

Informant Najla Nouhan Simon Sex F Age 82 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Michigan Date May 23, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA1

Her husband never talked about anything, she never knew what was on his mind. He never allowed her to talk to anyone, even her sister in law. "I was a prisoner - I couldn't go to my family, they couldn't come to see me." Wouldn't let her see her dying father. When she went anyway he left the house, as he always did when he was mad. He would be gone with his suitcase sometimes for one or two weeks. Once he was gone for 2 years and she never knew where he went. He used to buy the family's clothes and food but when he was gone, he left her with nothing. It was traditional for the man to do the buying for the household.

Informant Mary Shamey Sex F Age 67 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Mich. Date May 30, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

When they came to Dearborn, Mich. (1926 ...) people used to go to the parks. Woman used to sit in 2 separate sections and talk about their interests as women. But there was no segregation between men and women.

Informant Mary Shamey Sex F Age 67 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Mich. Date May 30, 80

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA2

(In the 1920's) most of the Arab women in Michigan City did their business and shopping by telephone with Syrians who had stores there. Her mother used to contact a Syrian man and tell him to buy whatever she wanted from the store.

v1/20/a

v1/19

Informant Mary Shamey Sex F Age 67 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Mich. Date May 30, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA2

When they lived in Michigan City between 1911 - 1926 women used to cover their heads and because most of them couldn't speak English they spent most of their time at home.

IB1

Her mother used to cover her head when she went out to shop and continued this custom until she died. This custom, although required by Islam, started to die out in the late 1920's.

Informant Mr. Mohamod Habhab Sex M Age 61 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date July 20, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Informant's family kept tradition in the 1920's of inviting Arab friends over to eat and sleep, and "eat and eat". Informant identifies with this tradition and claims to keep it. Believes this tradition is kept because hosts "want everyone to be happy" and so that "no one would talk about them"--"it reflects on their family".

VI/19

Values - tradition, honor of family

Informant Mr. Alex Ecie

Sex M Age 74

Interview Schedule Code IV/19

Religious Sect Sunni

Country of Origin Syria

Immigrant Age 15-17*

Interviewer Grant Farr

City Dearborn, Michigan

Date June 2, 1980

* Informant provides conflicting data.

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Lebanese, even the American-born, always carry their values and traditions.

The Lebanese community in Dearborn still use old traditions just like in the homeland.

VI/19

Valua - Lebanese traditions

Informant Mr. Alex Ecie Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15-17*
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 2, 1980
* Informant provides conflicting data.

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Informant talked about generosity and how important it is for Arabs to make the guest very satisfied. Arabs don't worry how much the guest consumes--food--because it is in their hearts, religion and tradition to welcome strangers and guests and try to please them with what they have.

Even the American-born carry the same values.

VII/19

Valeeta - generosity

Informant Mr. Alex Ecie Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code V/19
Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15-17*
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 2, 1980
* Informant provides conflicting data.

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/1

When someone got married, or if there was a celebration, informant used to dance with others the "sword dance" in Highland Park and Dearborn.

I/B/3

When Egyptians and Yemenis go to mosque, they wear their traditional clothes.

I/A/1

Women covered their heads for a long time. They stopped covering their heads "just lately". Women went to stores shopping with their husbands, not alone.

VI/19

VI/20/c

Informant Shaikh Kalil Bazzy Sex M Age 86 Interview Schedule Code V/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 9
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Michigan Date June 9, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Despite lack of religious training, very few married outside ethnic group or religion; "I married them; I know". Muslim youths married girls-- American or Polish or something like that. When they did, he did not oblige the girl to convert to Islam. There is freedom in this country. She keeps her faith. On the other hand if a Muslim girl married a non-Muslim, I would not permit it because a girl has to adhere to her husband's faith.

"I married them (boys) when they married non-Muslims; it didn't matter". He was the only one around who could perform burials and weddings. He still does; nothing tiring about it.

Informant Imam Muhammad A. Karoub Sex M Age in 50's Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Mich. Date June 6, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB1

Asked about boys and girls dating he said Islam doesn't have dating or co-education. Said his father had a moderating influence on people, advised them on family because he had a family himself. In his house they did everything Americans did except drink, gamble or eat pork. Dancing was frowned upon, because it leads to lust.

A father will encourage or take boys to first sexual experience, he wants him to take the hurdle to become a man. A girl was protected because she could dishonor his name. If a girl went on a date she didn't publicize it, and they closed their eyes, "It was as if we turned away from it knowing that we could hardly handle that situation." "so we took a laissez faire attitude." "I don't want to disservice the faith but... you can't stop it." They tried to be a moderating influence, so that if a girl dated it wasn't too much, or would date without sex, until after marriage.

Informant Imam Muhammad A. Karoub Sex M Age in 50's Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Mich. Date June 6, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA2

His father's oldest brother, the uncle of informant, named Mohammed, was a father figure to his younger brothers. This tradition remains so today. He could punish and dictate duties, hours etc. This was accepted. He could also stand in place of father at sisters' wedding and speak for the bride at marriage contract.

Informant Imam Muhammad A. Karoub Sex M Age in 50's Interview Schedule Code VI / 19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Mich. Date June 6, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA3

Asked about changes in religious practices:

He said he introduced much English, only ritual prayer is in Arabic and Qur'anic intonations. The sermon is delivered in English. He follows schools of law that are most liberal - Hanafi and Shafi'i. Introduced English into wedding and funeral prayers. Wrote some of the English in Arabic letters for his father - "do you take this woman..." etc.

In factories, some workers allowed by foreman to do their prayers at the times. Missing a prayer not serious, can make up missed prayers, feed the poor, practice abstinence, etc. Goes into detail on this.

Agreed that the Imam had to be flexible in American environment - his father was never rigid - because rigidity causes Muslims to shun Islam. Within prescribed limits imposed by God possible to be flexible. Imams in post WW2 era are more formally educated from old country and more strict. They are from environment conducive to Islam and expect more, this is not realistic in America. He tells them to be more liberal, or they will cause people to turn away.

VI / 9 / 6

VI / 19

Informant Mr. William Darwish Sex M Age 79 Interview Schedule Code VII/19
Religious Sect Orthodox/Baptist Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 9
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Illinois Date July 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/1

In homeland goats, the source of milk, would have to milked daily because of lack of refrigeration. Families would pour cream over freshly baked bread, add sugar, for part of a meal; ate cream and sugared bread in U.S. also.

Informant Hasebe Assalley

Sex F Age 86

Interview Schedule Code VI/19

Religious Sect Melkite Catholic

Country of Origin Lebanon

Immigrant Age 17

Interviewer Alix Naff

City Spring Valley, Ill.

Date July 10, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB1

In her own home the man was the head of the family, but the children and she had freedom. In the old country the woman and children bowed to his authority but in this country they took on American ways.

VI/14

VI/12

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Nellie Khouri Jacobs Sex F Age 71 Interview Schedule Code IV/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Ill. Date July 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB3 Informant's father wrote religious words for Syrians to wear as amulets.

IB3 Syrian community maintained traditional wedding, burial and baptismal rites up to a point (she is not clear, tells of baptismal of her daughter where they had open house) Pressed on the subject she said "second generation tried to carry on something a little but I don't think they did too much of that, they did some Syrian dancing at parties or something special."

IB3 When Louis ⁵⁸Annally died in 1926 the Syrians got a band to play dirge.

X/1/6

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Nellie Khouri Jacobs Sex F Age 71 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Ill. Date July 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IA2 Children wouldn't learn to speak Arabic. Understood it but spoke English.
- IB3 Agrees her father's house was mainly a Syrian household. Parents spoke Arabic and ate Syrian food.
- IB3 Claims traditional rituals changed with second generation (hers). They Americanized very fast - "No more wailing at funerals, but earlier, the more they showed emotion the more they thought it was great."

Informant Mrs. Nellie Khouri Jacobs Sex F Age 71 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Spring Valley, Ill. Date July 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IA3 Informant claims that pregnant unwed girl worked for her father-in-law. He sent her away for fear that people would talk and (probably accuse him). He also refused invitation to local tavern to take a girl friend (prostitute).
- IB1 She calms unwed mother was not ostracized, had a second illegitimate child and married a Syrian who forgave her. "She was a bint Arab." Also claims she was not disgraced; later she left her husband and children and moved from S.V.

Informant Mrs. Khazna Khouri Sex F Age 77 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 20
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
000-027

Informant and her husband came directly to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she lived until she returned to Syria and then returned to the U.S. to Detroit, Michigan.

IV/3

V/1

IV/4

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Mary Maloley Sex F Age 65 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
764-797

Mrs. Maloley talks about the superstitions connected with menstruation, especially the taboo against canning fruit. She seems to feel either that this is a valid belief or that the practice of it is true. I think she says this is something (commandment ???) from God (najasi). She points out that they don't have this belief in this country.

797-817

In talking about the use of dough as part of the marriage rite, Mrs. Maloley says that bread and wheat are from God (min'amr Allah)

Informant Mr. Peter Fawaz Sex M Age 73 Interview Schedule Code VL/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria? Immigrant Age 21
Interviewer Alix Naff City Manchester, New Hampshire Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
311-360

When the interviewer laments the assimilation process and resultant loss of Syrian culture in the U.S., the informant concurs, commenting that (I think) they didn't adopt¹ from the Americans, ilm², awaa'id, sharab, i'tibar, (ma katabna ???)² but nonetheless they lost everything, they didn't keep their traditions/ways (awayitna) and yet didn't accept the American ways; they are caught/in between the two.

rahit--bain al banaiin

¹Jeena hatta mundhur

²The Americans don't have these things. "Ma fish 'andun min hai al-Amerkaan".

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
*Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
213-829

In the old country, people didn't have anything to do, so when they celebrated weddings, they could afford to celebrate for days, entertaining the bride and groom. This is a busy country; after wedding ceremony, here, there is a good time and then the couple goes away. In the early days, they never went away. For about 10 years after he first arrived, weddings/marriages required parental approval/consent like the old country.

Then they began to make love like in the U.S., would get married on Sunday (because Christians are not supposed to get married on Saturday, so they would go to bed on Monday night and not on Sunday; he apologizes for this explanation) It is not right for them to get married on Saturday because they would get up the next morning and it is the day of resurrection and liturgy. While in the old country, when the sun sets, Monday arrives, and so it is o.k.

II/11

II/16

III/13/6

VI/19

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI / 19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
471-819

Very few Syrian men went out with American girls. There were non-Syrian girls available enough because there were more Syrian men than Syrian girls (there weren't any in the early days) in the U.S., so that's why some married non-Syrian-Lebanese girls.

easily

At first the Syrian community did not accept/the non-Syrian wives. But after they really got to learn their ways, they did. Not because they thought themselves better, but because they wanted them to marry someone, who has the same ways of life and would know what to expect when having a guest. they'd understand
The house is open to them; to keep their own traditions.

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
*Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
213-829

Mr. Shabo contrasts old funeral mourning custom -- 40 days of wearing black
They would wail (biwelwalu, byindibu). If the family was wealthy, they would hire
professional mourners. These laments would be spontaneous, improvised. People would
cry, made to cry from the laments. It was requisite. poetry-like
(Mr. Shabo relates this memory, oral ability at improvisation to his own mental
calculations concerning his business and his ability to retain numerical/data
in his mind--he does record them in his book.) and other
a sad

They would do/zalaghiit for the dead. These customs were throughout the
old country, not just in Damascus, or the mountains.

