using the press to advertise their patriotism. During this period of the White Australia Policy, acceptable 'ethnic representation' meant showing group allegiance to the flag.

There was evidence within the stories related about recruitment that suggest that the process of assimilation could entail negotiation with state officials who questioned Lebanese migrants' legitimacy to join the Armed Forces. The manner in which such migrants dealt with such obstacles suggests that Khater's (2019) concept of 'transnational identities' has value. Such Lebanese migrants did not deny their Lebanese heritage, but instead stressed the values they supported and the common cause that they were fighting for. These values and the cause transcended nationalisms and national borders, as many officers and soldiers came to recognise on the international fields of conflict.

Indeed, as this chapter showed, Lebanon itself was a theatre of war for many Australian soldiers, and the following chapter will suggest that this experience contributed to greater mutual understanding and reciprocity. Overall, as the following chapter reveals, their war experiences gave Lebanese Australian veterans more confidence to carve a more prominent role in participating in post-war Australian society.

7. The Home Front

As shown in the previous chapter, Australian-Lebanese who served in the Australian Defence Forces tended to look back fondly on the shared camaraderie. It was an arena where they felt unconditionally accepted into their society, regardless of their prior experiences. This chapter explores the contribution made by Lebanese Australians to the post-war socio-economic reconstruction of the country. This post-war period gave many veterans an opportunity to project their enhanced feeling of belonging in areas such as politics, academia and business. Furthermore, many retained a comradeship with their former army battalions, through their involvement in ANZAC Day celebrations, the Returned Services League (RSL) and other community clubs. These activities reinforced their Australian identity.

Furthermore, for many Australian-Lebanese families, their military associations did not stop when the fighting finished. Many raised children and grandchildren who continued their elders' military legacy through joining the Australian Defence Forces, turning their own experiences into a new family heritage.

25 April – ANZAC Day

There have been many academic treatments on the ANZAC Day tradition and its influence on Australian identity (Blagg: 2006; Donoghue and Tranter: 2013; Drozdzewski: 2015). However, for the purpose of this chapter, I draw on newspaper sources, other primary resources and personal interviews with respondents to explore what the annual ANZAC Day marches meant to Lebanese Australians who fought in World Wars 1 and 2.

From the earliest manifestations of remembrance, many Lebanese settlers who did not serve in wars were keen to show their respect for those who fought for the country. This demonstration of patriotism was first noted in the press during the First World War:

> The Syrian Maronites in Sydney, realising their indebtedness to the Anzacs, who, in fighting in Palestine and Mesopotamia, are relieving the Syrians from the oppressing Turkish yoke, decided at the last meeting of the Maronite Syrian Progress Association to take part in the Anzac Day celebrations by holding a service at St. Maroun's Church, Elizabeth-street, Redfern. (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1917:7)

This demonstration of support for the ANZACS among the Lebanese community was noted in other media reports after the First World War. Not only did the early Lebanese settlers march in country towns and cities during ANZAC Day, but they also placed wreaths at monuments at

the dawn services and 11 o'clock observance. For instance, in 1933, the *Cairns Post* featured an article on the local ANZAC Day celebrations at Babinda. It observed that 'celebrations were held in the Beattie's Theatre to commemorate the eighteenth anniversary of ANZAC. During the evening hymns were sung and vocal and instrumental items were rendered' (*Cairns Post* 1933:13). Among the locals who were mentioned in the article was a Miss Mellick, a descendant from the Mellick family, originally from Lebanon, who had settled in Queensland in the late 1800s. This family tradition continued during World War 2, when it was recorded in the same paper that 'a C. Mellick placing a wreath on the cenotaph during the April 25 ANZAC Day celebrations at Babinda' (*Cairns Post* 1941:6), and again in 1943, when 'a wreath was placed during the Anzac Day celebrations at Babinda by an A.C. Mellick' (*Cairns Post* 1943:1).

Examples where the Lebanese community was singled out in the press for its patriotism during World War 2 included the Syrian communities in the NSW country towns of Taree and Wingham, which placed wreaths at the monuments in Taree during ANZAC Day celebrations (*The Manning River Times and Advocate* 1944:1). The same paper later noted this Lebanese observance after the war. In 1947, the same Lebanese communities once again were recorded as placing wreaths on the monument during the ANZAC Day service in Taree (*The Manning River Times* and *Advocate* 1947:1).

For many in the Lebanese community, ANZAC parades were a means to pay tribute to those who lost their lives during the conflicts, and a means to display their national solidarity. For instance, a 1954 article on arrangements for an upcoming ANZAC Day in the Brisbane *Telegraph* (1954:4) reported that:

> For the first time in Queensland members of the Lebanese community will lay a wreath on the Shrine of Remembrance in ANZAC Square as a mark of respect to Australian servicemen and Lebanese nationals who lost their lives. Former Corporal Vince Mahboub who served with the 2/18th Battalion and was taken prisoner with the Eighth Division in Malaya, will lay the wreath on behalf of the recently formed Lebanese Association in Queensland. (1954:4)

Vince (Vincent Michael) Mahboub was a World War 2 veteran born on 17 October 1918 in Sydney to Lebanese parents. He had attained the rank of Corporal when discharged (NAA: B883, NX31539). The article acknowledged Vince Mahboub's service with Australia's Defence Force and his association with the Lebanese community and reflected a growing recognition by the press of Lebanese-Australian wartime contributions.

Like Vince Mahboub and the Mellick family in Queensland, World War 2 veteran James Saad (2010) (who was discussed in Chapter 6) never missed an ANZAC Day parade. After the war, he became the Vice-President of the 2/1st Infantry Association, the battalion he served. Every ANZAC Day he would lead his battalion during the march in the Sydney city parade, with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren marching alongside. James was conscious of the role the Defence Forces played in strengthening his feeling of belonging, and he was determined to transfer this consciousness to later generations:

> The Defence, overall, overall, it's put me where I am today, the Defence, it put me over – the fact, not only in the Defence Force but being in the force– see, you can be in the Defence Force and nowhere near the fighting, you know what I mean, but you are needed, you are needed back there, yeah. But, no, my thing being up the front with the most dangerous spot of the lot and I appreciated that very much. I came out of it very good like that and I always look after – that's why now I'm Vice President of the Association and everything. I lead the ANZAC Day march in my battalion and everything, my unit; I'm going to wear it again this year (his uniform). I got my grandkids as banner bearers. My grandkids and great grandkids are banner bearers on the ANZAC. (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010)

In his interview for this research, James was keen to express his pride at attaining the position of Vice-President of the 2/1st Infantry Association. He described how the Association had held a vote amongst its members as to who should wear the battalion's medal for the Battle of Crete during the ANZAC Day march. Eighty-five per cent voted in favour of James holding this honour even though he did not fight in the battle. He interpreted this as a sign of the respect he held among the Infantry Association, a gesture that touched his sense of cameraderie greatly.

James could list a total of twenty-three men and women from New South Wales, all descendants from the village of Kfarsghab, Lebanon who joined the Australian Army during World War 2 (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010). He was also proud that his experience in the Australian Army had encouraged other members of his family - along with other Australian-Lebanese friends - to join up.

His status within Defence Forces reinforced James' bond to Australia, a sentiment which he passed on to his children and grandchildren. His home was full of memorabilia from his war

participation, and this reinforced his family's sense of pride in James' achievements. I asked James how his time in the Defence Force impacted on his family and his friends*:*

> Oh, they (family) thought it was great, yeah, because my boys and they're protecting them, so "You so and so, were having a go at us before. My boy's not even Australian, he volunteered to go, and you want to have a go at me?". Oh, yeah, then we started together – well then, a lot of Lebanese joined up, see, after that you see, after I went in, quite a few went in. (James Saad, personal communication, 22 January 2010)

James' experience growing up in inter-war Australia had been tainted by recollections of the forms of racism described in Chapters 5 and 6. Through James' participation in the Armed Forces, his parents were able to challenge such racism by pointing out that even though their son was not Anglo-Australian he still volunteered for war service. His pride was associated with a sense of growing confidence and his justification in asserting a sense of belonging.

Another illustration of this growing sense of post-war confidence in Australian self-identity involved Edward Earl Gaha (see Chapter 5). Edward served in World War 2 with the RAAF, and his twin brother, Daniel (Earl) Kingsley, along with an older brother Francis Clive also served in the Army and Air Force respectively. Upon being discharged from the RAAF, Edward became a member of the Croydon Park Ex-Servicemen's Club and a life member of the Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women Association. He also became a member of the Air Force Association and was one of the prime movers in his group to organise and encourage the members to attend the ANZAC Day Sydney marches (Edward Gaha, personal communication, 23 January 2010).

His brother Daniel was locally active in the Dee Why Community, being a member of the Dee Why Surf Club for 50 years, Rotary for 16 years, the Leagues and Bowls clubs for 35 years, and a Lions member for 12 years. In some cases, he was a foundation member of these clubs or served in their administration (Gaha 1988:62). Due to Daniel's extensive involvement in the community, he was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship by Rotary International for his 'tangible and significant assistance in the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations between peoples of the world' (Gaha 1988:62). Both Daniel and Edward believed that marching at ANZAC Day was an important part of their community involvement. Daniel was paraded in a car when he was unable to walk in his later years.

Edward Gaha and James Saad were among the many Lebanese serving in the Defence Forces who viewed their experience as a catalyst that gave them confidence to express their feelings of national belonging. Whether through attending the ANZAC Day marches each year or involvement in their Battalion memberships or Air Force associations, this constituted an opportunity not only to maintain solidarity with other veterans, but also to reinforce their allegiance to Australia and to affirm the decision of their elders in their decision to migrate.

Further demonstrations of national belonging can be found in the experiences of the brothers Samuel and Jack Aboud, who were born in Toowoomba and Goombungee respectively in Queensland. Their parents Assad and Warde Aboud had migrated to Australia in the late 1890s from the town of Zahle in Lebanon (Queenie Salemi, personal communication, 19 May 2010). Samuel and Jack both volunteered during World War 2. Their brother Mick also wanted to join the Defence Forces, but he was refused because of varicose veins (Queenie Salemi, personal communication, 19 May 2010). After their war service, the brothers would march in the city of Melbourne every year during the ANZAC Day parade, and Jack's children would also attend to support their father.

Samuel and Jack's sister, Queenie Salemi, would also attend these marches every year and Queenie emphasised in her interview with me that they cheered not only her brothers but all the Australian soldiers. Even upon the death of her brothers, Queenie emphasised that she still attended the parades, never missing a year (Queenie Salemi, personal communication, 19 May 2010): 'It's all the same, I just went to the march. Even when there's nobody there (her siblings), I still went'. For Queenie, her brothers were part of a broader national community that included the other soldiers. Furthermore, her participation in the memorial march symbolised her own sense of belonging with this community, even after her brothers' passing. Their wartime participation led to an ongoing deep sense of belonging and shared struggles, and this togetherness could be felt not only among those who served in war but also other members of Lebanese families.

Like the Aboud brothers, the war experiences of Samuel, Fawad (changed to John) and Bahij (changed to Burt) Assef symbolised their greater feeling of acceptance into Australian society. They were born in the town of Bterrum, Lebanon and volunteered and served in Australia's Defence Forces during World War 2. Abe Assef, their younger brother, was too young to serve, but remembered how at the age of twelve or thirteen he dug trenches at his school grounds in the NSW country town of Quirindi, 'in case the Japanese invaded the town' (Assef A, 2010). After the war, the brothers served in their local communities and participated in ANZAC Day

marches. Burt would march in his hometown Qurindi and occasionally in the ANZAC Day city parade in Sydney or Taree, while Sam regularly marched in the Sydney parade. John marched in his country NSW town of Moree (Assef A, 2010). Bahij's son Richard remembers his father's love for ANZAC Day: 'he used to really enjoy the reunions. He used to march every ANZAC Day in Quirindi – to a lesser extent in Taree but in Quirindi he always marched and we marched too because we were Cubs and Scouts and Girl Guides' (Richard Assef, personal communication, 4 May 2010).

Seamus Jabour, the grandchild of Gordon Jabour (see chapter 6), marched alongside his grandfather during the South Grafton ANZAC Day march on 26 April 2006. Interviewed for the *Daily Telegraph*, Seamus expressed his sense of family pride, without mentioning their Lebanese heritage

> "It's a day to remember all those who fought in the war and a day just to be with my grandpa, because he lost two brothers in the war," Seamus said. "Marching in the parade meant a lot to me and representing my Uncle Roy (Gordon's brother). I felt proud and I was thinking a lot of my uncle. I have never met him, but I've seen a lot of war videos and the amount of guts those guys had was unreal."

In a similar manner, even at the age of 92, Michael Deeb (a World War 2 veteran) vividly recalled the 'national pride' he felt at ANZAC Day marches and what this meant for his Australian-Lebanese family:

> I am now 92 and for most years I attend the Narromine ANZAC Day marches. As this is the town I was born in and love. I never missed an opportunity to march as I felt a sense of national pride. Our family did 11 years all up in the armed services, with Paul (Paul Khoury - Michael's maternal uncle) and Joe (Michael's brother). You feel a sense of pride for Australia and I was part of the community. I was proud and enjoyed being a soldier and fighting for Australia as I always felt like an Australian – I was born here after all. But also, I feel sorry when I am marching for those who have gone like my mate Jack Burgess, we used to play golf together. When I march, I also like to remember the fellows I knew, some are gone, some were from Wellington and Dubbo. I was very proud to be a soldier and march during ANZAC Day (Michael Deeb, personal communication, 19 November 2019).

Michael Deeb's justifications for why he marched during ANZAC Day epitomised the interlinked feelings of family pride, community ties, comradely loss and national belonging that many Lebanese Australians experienced. His statement that 'I have always felt like an Australian - I was born here after all' was the only hint that his origins might have once been contested.

The above examples all suggest that ANZAC Day marches were an important day of remembrance for many Lebanese veterans and dependants. Not only did it recall fallen comrades, but it also represented a memory of bonding experiences within their community. For the Australian-Lebanese veterans as well as family, relatives and friends who had served in the Armed Forces, their participation in ANZAC Day celebrations was an opportunity to express both a sense of family pride alongside a recollection of how they assumed their national identity. This interlinking of family and national pride was expressed by most of the Australian-Lebanese whom I interviewed: participating in the ANZAC tradition was a symbolic act, recalling their process of becoming Australian.

Community Work

It was not only through commemorating the ANZAC spirit that Australian-Lebanese veterans displayed their sense of belonging to Australia. As noted above, many veterans also actively participated in their local communities. Some were leaders in their local RSL clubs, while others were conspicuous in their local sporting clubs or in local or Federal Government. As the nation sought labour power from a wider range of sources after the Second World War, Australian-Lebanese veterans often took advantage of changing attitudes towards non-British migration to enhance their community affliliations. Many of the stories below reinforce Thornton's narrative of the 'assimilated migrant success story' noted in Chapter 2.

Upon completion of his army duties, George Shalhoub returned to the NSW country town of Nyngan with his family. George built and established his own store, with the family home built above the premises. He built the business close to the town's RSL Club site, and when it was decided to build a clubhouse, George used his building skills to help them with the construction (George Shalhoub, personal communication, 28 February 2010). After the RSL club was opened, George became the President and the Secretary, later becoming the manager. One World War 2 veteran I interviewed defined the RSL as 'an important post-war institution in many Australian towns and also a strong supporter of Australian nationalism' (Kenneth Malouf, personal communication, 22 November 2010). Thus, when George Shalhoub helped the community to build its own RSL club, he was projecting his support not only to the RSL club and

the community of Nyngan in general but also demonstrating that he felt he was on an equal footing with the other veterans who had fought for Australia.

Sports clubs offered another avenue for Lebanese to raise their post-war community profile. After the war, the Malouf brothers returned to Coffs Harbour and worked in their parents' drapery store. The Maloufs loved sport and after their wartime experiences (see Chapter 6) their family name became synonymous across the local sporting community. Brian Donald Malouf played football for Coffs Harbour for six years from 1944 to 1949 (Brian Malouf, personal communication, 4 January 2010). He was also vice-Captain, instructor and social secretary during his time with the Coffs Harbour Surf Club and was awarded life membership in 1948 (*http://coffsharbourslsc.asn.au*). His brother Bernard (Bernie) Francis was the Social Secretary of the RSL Club and Surf Life Savings Club in Coffs Harbour and played rugby league with his brothers in Coffs Harbour in the 1950s. Bernie's post-war contribution to his community went far beyond sport. The NSW Parliamentary Member for Coffs Harbour, Mr. Andrew Fraser MP, nominated Bernie for an Order of Australia medal, which he subsequently received on the 9 June 1987 for service to the Aged Community of Coffs Harbour, particularly through his involvement in the Society of St Vincent de Paul and his service to local government.

After Bernie's death on 20 October 2010, Fraser, paid tribute to Bernie during the sitting period of the NSW Parliament (http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Prod/parlment/hansart.nsf). He described Bernie's extensive achievements in the community and involvement in the politics of Coffs Harbour prior to and after World War 2. In between, Bernie served in the Citizen's Military Force and the Australian Infantry Battalion, performing overseas service in Borneo and 'carrying shrapnel injuries in his hip to his grave'. Not only did Bernie receive an OAM, but he also was awarded a Papal Medal for his services to the Catholic Church and wider community. When Coffs Harbour was officially declared a city on the 1 September 1987, Bernie was installed as the first mayor for the city. In 1995, a function was held in Coffs Harbour to name a train 'Bernie Malouf – Community champion Coffs Harbour' in honour of the service he gave to the Catholic Church and the wider community. One of the wings at its aged-care facility, St Joseph's Aged Care, which Bernie worked hard to establish, was also named in his honour.

The Malouf family epitomises the 'success story' narrative outlined by Thornton (1868) in New Zealand. In the Australian case, the early process of workforce assimilation often involved hawking, trading, wholesaling and retailing. In this way they became an interlinking part of local communities. The next generation, like Bernie, often fought for Australia and returned deter-

mined to take an active part in community associations, business affairs and politics, reinforcing their heightened sense of national belonging. In Bernie's case, his assimilation extended to other organisational leadership roles within his community, in politics and with community-based institutions, culminating in his award of the OAM.

Another example of this transition from wartime service to community leadership involved Anthony "Bob" Moses, who served in the citizen's military forces during World War 2 and was subsequently prominent in civic affairs after the war. He was elected to Coolaman Council in the Riverina region of NSW in 1953, serving on the council until 1970, including 4 years as Deputy President. In recognition of his community service, the town named a local park after his family, Moses Park, and in 2005, 27 years after his death, a plaque was placed in the park in honour of Anthony for his contribution to the Coolaman Council (Convy 2008:47). The naming of parks, trains or certain wings in institutions (as the case of Bernie Malouf) among other places were tributes to these post-war Australian-Lebanese soldiers, reinforcing their contribution to community building and nation building. What this narrative often marginalised was the institutional setting of their family's early struggles to be accepted as participants in the process of nation building (Farry 2005)

In a similar gesture, the Jabour family of South Grafton also had a major sporting park in South Grafton named after Gordon Jabour, Jabour Park. Mr Osma Jabour's four sons all served in World War 2 (see chapter 6). Osma himself actively participated in the community in South Grafton. After he had passed away in early 1945, the Grafton local newspaper, the *Daily Examiner* (1945:2) devoted a one-page obituary describing his contribution to the South Grafton community:

> The deceased established a fine reputation in business, which was known far and wide and had a large circle of friends who will greatly regret his passing. He had always taken an active interest in matters pertaining to the progress and welfare of the town and had assisted as a member of the Railway Institute. (The Daily Examiner 1945:2)

Osma and other Lebanese parents described in Chapters 4 and 5 had always taught their families the importance of community involvement as part of their belief in assimilation Given the timing of his migration, (see Chapter 4), his own community engagement focused on business. Two of his sons, Louis and Gordon Jabour, extended the scope of the family's community participation in their own right after World War 2 through moving into politics. As noted in the previous section, an interest in Australian politics whether it be at the Local, State or Federal levels, symbolised a deeper sense of local participation and national belonging. This scope

of Lebanese participation beyond trading and beyond military participation became more prominent Australia's post-war reconstruction. Osma's son Louis Jabour was Mayor of Casino for thirteen years, while Gordon was an Alderman in the City Council of his hometown Grafton for seventeen years before he served two terms as Mayor of Grafton in 1982-83 and 1985-87 (Gordon Jabour, 5 July 2010, personal communication, 2010).

Upon his death in December 2010, *The Daily Examiner* (2010) (which had honoured his father in 1945) printed an obituary for Gordon, providing a detailed account of his involvement in his community. Among his achievements, it noted he was the founding member and president of the South Grafton Servicemen's Club as well as the South Grafton Apex Club and was the executive officer of the Jacaranda Festival Committee. However, his most passionate interest lay in sporting organisations, an activity that began before the war through the South Grafton Cycle Club. After the war, Gordon was also the Secretary of the Woolgoolga Surf Club (The *Daily Examiner* 1951:8). Later he became a champion lawn bowler. Gordon was also active on various local committees in his hometown such as the South Grafton Businessmen's Association and the South Grafton Scout Group (The *Daily Examiner* 2010).

Bernie Malouf, Anthony Moses and the Jabour brothers were not the only Australian-Lebanese veterans to move into politics. The Honourable Robert (Bob) Cumin Katter Sr. was born on 5 September 1918 in Brisbane, Queensland. His father, Carlyle Robert Katter had migrated from the town Beshari, Lebanon on 25 January 1898 on a French mail steamer and landed in the port of Sydney before settling in Normanton, in Far North Queensland (NAA: A1; 1905/2049).