Mr. and Mrs. Shabo don't personally remember these nadab (laments) to sing them.
You'd have to go to the old country to hear them now.
He says that now after a funeral, the people celebrate with a banquet, laughter, songs.

1
women; they would not make a mistake; they knew everyone.
They have died now, these women.

II/14

II/16 VI/2

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Ramza Abdelahad Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
055-491

just as in Syria
The Syrian community in Boston kept, for the most part, their customs, especially those related to Easter, Xmas. They would celebrate and visit with each other. There would be trays of sweets (tuttli, brandies). Until recently, when they all separated and left the geographic community.
From morning to night, on Easter, they would say to everyone "Christ is risen al-Masih qam"--as long as they lived in a geographic district.
They would serve each other/coffee, tuttli, greet each other "Kull 'aam wa enti salmi"
istiqrara (???)
They loved each other very much.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
275-302

In the early days girls were not allowed to go out with young unmarried men. At his age now, he still thinks it should be this way; he believes in the family tie (type???) first. He has seen those who dated for several years, or eloped and their marriages were on the rocks after a short time. They thought they were in love. And he knows of a marriage, where they knew the family, and the marriage exists still, because neither the boy nor girl are going to show their best before their marriage, because they don't know each other. He would not allow his daughter, if he had one, to go out until midnight unless he knew the family of the boy; never allow to go out of town. He never went out with his wife and they maintained their marriage since 1917. They and others lived a happy married life this way.

This is a Syrian custom in which he believes still.

Informant Alexander K. Malik Sex M Age 71* Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 19*
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962
* deduced from information given

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
111-541

Mr. Malik feels that the early Syrians maintained Syrian habits/just for a short time until their wives came. arghile and nightgowns

In the U.S. when there weren't many Syrian women who were the ones who knew about home remedies in the old country, the men had to go to doctors. Mr. Malik remembers a doctor who was drunk about 90% of the time who took care of them. He was a good doctor, not a Syrian, when he wasn't drinking.

Informant Mr. Peter Fawaz Sex M Age 73 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria? Immigrant Age 21
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Manchester, New Hampshire Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
501-531

After explaining cures such as cupping and branding and leeching for sore eyes,¹ Mr. Fawaz explains that these are no longer done, except that the Americans and Europeans are now going back to the medical books, a thousand years old, of Ibn Sina and others and are translating them and teaching them in their schools.

¹ These cures were the realm of the women.

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alixa Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
*Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
213-829

exactly

In the U.S. at weddings they used to celebrate/like in the old country, zalaghiit, but it would only be that day, because on Monday everyone would go to work.

There would not be a pre-wedding ceremony celebration for the bride and groom.

But after the wedding for 2-3 months they would be invited to people's homes. (fakit yazra--the Arabic expression for this custom)

The majority who attend a wedding to this for the bride and groom. Only a few stingy people don't. They would invite the couple's family and everyone else they were friends with too (the hosts). The same would occur when someone came from the old country, supper.

Today they don't even invite their parents to dinner (the children).

"Who cares about who today?"

¹ He would 'be no good if he didn't, if he attended the wedding.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
160-280

Informant's father was very hospitable. Would come home with meat under one arm and guests on the other and tell his wife to prepare a meal (dinner).

Informant's father was a good singer. Informant doesn't remember his songs, but she remembers guests from Australia (Syrians). Her father improvised songs about their youth/friendship in the old country. One man left the room weeping.

Informant's father wrote songs, etc. down, but informant gave them and Arabic books away (to others who presumably could read Arabic) because she couldn't read Arabic (to/Julia Tawil in L.A. and another friend in Chicago).

her husband

/
who lives near the Syrian church in L.A. (St. Ann's--Melkit
???)

Informant Mrs. Rose LaBa Sex F Age 84 Interview Schedule Code VI / 19
Religious Sect Catholic* Country of Origin Mt. Lebanon Immigrant Age 14
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962
*possibly Orthodox

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
499-545

Informant expresses a desire to go back to the old country (for a visit):
"Gee, I love to go back"

She says that although she doesn't know anyone there, that if they know a person who returns they celebrate the occasion--music, dancing.

They would also do this when generals came from France or other places.

Her brother was decorated (militarily) for 2 months straight (???) and had 200 men under him decorated. They would celebrate these occasions with singing, dancing, zalaghit.

She then recites a poem which seems to praise military valor and the great family names, such as Awad. (This may have been composed in honor of her brother.) She then recites nadab (eulogy poetry).
of the important people

She talks about funeral processions, / through several villages, the cortege met by the people, led by the horse of the shaikh.

Informant Mr. Thomas (Tannous) Cory Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 14
Interviewer Alix Naff City Windsor, Ontario, Canada Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
511-588

They would go to the Protestant church with those Protestants who put them up for the night and to the Catholic church with those who were Catholic.

It didn't matter to Mr. Cory to attend the Catholic church; the people there welcomed him.

Mr. Cory

In Napponnee they/went to the English church all the time.

For special functions, baptisms, marriages, they would get an Orthodox priest from Montreal.

Each year a priest who would come to them, making a tour for those who were getting married, were to be baptized.

Marriage ceremony/^{and baptism}was exactly like in the old country (zalagheet, carrying the bridegroom on their shoulders and sing a certain song

V/8

VI/3/f

II/9/2

VI/9/6

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Ramza Abdelahad Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VL/19
Religious Sect Maronite? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
000-053

Syrian and Lebanese

There was a large Arab/community in Boston when she arrived, living on Hudson, Tyler, Harvard, Oak streets, all together.

The house had 4 fawadhi??? Suriyiin.

They would help each other in the community, they would love each other. On Easter, they would enjoy themselves, celebrate as if they were one family saying/"Christ is Risen", sharing sweets (mlabasi, tuttli) in the neighborhood. to each other

She never liked real American ways though they told her she would enjoy herself, and get used to American ways but she didn't like it.

VI/1

VI/2

X/2/2

X/2/c

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Selma (Salimi) Salhaney Sex F Age 84 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 32
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
0-86

actually from when they boarded the ship
When informant and family arrived in the U.S./they did not continue to dress as in the old country but they did continue to fix Syrian foods. The communication and socializing was in Arabic (sahras), in the community.

III/3

IV/4

V/3/6

VI/7

VII/19

Informant Mr. Herb Bojrab Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria? Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date June 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
072-195

The Syrians used to socialize together in each other's homes, but there wasn't much singing or dancing. He gives a reason, which I cannot understand, perhaps related to their focus/energy devoted to work.

On Sundays they would each do their own washing of their belongings.

Once in a while people would come to visit or they would visit other people but there wasn't dancing or dabke, or singing, or weddings.

Work was hard. They used to work 10 hours a day for \$1.50 (15¢/hr.) anywhere, including working on the railroad. Mr. Bojrab earned \$39/month, if he worked enough in the month (???). The wages were sufficient because food was cheap. They lived better in the U.S. on \$39 a month than they had been in the old country.

In the old country there was no work available. All harvesting in the old country had to be done by hand. I think he makes a reference to some of the crops not succeeding due to lack of water.

VI/3/6

V/11

III/2

VI/16

III/19

Informant Alexander K. Malik Sex M Age 71* Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 19*
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962
* deduced from information given

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
111-540

Four Syrian men were arrested for wearing their night gowns outside their homes and smoking a Turkish pipe. Since they could not speak English, Mr. Malik explained that that was there custom in the old country--to put on their nightgowns, drink some araq and smoke their Turkish pipes. They weren't trying to insult or harm anyone. The officers took his word and released them to him. He hired a buggy for them since they had their night gowns on. The police would not take them back.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
028-045

In the old country, wedding guests brought food--sheep and goats--as gifts. In the U.S. guests brought the groom rice, whiskey, 'araq for celebrating with. The Syrians liked this custom; it lessened the burden on the man to provide. It also made one feel like one of the family, who participates, not just as a guest. People were invited because you knew them, considered one of you.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox~~ Melkite Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
067-094

Mrs. Bonahoom says that her father was a very intelligent, well-read man, who knew all the religions¹ and could discuss them; consequently he did not have belief in witches or devils and did not communicate these beliefs (fear) to the informant.

Her source of information about this is from others in the community.

¹He knew the Jewish tradition and the Quran.

Informant Mrs. Ramza Abdelahad Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alixa Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
055-491

or m'burri
7 There was a leader in the Boston Syrian community. His name was Assad ibn Durzi (???) They talk of him in their church, St. John¹. He was educated in a college, and well-loved. He got married and became a leader in the church.

And in St. George's church there was a similar leader--Gurios ad-Daraani. He was muqtadir (???), had money, spoke English better than anyone else. He acted as an agent, "buying tickets for the immigrants to send to their relatives in the old country to come. (She calls him a kind of ticket agent, seems to me to be a forerunner of a travel agent.) He would buy the necessary tickets for the people (coming & going - traveling)

Every church had its leaders who took care of the people, were responsible for them (diir bellu alayhun).

¹ Whenever informant mentions deceased people, she always asks God's mercy on them "All yerhamu, al-marhuum.....".

² This is another man, Saliim Ayyoub.

VI/5

VI/9/2

VI/7

III/2

VI/19

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
800-824

Mr. Ellis's proverbs: Every rooster crows in his own back yard. (boasting)
Kul diik as-sayaah.

al-kurid fi 'ain immu ghazal.
in the eye of his mother is a gazelle.

ghaltat al-lisan'adham min ghaltat as-saif.
A mistake of the tongue is worse than that of the sword.

bil watia¹btshrub mai hawa ma ghayraha.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
160-280

Informant's father would tell her things in a manner so that she would remember (stories); he wanted her to remember.

280-348

One story: what's written on the forehead (i.e. by God) cannot be changed--moral. Cultural value: a sense of fatalism???

348-400

Informant relates other stories told by her father which she find impressive.

Tells a story about a king who was duped into thinking he was spending the night with his wife's sister, whom he wanted, but it was really his own wife who the next day served him a variety of colored hardboiled eggs to point out that beneath the surface (hair color....) all women are the same. (Interesting that a man would tell this story--my comment)

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
*Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-296

The Shabo's remember their home always being open to guests.

They didn't go out to dinner in those days. Dinners were at home.
Mrs. Shabo cooked and Mr. Shabo served the whiskey.

Mrs. Shabo can remember cooking and serving 50-100 men on an occasion,
a wedding (two weddings--their children???) - also for baptisms, of which there aren't *
Mr. Shabo says this was their (i.e. Syrian) custom..
I think she says that this isn't done anymore, since about 25-30 years.

*any (traditional) anymore.

Celebrations are now done in hotels (hwatitil???) or motel (???).

I think she says that the people (perhaps young people implied) are enjoying
the new customs.

Informant Alexander K. Malik

Sex M

Age 71*

Interview Schedule Code VI/19

Religious Sect Orthodox

Country of Origin Syria

Immigrant Age 19*

Interviewer Alixa Naff

City Grand Rapids, Michigan

Date July 1962

* deduced from information given

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
111-540

When Mr. Malik first encountered his brother in the store, the brother asked him "What ^{can} I do for you, ^{young} man?" and Mr. Malik thought that if this is America, he should go back home, there was no place for him here. He began to talk to himself in Arabic. When he realized, after his brother spoke to him in Arabic, that he was his brother, he began to kiss him but his brother told him to wait until they were at home because they don't do that in America--the other people in the store were watching.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code V/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
330-370

Stories would usually be told for entertainment in evening gatherings. Children would be told them because they contained moral lessons. Many of them concerned Haroun ar-Rashid and Abu Nuwas.

He then relates an example of such a story. He personalizes the story having it take place in his home village, in part.

I think after telling the story he says that there are no purpose to these stories (and yet there does seem to be a message in them to me).

Geha is like a clown, a fake; Abu Nuwas was a real person, Geha was not. Geha made up stories to trick people, to gain something.

Riddles were also common. He tells one, concerning a fish. They catch the fish when their house flows out the window (i.e., out of the net).

VI/14

VI/16

VI/19

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
115-267

Songs and zalagheet at weddings praise the girl, her eyes, nose, beautiful face. Usually they mention the family -(interviewer's comment) to which informant responds that the family is very important, especially to the groom (or rum ???), you come from a certain family.

This family reference also occurs in mourning laments.

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
* Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-296

greed-related

Neither Mr. or Mrs. Shabo believe in the evil eye, though they are familiar with it. Mr. Shabo relates that sometimes when there is an emergency or something (bad) happens, they say it was the evil eye (al-'aini). Mrs. Shabo relates that there are people who use amulets to ward off the evil eye, but she herself did not put anything on her family, not a cross, nothing. Mr. Shabo says they relied on God. Mrs. Shabo says something about 'ain al-Wahid (the eve of God???)

I think Mr. Shabo says he learned about the evil eye through the church over there--in the old country???

¹older (khutra)

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/9
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
471-819

There was a man in Grand Rapids who had a store which supplied the peddlers. His name was George Hanna (???). He would ship their merchandise to them. They would come to Grand Rapids twice a year, Christmas and Easter.

V/5

V/3

IV/19

MRS.
Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alixa Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
*Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-296

Both are aware there are many in Arabic

Mrs. Shabo does not know any Arabic proverbs./ In the U.S. they had no older people in the family to learn them from.

Mr. Shabo remembers everything was focused on work and riyaz (???).

I think Mrs. Shabo says that people had a good time at their home always. All it took was for somebody to stop by and drinks would be served and a good time would be had by all.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
115-267

During the Depression, Mr. Ellis and others helped very many people who claimed they couldn't pay for themselves, using the Depression as an excuse for they could have paid; Mr. Ellis paid himself, while others didn't. This is one thing which has been lost.

Interviewer suggests success and loss of closeness produced this loss. Informant says they lost the closeness and took advantage of the making of dishonest dollar; when "they trust (???) everything to the dollar instead of to the honor".

Mr. Ellis remembers being repaid after many years by a successful man who couldn't afford it during the depression; because he knew he owed it, not because of the law. Others should have done likewise, but didn't.

In early days, we bought merchandise from "good Americans" by telephone, letters, telegrams. good businessmen

Now these have to be confirmed, because of the loss of honor among our own people. In those days, Mr. Ellis would never think of having a note signed when loaning \$40-50.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Melkite Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
067-094

Mrs. Bonahoom's mother taught her to use the smoke from a burned rag to heal a sore or cut. She still uses this remedy and has taught it to her children. She is convinced of its efficacy.

and possibly chick peas (???)
She also remembers the use of sumac/and another weed (khabaizi???) to wash sore eyes.

with qdhami around it
She remembers boiling wheat/for the first tooth, but this custom has died.

She regrets the loss of the traditional funeral,¹ with lamenting and mourning, because it allowed people to cry and relieved the pain a little. Because the lamenting is done by women, when a woman had a daughter, people would say that she would have a good funeral.

impossibility
She comments on the difficulty/of translating Arabic words into English, using the word batir (tragedy???) as used in the funeral ritual as an example.

Current funeral practices are a three-ring circus.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VII/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
471-819

The Syrians used to spend the evenings, practically every evening in each other's homes, no matter what town they came from. They had groups who got together with each other (the members of each among themselves). They spent very happy evenings together. They would play cards, sing, do Arabic dancing (half the time) chat. very little

Mr. Ellis says that they don't do this/anymore; he laments the passing of this tradition, because this was a very good habit, they had enjoyable times, and their children would understand one another. Because at this time there were only a few Syrians who had families.

Informant Mr. Jim (Najib) Azar Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
000-018

About half the village of Bloudane, at least the young men, immigrated to the U.S. to Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

So when they came, they didn't lack anything in terms of the old country, except of course their families, parents.

They were all brothers here, sons of uncles (paternal) in Ft. Wayne, most of them, about 100, single; a couple of them were married. They worked together in the factory and in the evening they would eat together, and They all had places next to one another (living quarters). If they wanted to celebrate on Sundays, to jump, to play a stone-throwing game they would.

They would even celebrate weddings as in the old country, firing guns in the street, singing¹ Weddings would take a week, if the individual was well enough off to afford it.

¹ pastries and rice cooked in butter

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
045-115

In the old days, guests provided food for family of deceased; this eased the responsibility of the bereaved both emotionally² and financially. The guests usually stayed in the home of the bereaved (out of town guests).¹ Mr. Ellis feels that this custom was much better than the current custom.

Mr. Ellis is opposed to the excess of expensive caskets; he contrasts American funerals with those in the old country; there they go because of respect for the dead; here they go because of ~~smallness~~/of the family, than to bury the dead. The church
more or less
teaches them to bury the dead; that is why Mr. Ellis goes to funerals.

¹ or maybe he means they would stay, keep company with the family of the deceased in their home where the body of the deceased was.

² the bereaved are in sorrow too much to make food

Informant Mr. Jim (Najib) Azar Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Tape II
Side II
100-305

Another difficult passage; notes may not be accurate:

The greatest pride (hamasa) among the Arabs was their poets; Mr. Azar uses as an example a hypothetical conflict between Detroit and Ft. Wayne and Toledo. Poets in each town would rise up and inspire (???) the respective peoples, talking about their background (not sure if he means to unite the 3 groups or encourage their competitive spirit???)

Education, according to Mr. Azar, of children depends on parents, their background and values. Some advise their children to take advantage of the present (the carpe diem theme). These people don't seem to have good values.

There are other parents who would explain an opposite value to their children (I can't understand the flower analogy statement he makes).

A person from a good background/family, who knows God and who loves loving, who loves people try to raise their children similarly.

Informant Mr. Thomas (Tannous) Cory Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code IV/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 14
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Windsor, Ontario, Canada Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
511-588

Especially during their first year as immigrant peddlers, they would long for (???) the old country.

Informant Mrs. Selma (Salimi) Salhaney Sex F Age 84 Interview Schedule Code VII/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 32
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
401-424

When they first arrived from the old country, the Syrians kept their wedding traditions and celebrations completely (zalagheet etc.).

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code V/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
754-800

animal

Mr. Ellis relates/story of how fox outwits lion by telling him he won't visit him because he observed how the other animal did so and didn't return.

VI/19

Values - learning by experience of others

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code IV/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
400-418

the extent of
Informant tells story (presumably told her by her father) with mother love/as theme. A man kills his mother, runs to his girlfriend with his mother's heart, as she requested because she didn't like his mother and told him she would not marry him otherwise. The mother's heart asks the son if he is all right when he stumbles/as he runs toward the girl.
falls down

Informant Mrs. Selma (Salimi) Salhaney Sex F Age 84 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 32
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
352-64

Informant claims they did not have an awareness of djinn in the old country.

393-401

Informant denies belief in superstition concerning practices for a woman to bear a son.

VI/19

II/16

Informant Mrs. Mary (Mariam) Sayfee Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code IV/19
Religious Sect _____ Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
302-565

Prayer to restore a person who has been afflicted with the evil eye curse must be learned by a man from a woman and by a woman from a man.

(Mrs. Nazha Haney wanted to learn it in order to pass it on.)

But the reading connected with it, or the actual prayer words are taken from the Bible.

Informant Mrs. Selma (Salimi) Salhaney Sex F Age 84 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 32
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
352-364

Informant claims they did not have an awareness of djinn in the old country.

364-384

Informant disavows knowledge of superstitions or practices in order for a woman to produce a son.

Informant Alexander K. Malik Sex M Age 71* Interview Schedule Code VL/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 19*
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962
* deduced from information given

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
0-820

Mr. Malik was always able to obtain Syrian food in Grand Rapids.
But Mr. Malik says that food comes second to him; that he does not believe much in the food.

Many Syrian foods which people are crazy about, Mr. Malik doesn't care to look at or taste.

Informant Mr. Peter Fawaz Sex M Age 73 Interview Schedule Code VII/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria? Immigrant Age 21
Interviewer Alix Naff City Manchester, New Hampshire Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
231-311

One story which Mr. Fawaz relates seems to show pride in being Christian, in Christian values of honor and love of fellowman, fidelity/loyalty. (al-wada???)
~~See index of this tape for content.~~ → al-wata???

The story concludes with the king discovering that the hero is a Christian and that Christianity teaches honor and love of fellowman and subsequently pardoning him.

VI/19

Values - honor

Values - fraternal love

Values - pride in religious sect

IX/1/2

Informant Mrs. Latiffee Cory Sex F Age 64-66 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 11-13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Windsor, Ontario, Canada Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
121-320

Informant's mother returned to the old country and died there.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
045-115

The informant and interviewer discuss the mourning laments that used to be ~~said~~ sung for the dead. They were in Arabic and can't be done in English, so they are lost (as those knowledgeable in Arabic become fewer, I presume). Mr. Ellis says he didn't mind this custom (nadab) of improvised wailing. It had a real value to it. It showed respect (statement by interviewer concurred with by informant). These wailings are the equivalent of the eulogies given by Americans at funerals.

Mr. Ellis is frequently asked to give eulogies. He praises the man, how good he was, how he provided for his family. He then recites the Arabic equivalent "today we lost a very big man"; this is sung.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
000-028

When the young generation became of age, went to school, had own friends, older Syrians had to adapt themselves to the American way of life, to satisfy their children, their companions.

So they started to drift away from traditional Syrian way of life to the western way of life.

Their business associates also affected this process; mutual exchange of information, knowledge. The Syrians tried to teach the best of what they had to offer and to learn from them naturally the best.

VI/19

VI/3/c

VI/11

X/2/2

X/2/b

Value - pride in the best qualities of Syrians

Informant Alexander K. Malik Sex M Age 71* Interview Schedule Code VI/9
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 19*
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962
* deduced from information given

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
111-540

When Mr. Malik came to the U.S. and observed the Syrian community continuing the old country ways, he would preach against it. An example is a person from an important family back home, regardless of age, receiving attention and respect. He was their leader. Mr. Malik felt this was not right--old country ways do not work in the U.S.--respect should come for the individual on his own, not for who his family is, because the family was left behind. It is important to have a good family but also to live good according to the American way.

Mr. Malik says that he organized many clubs for this purpose, to change things like this. While they might have been insulted if Americans of other nationalities had told them the same things, because they were very proud, they were receptive to someone who was Syrian. The community was closely tied, especially due to the church and even today the young/people maintain the same closeness but some do not

are to be admired for keeping the old country habits (values) respect for the older, children attached to parents--as in the commandment to respect father and mother.

Christian inherited

When a young person would leave the house, he would say "with my father and mother's blessing", that what he is doing is right. Even married people think a lot of their parents. They would not send them to an institution.

They are so proud (of them).

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code W/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
418-483

Informant's husband (???) tells the story of Barhoom, son who returned home from America only to be murdered by his mother (and father) thinking he was a rich man. (My comment: interesting that women are evil-motivated, agents)

Informant Mrs. Ramza Abdelahad Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect Maronite? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alixa Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
000-053

The weather was the most difficult thing for her to adjust to in the U.S.-- especially the quantity of snow. It was a five-minute walk to the streetcar. She couldn't understand how her sister could like snow; she had never seen so much. They cooked Syrian foods (her sisters had married Arabs) kusa, ~~mihsa~~, yabrak; nothing was lacking.