While growing up in Cloncurry, Robert excelled at school rugby league (Dominic Katter, personal communication, 25 January 2011) before becoming a student in legal studies at the University of Queensland. However, he did not complete his degree due to the outbreak of war in 1939. He joined the Australian Army, the 9th Australian Infantry Battalion on the 25th January 1940, and was discharged on 18 July 1942 with the rank of Captain on medical grounds. Upon being discharged, Robert returned to Cloncurry and became active in the local business community, before turning to local and federal politics. He became the proprietor of the local drapery business, menswear store and owner of the local picture theatre. Katter was renowned for his decision to remove the steel railings in the theatre that separated Indigenous Australians from other Australians and he also removed the hard chairs so that all theatre patrons had to share the canvas seats (normally reserved for European Australians). Treating Indigenous people equally in Cloncurry was part of his belief in the struggle for Aboriginal rights (Dominic Katter, personal communication, 25 January 2011).

Katter's political ambitions led him to join the Australian Labor Party for whom he served on Cloncurry Shire Council for over twenty years. He was a Councillor from 1946 to 1967 and its Chairman from 1948 to 1951 and again from 1964 to 1967. Indeed, at one stage, Katter was Australia's youngest local government head. While he was Chairman of the Cloncurry Shire Council he had arranged the building of premises for those in the community for those without accommodation, specifically for the Aboriginal people, maintaining his fight against Indigenous Australian injustice.

In 1964, Katter joined the Country Party, and in 1966 won the Federal seat of Kennedy. He was re-elected, often with increased margins, a further nine times. Katter later served, from February to December 1972, as Minister for the Army until the McMahon Government's defeat at the December 1972 election. He continued to represent the seat of Kennedy until 1990 and was involved on various parliamentary committees and appointed by the Australian Tourist Commission as its ambassador to the United States, where he travelled through the USA representing Australia (Williams 2007 and Dominic Katter, personal communication, 25 January 2011).

While Katter devoted attention to Indigenous inequality, other Lebanese descendants still recalled the inequality and racism that the Lebanese community experienced before the war (see Chapter 5 and 6). The Hambour and Rawady families had lived and worked in Kapunda, a copper town in South Australia in which its inhabitants were predominantly of British or Irish descent. Reginald recalled how the Lebanese families had experienced racism: 'my parents and grandparents experienced racism in the town and when I was at school, the children at school used to pick on or tease me and the few Italians, so we were always in fights against a majority' (Reginald Rawady, personal communication, 11 July 2012). Yet, like other interviewees described in Chapter 6, this discrimination did not stop a large contingent of the Hambours and Rawadys from enlisting during World War 2. Saleem Hambour explained his motivation for enlistment through 'patriotic reasons' (see Chapter 6). Saleem had five siblings, Eli, Angelina, Gabriel, Martin and Evelyn Hambour who, along with three of their cousins, Roy Douglas Hambour, George Hambour and Hedley Gordon Hambour all experienced wartime in Australia's Armed Forces.

Saleem Hambour, had owned a delicatessen in Kapunda before the war, before enlisting in the RAAF. After the war, he returned to work in his deli while also working in carpet laying. Later he opened his own shop selling furniture, toys, and giftware and floor coverings. However due to periodic drought in the area, the farmers could not afford to pay their bills and were

short of discretionary funds. As a result of reduced business, Saleem decided to sell life assurance for MLC, where he excelled, travelling up to a 60 miles radius from his home to secure sales. He was also a player and later president of the Kapunda football club and was awarded Lifetime Membership. Meanwhile Eli Hambour and Reginald Rawady (described in Chapter 4) after the war were both patrons of the Celtic festival in Kapunda (Reginald Rawady, personal communication, 11 July 2012). Eli was granted an OAM on the 9 June 2003 for services to the community of Kapunda (Bruce Hambour, personal communication, 26 March 2012), while Martin Hambour returned to his teaching vocation after the war, becoming headmaster of Adelaide High School.

The Hambour contribution to Australia's defence continued with Bruce Hambour (the son of Saleem). Both his parents were RAAF veterans, and encouraged Bruce to join the Air Force Cadets, which he entered at the age of 14. In April 1964 he joined the Defence Force, still age 16, and was deployed to the Malay war zone, before serving in Vietnam with the RAN from 27 May 1965 to 11 October 1968.

Katter, the Maloufs and the Jabour brothers and others discussed in this chapter chose post-war careers or volunteered in areas that involved active engagement and even leadership in community affairs. For many, participation in the Armed Forces was transferred in the post-war reconstruction environment onto the local, regional and national civic stage. While the post-war generation broadened their field of social participation beyond that of their parents, the interviewees for my study claimed that they continued to value, and pass onto their own children, a strong ethic of civic participation and community involvement.

Another field of post-war community endeavour for Australian-Lebanese that maintained family tradition was business (see Chapters 4 and 5). With respect to Thornton's (1968) narrative of 'migrant success story', post-war business success was facilitated not only by a desire to assimilate, and a growing confidence in their assimilation, but also by the decades of economic expansion Australia experienced after the war. Many Lebanese Australians were able to build of their parents' pre-war success and prosper further during the long economic boom between 1950 and the early 1970s. Once again, in order to appreciate the nature of any particular process of migrant assimilation, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the attributes of migrants, but also the socio-economic milieu in which they operated.

After serving in World War 2, David Andary (see chapter 5), entered the field of business. He set up three major agricultural companies in the Riverland area, becoming a leader in the fruit growing industry in South Australia. He formed Riverland Fruit Product Ltd and the Berri Fruit

Juice Cooperative, which later became known as Daily Juice. David served as Director (1954-1982) and Chairman (1960–1981) of Berri Co-operative Packing Union and as Chairman of the Nisshin-Berri Pty Ltd, a non-profit joint venture with the largest flour mill in Japan, established to encourage trade between Japan and Australia. Like others discussed in this chapter, David transferred his wartime military involvement into peacetime civic and business leadership. His contribution to the economy of South Australia and specifically the town of Berri was recognised by the Australian Government when it requested his services to lead overseas trade missions on behalf of the Federal Government to Japan and then the Arabian Gulf in the 1970s and 1980s (David Andary, personal communication, 22 February 2010). On 3 June 1978, he was awarded an Order of the British Empire – Officer (Civil) for his services to the South Australian fruit industry.

Dr Alexander Morvan Dan (discussed in previous chapters) followed the path of medicine after his war experiences. Discharged from the Army on the 8th February 1946, he worked at Paddington Barracks examining returning prisoners of war. He continued his medical practice in Kingsford, Sydney, while also entering in the property industry, buying land to build houses or apartments, before renovating them for profit. He later sold his medical practice to become fully committed to building and property development.

Following a number of other Australian-Lebanese veterans, Dr Dan also received national recognition, being awarded the Order of the British Empire – Commander (civil) on 1 January 1967 in recognition of service to the community. For Dr Dan, the OBE (like David Andary), was an award that symbolised his contribution to a country that had been predominately British but had altered considerably since the end of the war due to mass immigration.

David Andary expressed a similar sentiment:

> Although I had experiences of racism at school while growing up, I did not feel any different being in the Defence Forces, as my father brought us up to be part of the Australian society from the beginning. I was Australian, fighting with Australians. So when I left the Defence Force, I felt even more confident as I had fought alongside my mates and so it was only natural to go back to my community in Berri and continue to contribute to that community which my father had started. (David Andary, personal communication, 22 February 2010)

Norman Batrouney, who had enlisted for war service on the 13 March 1941, was also awarded the Order of the British Empire Medal (civil) BEM (c) on 31 December 1976 in recognition of

service to the community. John Stanton Davies Mellick was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia on 26 January 2005 for his service to the community, particularly through the restoration of St Paul's Presbyterian Church, and for his contribution to Australian cultural studies.

The stories relayed so far in this chapter suggest that this post-war period was an important confirmation of the acceptance of the Lebanese within Australian society. This was reflected by the early Lebanese participating in the economic (Andary), political (Katter, Jabour), cultural (Batrouney) and medical (Dan) institutions In addition, to many of the Lebanese still attending non-Lebanese churches post war. It is at this point, after two global conflicts, and during a period of post-war reconstruction and economic expansion, and greater acceptance of non-Anglo migration, that the Australian Lebanese story comes to mirror the stories presented in the United States by Abdulhady (2011) and Haddad (2018) of assimilative success, or what Abdulhady (2011: 91) said 'can be assumed as the full assimilation of these individuals to their host societies'.

As noted in the previous chapter, military participation gave many Lebanese Australians an opportunity to demonstrate their sense of belonging to the nation, and this opportunity often gave them the confidence to participate collectively in the process of post-war nation building. This opportunity often arose on the back of the racism many of the Lebanese families had previously experienced before the war, an important point that Farry emphasises, and one often lost in 'migrant success' narratives. After the war, these veterans extended this sense of belonging to actively participate in various fields of endeavour within Australian society, from community engagement, sporting clubs, politics, academia and medicine. For their efforts, many ended up receiving national recognition for their contribution to the nation. Yet, for many of the interviewees in my study, the historical experiences of institutional discrimination and racism do form an important part of their family stories, highlighting the further hurdles that their parents and grandparents had to jump in order to make their way in Australia.

Continuing the Military Tradition

Thus far, this thesis has attempted to explain the assimilatory behaviours of the women and men of Lebanese background. The evidence in this chapter and the previous chapters have shown how engagement with the Australian Armed Forces, or active support for the Australian war effort, was often perceived by the Australian-Lebanese as an opportunity to participate in wider circles of post-war reconstruction.

However, these Australian-Lebanese veterans who served in both World Wars were not the only family members to serve with Australia's Armed Forces. Although most of the Australian-Lebanese who served in those wars have now passed away, Lebanese names are also represented in the conflicts of Korea, Vietnam, Borneo, Iraq, Afghanistan as well as within the current Australian Defence Forces. Some of these family stories have been touched on earlier in this chapter, where children or grandchildren of veterans followed their ancestors' footsteps into the Defence Forces or Reserves. This section explores how the military tradition has continued among some families and the meanings that participants attach to their involvement.

One example of an intergenerational military tradition was the family of John Julian Mellick, who was born on a French ship at the wharf in Melbourne in 1892 after his parents, uncle and aunt had migrated from the village Bterram, Lebanon. They eventually settled in Rockhampton, Queensland. John enlisted for service in 1916 as a mechanic with the Australian Flying Corps, while his brother Frederick Charles Mellick also served with the RAAF. Their nephew George Mellick, the son of their brother Habib, later served in World War 2, while John's two sons Sidney Oliver Alfred Mellick and John Stanton Davies Mellick (described earlier in the chapter) also served in this conflict.

Another example of Lebanese Australian intergenerational military engagement involved Edmond Haddad. He could not join the Australian Air Force during World War 2 because he was colour blind, so he joined the Australian Army instead in 1941, elevating his age from seventeen to nineteen (see Chapter 6). During his war service Edmond was a Bombardier, earned two stripes, and was later made a Sergeant. He remained with the Australian Army for thirty-three years after the war. During this post-war era, Edmond concentrated on explosives and missiles, and upon his retirement in 2 July 1974, he had risen to the rank of Colonel (Edmond Haddad, personal communication, 13 June 2010). He had five children, three of which followed their father's footsteps into the army: 'My three sons followed me into the army – not that I wanted them to but they wanted to. One got out after he was commissioned at Duntroon and he's now a very, very high-ranking professor. Peter became a General and he's done well, and the other fellow became a full Colonel'. When Edmond was asked how he felt now three of his sons had followed his footsteps, he responded 'very proud' (Edmond Haddad, personal communication, 13 June 2010). Edmond felt that his children's voluntary decision to follow his example by entering the Armed Forces was a reinforcement of the family's attachment to the country.

Another example where family tradition in the Defence Forces continued involved the Gaha brothers (also mentioned above). Three Gaha brothers (Francis, Edward and Daniel) served in World War 2 (their fourth brother Ronald Gaha served in the Cadets). The defence tradition of the Gaha brothers started during World War 1 when William Gaha, a distant cousin, served in the Army Medical Corps unit in Australia's Imperial Forces. In addition, Edward George Shalala, a maternal uncle, served in the Australian Imperial Forces as a private with the 1st Infantry, sailing for the United Kingdom in May 1917. In December 1917, he was transferred to the Australian Flying Corps and was discharged in London on 7 April 1919, after being issued with the British War Medal (Gaha 1988:113). Edward's brother Roy Peter served in World War 2 with the Army Medical Corps as a Captain, taking the position of Assistant Director of Medical Supplies for the Commonwealth of Australia and rose to Lieutenant Colonel by the end of the war (Gaha 1988:114). Another cousin of the Gaha family on the mother's side served in World War 2, Philip Thomas Basha (Gaha 1988).

The Gaha family tradition of Defence Forces service continued into the twenty-first century through Ronald's three sons, who are currently in the senior ranks of Australia's Defence Forces and served during the Gulf War and in Iraq. Ronald's fourth son was rejected by the Navy because these three sons were already serving (Ron Gaha, personal communication 9 July 2010). As Ron and Maureen Gaha conclude:

> GK: You know, how proud you must be to have such a family history - - -
>
> Ron Gaha: Yeah, we are, aren't we?
>
> Maureen Gaha: Well, we are and especially as our children have continued it on.
>
> Ron Gaha: That's made us proud because they were so enthusiastic when they went off just to cadets and then to make their lives around the army and the navy and everything. Well, not the army so much – well, it was in a way, wasn't it, but it was the navy, they embraced them and that's great and it's always stood them in good stead because they were good children but that just brings them up.

The father of Greg Melick, (first mentioned in Chapter 5), and three of Greg's great uncles served in World War 2: Stan Melick, Alfred Joe and Louis Aboud. Greg studied law and joined the Citizens Military Forces (now the Reserves) in 1966. His full name at birth was Aziz Gregory Melick and upon joining the Citizens Military Forces decided not to use his Arabic given name, Aziz, because of the racism he experienced while growing up. Instead, he adopted the name Greg Melick. Although both of his parents were of Lebanese descent, Greg always felt Australian:

> I grew up with more of an English background than a Lebanese background. I mean, I knew far more about English history than I knew about Lebanese history and, you know, I consider myself Australian, I've always considered myself Australian, not Lebanese, and most of my cultures, prejudices, etcetera, were English or Australian rather than Lebanese. (Greg Melick, personal communication, 21 May 2010)

Greg was instilled in Australian culture and history while growing up because, like many early Lebanese migrants described in Chapter 5, they believed that their children should assimilate and encompass their adopted countries culture, language and customs in order to succeed. Although Greg had experienced racism while growing up, this did not stop him (like James Saad and other Lebanese described in chapter 6) in wanting to join the Armed Forces. Greg identified as Australian first and foremost. The racism he experienced did not extend to recruitment in the Defence Forces:

GM Aziz, so I'm Aziz Gregory and I used to get tormented at school about being a wog, being an import. I used to get involved in fights about my name and so I got sick of being disciplined for being involved in fights, so when I moved to Newcastle, I started using Greg, which is my middle name, which moderated to a certain extent but there was a lot of prejudice against people of my background or any background other than Australian.

GK So why did you join the Defence Forces?

GM "I've always been interested (in Defence Forces). I joined the cadets. I was interested in firearms and I was interested in shooting and that and then I became interested in the history, you know, Australia's military history as such, and I was always proud of the fact my father fought in World War 2 and my relatives did but that wasn't a major influence.

GK What three things do you think your dad, even your cousins, Aboud, who stepped into World War 2, would they have liked most about Australia while growing up?

GM Well, they love their country and they thought it was appropriate to do their duty; they considered themselves Australian rather than Lebanese. I mean, sorry, they considered themselves Australian first, Lebanese second, which is the way I've always considered myself. I think that probably because of what this country had to offer, the freedom.

Like Greg Melick, Dominic Katter also followed his grandfather's footsteps in joining the Defence Forces as a Commander in the Royal Australian Navy Reserve, while his uncle, Bob Katter MP, followed his own father's footsteps by not only becoming an Australian Federal politician but also being a member of the Australian Army Reserve as Second Lieutenant (Dominic Katter, personal communication, 25 January 2011).

Mark Jeffrey Nowfel, the grandson of World War 2 veteran Albert Robert Nowfel, enlisted with the Australian Army soon after leaving school and has been with the army for 21 years, participating in two overseas deployments to Timor and Afghanistan. Mark and his sister Kym were Army Cadets while at school (Robert Nowfel, personal communication, 19 January 2011).

The children and grandchildren of the Australian-Lebanese veterans often carried on the family's tradition serving their country. One factor that marked the earlier generations of Lebanese Australians, the experience of racism and discrimination, was voiced far less by those I interviewed from later generations. As shown in the previous chapter, there was even a case where one Lebanese serviceman I interviewed has been used to advertise the multicultural nature of the modern Australian Defence Forces, much to his surprise, as he had always self-identified as an 'Aussie', rather than Lebanese.

A new sense of being Australian

As we read in chapter 6, most of the Australian-Lebanese veterans did not regret joining the Australian Defence Force, because fighting in the Australian Defence Forces was not only seen as a moral and patriotic duty but also an experience a camaraderie in which they were treated equally to those around them. In this way, those who fought during the two World Wars often expressed the view that they developed a more profound new sense of confidence in their Australian identity. On the other side of the cultural ledger, a new post-war understanding of the Lebanese had begun to emerge within the Australian community. This section will explore this new, more reciprocal, understanding.

The son of World War 1 veteran Richard George Saleeba (introduced in the previous chapter), Alex, recalled that one day during the 1930s he mentioned to his father that he was called a 'dago' and was being bullied at school. To this day, Alex clearly remembered the name of the offending student, and their Anglo-Celtic origins. This racism so infuriated his father Richard that he rang the bully's parents up and told them: 'I'm Australian. I've fought for King and country and I'm as much Australian'. He continued by asking them whether they had fought in the war, 'what have you done? Nothing'. (Richard Saleeba, personal communication, 19 May

2010). His father's wartime experience had given him the confidence to defend his family name and his ethnic tradition and the confidence to debunk any claim that he was less Australian than his son's tormentors. The experience of putting his life on the line for his country gave George the moral authority to stand up to and eliminate the bullying and name-calling of his son.

Another example of the impact of the war on subsequent feelings of belonging to Australia involved Malcolm Nasser (whose four first cousins, John, Wallace, Harold and Doug Nasser all fought in World War 2). Malcolm, John and Wallace were born and grew up in Clermont, while Harold and Doug, were born in Atherton, Queensland. There were only three 'foreign' families in Clermont at the time, including a Greek family (Malcolm Nasser, personal communication, 24 November 2010). Malcolm recalled clearly the change of mood that the locals in the town felt towards the 'Lebanese' after the war. Prior to discussing how the post-war environment changed the perception of the locals to ethnicity in the town, it is useful to provide a brief background on the history of the main character and his family, namely Isaac Nasser, because their story typifies the history of so many of the Lebanese described in this thesis. Malcolm's grandparents, Isaac and Footeen Nasser (nee Solomon), migrated to Australia in 1893 from the town of Kousba, Lebanon and settled in Queensland, in Clermont, a small, rural town in central Queensland highlands. Like a majority of early Lebanese settlers to Australia during this period, they established a successful hawking business (see chapter 4). Using horse and wagon, Isaac and Nicholas (Isaac's brother) supplied a range of goods to the many isolated cattle and sheep properties in the region inland from Rockhampton – using Clermont as the central point of their run where they established a supply depot. In 1896, they decided to move to Clermont on a permanent basis (Nasser 2001:23-24).

Issac and Footeen expanded the supply depot to a general and drapery store, but a year later they lost their home and business (along with many lives lost in that district) due to the devastating floods of 28 December 1916. However, in 1917 they bought the Leo Hotel in Clermont and started their career as hotel licensees (Nasser 2001:40-41).

It was at the Leo Hotel that Isaac helped establish a special landmark for the town which was the central point for the town community to gather and socialise. The Hotel was referred to as 'Nasser's Leo Pub' in a mid-1920s poem called '*The Clermont Yesteryear'* by a poet writing under the pseudonym "The Bald Eagle". Footeen was a tremendous cook and the public bar

of the Leo has the distinction of being the first in Australia to serve *Kibbe* (the Lebanese national dish) as a counter snack (Malcolm Nasser, personal communication, 24 November 2010).

Despite this fame, Issac and Footeen's grandson, Malcolm Nasser stated that they felt like outsiders while growing up in Clermont:

> Oh, a lot, yes we felt like outsiders. We're the only Lebanese family in Clermont, with the only one other Greek family at the café in the same town, the only foreign people, Greece and Lebanon in Clermont. And we're very good friend, we're very good against that Greek, we're still very good to the Greek family right now because we grew up in the town and we're accepting each other, you understand? But there are no Lebanese in Clermont, we're the only Lebanese family in Clermont for years.
> (Malcolm Nasser, personal communication, 24 November2010)

Even though the Nasser's ran a popular hotel that was central to the community, they were still treated as different and as outsiders, up until World War 2. At this juncture, the mood and appreciation of the locals towards the Lebanese family began to change in the town. They started to treat the Nasser family as part of the community and becoming more accepting. Malcolm recalls how the Leo Hotel played a role in this change of mood from outsides to insiders.:

> MN: When the war came a lot of people in Clermont went to fight in the Middle East. They came back from Africa and Lebanon back to Clermont. They'd been over there, right, fighting, and they understood our people coming from Lebanon. Prior to the war, if I said I came from Kusba they had no idea what I was talking about but when they came back from the war all the soldiers can say to my grandfather in the hotel "Isaac, we were at Damascus yesterday. We were in Nazareth last week. I was in Nazareth". You understand? They were there, they'd been there, fighting, against the Germans and made much more interesting.
>
> GK: And did that make them understand the Lebanese immigrants better?
>
> MN: Accepting, much more accepting. They never – prior to that they always looked down their nose at the Lebanese, a bit second rate, like anti race. They were a bit – they didn't call us names, they never called us like "dagos" - - - or anything, no, but they looked down.