¹ Her sister seems to have been better adjusted, of course she had been here longer, wasn't tired, wasn't thirsty, not waiting for tomorrow.

Informant Mr. Joseph Kirby Sex M Age 66** Interview Schedule Code VI/19

Religious Sect _____ Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age 21**

Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962

* Informant was born in Mardin, Turkey **deduced from information given

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
021-131

Mr. Kirby mentions the Assyrian name for Saidnaya convent (as-Sahoura, as-saidi in Arabic). He does not believe in miracles, and relates the old country miracles-- cured people leaving crutches, etc. to similar customs in a shrine in Canada. He says if you believe, then something becomes a miracle.

He tells an incident where he visited this Canadian church with his paternal aunt's son's daughter who lived there. I think he asks her what's wrong, she replies "nothing", he takes the crutches and throws them down from above. She seems to reprimand him "kul mza'abarat, mza'abarat???) I think he says more. (I'm not sure if I understood this story correctly.) people don't believe this any- Mr. Kirby then mentions two or three of his family (bait haali) who were killed, it's a shame, in _____ (bil-abstad???)
1 arkaas

VI/9/6

VI/19

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
* Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
213-829

Mr. Shabo has 9 children. For each baptism, he had, he thinks, at least a couple cases of whiskey and 5-6 cases of beer. Everyone helped themselves. This was their system/customs. But Mr. Shabo's children don't do this (continue the custom); they ~~do~~ ^{are} quietly.
so

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
471-819

The Syrians in Grand Rapids kept their traditions very much until the 1920's. Then they started (to change); naturally their young boys, children growing, young generation growing... end of tape.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
720-754

Worst superstition in the old country is seeing a crow which means death, if it flies over a certain district in the village.

He used to believe this in this country, but not anymore.

Other superstition still observed is not to travel on Wednesday (start a journey). Some people don't cut dress patterns on Tuesday. (This may be related to the Greek custom of not beginning a task or experience/journey on Tuesday because Constantinople fell to the Turks on a Tuesday--my comment.)

While the Tuesday and Wednesday superstitions may vary from village to village, the crow superstition is pretty general.

Informant Mr. Thomas (Tannous) Cory Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 14
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Windsor, Ontario, Canada Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
392-460

Mr. Cory became a Canadian citizen in 1907; he was told that he would not be a British subject. It cost \$2. They told him in Montreal, where he was, that he should become a citizen in case he returned to the old country, in order to be able to come back.

Since Mr. Cory wore short pants at the time, he wanted to look older in order to obtain citizenship, and so he added 2 years to his age.

VI/6/6 - Canadian citizenship

VI/19

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VII/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
115-267

Mr. Ellis says they have lost the customs related to weddings and funerals. He relates the putting of pepper in eyes of deceased man's 4 horses and dressing them in black to show the extent of response to death in the old country. The pepper was to make the horses cry; the man was a horseman. The horses marched in the funeral procession to the music.

Mr. Ellis mentions that some of this custom is observed here in military funerals.

Informant Mr. Jim (Najib) Azar Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

He in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Tape III
Side I
179-228

Mr. Azar states that those who do not know God such as Hitler, Mussolini and ~~communists~~ ^{Stalin} were possessed by djinn and acted under the direction of the devil. Someone who would be responsible for the deaths of 50-60 million people in war could not possibly know God. The devil was directing him (ruling him).

VI/19

Informant Mr. Dan Sickrey Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 18
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July, 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
252-279

Informant cannot remember what people used to say about djinn.

MRS.

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alixa Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962

* Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-096

2

Arabic food products were always available. There were stores which sold
all these Arab food items.

MRS.
Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
*Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-096
2

When the immigrants first came, they continued to keep the traditions and customs of the old country.

Informant Mr. Dan Sickrey Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code *VI/19*
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 18
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I X World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-047

Informant says that they brought the customs of the old country with them.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code 177/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox~~ Melkite Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
148-230

Mrs. Bonahoom says that now the meal served by the family of the deceased is usually for out-of-town relatives/people, before they go home to show the family's gratitude.
to describe

She continues/the no longer observed custom of 'azzi (going to the home of the bereaved in the evening and keeping company with them for a week).

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VII/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox~~ Melkite Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
515-614

she remebers hearing about this

Mrs. Bonahoom remembers seeing cupping done as a cure, and branding/as
preventive/against disease.

or for a disease already contracted.

Informant Mrs. Lorraine Bojrab Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code V/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date June 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
000-035

Mrs. Bojrab relates the evil eye experience which occurred to her half-sister in the U.S. She had rejected marriage to a certain man and then married someone else and then began to have one illness after another, one operation after another, but doctors were unable to give a clear diagnosis as to her illness. Each doctor gave a different diagnosis. Ultimately she discovered through a clairvoyant (spiritual reader) in Mexico¹ that she had been cursed by the mother of the rejected suitor. The informant is not sure whether the clairvoyant was Syrian or not, or whether her chants were Arabic or Spanish. The clairvoyant was struck speechless when she uttered the name of the mother who cursed the informant's half sister. Since the informant was unable to procure a garment belonging to the woman for the clairvoyant to lift the curse by burning it, she was not relieved.

The informant says that she has no alternative but to believe this account. Her mother used to believe in the evil eye.

¹ She moved there for climatic reasons and got to know Syrian ladies there.

Informant Mr. Herb Bojrab Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code V/19
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria? Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date June 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
072-195

Informant doesn't know if before coming to the U.S., the immigrants expected to give up Syrian customs for American ways.

He says that when he came to this country, he did not miss or lack Syrian traditions, customs foods. They were able to order all Syrian food products from New York.

They ate Arab food and American food.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox~~ Melkite Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
067-094

Mrs. Bonahoom cannot recall any miracles attributed to saints having occurred in Ft. Wayne, nor can she recall any weather-connected superstitions.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom

Sex F

Age

Interview Schedule Code V/19

Religious Sect ~~Orthodox~~ Melkite

Country of Origin United States

Immigrant Age n.a.

Interviewer Alix Naff

City Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I

World War I

1920's

1930's

Side II
017-036

Mrs. Bonahoom stops at the grocery store after coming from a funeral before going to visit anyone so that she will not bring bad luck or illness to anyone. She seems to be concerned about what might otherwise happen.

But she does not believe in the superstitions connected with menstruation regarding visiting a nursing mother, walking in a garden, or putting one's hand in a pickle barrel, or taking communion. She remembers being taught these superstitions as a child, to abide by them, as well as the evil eye superstition. She remembers people tying blue ribbons to baby buggies to ward off the evil eye. She remembers a little boy whom people said died because of the evil eye in Ft. Wayne.

Informant Mr. Jim (Najib) Azar Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Tape III
Side I
317-456

Mr. Azar, who had made amulets to ward off evil and sickness--words recalling Biblical cures God performed and asking him to perform another (showing the belief in the power of words--my assessment), indicates that an amulet per se will not work by itself; the wearer must have faith.

Informant Mr. Assad Shabo Sex M Age Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect Country of Origin Syria* Immigrant Age
Interviewer Alixa Naff City West Roxbury, Mass. Date August 1962
* Informant is an Assyrian, born in Turkey (Mesopotamia)

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
213-829

Mr. Shabo mentions that funeral wakes and wedding receptions used to be held in peoples' homes, but now they are held in halls.

Baptism was another occasion for calling everyone up and inviting them to your home for a good time.

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Mary (Mariam) Sayfee Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect _____ Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
0-94

The Syrian community in the early days used to celebrate their holidays, weddings, like they did in the old country.

Now, once in a while they do it that way. Informant prefers the old ways. When she attends celebrations, she bzalghat (ululates). She remembers wedding songs from the old country.

Informant Mrs. Selma Bonahoom Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox~~ Melkite Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
614-670

Informant's father played backgammon, and cards.

Informant Mrs. Mary (Mariam) Sayfee Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect _____ Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
505-527

Informant doesn't remember any Geha stories or that anyone told them. They are something which one reads.

Informant Mrs. Mary (Mariam) Sayfee Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect _____ Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side I
527-48 awar ad-dinaesh lives inside of a person and motivates him in wrong direction(???)
(tries to change a person's mind)
Informant says that they say this is recorded in the gospels.

Informant Mr. Eli Busada Sex M Age 87½ Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Washington, D.C. Date April 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/B

Life changes.

Any Arab habits or customs that are left deal with food, basra (card game),
music--

not superstitious.

Informant Mr. Eli Busada Sex M Age 87½ Interview Schedule Code IV/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Washington, D.C. Date April 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A

In Worcester, Mass., had professional (non-paid) female wailer.

Informant Mr. Eli Busada Sex M Age 87½ Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Washington, D.C. Date April 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/B

Got Arab ingredients, records on Atlantic Ave., N.Y. or Boston. Also Greek shops in D.C.

Wives learned to cook Arabic food. Mrs. Busada has several Arab cookbooks. Mrs. Busada likes raw kibble.

Mrs. Busada's family reacted to Mr. Busada as foreigner and divorced man. She didn't have much family, friends accepted him.

Mostly couple she lived with after mother died.

They were Baptist and "besides they knew Desire's (Mr. Busada's first wife) family" and had heard lied about Mr. Busada.

Brothers loved him from beginning.

Informant Mr. Mahmoud Sadak Sex M Age 82 Interview Schedule Code ~~VI~~/19
Religious Sect Druze Country of Origin Mt. Lebanon Immigrant Age 15
Interviewer Grant Farr City Washington, D.C. Date April 24, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

III/A
215

Syrian customs:

Food, music.

People would come to his home and they would read Arab authors and discuss.

Informant Mr. Frank Abodeely Sex M Age 83½ Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 17, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/1

1901 Mrs. Abodeely's mother peddled; had one child then returned to homeland. Peddled while she was pregnant. Took train to small towns around Cedar Rapids. Mrs. Abodeely's mother told her that during this period all the women peddled; Mr. Abodeely said that in his time (1912) no women peddled, only few. Even Mrs. Abodeely's sister-in-law and another woman peddled. Women slept in homes in farms, stayed on road, carried suitcases and went door to door; no children peddled.

By 1912, men were married and had homes and families so women didn't peddle; not that peddling had declined.

When women had babies they didn't call doctors; gave birth alone. Used to sleep 10-14 people in a room. When her mother gave birth to first child, she had it in room with all men around. Her uncle helped in delivery. There were no shades on windows or nothing. They would eat outside on sidewalks.

V/6

VI/2

VI/20/6

VI/19

VI 1/18

Informant Mrs. Edna Migala Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin United States* Immigrant Age n.a.*
Interviewer Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date May 21, 1980
* parents were immigrants from Mt. Lebanon

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

She says that her mother was mourning and wearing black all her memory. (why???)

VI/19

VI/15 ?

Informant Mr. Osman Mohammed Chamie Sex M Age 73 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin United States* Immigrant Age 32*
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date May 31, 1980
* U.S. born in 1907 but taken to Syria in 1913; immigrated to the U.S. in 1939
Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/3

When a man wants to betrothe a girl he comes to her parents' home. When they agree they then perform the " 'aqid" or contract. Some then go to the common threshing ground and celebrate with dance and music. The whole village attends; after they return from the "bayadir" (threshing ground), they go to groom's parents' for a feast. At 'Aqad, parents of bride and groom go before a sheikh, also bride and groom--there is a "mahr" (dowry)--promised immediatly or in future--1/3 now, 2/3 later. Some give money or turn over piece of land. All this according to agreement.