GK: Second rate citizens?

MN: Exactly. But after the war they had much more respect for my people. Well, they knew where we came from and they had been to Tripoli, Beirut, seeing the beautiful town, you see, education, and they came back and they can understand about the Middle East and the Holy Land and all that sort of stuff, you know.

The only story I used to hear as a kid was Jack telling us that in the Clermont (Hotel) my grandfather was often exposed by drinking people, drunk, calling granddad dago or some name; that's about the only thing. No, I can't – often when they're under the influence of drink in the hotel, where often – and the boy, when they're in the background, my father and Alex have to come down and referee at the fight in the bar because they're calling granddad a name. You know what I mean?

GK: So your father and his brothers come down and defend their father?

MN: Oh, often, often, often in the hotel, oh often. Oh, you can imagine. I can tell you the story that would bore you a bit, that tape I don't think, but I'm just saying often under the influence of drug - - -

GK: Alcohol?

MN: - - - the fellow behind the bar, they'd sort of, you know, abuse you, say "Oh, you dago bastard", they'd call granddad names or something, you know what I mean. And often drinking a bit they'd splash the beer all over granddad and so us kids would run out and find my dad and quickly dad would come down and my father would have to come down and - - -

GK: Defend his father.

MN: - - - defend his father, yeah. And obviously if Jack and Kelly were from home on leave on the war they often fought. That's the only fight from, yeah, defending the family.

MN: But I must say or I can say after the war that we, living in Clermont anyway, has much more respect by the community because when granddad says "I came from Beirut" and Tripoli or those towns, Jerusalem, and the soldiers behind the counter knew what he's talking about because they've been there, they can identify so much better, you see. Been there, has been there, can say it and they can say – the soldier

> would say “Oh, yes, I've been at Kusba, Isaac. I was over there for Christmas. I went to church one day” and granddad said “I've been married in that church”. You understand? You can imagine that bond there. The bond can say “I was married in that church” and they can say “I've been in that church; I was there when I was in there”.

Malcolm’s point was that during the interwar period when the Lebanese were perceived and treated as outsiders and socially inferior most Australians had little understanding of the Middle East. However, he noticed a marked change of perception among townfolk of British decent who served with Australia’s Defence Forces in the Middle East during World War 2. This had been a revelation for these ‘country lads’. His grandfather enjoyed talking to them over the bar about the ‘old country’ and, as they now had an appreciation of where he had come from, the veterans treated him with newfound respect (Nasser 2001:60). The experiences the Australian soldiers had brought back with them after being stationed in Lebanon and the Middle East assisted the understanding of the culture of the Lebanese and provided a new sense of acceptance and tolerance.

However, it was not just the first-hand experiences of the Australian soldiers that provided a new sense of acceptance of the Lebanese – the Australian media also played a role. Chapter 6 provided various examples of how the Australian-Lebanese were portrayed in the Australia media during and after the war. Increasingly, these were examples of how the Australian regional and urban newspapers tended to emphasise the positive experiences of the Australian soldiers in Lebanon and the Middle East.

For example, on the 15 July 1941 when the Australian soldiers were the first ‘British troops to enter the city’ of Beirut, the Lebanese welcomed their entry (*The Advertiser* 1941:7). The Adelaide newspaper, *The Advertiser* (1941:7) reported this occasion with the headlines, ‘*Australians’ Entry Into Beirut – Wild Excitement Among Population*’ and ‘*Seething Crowds In City’*. The paper reported how ‘the Australian soldiers marched into Beirut at 2.45pm on 15 July 1941’, and that the Lebanese population who had lined up to see the Australian soldiers had greeted the soldiers with:

> …. cheers, bursts of clapping and flowers thrown from the rooftops. The city was seething with people excitedly awaiting the arrival of the Australians. The crowds, which roared and surged in the pavements made no secret of their delight. They pushed and jostled on the sidewalks like an Australian crowd welcoming its own soldiers home. From every window and balcony dainty Lebanese girls who are renowned for their beauty threw

> kisses to the troops and cried, “Welcome Australians. Good luck go with you”. Men ran beside the marching column shaking hands and shouting, “Vive l’Australie”. They greeted them as victorious allies and not a conquering army. (*The Advertiser* 1941:7)

This report portrays the Lebanese as not only welcoming to Australians, but cheering ‘like Australians’, presenting a people who were not ‘alien’ to Australian sentiments. The *Daily News* (1941:2) reported that Staff Sergeant Max Shephard, who was in Syria with the Australian Army, had written to his father in Perth during his time in the Middle East, describing his experience of entering a town in Lebanon: ‘Diggers who arrived in the town had only to buy one drink after which the only way to stop the Syrians buying more for them was to walk out’.

These media accounts illustrate not only a positive view of the hospitality of the Lebanese culture but also the fact the Lebanese citizens were overjoyed to have Australian soldiers on their soil protecting their country. As the locals welcomed Australian troops into their country without any hesitation and with warmth, media reports were highly sympathetic towards Lebanese culture, treating it as similar to Australian culture.

Further evidence of this sympathetic treatment comes from the poet Kenneth Slessor, who was an Official Commonwealth War Correspondent during the war. In an article that appeared in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* (1942:4) entitled ‘*Standing Guard, A.I.F in Syria, Popular with Inhabitants’.* Slessor described the experiences of the Australian Army in the Middle East, Cairo, Palestine and Syria. Below is an extract of his article describing the life of the Australian soldier in the Middle East:

> …the A.I.F. has grown into the daily life of Syria. The Australians have made themselves more at home here than in any part of the Middle East. After Egypt and the barren landscape of Tobruk, Syria and the Lebanon are green, enchanting and romantic. The inhabitants too, are a merry, friendly people who have enjoyed the Australians from the beginning. The Australians laugh with them, chaff them, play jokes and games and sometimes even startle them, but no other troops could have got closer to their hearts. The Syrians and the Lebanese amongst whom the men of the A.I.F. are now living in daily contact, will be sorry when they go, not only because it will be partying of friends, but because some of the fun will have vanished from their simple lives. (*Kalgoorlie Miner* 1942:4)

Slessor describes how the Australians were able to integrate and assimilate with the local Lebanese population, who had provided a generous welcome. His first-hand account of how Australian soldiers were welcomed in Lebanon was powerful prose and could only positively influenced the views of British Australians towards the Australian-Lebanese. It also corresponds with the account Nasser presented after the war in his Claremont hotel. Such reporting would have influenced people on the home front and engendered more positive feelings towards the Lebanese settlers among those British Australians at home. The Lebanese could be now understood and accepted on their own cultural terms, rather than compared and contrasted with 'Europeans' and 'Asians'.

For example, Word War 2 veteran Joy Najar (see chapter 6) told the story of how her brother Joe Aboud was sent to Lebanon in 1941 with the Australian army. It was a very cold winter with snow and freezing temperatures. The Australian soldiers were selling or swapping (hawking) their blankets with the locals for the Lebanese alcoholic beverage *arak* in order to keep warm (Joy Najar, personal communication, 27 February 2010). These stories reinforce the friendships and understanding of cultures that developed with the locals and the Australian soldiers. Soldiers who had served in the Middle East spoke of the Lebanese with a newfound understanding, and this could only raise respect for Lebanese migrants in Australia. There is also a symmetry in this example with the early Lebanese in late nineteenth century Australia who formed closer ties with locals through trading relations. These wartime trading links also led to closer relations between different cultures.

Anecdotes of the experiences of Australian-Lebanese veterans who served in Lebanon had a positive impact on the way Australians judged Lebanese immigrants in Australia after the war. It reinforced the positive reporting within Australian newspapers on the interaction by Australian soldiers with the Lebanese locals and the positive reporting of the Australian -Lebanese community's support for the war effort (see Chapter 6). However, this element of attitudinal change should not be treated as a generic shift in Australian attitudes towards non-Anglo-Celtic migrants. The fact that so many veterans had been posted in the Middle East was a coincidence that benefitted the Nasser family mentioned earlier and other Lebanese migrants and their descendants. It remains a specific example of the potential for development of mutual respect when two cultures either trade or work more closely together. In this Lebanese case, the nature of the relationship facilitated greater respect for Lebanese migrants.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided examples of how many of the Lebanese who served in the Australian Defence Forces during World War 2 subsequently became 'migrant success stories' of the kind that Thornton (1968) documented in New Zealand. For the purpose of this thesis, these are more than examples of 'personal upward mobility'' - they also symbolised that this group of migrants had established roots in their new country and were confident enough to play active leadership roles in their communities. Through active service in Australian political life, or in organisations such as the RSL, lifesaving clubs, Rotary, Lions and the annual ANZAC Day parades, the Lebanese and their descendants were demonstrating the extent to which they had integrated into post-war Australian culture. This chapter has also shown that their acceptance was facilitated by post-war economic development and the coincidence that so many Australian soldiers had become more familiar with the Middle East.

Throughout this chapter, it has been noted that the examples presented echo to a large degree the type of 'migrant success' narrative that Thornton (1976) described in New Zealand and Naff, Abdelhady and Haddad found in the United States. Farry (2005) and Gualtieri (2009) have been more critical of such stories as they tended to suggest a more benign process of integration and assimilation whereby migrants found a way to fit into the dominant culture. Not only did migrants have to integrate in the terms set by the state, they also faced many legislative obstacles. In this and previous chapters, the narrative presented has attempted to balance the 'narrative of success' with the recognition that the role of the state during this period was less than benign. Along with casual everyday racism, the Lebanese migrants and their descendants faces a range of discriminatory Acts that inhibited their integration into Australian society. Farry and Gualtieri have been alert to these tensions involved in the process of integration, and the interviews that I gathered for this research provide many examples of the struggles involved in the process of belonging. Yet, the interviews also suggest that in recalling their own family histories, most of the Lebanese Australians were prepared to give voice to and appropriate the 'migrant success narrative' that Thornton, Naff, Abdelhady and Haddad articulated. Their pride in their process of assimilation is tempered with the recognition that they came from another culture, but found compatibilities and synergies that fostered acceptance and eventually mutual respect. In that sense, many of these stories hint at what Khater (2019) labelled a 'transnational identity'.