I/B/2

Syrians in U.S. cooked as in homeland, used traditional ingredients--made "qawarma" (chopped lamb cooked in its own fat and preserved in it--used as meat base for various dishes).

Informant Mr. Mahmoud Sadak Sex M Age 82 Interview Schedule Code ~~VI~~/19
Religious Sect Druze Country of Origin Mt. Lebanon Immigrant Age 15
Interviewer Grant Farr City Washington, D.C. Date April 24, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

III/B
335

Customs:

Use the Muslim system. Go to the mosques, etc.

Other Druze customs?

How did he keep his religion in the early days?

Religion is in the heart.

III/B
395

We will never know the truth about God.

VI/19

VI/9/6

Informant Mrs. Bahieh Kappaz Sex F Age 83 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Detroit, Michigan Date May 16, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/2

Supserstitions are gone--people's minds got bigger--no more evil eye--
They used to talk about it but it went away. Some still hold on to it.
No more belief injinn. They used to practice cupping but not here. They would
go to doctor here.

Informant Mrs. Zahdi Barsa Sex F Age 81 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 14
Interviewer Alixa Naff City St. Claire Shores, MI Date May 21, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's X 1930's _____

I/B/3

During 1920's when "French separated Lebanon from Syria" St. George came to Christian section near St. George church. Muslims were rioting and killing Christians. Terrified Christians heard sound of horses' hooves, running up and down at midnight. Christian people were spared. Bishop Silman and many Melkite priests made procession with host and candles around this section and Christians were not frightened. They heard horses hooves but did not see St. George. Melkite believe in St. George.

VI/19

II/3

Informant Mr. Peter Aref Solomon Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 10
Interviewer Grant Farr City Sterling Heights, Michigan Date May 28, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

In their neighborhood they started the Easter custom of going from house to house, breaking eggs and having a shot of whiskey (or 'araq). This became a custom of his non-Syrian friends as well.

VI/19

VI/3/2

X/2/6 - influenced other groups.

Informant Mrs. Madeline Bolis Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin United States* Immigrant Age n.a.*
Interviewer Alix Naff City Detroit, Michigan Date May 27, 1980
* parents were immigrants from Mt. Lebanon

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/3

Her mother was the strong one with the children. And the disciplinarian.

Her mother wore black until WWII.

why?

Informant Mr. Eli Busada Sex M Age 87½ Interview Schedule Code IV/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Washington, D.C. Date April 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/B

Raised children to certain age and do as they please. Tried to pass on some Arabness; girl speaks some; son memorized Arab songs from records and performs for guests, although didn't know meaning of words.

Informant Mrs. Mary (Mariam) Sayfee Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect _____ Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
302-565

Informant, after relating incident concerning the evil eye, says that lots of people don't believe in the evil eye (implication that from her own experience it should be believed in)

Informant Theodore M. Hamady Sex M Age 43 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Druze Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City McLean, Va. Date Sept. 1978

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Values: Family loyalty

Informant heard this story from his father: A daughter of one village married into a family from another village. She learned from her husband that the warriors of his village were going to attack her father's village. Her first loyalty was to her family, not to her husband. She warned her father and brothers and they were prepared.

Informant stressed that loyalty to the family is an important value in the Lebanese villages, and is a source of other loyalties, such as loyalty to the village or the faith. "It was your immediate family that constituted your greatest commitment of loyalty and it spread out, your cousin, your village. Informant thinks that animosity which existed between two Druze families in Flint, Mich. was the expression of the conflict between the two villages in his father's story.

values-family loyalty

21/19

Informant Aliya Ogdie Hassan Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA3

She doesn't think that the Islamic practices changed too much. Most of the Muslim women who marry non-Muslims - their husbands convert to Islam.

The Syrians and the Lebanese were much more broadminded than the Saudi Arabs or the Yemenis.

Women no longer cover their heads. At weddings the bride now wears an American bridal dress.

IIB2

She feels that one shouldn't drink.

IIB3

No conflict between Syrian traditions and American ones, except when work prevents prayer she makes them up at home. More strict Muslims will find nook at work for prayer during the day.

v1/9/b

v1/19

Informant Aliya Ogdie Hassan Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI / 19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Aux. Tape
IA1

Children were taught, when she was young, to kiss the back of the hand of Arab guests when welcoming them, and to say "Ahlan Wa Sahlen." (Welcome)
Boys removed or tipped their caps when seeing a lady on the street.
They said yes or no ma'am. Children stood when an adult entered the room until the adult sat down.

Informant Aliya Ogdie Hassan Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IA3 - She was taught to be independent and to be proud of the heroines of Islam.
IB1 In Sioux Falls her mother always covered her head with a lace cap. They tried
to get Aliya to cover her head when she went to school, but she would take it off.
It was the second generation that didn't cover their heads. When she first came
to Detroit the women all did it. (1926)
- IA3 Every place she went she had to have her brothers or her father with her while
she was growing up. Her mother never changed and would always wear her long
dresses with a high neck, and a hat, even in Sioux Falls.
Her mother never went out shopping until after her husband died.

vi/20/c

vi/19

Informant Aliya Ogdie Hassan Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code 51/19
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA3

In the home village there was a feud between the Ogdies and the Haymoors which started in 1680 and lasted over 100 years.

The family name was originally 'Aqad, from the fact that an ancestor was a jeweler who made and sold products in large cities - Mohammed al 'Aqad - originally from Hijaz. Learned his trade when his tribe visited Mecca. Many generations later in Lebanon the name was distorted to Ogdie. Ancesters were bedouin. Mores such as giving to travellers for 3 days were practiced by her father in Sioux Falls. Example: A man who had wronged her father was invited into the house by informant and fed. Father came home, recognized the man, but said "don't fear, you have eaten of our bread and salt, you are safe." Her father even took him into town.

The family feud was over an Ogdie abducting a Haymoor girl betrothed to her first cousin.

II / 2

II / 10

II / 16

VI / 19

Informant Wagha Sophiea Sex F Age 80 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 20
Interviewer Alix Naff City Royal Oak, Mich. Date May 28, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB1

When they were children men rode in the front seat of the car and women in back. Norman continues this tradition today. Norman stated that he tries to maintain his parent's traditions because he is the oldest son, his younger brothers are not so traditional.

Informant Wagha Sophiea Sex F Age 80 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 20
Interviewer Alix Naff City Royal Oak, Mich. Date May 28, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA3

- In church the sexes were segregated and also in social gatherings in homes. Women "shouldn't talk when men are talking." This tradition was not changed it died with the older generation.. Her sons Norman and Laurence say that the tradition is still maintained to some extent in their homes because men have their own topics of conversation as women do. This is not deliberate segregation but a natural one. Informant added that if the second generation had married Syrians like her sons had the tradition would have been maintained, but some married Americans.

vi/19

Informant Frank Abodeely Sex M Age 83½ Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 18
Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 17, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

Mrs. A replied to question about why boys and girls weren't allowed to date: Parents were afraid they would get into trouble and this would be a dishonor to the family. No one would then marry the girl. Mr. A. added if a girl wasn't a virgin no one would want her. Its the same here as in the old country. Her father wouldn't let them sit on the front porch together with her brothers before they were married. The honor of a family rests on its girls.

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIB1 When informant's wife was asked if she became accustomed to preparing a lot of food for guests, she said that she was pleased because Lebanese were talking ^{accout} her as a member of the Lebanese community. Her sister's (who also married Lebanese) didn't let their children mix with other Lebanese children. (She didn't say what the reaction of their husbands was.)

IIB3 He had five girls who married the boys they dated the first time, because he taught them how to act with boys and how to keep their honor and family honor.
"When you bring a boy in the house you welcome him and be good. If he deserves it, I increase it, if he don't, I tell him don't come back." He told his daughters if you don't like a man when you go with him, "find somebody else." He stated: "if a woman respect her husband, and a respect his wife, children do the same thing."

When he heard the interviewer say that family honor is important to Arabs he replied enthusiastically: "that's right, that's right."

About generosity he said that he has a son in California who is very generous "everybody died to go to his house." He thinks it's very important that Arabs serve a lot of food, because it keeps them proud.

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIB1

Wife said that informant was "the Boss" of the family. He said that his wife was "the Boss in the kitchen."

Wife took care of the children and had some authority as disciplinarian but not "all the authority."

IIB1

Informant taught his children Qur'an and reading/writing Arabic. Taught the children not to eat pork, in short how to be a Muslim Arab. All the family, including the wife, who is American, read Qur'an.

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIB3

Family celebrated Christmas, and Easter and both Muslim and Christian holidays. Wife, although she was American, kept his traditions and customs. She said "I followed his religion."

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's ✓

IIA2

After he bought a car in 1923 he drove to his relatives near Highland Park, about a half an hour drive. So he met a girl and then wrote to her from Highland Park. After a year and a half he married her. She was 17 at marriage. They were married in South Bend, Ind. A Sheik conducted the marriage. He went to Michigan City for the honeymoon. Informant married a non-Arab woman. Asked why, he said "What is it the Arab woman has, and the American women don't". He said that a lot of people asked him about his marriage and he always said "what the hell is the difference."

His wife when asked if it was unusual for her to marry a Muslim, she answered, "no" because her two sisters married Lebanese before her, and that was how she was introduced to him.

After marriage they lived in South Bend until 1929, then went to Michigan City.

IIB2

Informant's children married Shi'i Muslims.

VI/13/a

VI/3/f

VI/19

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IIA3 Story: He went to a picnic sponsored by a church and saw someone drinking during Prohibition. He was told by the drinker, "do what I say not what I do." The drinker offered him a drink but the latter refused because he is a Muslim, and told the drinker "if men like you in my country drink, we hung him."
- When he was asked why he went to a church picnic, the informant said he was invited by "the boys," his American friends. He also went with the boys to Sunday school.
- IIB2 Informant's children brought their American friends home. They married Shi'i Muslims. He said he didn't feel pressure to hurry to become Americanized "I really did love the American way... I like their rules, I like their equal."
- IIB3 His children were taught at home how to preserve some of their Arabic culture, altho they were American born and their mother was American. His daughters, although they were allowed to date, were following their father's advice in selecting friends and behaving as he taught them. He bought things like potato chips for parties that were held by his children at home. Informant stated that he still keeps his Arab traditions and he hasn't changed any tradition.

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA3

During the depression they had 4 children and "it was really rough." He added "I don't like to remember" those days. Wife said that they were given food stamps but informant said that food stamps "were nothing" because there was no welfare. Once a month the authorities in South Bend distributed some food to people, but it was very limited in amount. He was getting only \$6 or \$7 for 3 days of work. Family had a garden, and wife canned food that was produced.

People worked for only .25 an hour. Altho meat, for example, was available in the market for .9 a pound he couldn't buy it at one time because he didn't have any money. Family "never" went on welfare. When asked if he knew other Muslims who went on soup lines, he replied that the authorities "gave them" (other Muslims) grocery orders" but when people went to the grocery store to be served, the owner gave what he wanted not what people wanted.

He knew "three or four men, none of them had a nickel" He had to bring them home, fed them and gave them the living room to sleep during the depression. He stated that in order for someone to get help "he had know somebody." Informant that it was a shame (djarsa) for Lebanese to go on welfare.

Over.....

The Michigan City Bank didn't close so informant didn't lose any money.

Depression made him "very disappointed" about the U.S. because he lost his job and he was getting a job "from day to day."

Informant Mr. Kamel Osman Sex M Age 68 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Taylor, Michigan Date June 4, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/3 If there were a marriage, they put signs in coffeehouses; "everybody came" and helped with money.¹

II/B/2 "Women couldn't dance the debka with men" in the homeland.

¹They contributed to the family having the wedding, or even death or other crises, sharing the burden of expenses of the family. (Sahbak fil-qarḥwal-farah).

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin United States? Immigrant Age n.a.?
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
470-708

Informant says that people (Syrians) don't maintain customs concerning bride's virginity anymore, in this country. speculate/gossip

(related to honor-people would talk/about a girl who was socially active)
She relates story of a relative with whom the custom was observed in the U.S.

She then talks about some other woman who told her younger ^{granddaughter} relative about the importance of virginity and its symbol; and therefore what an unmarried woman should not allow on the part of a man.

The informant says it wasn't a shameful thing (dile) to discuss sexual matters.

In this country/a girl's mother or grandmother who inform her about menstruation.
as well as in the old country

Informant was so young when she came to this country, ~~she wasn't~~ that in the old country, they didn't discuss sexual matters in front of her; she learned by overhearing conversations.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
000-059

Informant's granddaughter did not want her father to come to the hospital when she delivered, according to the informant, because she was afraid of his reaction if the child was a girl (she had previously had three girls). This statement was related humorously. I can't understand what the father said he would do, if this were the case, according to the informant.

Informant believes that boys are carried high and girls low during pregnancy.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin United States? Immigrant Age ~~22-2?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
180-270

Informant relates story of an evil eye experience, the caster being a coal man (American) who gave the evil eye to a child Mrs. Beshara knows. She describes the cure.

that's a beautiful boy you've got there (appreciation of ethnic beauty ???)

This family had a maid from Zahle (she knew the coal man and took piece of clothing from his house--part of a pant pocket for use in the cure ritual.

The boy recovered instantly, completely after the ritual.

She mentions putting a blue bead on the clothing (inside so it wouldn't show) of a child (daughter??? Delores); a grandmother approved.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age n.a.?
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
470-708

Informant was married in a Catholic church; there wasn't any other church in that era (I presume she means in the U.S.).

There was no virginity proof ritual.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
708-827

Informant was taught in the old country that when they went to the vineyards, to beware of the djinni who would come from near the river, and I think she says they would be afraid.

But in the U.S. she didn't hear ever about their presence here.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
093-106

Informant comments on a proverb, translates it: the rich eat the poor.

al-fajir (???) byakul mal al-tajir --this doesn't sound quite right as a translation to me.

VI/19

Values ?

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
207-315

When she was a child in the U.S., she remembers the older Syrians talking in front of her about miracles and the evil eye. She was told it/was prevalent in ~~the-U.S.~~ "they've got a lot of ~~that~~" evil eye
Italy??? it

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
708-827

Informant does not believe in superstition prohibiting pregnant women from visiting new born children.

In America these kinds of superstitions are not known.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side II
106-138

Informant predicted, according to superstition (folkbelief) that her granddaughter would give birth to a son, which she did, because the granddaughter has a flow of blood during pregnancy.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code ~~VI~~/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age ~~n.a.?~~
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
158-180

???

Informant remembers when she was young, living in Hartford City, /an old lady lived with her and the informant would tell her story every night, staying up to 1 a.m. The old lady wouldn't let her sleep until she finished the story.

Informant Mrs. Elizabeth Beshara Sex F Age Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect ~~Orthodox?~~ Catholic Country of Origin ~~United States?~~ Immigrant Age n.a.?
Interviewer Alix Naff City Ft. Wayne, Indiana Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

Side I
207-315

Informant's paternal uncle (Bu Salem) who was smart, used to tell them
Christian stories (like that about the church of St. John in Damascus).

Syrian community
But now they don't tell their/stories anymore.

Conversation with:

Informant Nicola Shamiyyi Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
 Religious Sect Unknown Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age N/A
 Interviewer Alixa Naff City Rachaya al-Wadi, Lebanon Date April, 1965

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

In whatever country they migrate to, the Lebanese are closer to each other than they were in their homeland. In the early period they all helped each other. When a poor man arrived, he would be given money, work, training etc. The suppliers benefitted too.

In the new land the Arabic-speaking people would live together; the people of Rachaya lived together. They developed clubs, churches, had their own bishops and priests. Each faith had its own church and community.

VL/2

VI/19

Conversation with:

Informant Mrs. Fatme Askker Sex F Age 78 Interview Schedule Code VL/19
 Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 32
 Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

She is illiterate in both English and Arabic. She is traditional in some ways but not in others. She covered her head when she showed the interviewer to and from the door but not during the conversation. She condemned Muslims for not educating their children, and praised Christians for educating them, and bringing them up to be more polite. She did not like the new Arab arrivals in her neighborhood, giving an example of one's lack of courtesy by not helping her carry her packages. She said if it had been a Christian he would have helped her.

Conversation with:

Informant Nicola Shamiyyi Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Unknown Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Rachaya al-Wadi, Lebanon Date April, 1965

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Asked if the emigrants seemed changed when they returned to the village, he said if they changed their traditions and customs, this comes from association. Those who first went to America and succeeded stimulated travel back and forth. This changed life in the village and in Lebanon.

The people from Beirut and Zahle left before the people of Rashaya. They knew about the U.S. before the others. They were the first to go to the U.S., Africa, Australia, and South America.

Those who went to Australia began going 70 or 80 years ago, so that they have no relatives left in Lebanon. The Saliba family of Rachaya are all in Australia.

Conversation with:
Informant Mary Agency Sex F Age 83 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 23
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 5, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

She came to the U.S. in 1920 from Tebnine but she was raised in Beirut. She was never educated - they never educated girls. It is "ayb" or a disgrace to educate girls, girls should be the "mother of the house." A man should be educated because he works and trades outside the home.

She used to put food on the table and take her children and go into another room. For 10 years she remained in the this town and associated with no one.

When her children were young and her husband was alive she didn't work outside the house. When he got sick she worked with him in his grocery store. He learned the business from her brothers. They still have a store, which the sons operate. Their name is Rustum. All from Tebnine.

Conversation with:
Informant Mary Agemy Sex F Age 83 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 23
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 5, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Married in 1920. Her brother married with ^{her} her cousin. It was her brother who married not her. She didn't know him (her cousin). "Do you think that in those days a girls eyes were like those of today's girls - bold? That's the way it was, the parents marry a girl off and she must live her life whether good or bad. And things come to pass. Look, this is chance - it depends on one's fate and chance. Now, look, they associate and are knowledgeable and then they divorce.. In the past, divorce was not common, but it is today. Among Christians divorce is taboo, especially among Catholics. They may do what they want outside but they can't divorce - the priest dictates to them. In Islam divorce is simpler and better - better than staying unhappy together."

VI/13/a

Values - marriage vs divorce

Values ^{role of} fate and chance in life

VI/19

Conversation with:

Informant Mary Agemy

Sex F Age 83

Interview Schedule Code VL/19

Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim

Country of Origin Syria

Immigrant Age 23

Interviewer Alix Naff

City Dearborn, Michigan

Date June 5, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Husband belonged to Republican party. He also belonged to a political organization which gave a dinner at the mosque which she cooked for. This was while Roosevelt was president. All the important people of the town came and after the dinner they wanted to meet the cook. She felt it was compromising herself to shake hands with men, it is inconsistent with a Muslim woman's modesty and honor, but she was pressured by others to do it. She doesn't know the name of the organization.

Informant Zenib Sabaugh Sex F Age 75 Interview Schedule Code VL/19
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 17
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dearborn, Mich. Date May 30, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Girls were not allowed to talk to boys in the village and if a girl went out with a boy "they would kill her." She added that the film about the public execution of a Saudi princess and her lover was accurate "I believe it." This film had been shown on national T.V.

Women in the village do not go around with their hair uncovered. They did this only in the U.S. She remembered that in the early 1920's when Ataturk outlawed the wearing of a head covering and veil the women of her village, who according to her, never wore a veil, were compelled to uncover their heads. They replaced what she described as a closely woven mandil with a more sheer one which, she laughed, always fell off.

She thought the whole idea of covering heads was nonsense. (She herself had shoulder length salt and pepper hair partially covered with a small scarf that seemed to rest on the top of her head.)

Informant George F. Addes

Sex M Age 70

Interview Schedule Code VI/19

Religious Sect Melkite

Country of Origin U.S. born

Immigrant Age N/A

Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr

City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA1

When there is a celebration of something women were segregated from men.

Informant Sam M. Haddy Sex M Age 72 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA1

Women were separated from men in the church and in the home when there was a visitor. His mother started changing this habit both at home and at church and people "welcomed it." "it just took somebody to start it."

Informant Theлма Wehby Sex F Age 82 Interview Schedule Code V1/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alixа Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA1

Women were separated from men in the house when there was visitor.
They were separated in church too, women on one side, men on the other.

Informant Rose Canty Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code v1/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 1
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Ill. Date July 13, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA3

Her mother only covered her head when she went to church. She didn't have to be accompanied when she went outside the home. The segregation of women existed when she was young but changed as she grew up as women tried to be equal like men. Her mother compared Lebanese women to American women who had more freedom, she wanted Lebanese to be like American women. Situation changed because of the influence of American life.

Informant Christine La Hood Sex F Age 85 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 5
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Ill. Date July 15, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

The Syrians, both Maronite and Orthodox, would visit each other on holidays. Her father would lay a big table with sweets, whiskey, and hors d'oeuvres. He would explain "that is tradition."

v1/3/b

v1/19

Informant Christine La Hood Sex F Age 85 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 5
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Ill. Date July 15, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA2

Her family provided her with a cedar chest when she was married filled with sheets, etc which her stepmother and sisters made. "That was Lebanese style." She remained at home for 1 month after the wedding in 1912 in order to buy presents for her husband's family.

Informant Victoria Trahd Atalla Sex F Age 68 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious ~~Sect~~ Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Mark, Ill. Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

- In the privacy of her home informant dresses very casually - shorts sometimes bra-less. Her mother used to admonish her to dress properly, but she values her comfort too much. Her friends are aware of this.

Informant Hasibe & Abe Aossey

Sex F & M Age 74 & 82 Interview Schedule Code VL/19

Religious Sect Muslim Shi'i

Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 21 & 15

Interviewer Alixa Naff

City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 17, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

She continued to cover her head for 15 years after she arrived in U.S. She had to do this to maintain her status as a shaykh's daughter. Once an imam from Detroit visited and her head was uncovered. She escaped through a back window before he could see her and covered her head.

When Abe first arrived he came to visit her in 1913 - she wouldn't let him see her but spoke to him through a curtain which separated her husband's store from the house.

Informant Victoria Trahd Atalla

Sex F Age 68

Interview Schedule Cod

Religious Sect Orthodox

Country of Origin U.S. born

Immigrant Age^e

VI
N/A / 19

Interviewer Alixa Naff

City Mark, Ill.

Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____

World War I _____

1920's _____

1930's _____

Because in her home they ate Arab style with bread instead of silverware, she had to learn how to eat American style from her second husband and her American girl friend. Before that she was embarrassed when eating in public at church dinners, or restaurants.

VI/12

VI/19

Informant Victoria Trahd Atalla Sex F Age 68 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Mark, Ill. Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA3 - Her first husband was "a regular Turk," very strict and jealous. They quarreled when she kissed his 17 year old nephew, whose mother, her husband's sister never let him come near her again.

IIA3 When married to her second husband she cut her hair and he like it. (about 1939)
Her mother always told her she had no modesty. Her mother was always well dressed. Her aunt wore a black mandil (scarf).