8. Conclusion

The context for this thesis was the Lebanese diaspora that began in Australia during the mid-1800s. As noted in the introduction and literature review (Chapters 1 and 2), at this time the Lebanese often stamped their presence in host countries by travelling around regions as hawkers, setting up businesses in different urban and rural settings. As noted in Chapter 2, researchers have noted how early Lebanese settlers used those initial opportunities to assimilate and settle in their adopted countries. This thesis used this context to examine how the early Lebanese diaspora in Australia experienced the process of assimilation from their earliest forms of economic activity to deeper forms of social engagement, such as involvement in Australia's Defence Forces during the World Wars. It then examined how descendants subsequently understood that engagement in the Australian Armed Forces and other military experiences from the perspective of a sense of national belonging.

Establishing the Significance of the Research

As noted in Chapter 1, my initial interest in this issue developed out of Batrouney's (1988) overview of the history of the Lebanese in Australia, which made me question why so many early Lebanese joined the Australian Defence Forces during the World Wars. I wanted to explore the reasons that made these servicemen and women participate in armed combat for their adopted country, especially after their ambiguous status as non-Anglo migrants and 'aliens'.

My approach to this question involved interviewing World War 2 veterans and dependants of veterans from both World Wars. Using this technique, and supported by documentary evidence, I explored their families' participation in Australia's economy, their settlement experiences, the milieu of their early settlement and set this against discriminatory government policies of the day.

In approaching my initial research question, I was aware that although the Lebanese have been settling in Australia since the 1880s, their participation in Australia's Armed Forces had not been considered in any systematic manner. This is not surprising given the fact that it is only very recently that researchers have begun writing about non-British participation in Australia's military, as noted in the literature review in Chapter 2. This thesis contributes to this more recent research on the military experiences of non-British experiences in the Australian Armed Forces.

An added significance of this thesis involves linking this experience to the sociological circumstances of migrant assimilation. By studying the involvement of the first wave of Lebanese and their dependants in Australia's Armed Forces, my thesis helps appreciate the social processes and experiences that encouraged the successful assimilation of the early Lebanese settlers. This assimilation was the more interesting given the racism that many Lebanese experienced during the course of their settlement. This study of Lebanese settlement is a valuable contribution to Australian migration history because of the clash of perceptions between settlers and the host culture, where the Lebanese saw themselves as 'European', while the host country saw them as 'outsiders', equivalent to the debarred Asians, a status that the Lebanese strongly rejected (Batrouney, 1992). There was therefore a tension between migrants' self-perception and aspirations on the one hand and the host country's acceptance and accommodation of their differences on the other hand.

My findings reveal that, in the face of this tension of conflicting perceptions, the Lebanese negotiated the process of assimilation in three major ways:

- Through their early employment experiences, such as hawking and their participation in Australia's economic activity;
- Their social experiences with Australian institutions such as religious institutions, business associations and sporting clubs; and
- and Australia's Armed Forces participation in civilian and military roles during the World Wars.

The importance of these findings is contextualised in Chapter 2, which explored the literature on the migration experiences of the Lebanese diaspora to five different countries (Australia, USA, Canada, New Zealand and Argentina). This revealed a variety of responses within the Lebanese community to the process of migration across the diaspora. Under some circumstances, such as in Canada (Abu Laban, 1980), there occurred a 'diaspora identity' that maintained Lebanese culture. In other instances, such as in the USA (Abdelhady, 2011 and Naff, 1992 and Hitti 1924) and New Zealand (Thornton, 1968), the Lebanese community tended to assimilate into their host culture. This literature helped me refine my research question:

- what were the historical, political and social policies and socio-economic conditions which gave rise to different migratory responses?

An analysis of the Australian experience was undertaken to help answer these questions. Subsequent questions which the existing literature raised included:

- did the settlement of the early Lebanese and their experiences play a role in shaping a new identity for Australian-Lebanese?
- What sociological factors affected the early Lebanese migrants' experiences?
- What factors encouraged the Australian-Lebanese to join the Defence Forces?

  and to what extent did this affect their level of assimilation into Australian society?

I decided to focus these questions on an analysis of the participation of the Lebanese community in Australia's Armed Forces because this is an arena where participation in a national threat is widely considered to be a supreme test of loyalty. Furthermore, given the Lebanese had been arriving in Australia since the 1880s, this period coincided with restricted and discriminatory migration policies by the Colonial States and then the Commonwealth that placed the Lebanese in an ambiguous position. This historical timing made it possible to explore the tensions within Australian recruitment policies between sentiments towards foreigners and the responses of migrants affected by such policies during the two most significant military conflicts the nation engaged in, World War 1 and World War 2. As noted above, up until now there has been no research that specifically investigates the involvement of the Lebanese diaspora and the participation of Lebanese migrants in the Australian Defence Forces.

The questions listed above which the literature review chapter suggested to me were operationalised in my methodology. In Chapter 3, I described my research process, which was centred on qualitative face-to-face interviews. From my review of the global diaspora literature, I noticed that one feature of studies of Lebanese immigrants has been the use of face-to-face interviews, questionnaires, and participant observation to collect necessary information (see Abu-Laban 1980; Jabbra 1984; Naff 1985; Abdelhady 2011; McKay 1989; Monsour 2005; and Hyndman-Rizk 2011). Given my research questions, I anticipated that face-to-face interviews would allow the war veterans and dependants an opportunity to describe their (and their family members') experiences in their own terms. I also decided, where possible, to visit most of the participants in their own homes as my research questions were focused on family heritage. I found that the qualitative interviews allowed participants the opportunity to convey their situation from their own perspective and in their own words.

Research Evidence and Findings

The evidence from the research confirmed and augmented previous findings that the early Lebanese experiences of growing up in Australia were shaped by a will to assimilate. In Chapter 4, I explored how many early Lebanese settlers in Australia - like those in the USA, South

America, New Zealand and Canada during the same period (see Chapter 2) - were employed in hawking as their first form of occupation after their arrival. Hawking became the catalyst for many early Lebanese to venture into different cities, towns and regions across Australia and this laid the foundations for the early Lebanese settlers (both men and women) to assimilate into their adopted lifeworld. These conclusions were reached through secondary evidence as well as introducing new primary evidence. This primary evidence was based on my first-hand accounts from veterans and relatives who relayed their families' hawking experiences after their arrival to Australia. Secondary sources included an extensive media search on 'Syrian' hawking stories across Australia from the 1880s onwards, as well as Parliamentary debates, which provided an invaluable foundation on which I described the history of early Lebanese hawking practices and how the Lebanese were perceived within the Australian society, whether by competing businesses, politicians or local residents.

Drawing on this early migratory experience, the subsequent findings in Chapter 4 were pivotal in helping to answer one of my principal thesis questions: *"What were the early migration experiences and the social processes of the early Lebanese migrants that encouraged and influenced them and their dependants to successfully assimilate in Australia?"* Hawking provided an ideal context for the early Lebanese to learn the English language and to familiarise themselves with local milieux. This occupation became an important link through which many assimilated into local society. The entrepreneurial spirit of hawking encouraged the Lebanese to engage with any person seen as a potential customer, and this facilitated the interaction with a broad cross-section of Australian society. In particular, in remote regions their presence with their wares was not only functional and utilitarian but also a welcome distraction in the everyday life in regional towns.

Hawking became an occupation as well as lifestyle and it facilitated early Lebanese settlers' assimilation. Eventually, many of them exchanged this more nomadic life for greater stability in regional areas, once profits from hawking raised the capital to make a stable base possible, as exemplified by the stories of George Koorey and George Dan in Chapter 4. As I demonstrated, hawking provided the opportunity for many other early Lebanese to venture into different regions, cities and towns across Australia and to build a base for their social and economic assimilation into the host society.

Chapter 5 explored the *social* factors which further facilitated the early Lebanese assimilation into Australian society. For instance, the mobile nature of hawking ensured that the Lebanese were not seen by the host culture as forming 'ghettoes' within the Arabic community. At most,

to employ MacKay's terminology, the Lebanese were an ethnic category, rather than an 'ethnic group'. This was particularly valid for regional areas where so many Lebanese practices hawking. The itinerant nature of their employment as hawkers took most of them to country areas where they sought to interact with other cultures, rather than engaging primarily with their own cultural group. Furthermore, Chapter 5 also described how these early Lebanese settlers had been exposed to Western influences for some decades prior to immigrating to the West. Lebanon had established Western education and religious institutions as well as becoming a staging post for importing and exporting goods to European, American, African and Middle Eastern countries. In this manner, many of the early Lebanese immigrants were familiar with the culture of the West, including its languages and religions prior to migrating to Canada, South America, the USA, or Australia by the late 1800s (Hourani, 1991; Naff 1985; Gaspard 2004; Harris 2012). This cultural and economic context helped ease Lebanese migrants' transition into Australian society.

Chapter 5 also addressed a range of social behaviours and attitudes that the first generations of Lebanese migrants adopted in their efforts to assimilate into the host culture, and my interviews emphasised how these attitudes were passed onto later generations. For instance, the early hawkers established businesses in rural towns where few other Lebanese families resided. They therefore often enrolled in and attended local churches, Anglised their names and socialised within the local community, further facilitating and expressing their assimilation.

The assimilating influence of parents was illustrated by the answers their children and grandchildren provided to my question: *"If you (or your father/mother/siblings) were asked, what kind of advice would you (or your father/mother/siblings) give Lebanese immigrants in order for them to do well and succeed in Australia, what would be your answer (their answer)?".* As noted in Chapter 5, a substantial majority responded that the advice would be to assimilate and integrate into the Australian community.

These findings from Chapters 4 and 5 tended to support the classification of the early Lebanese Australians as an 'ethnic category' rather than an 'ethnic group' (see Chapter 2). Even in situations where it could be argued that they acted collectively, or in the name of the group (such as efforts to support the war effort, or to reform discriminatory legislation) the ultimate aim of their group actions was to eliminate the distinctions between the Lebanese and the rest of the Australian society. Such collective action by the Lebanese as an 'ethnic group' invariably stressed the 'likeness' between the Lebanese and the dominant culture.

Having established in Chapters 4 and 5 that a strong assimilatory environment was part of the early Lebanese heritage in Australia, the following chapters explored the attitudes and responses of those of Lebanese heritage to Australia's war effort. My findings in Chapters 6 and 7 helped answered the other principal thesis question: *"to what extent was early Lebanese involvement and experiences in the Australians Armed Forces a contributing factor to their successful assimilation into Australian society, including that of their dependants?"* While Chapters 4 and 5 provided evidence of a strong will to assimilate among the early Lebanese migrants, this second question was designed to test this assimilatory resolve, especially in the face of discriminatory policies and attitudes within the host country.