VIII / 2 / b

VI / 13 / a

VI / 19

Informant Nellie Bourazak Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Ill. Date July 17, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIB1

It was traditional that family members stuck together, old with new generations. The Americanization process worked within the Arab family to the extent that being or living alone became an accepted and apparent phenomenon within the Arab community in Peoria. Many ladies are now alone but they get together.

v1/12

x/1/a

v1/19

Informant Theodore M. Hamady

Sex M Age 43

Interview Schedule Code VI/19

Religious Sect Druze

Country of Origin U.S. born

Immigrant Age N/A

Interviewer Alix Naff

City McLean, Va.

Date Sept. 1978

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA1

Informant had a relative in Flint who was murdered during a holdup, which he resisted. (Informant didn't say who the murderers were) Other members of the community came to Flint to avenge the death of the relative, but informant's grandfather confronted them and called the sheriff and had them put in jail for the weekend.

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code FF 119
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 198

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IV/B/1

Asked what she would say are some positive qualities or the Arab people or Arabic culture, hospitality for example, she replied: "Well, hospitality is number one; they're all hospitable, no matter what part of the country they are from, they are very hospitable; they're very loving and they can't do enough for you". Referring to the great amount of energy expended to put all kinds of food on the table for guests, she comments: "Right, right, and that is the tradition that will live through even the new generation". When she visited American homes, she realized that the American people had a different custom and although no one would say anything, "I might've thought it, .. and I might have thought well, the difference between the Arab culture and the American culture". Asked if she would be more proud or pleased with the American or the Arab culture, she replied: "I was happy with my own culture, with the Arab culture, yes (regarding hospitality) that's right (and generosity?) and generosity"; "that does not mean they were not good neighbors or good friends".

Informant Mr. George Malooley Sex M Age 73 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 24
Interviewer Alix Naff City Lexington, Nebraska Date 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/2

Asked if he maintained the traditions, customs and values of the homeland as seemed apparent because he was isolated from Arabs in Lexington or deliberately, he said deliberately because that's the way "we like it and the way we were raised and we wanted to raise our children in our traditions--in one way in particular. If they saw a person, known to them or strangers, they greet him, meet him and benefit themselves. (He was conscious that he was talking for the tape recorder.)

Reminded by the interviewer that he had told her that he didn't learn English well because he didn't want to and because he wanted to maintain Arabic, he said: "That's true".

v1/7

v1/19

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code VE/19
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 1
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 191

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IV/A
/1

Asked if she and other Arabs were identified as ibn ^Carab and bint ^Carab then (in the Twenties and Thirties), she replied "Why I suppose so; I don't see how it could be different". Her children did ask her about life in the old country when they were small. "I used to cook Arabic food and maybe sometimes they'd say they didn't like it and I'd say 'mother Mary and baby Jesus used to eat that' and then they would eat it and love it and that was our ritual at home when it came to something to eat".

Asked if she had to give herself an identity then, did she say: "We are from Btegrhine, or we are from the Saliba family, or we are Orthodox, she replied: "Whichever was required; I'd say the whole spiel; (all three?) yes, if they want to know who I am; that was my identity; first I was a Lebanese, Orthodox religion, of Arab descent".

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I World War I 1920's 1930's

II/A/2

Informant doesn't recall any superstitions, "no superstitions". They did have home remedies--chicken soup, egg soup and rice soup; they took quinine (kina) if they had a fever; that was the biggest medicine. They also went to the doctor if they had a fever. They used leeches a lot to get rid of the "bad blood" but she never experienced this remedy; she thinks they did it maybe to relieve blood pressure.

Bteghrine had four doctors, all from the Sawaya family, who went to medical school in Lebanon.

People wore a tauq (a thin wire collar) and prayed to particular saints when they were ill. Some people who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem would bring them back as gifts for friends. They would also tie a rope around the church during a drought and make a vow and pray for rain and it was effective.

II/9

II/14

VII/19

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code V1/19
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

III/B
/1

In her home, regarding the treatment of guests, there was the traditional hospitality and generosity. She noticed a difference in hospitality among her American neighbors--"Well, the custom's different; the Arab neighbors always, that's their nature, their custom is hospitable but other nationalities, other ethnic groups have the same customs, for instance like the Italians or the Greeks... but the ordinary American people who were generation after generation in this country, well I don't guess they had that; they were good neighbors but-". "Well, it didn't make me feel bad because that's the way they are and that's the way it was; I liked them". "I didn't give it that much thought; they did what they want and I did what I want; you see, there was no conflict there".

III/B
/2

She never experienced, regarding old country home remedies continued in the U.S., the use of leeches to cure "but I think some old people did use those; well, even the American people used them here, I think, cause they are known; you go to the drug store and buy them, I believe; you used to".

"

She has never known any stories told about a character named Juha or about the djinn.

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code PL/19
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

CV/A
/2

Asked how she thinks her children felt then about being Syrian or Lebanese, were they ever ashamed of it, she replied: "No, they were never ashamed of it; they were very well liked and respected". Asked if they ever questioned why they had to do something that an (American) family didn't, if they ever said "we want to be more American", she replied: "No, because they figured they were American; those kind of thoughts didn't come up". "Some of the best children of the best families in ~~own~~ were their friends". Asked if ~~all~~ her children had similar reactions to their ethnic identity, are they all proud to be Arab-Americans or some more so than others, she replied: "Yes, I think so; I think so, maybe some more than others but no, I, they're not ashamed of what they are (and you don't recall a time when they might have been?) no! never! They were just as American as the next door neighbor or the far neighbor".

She served her children's friends Arab food "they loved it; all their friends loved the Arab food". She would tell them "that's what mother Mary and baby Jesus used to eat"; "they just laughed and enjoyed it". She didn't hear that from her mother; "that's something I invented".

VI/19

Informant Mr. George J. Bouhana Sex M Age 67 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Maronite-R. Catholic Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Warren, Michigan Date May 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/2

When the informant was a child, the neighborhood "was just beautiful"; doors were open, people visited each other's houses; there was respect and discipline; they ate, drank, sang; informant used to play the harmonica.

II/2

II/3/6

II/16

II/19

VL/19

Informant Mr. George J. Bouhana Sex M Age 67 Interview Schedule Code VL/19
Religious Sect Maronite-R. Catholic Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Warren, Michigan Date May 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/B/3

Supersition:

People were superstitious; they believed in "not doing certain things in certain days".

II/19

Valer - Superstition

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Negebe Sheronick Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code _____
 Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 18
 Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- | | |
|--------|--|
| | house and |
| I/A/2 | <p>Women used to work in the/fields, to milk the cows and goats, but not anymore. Women went out alone but always covered their heads, both Muslims and Christians, especially in churches. Informant doesn't cover her head except in the mosque and at funerals, out of respect; churches and mosques are houses of God. Women who continue to cover their heads probably do so out of habit. "I made the pilgrimage and covered my head, but not all the time. I couldn't; maybe God will punish me, I don't know, but maybe he will forgive me too". Habits are hard to break.</p> |
| I/A/3 | <p>Informant's father brought in a woman teacher in 1922 to teach in the village.</p> |
| II/A/2 | <p>Informant worked as a boss in the field, since she didn't have brothers and was the oldest girl. They had 35 workers (probably sharecroppers) in the field all the time and had hired help. It was not usual for a girl to do that but was necessary. They respected her. She hired and fired and directed, carried out her father's commands.</p> |

II/5
II/7
II/13

II/9
II/12

VI/9/6

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Negebe Sheronick Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code _____
 Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 18
 Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/3

Teacher taught children Arabic in the community, also at home; both read and speak and write Arabic perfectly; also transmitted religious practices to children. Many children didn't learn.

II/A/2

Father was strict; mother followed what father said; had to obey father.

Where her children were concerned, she and her husband sometimes disagreed, not often. "I don't know what kind of mother I would have been if I had stayed in Jub Jennine. I wouldn't have been able to do as much for my children there as I did here". "I raised my children as my parents raised me".

Informant didn't have to transmit Arab traditions and customs; they picked it up.

Children married Arabs. I was happy they did, but wouldn't object if they didn't; they respect us and their family.

VI/19

Informant Mrs. Negebe Sheronick Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 18
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/1

Muslims and Christians in Cedar Rapids in the early period (pre WWI) were one big family and conducted each other's services. Informant's father performed services for Christians, ~~il~~ at funerals; if someone died or got married among the Christians, he performed service. For Muslims he was the sheikh. "There was no difference in religion--one God".

II/A/1

Orthodox and Muslims assist each other in cooking and buying tickets for respective public dinners.

Now the Christian and Muslim communities are more separated than before; young people are not as close as their parents were. People in this country are not naturally as close as in the homeland.

VI / 19

Informant Mrs. Eva Frenn Sex F Age 56 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 17
Interviewer Alix Naff City N. Hollywood, California Date 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/2

When informant arrived in Okmogie, Oklahoma, her mother-in-law couldn't speak any English at all but Mrs. Musallem (informant's sister-in-law) could. They ordered ingredients for Arabic foods from N.Y. from Sa'adi. "Oh we ate all the food just like the old country". Her mother-in-law would not let them eat pork "just like the Muslims--no, it had nothing to do with religion; she was finicky, that's all. When we went to Muskogee, we ate prok; a lot of the Christian old-timers didn't eat pork; some still won't; they think its an unclean meat.

Informant's social life changed a great deal. "We didn't have any Lebanese people around us and every Sunday we had Syrian people come from Muskogee or Henrietta to say hello the new bride". Most of them were from Sadie, Oklahoma. Most of the Syrians in Oklahoma were from Jdaydat Marj^c ayoun and then we'd go to visit them. It was a very very quiet social life for me".

Other Syrians in Oklahoma had read-to-wear stores. Very few people farmed; all those she knew had stores.

VI / 19

Informant Mr. Louis Faris Lutfy Sex M Age 88 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15
Interviewer Alix Naff City East Detroit, Michigan Date May 20, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/2 Informant's wife didn't work. Her English was worse than the informant's. Also, at that time Damascenes didn't want wives to work; she also had to take care of her sisters and brother and had her first child the first year (they were married).

II/A/2 Informant's wife gave birth at home by midwife; didn't used to go to hospitals in 1911.

II/B/1 Informant's wife raised grandchildren while daughter worked in husband's store until 11 p.m. every night.

VI/7 VI/20/2

VI/20/6 VI/19

VI/19

Informant Mr. Joseph Couri Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code _____
 Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
 Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Illinois Date July 15, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/1

II/A/1

The Itoo Society was formed in 1914. One of the informant's cousins drowned in a boating accident and the Itoo people organized a funeral for him. After the funeral, the Itoo people formed the society as a charitable organization for Itoo needy people. During the first 4-5 yrs., meetings were held in informant's parents' house (informant has a picture of this). Then the Itoo Society bought a house in the Itoo neighborhood in Peoria. Most of the Itoo people belonged to the society. Later, a group of Itoos formed their own society because they didn't get along with others, especially concerning the homeland politics and who was going to be mayor of Itoo.

Itoo Society still exists. People meet and dance and have dinners, etc. It was a club that kept our people together".

Informant stated that through the Itoo Society he is passing Itoo culture to his children.

Informant Mr. Nafe Katter Sex M Age 82 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Druze Country of Origin Mt. Lebanon Immigrant Age 22
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Saginaw, Michigan Date June 13, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Druze religion and Druze in Saginaw and Detroit, Michigan continued:

II/A/2

2) The second degree, al-sharh "also a constructive method" for "the mind of young people". The committee also watches the activity of the person.

3) Third degree, called al-hikma: to (make) just all things in life.

Informant said that Druze "ideas" helped him to succeed in life. A person is not allowed to go to majlis and learn the hikma if he 1) smoked a cigarette, 2) drank alchohol, 3) used foul language, 4) didn't wear leffe (turban), 5) married from another religious faith.

He thinks that Druze as religion should be flexible and not so strict in order to maintain the religion. "In order (that Druze) carry on that good culture, I think that we should have to relax" the rules of the faith.

II/A/2

The Druze bought cemeteries in Saginaw and in Detroit, which were open to all Druze whose families wanted to use it, whether they had money or not.

Informant Mrs. Samia Salem Sex F Age 80 Interview Schedule Code II/19
Religious Sect Druze Country of Origin Mt. Lebanon Immigrant Age 20
Interviewer Alix Naff City Béthesda, Maryland Date August 22, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/1

Work did not affect the way informant and her husband brought up the family. She didn't want her children to be influenced by Americans and used to be with them all the time "to keep them away from Americans".

Informant Mr. George J. Bouhana Sex M Age 67 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Maronite-R. Catholic Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Warren, Michigan Date May 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/1

Lebanese people kept their traditions--weddings, food, decorations--for 40 years; some remain even today. In general traditions survived until end of WWII when people moved to different places because of better jobs, better education for their children, better homes in the suburbs and also because the children grew up and they were second generation.

In early days (1920's-30's), most of the time people did not go to a doctor. They used to take care of themselves by using traditional (medication) such as onions, herbs, potatoes, etc.

II/A/3

Informant continues to have Arabic food; tried to transmit their heritage to their children through their daily life, "naturally...act in our own heritage and we expect them to follow" our heritage, also they talk about their homeland when they got a chance.

Informant's daughter, 39 years old, speaks Arabic and cooks Arabic food.

II/B/1

Parents would like to see their daughters married; a single girl in the house would be a tragedy, "terrible"; on the contrary for the informant, he likes to keep them as much as he can.

Informant Mr. & Mrs. Najem Basheer Sex M/F Age 84/64 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Druze Country of Origin Mt. Lebanon Immigrant Age 17/24
Interviewer Alix Naff City Richmond, Virginia Date Sept. 21, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/1

Mr. Basheer's mother, like other Druze women, covered her head but not her face. Women were always separated from men in the house. His mother went shopping and visited her relatives by herself; sometimes she was accompanied by her husband.

Informant Mrs. Amelia Malooley Sex F Age 49 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Illinois Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

AM
I/A/2

Since her father was dead, her brother raised her and rest of family in his place.

AM
I/A/3

Informant was not informed about menstruation, didn't dare go to her mother, but her paternal uncle's wife, who was wise, realized what was happening and explained to her that she was a woman and told her mother and they told her what to do.

Then she (informant's mother) warned her--from now on you must never let a boy touch you. She never told me why--but the implication was left that if he touched your finger, you'd become pregnant. It was a dilemma.

Informant Mrs. Amelia Malooley Sex F Age 49 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Illinois Date August 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

AM
I/A/3

A menstruating woman was not supposed to preserve foods or bake bread or cook food. She was supposed to be contaminated and food would spoil. Also a woman who was menstruating could not visit a woman who had newly given birth for fear that the new mother's milk would dry up.

AM
I/B/1

Oh no never--never could we dare to ask where babies come from. Anything I learned as a young girl came as tidbits from my American girlfriends. I thought those girls had done something very wrong to know that kind of stuff. I felt guilty knowing. We were so sheltered. When we got our nickel on Saturday night to go to Main Street to buy an ice cream cone or go to a show, we had to go straight home. We all went in groups usually with our Syrian girlfriends. I can't say we didn't have a wonderful youth. We did. We had quite a few Syrians here at that time (1920's and probably during WWI).

Informant Miss Budelia Malooley Sex F Age 77* Interview Schedule Code V1/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age ca. 1 year
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Illinois Date July 4, 1980*
* 59 at the time of the August 1962 interview

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

VA
I/B/2

Informant comments to Mrs. Atalla that items such as family prayerbooks should be kept and passed to children and grandchildren.

Informant Miss Budelia Malooley Sex F Age 77* Interview Schedule Code 51/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age ca. 1 year
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Illinois Date July 4, 1980*
* 59 at the time of the August 1962 interview

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

VA
II/A/1

Informant's mother and informant's paternal uncle had great mutual respect;
(he called her:) ya mart khaiyyi (my brother's wife).

Informant Widad Naff Frenn Sex F Age 47 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 6
Interviewer Alix Naff City North Hollywood, Calif. Date 1962
Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's ---

Father learned about Christmas and would fill children's stockings with nuts and orange and hang them in the doorway. Children brought American customs and holidays into the house from school and also their father began to earn more money.

Weddings and funerals were like in the village, baptisms too especially if it was a boy.

Eva Frenn, informant's cousin, said of her mother that she wouldn't allow pork in the house until they had a grocery store in Detroit in 1930.

Informant Mrs. Latify Cory Sex F Age 83 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Louis Cory City Windsor, Ontario, Canada Date July 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/3

When first arrived at Rochester, Pennsylvania, age 11, she was fascinated by young neighbor boy who did acrobatics, talked with him. And apparently was seen walking with him by brother. He reprimanded her harshly "what do (you) mean by walking with a boy?"

II/A/1

In homeland, during Pentecost celebration, boys went to one part of village and girls to another to boil and compete in egg cracking game. On such occasions boys and girls did not mix--"not nice".

Informant Mrs. Eva Frenn Sex F Age 56 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 17
Interviewer Alix Naff City N. Hollywood, California Date 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/1

There were changes in traditions like weddings, but in a town like Okmogie it didn't matter. "We had a big Lebanese baptism for the boys". Funeral and mournings changed. Her mother-in-law wanted to hit on herself when she heard of a family death but we told her, look Maw, we're in this country and we don't do things like that here. Oh, yes it was different here". But it was harder for her mother-in-law to change than her. She never changed and wanted everyone to go her way. She continued to celebrate holidays her way and other things like airing mattresses outside.

Informant Mrs. Eva Frenn Sex F Age 56 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 17
Interviewer Alix Naff City N. Hollywood, California Date 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/1

"When I was young in Zahle, a groom would slap the face of his bride to show her he was boss".

Husbands used to help the midwife with delivery of his children. He'd hold his wife. "This was in my mother's day and before. They believed if he was there, he'd give her strength".

Informant Mr. Abe Abraham Sex M Age 60 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Elaine Hughes City Vicksburg, Mississippi Date August 23, 1979

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/3

Informant's father, who made 3 trips back to the homeland, "always told us 'there's no country like the good old USA'". It wasn't because it was the land of opportunity; it was here, but because they could live (goes into a distorted understanding of Middle East history, oppression, Phoenicia, etc.; goes on to say:)

The Christians and many other people of Lebanon had a tattoo on the left hand between the little and ring finger, of a cedar of Lebanon; that was the way to let people know they were Christians of Lebanon. Informant's grandmother and his father had one; he doesn't know why it was tattooed in that spot. Some tattooed a big tree on their forearm. This probably changed at the turn of the century because the informant didn't see it on people who weren't as old as his grandmother.

vi/18

vi/19

Informant Mr. Abe Abraham

Sex M Age 60

Interview Schedule Code VI/19

Religious Sect Orthodox

Country of Origin U.S. born

Immigrant Age n.a.

Interviewer Elaine Hughes

City Vicksburg, Mississippi

Date August 23, 1979

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/3

Informant's mother started wearing black when his brother got killed in service in 1944. And she wore it till she died.

v1/6/5

v1/19

Informant Charles Teebagy Sex M Age 80 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 20
Interviewer Alix Naff City Dorchester, Mass. Date 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA3

When the Syrians immigrated they dressed like the Americans, but the men kept their mustaches. They were proud of them and used to swear by them.

They kept all their traditions.

Informant Tafeeda Beshara Sex F Age 65 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 6
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Ft. Wayne, Ind. Date 1962

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Salem Beshara died in 1910. He had sold his business to take his tubercular wife to Syria. She died soon after they got back. He had lost a lot of money and was a heavy drinker. He wasn't too old.

Khaleel Shaheen was another important supplier like Salem in Ft. Wayne. Salem served peddlers from Zahle, Beirut, Rachaya, Aythu, and Ayn Arab. Shaheen served those from "Irnie and Bludan; he was from Bludan. He also had rooms above the store. No heat, no conveniences. No one ever seemed to get sick, they were all healthy, but when one got sick they all helped each other. They brought all their old traditions with them. Evenings they'd tell stories or play Arabic instruments and sing and dance. "Those Arabs with their hospitality. If they didn't have a cent, they had food to serve guests."

✓/3

✓1/19

VI/19

Informant Mr. Mitchell J. Maloof Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Roman Catholic Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Illinois Date July 15, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Informant's family used to go camping (picnicing?) with other (Syrian and Lebanese) families. Informant claims that his family did not change that much from his father's family; they still visit each other; the only changes are in traditions such as the way of eating or offering food to visitors. They continued traditional wedding ceremonies in the U.S.; his brother's wedding lasted 3 days because he was the oldest son.

VI / 19

Informant Mr. George J. Bouhana Sex M Age 67 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Maronite-R. Catholic Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Warren, Michigan Date May 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- II/B/1 Informant went to silent movies in the 1920's, 3¢ on weekdays, 5¢ on Saturdays. Family had an "old fashion" phonograph on which they played Lebanese records and sang and danced to them. Informant still has some of these old records.
- II/B/1 Informant spent most of his freetime playing sports; he was a team leader.
- II/B/2 They had interclub games and the informant became a master of ceremonies and worked in night clubs during the 1930's; he did his own show and employed people for him; he was a good dancer.

Informant Elizabeth Forsa Sex F Age 74 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U. S. born Immigrant Age n/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Ill. Date July 8, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA2

It was the Lebanese custom for the children who are working to give their earnings to their parents, who then gave them back some for spending money. The rest goes into the family pool.

This money is used for the family or saved until the oldest gets married and is spent on the big wedding. When the oldest boy gets they give him a furnished house and help him get started.

vi/12

vi/19

Conversation in a non-interview situation

Informant Mrs. Mary Nassif Sex F Age 61 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age _____
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 23, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Mrs. Nassif's husband was a peddler; when he came to the U.S. in 1913, he was 18 years old, knew no English. His uncle gave him \$30 worth of dry goods and notions and sent him out to peddle. At night he asked for lodging at a farm house. It was a large family, very friendly. They invited him in; it was dinner time. They motioned for him to join them for dinner. He was very hungry but in typical Arab fashion, he refused, thinking they would ask him again as is the Arab custom. One is supposed to refuse at least twice. These American farmers, however, took him at his word so he remained by the fireplace, very hungry. Finally, a daughter filled a plate for him and he took it gratefully. He never forgot her name--Margaret--as he retold and retold the story years later.

Conversation in a non-interview situation

Informant Mrs. Mary Nassif Sex F Age 50 1/2 Interview Schedule Code VI/19
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age _____
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 23, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

An American wife of an Arab peddler invited her aged Arab in-laws who lived next door for dinner on the next Sunday; the invitation was 7 days earlier than the proposed dinner. On the appointed day she prepared a meal and set a table to impress her in-laws, since her husband was away peddling. She waited a couple of hours and they didn't come. Finally, they told her that she hadn't asked them a second or third time as was expected according to Arab custom--presumably to demonstrate her sincerity about the invitation. Non-plussed, she invited them again for dinner and stressed that she meant it and would not ask them again.