Using secondary and primary sources (interviews and documentary evidence), Chapter 6 revealed a variety of reasons why so many Australian-Lebanese joined the Australian Defence Forces. For most of the interviewees, the Australian Armed Forces was a significant institution that gave them (and their family members) the opportunity to 'prove' themselves as Australians, or - for those who did not enlist - to contribute to the home front and be counted as patriotic Australians. The overwhelming majority of the Australian-Lebanese veterans interviewed revealed that they did not regret joining the Australian Defence Forces, precisely because it provided the opportunity to demonstrate their belonging to the wider Australian society. Other interviewees claimed that they were so assimilated into Australian society that their Lebanese ancestry had played no part in their decision to enlist.

My research also emphasised how the early Lebanese navigated the government regulations and policies of the day in order to enlist, especially the enlistment experiences of many Australian-Lebanese who enrolled during World War 1 when more restrictions were placed on the recruitment of non-British-subjects. These experiences were exemplified by Mr Said Samaha, who wrote to senior members of the Western Australian Defence recruiting committee stating his case as to why Lebanese should be enlisted, as well as Mr Anthony Zed who went to great lengths to have his parents and himself naturalised so that he could serve in the war. What these cases and others in Chapter 6 showed was that the early Lebanese veterans and their dependants went to great lengths to demonstrate their loyalty to Australia and to be accepted as Australians. It was not enough to feel Australian through their occupational history and local assimilation. War tested their loyalty in times of heightened social tensions and this environment helped reinforce their will to assimilate.

My research then moved to the Second World War and observed that a majority of Australian-Lebanese enlisted for two reasons, both of which were associated with their sense of belonging

to Australia and their desire to be counted as part of the nation: either to 'prove a point' that they too were Australian or to demonstrate their strong allegiance and 'patriotism' to their country. As noted in Chapters 4 and 5, these servicemen and women (World War 2) already felt a strong allegiance to Australia. However, what emerged from many stories was a sense that many Lebanese had experienced either overt or subtle racism even during the inter-war years and, despite this, a large percentage of the men and women were ready and willing to enlist in the Australian Defence Forces. Those who experienced such racism were more likely to be motivated by proving a point.

Ironically, as Chapter 6 noted, some of these servicemen and women of Lebanese heritage who were keen to demonstrate their sense of belonging found that their Arabic skills and cultural knowledge were utilised through recruitment as intelligence officers for the Australian Army during their time in combat in the Middle East. This was illustrated in numerous first-hand accounts from interviewees. The pride expressed by these veterans suggested an emerging awareness that their Lebanese heritage and their Australian sense of belonging were mutually compatible rather than mutually contradictory. In addition, Chapter 6 also provided many examples of how the experience of many Australian servicemen and women serving in the Middle East helped break down prejudices to the acceptance of the Lebanese during and after the Second World War.

Overall, Chapter 6 illustrated how the participation of Lebanese settlers in the Armed Forces presented an opportunity to 'prove themselves' as Australians. It consolidated their feelings of being Australians who were fighting for common values. Whether the Australian-Lebanese joined the Armed Forces or supported the war efforts on the home front, the experiences of World War Two reinforced their confidence in their status as Australians. it was also observed that the press played an increasingly facilitating role in this process, reporting favourably on both Australian-Lebanese efforts to support the war as well as the responses of Lebanese to the Australian occupation of Lebanon.

Many veterans used this confidence to reinforce their sense of loyalty to local communities and the nation through wider social participation in post-war reconstruction. This effort was the focus of Chapter 7, which found that many veterans became more closely involved in their local communities or politics, becoming successful local and Federal politicians, business entrepreneurs, property owners, doctors or academics. In Chapter 7, I also found that many veterans (and their dependants), maintained an allegiance to their wartime battalion through allied

organisations such as the Returned Services League (RSL) and the annual ANZAC Day parades across Australia. Some World War 2 veterans stayed on in the military after the Second World War, while some of their dependants continued the family involvement in Australia's defence tradition by fighting in war theatres such as Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan or Iraq.

This post-war participation in Australian society can be considered a further milestone in the history of early Australian-Lebanese settlement in terms of mutual interaction between migrants, the host culture and assimilatory behaviour. Their actions on the home front after World War 2 symbolised that they had moved beyond an economic role and were confident enough to play active community leadership roles, for instance in Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs and lifesaver clubs.

Throughout the thesis, in particular in the later chapters, it was found that many Lebanese immigrants did not retain their Lebanese identity and increasingly identified as more Australian than Lebanese. In many cases, this was a conscious decision among the Lebanese Australians resulting from their earlier will to assimilate. After all, they fought in Egypt, Gallipoli, Middle East, France, Belgium and Papua New Guinea at a time when Government legislation made it difficult for some non-British Australians to enlist or vote and being counted as Australians. As noted, especially in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, these men and women of Lebanese descent were trying to carve out a place in Australian society on their own terms, even if it meant accommodating to government and legal stipulations that they resented. Also, they had to contend with casual racism in their everyday lives prior to enlisting as well as from some officers who were gatekeepers to their participation in the Armed Forces.

In this way, my research charted a path between the New Zealand researchers Thornton (1968) and Farry (2005), and between the United States research conducted by Naff, Abdelhady and Haddad on one hand and Khater and Gualtieri on the other hand. In both the New Zealand and the United states contexts, I pointed to ongoing debate where some researchers adopt a more 'celebratory' approach to Lebanese assimilationism. This research tradition can be distinguished from a more critical approach to assimilation that emphasises the power of the state and the dominant cultural institutions to impose the conditions under which migrants are considered 'acceptable'. In the New Zealand case, for instance, Farry suggested that Thornton's research tended towards presenting a narrative in which migrant success was achieved through meeting the obligations and aims of the dominant host culture and Government authorities. Farry drew attention to the racism and discrimination many migrants faced and emphasised how migrant success was defined on the terms of the dominant culture. My

research took account of both these perspectives and suggests a synthesis between them. The restrictive state policies and casual racism influenced the way in which the Lebanese negotiated their acceptance into Australian society, but most of my interviewees themselves, while cognisant of these restrictions in their families settlement story, presented narratives that corresponded with the 'successful migrant story' within the confines of the definitions of the dominant culture. Often, when migrants were forced to negotiate their sense of belonging, they adopted narratives that could correspond with Khater's concept of a 'transnational identity', asserting the common positive values that different cultures possess or proclaim.

Elena Govor has also dwelt on the issue of assimilation and reasons for enlistment by the Russian ANZACS. She concluded that patriotic feelings were the reasons why Russian immigrants enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (Govor 2005:68-69). Like my research, Govor illustrated the early Russians strong assimilative feelings and pride of being part of the Australian society after they had served in World War 1 and 'belonging to the ANZAC tradition was at the heart of their sense of belonging to Australia" (Govor 2005:29-240). This Russian experience can be compared with those explored in this thesis. The experiences of the Australian-Lebanese involvement in the Australian Defence Forces and their post-war experiences of assimilation in Australian society draws parallels with the Russian ANZAC experiences. They represent two different cultures, yet with similar war and assimilation experiences as illustrated in my Chapters 6 and 7. One difference that makes the Lebanese even more intriguing is that the Russian homeland was part of the Allied war efforts, while the Lebanese homeland was considered part of hostile alien territory, even though other much larger Lebanese communities in the global diaspora were actively seeking ways to free their country from Ottoman rule (see Fahrenthold 2019).

Contribution of Findings to Local Literature

Through these findings, I have been able to contribute new angles to the literature on the Lebanese experiences in Australia, such as research undertaken by McKay (1989), Batrouney (1979; 1985; 2019), Mansouri (2006), and Monsour (2010) to name a few. What my research specifically contributes is primary evidence through detailed first-hand perspectives from 80 participants on the early Lebanese migration and assimilation experiences. While this is in itself valuable, none of these other Australian studies have devoted much space to the role of the Armed Forces in facilitating or reinforcing this process of assimilation. It could be said from my thesis research that this experience in war was a crucible of Lebanese assimilation.

Where the Australian literature has discussed the enlistment of Australian-Lebanese serving in the World Wars with Australia's Defence Forces (Batrouney, 1985 and El Khouri, 2012), they have tended to under-emphasise the prior sociological factors that facilitated their enlistment in the Australian military (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, none of the studies explored how wartime involvement affected post-war community participation. Chapter 7 of this thesis took this extra step in assessing the post-war involvement by Australian-Lebanese World War 2 veterans in civil and civic society.

A key obstacle to assimilation for the early Lebanese settlers was that like many other new immigrants they experienced various forms of discrimination and racism, whether it be because of the colour of their skin, the way they dressed, the country they were born in or by the nature of their employment, as reported in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. However, the early Lebanese are a case that departs from Sam et al's (2010) findings that 'those experiencing high discrimination are more likely to prefer separation, whereas those experiencing less discrimination prefer integration or assimilation'. In addition, they found that 'high discrimination predicts low preference for integration and poor adaptation'. The historical background of the early Lebanese migrants and their timing of migration can be speculated as reasons why they depart from Sam et al's findings. The same can be speculated from Berry's (2006) research, which concluded that 'if immigrants experience rejection from the society of settlement, then they are more likely to reject them in return'. My research found that the early Lebanese immigrants did not reject the host country and nor did they prefer separation. Despite the finding that the early Lebanese experienced discrimination, this did not affect the will of many early Lebanese to assimilate, as illustrated in my Chapter 4,5 and 6.

My research also provides a valuable historical and sociological context for McKay's (1989:118) conclusion that the second and third generations of Lebanese did not have an affinity for Lebanon. I reached a similar conclusion in Chapter 5. For example, a number of Australian-Lebanese veterans interviewed for this research whose parents had migrated to Australia had inherited property and land in Lebanon but were not interested in maintaining it, nor did they keep up the contacts with relatives in Lebanon. In addition, as noted in Chapter 5, many of my participants, descendants of the early Lebanese migrants, were not interested in learning the Arabic language or any orientation towards the Lebanese churches, even after branches were established in Australia. Indeed, I found that many of the early Lebanese attended the Church of England or the Catholic Church in the towns where they lived.

My findings in Chapter 5 are also consistent with the views of Batrouney (2002) who found that the Lebanese were engaged in assimilatory behaviours, such as shedding their religions, changing their Arab names to Anglo ones and engaging in the host societies cultural practices. My methodology uncovered many instances of this type of behaviour and therefore provided corroborating evidence for Batrouney. In addition, Batrouney stated that the Lebanese were influenced by the dominant assimilationist ideologies in all public spheres and adopted Anglo-Australian values and attitudes, a finding reinforced throughout my research.

My findings therefore corroborate prior research on the various assimilatory behaviour of the early Lebanese settlers and their dependants in terms of their early hawking experiences, change of names and participation in the major institutions of the nation. However, while complementing their research, my research identified the important symbolic and material effects that wartime experiences had upon the early Lebanese in terms of their will to belong as Australians and to be accepted as Australians. Through my interviewing techniques, I have added empirical weight to Batrouney's (1985) and El Khouri's (2012) suggestion that the involvement and experiences of the early Lebanese in the Australian Defence Forces was a contributing factor for their successful assimilation into Australian society, including their dependants. The evidence in Chapter 7 provided additional weight to this claim.

International Literature

Thus far in the conclusion, I have briefly alluded to some US and Canadian research on Lebanese diaspora as it related to specific parts of my argument. However, given the international nature of the nineteenth century Lebanese diaspora, more attention is warranted concerning how my thesis relates to this wider body of research. The international literature as it pertains to this research provides a range of important similarities to my findings, although there are also some significant differences.

As noted in the previous section, with respect to the literature on the early Lebanese settlement in Australia, there has not been any detailed academic treatment on their hawking experiences. However, my findings mirrored those in the international literature of Lebanese immigration the United States of America. For example, Naff (Shakir 1997:42) concluded that the most fundamental factor in the assimilation of Syrians in the USA was 'pack peddling'.

Like my research, and other research such as McKay (1989) and Batrouney (1992; 2002), along with US research by Naff (1992) and Argentinian research Valverde (1992)], a New Zealand study conducted by Thornton (1968) described how the early Lebanese did not resist

assimilation. Thornton also found that the early Lebanese immigrants in Dunedin integrated into New Zealand society through economic means, mainly through the practice of hawking.

Thornton's research provides some similarities to my research on the early Lebanese-Australian migration. Like the New Zealand migrants, they too had low correspondence with the homeland to the extent that many of the early Australian-Lebanese did not want to claim any property or land in Lebanon which was left for the descendants. Also, the majority of the early Lebanese in Australia and their descendants also built their future in Australia, starting with hawking and then involvement in their communities by establishing local businesses and settling permanently in their chosen place of settlement. However, the main difference between the New Zealand and Australian case appears to be that the early Lebanese Australians engaged in less group cohesion, compared with the New Zealand Lebanese.

One explanation for the differences between the New Zealand and Australian experiences could be due to Thornton's population sample, which was primarily an urban migrant community. A large number of early Lebanese migrants to New Zealand settled in Dunedin. Many of the migrants I had interviewed had settled in country towns where there were few fellow Lebanese. In larger population areas, such as Dunedin, it was possible to maintain a stronger sense of ethnic grouping. Thornton's research might have assumed a closer resemblance to my research had been able to focus more on urban areas, such as Redfern in Sydney, where, as Chapter 2 noted, an early community of Lebanese congregated and built warehouses, factories and shops. It was often from such areas that new migrants sought assistance before spreading out to various regions. As noted in Chapter 2, the press devoted attention to this group of urban Lebanese prior to and during World War 1, but unlike the Dunedin-Lebanese, these urban Australian-Lebanese dispersed away from their inner-urban enclave.

My research also supports some of the conclusions reached by Tabar (2005) from a more general diasporic migration perspective. Tabar concluded that the Lebanese migrants and their descendants across the world share similar experiences that constitute the basis for sharing an imaginary diasporic identity: they all come from, or are descendants of, the same country of origin. Whether they went to the United States, Latin America, Australia or Canada, they all tended to initially face social exclusion and racial discrimination, and this impacted on the process of their integration. Tabar (2005) summarises the Lebanese diaspora experiences by stating that: 'The diasporic identity of these migrants is even more solidified and rigidified in the context of resisting discrimination and fighting for inclusion and equality with members of the host country'. This resonated with the Australian context, as my thesis demonstrated during

their early settlement experiences and participation in the Armed Forces during the First and Second World Wars.

The experience of the early Lebanese in Australia also supports Tabar's claim that this diaspora resisted discrimination and fought for inclusion and equality as members of the host country (Tabar 2005:8). In Chapter 6, I described how the early Lebanese who sought to enlist in World War 1 met various obstacles to enlistment, such as the *Defence Act 1903*, while the *Naturalisation Act 1903* prevented non-Europeans from applying for naturalisation. Chapter 5 presented a range of illustrations from archival sources that showed how the early Lebanese navigated these Acts in order to enlist and be accepted as Australians. In addition, the thesis presented first-hand accounts from World War 2 veterans outlining how they resisted discrimination and racism in their efforts to enlist and flight for their country. Thus, the wider international Lebanese diaspora literature was valuable in generating my hypotheses relating to the Australian context.

Furthermore, as noted in Chapter 2, the literature also shows that the concept of assimilation is contested in many local contexts. There are researchers who celebrate the assimilation success of Lebanese (Thornton, Naff, Haddad, Abdulhady) and those who consider that this success is built on the power of the dominant host culture to ensure migrant conformity (Farry, Gualitieri, Khater). In this thesis, I have drawn from numerous perspectives and in this way endeavoured to respect the testimonies of respondents while also recognising the obstacles that were placed in the way of their efforts the make a home in Australia. Both the more celebratory and the more critical perspectives were found to be valuable in presenting a more nuanced picture of the early Australian-Lebanese experience. Indeed, as shown throughout Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, respondents in this research presented narratives of settlement which tended towards the celebratory, while they often contextualised their experiences by presenting anecdotes of discrimination, racism, government suspicion. As would be expected in any successful process of assimilation, the anecdotes of suspicion faded from the narratives over time, becoming almost a memory by Chapter 7.

Qualifying and Extending the Research

As described in Chapter 3, my research used oral questionnaires and secondary document analysis in order to answer my research questions, which themselves were derived from existing literature. All research methods have their limitations and this study acknowledges its own limitations, noting explicitly that:

i) A small sample of 22 Australian-Lebanese World War 2 veterans was obtained from the total of over 600 who served. In addition, 58 dependants of veterans were identified and added to my sample. One consequence of the necessarily limited sample is that if it had been possible to obtain a larger number of veterans, I would have had a richer variety of experiences to draw on in my findings.

ii) One possible criticism that could be levelled at my methodology was that I searched for Lebanese Australians whose families had a historical relationship with the Armed Forces and who served in the Australian military. It could be argued that this skewed my population sample in advance towards migrants and descendants who already possessed an assimilatory sensibility. However, I was able to supplement my interviews with evidence from secondary sources and detailed interviews with their dependants. These primary sources tended to be consistent with the evidence presented by my interviewees, thus heightening my confidence that my sample was not unrepresentative of Lebanese experiences. Furthermore, given the age of World War 2 veterans, my total population is declining considerably and my research was timely.

iii) As noted above, it possible that my sample over-represented early Lebanese who resided in regional Australia and under-represented urban members the diaspora, in particular those in inner-city Sydney and Melbourne. One reason that explains this skewed population was noted throughout the chapters. Many regional Lebanese that I interviewed retained strong links to the communities their families initially settled in. Meanwhile, the early urban concentrations of Lebanese around Redfern in Sydney and Carlton in Melbourne dispersed. This made it difficult for me to identify these early urban members of the diaspora. Further research is needed to identify these migrants and to examine their community ties of solidarity, and to determine whether their experiences differed markedly from those residing in regional areas away from close ethnic ties. However, in defence of my findings, it should be noted that their was a correspondence between the views expressed by my interviewees and the views reported in the press from Lebanese residing in major urban settlements.

iv) Studying one ethnic group in the Australian military does not allow for easy generalisations and comparativeness with the other immigrants who participated in Australia's Defence Forces during the World Wars, such as Australian Indigenous

groups, Maltese, Indian, Chinese, Greek or Russians and Jewish officers to name a few. Caution needs to be exercised in making such comparisons drawing on studies of separate migrant communities. Areas of further research could include comparative studies carried out with immigrants from other ethnic groups who participated in Australia's Armed Forces, for example the Australian Greeks or Australian Chinese. This would be a useful addition to the Russian research by Gover and would help to understand the similarities and differences that individual cultural groups experienced in their attitudes towards participation in war. This would also help overcome some of the limitations of the research noted above. Some ethnic groups such as the early Chinese had also experienced racism and exclusion, while experiencing a different migration history than the early Lebanese settlers. Similar hypotheses to mine could thus be posited to provide that comparison.

v) The fact that I am of Lebanese descent could also bias the reactions from other Lebanese, or at least differentiate them from other interviewees' reactions. Although, my background being Lebanese could have been a limitation to the research, it also had its advantages in that I was more confident in understanding the cultural and migration issues and backgrounds raised by the interviewees. It also assisted me greatly to gain the trust of the interviewees and their families early on during the interview process, as I was able to quickly develop rapport with the veterans and their dependants. Again, the fact that the findings from my interviews were consistent with so much secondary literature and international literature suggests that I was able to limit intentional or unintentional bias.

Apart from some literature on the American Lebanese in the U.S. Armed Forces, there is little literature more globally on the relationship between the veterans' assimilatory characteristics and the Armed Forces. My research has focused on this relationship as an assimilatory factor and has found that military involvement did perform an important role in presenting opportunities for Lebanese to express and reinforce their sense of belonging to the nation, even if prior assimilatory experiences influenced the reasons behind Australian-Lebanese enlisting in the Armed Forces. As such, this finding provides an additional dimension to the migration, military and historical academic literature both in Australia and overseas on the assimilatory experiences of the early Lebanese migrants. This Australian experience therefore suggests that it would be worthwhile to explore the relationship more broadly across other diaspora experiences, something only Naff (1985) has briefly attempted in the USA.

Conclusion

This thesis contributes to the understanding of the influences and motivators of the first wave of Lebanese Australian settlers towards assimilation and their participation in Australia's Armed Forces – an issue that has received little attention in both international or Australian academic research. The purpose of this study was to explore these early migration experiences and the social circumstances of the early Lebanese migrants, and the extent to which this influenced their - and their dependants' - assimilation into Australia. In turn, the thesis explored the extent to which their involvement and experiences in the Australian Defence Forces reinforced their assimilation into Australian society, including that of their dependants.

This exploratory thesis has also contributed to the understanding of the involvement of a non-British ethnic group in a majority Anglo-Saxon military tradition and explored the ways in which this immigrant group assimilated economically, socially and militarily. This study has also broadened the academic literature about the first wave of migration by an ethnic group whose diaspora was, and remains, global. Early Lebanese Australian assimilation is a phenomenon noted by many researchers, but in my research I have attempted to synthesise the 'successful migrant' narrative with the recognition that successive governments inhibited assimilation and applied discriminatory legislation that impacted on these migrants. The narrative presented in this thesis explores this tension between migrant self-identification and an official milieu that challenged that self-definition. This tension between was apparent throughout this thesis.

By interviewing World War 2 Australian-Lebanese veterans and dependants and sharing their early experiences in Australia and their participation in Australia's Armed Forces, this research lifted the lid on memories which were instrumental to the conclusions reached about this story of migrant assimilation. By presenting stories of their involvement in the host's countries Armed Forces and their post-military experiences, I have attempted to add more intelligibility to the early Australian-Lebanese process of assimilation.

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