TREVOR BATROUNEY
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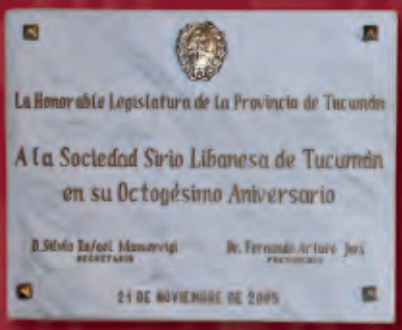
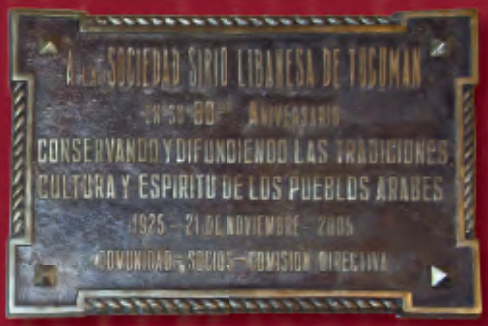
PAUL TABAR (Eds.)

Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian Communities in the World

Theoretical Frameworks and Empirical Studies

INTERCULTURAL STUDIES 5





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Contents

Introduction: Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian Communities in the World

Trevor Batrouney, Tobias Boos, Anton Escher and Paul Tabar

The "Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian Communities in the World" conference took place between May 19 to 22, 2011 at the Department of Geography of Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz. The goals were to initiate international long-term research of Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian global communities including discussion of cultural and social theoretical frameworks for interpreting the "living-between-cultures" that migrant communities experience in times of globalization. This would involve examination of key concepts like diaspora, transnationalism, ethnicity and social network as well as presentation of empirical findings. Scholars from Australia, Austria, Brazil, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, and the United States of America (USA) accepted the invitation extended by Anton Escher (Department of Geography Johannes Gutenberg-University, Mainz), Paul Tabar (Institute for Migration Studies der Lebanese American University, Beirut) and Tobias Boos (Department of Geography Johannes Gutenberg-University, Mainz). Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp, Ala Al-Hamarneh, Jalal Al Husseini, Trevor Batrouney, Philipp Bruckmayr, Christina Civantos, Gebhard Fartacek, Myria Georgiou, Nelia Hyndman-Rizk, Anne Monsour, Greg Noble, Camila Pastor de Maria y Campo, Paulo G. Pinto, Scott Poynting, Oswaldo Truzzi, Eugenia Siapera, Aude Signoles, Paul Tabar, John Tofik Karam and Khachig Tölölyan presented their work on Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian communities in the world. Some of their recent works are included in this volume.

The financial support received from DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), IFF (Inneruniversitäre Forschungsförderung, Mainz) and ZIS (Zentrum für Interkulturelle Studien, Mainz) enabled us to organize this international and interdisciplinary conference and to create a professional and amicable atmosphere. As a result, we would like to express our gratitude to these organizations in particular.

The existing global connectedness of many communities of the Bilad as-Sham, which make up contemporary Lebanon and Syria and ancient Palestine, is the outcome of the migration history of that region, which commenced in the middle of the 19th century. At first, people from that area migrated to South and North America, later to Africa, Australia, to the oil-producing neighboring countries and, finally, to Europe (cf. HOURANI 1992: 5; LABAKI 1992: 605; TABAR, NOBLE and POYNTING 2010).

Due to the long-standing tradition of migration, existing nomadic structures, and participation in the realities of life in various countries, Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian people and their descendants on the one hand are part of different societies all over the world. On the other hand they create global networks linking the various communities. The connecting relationships are based on political, economic, cultural and social interests and are maintained by institutional, familial and personal linkages (cf. BATROUNEY, this volume). Hubs of community building placed in specific cities and villages form the centers of these vast networks of communication. These hubs of

globally connected communities developed primarily in the countries of the Near East. ESCHER (2004 and 2012) demonstrates this by making reference to the example of Amar al-Hosn (Syria), HYNDMAN-RIZK (2011) by reference to the example of Hadchit (Lebanon), NABTI (1992) by reference to the example of Bishmizzine (Lebanon) and GONZÁLEZ (1992) by reference to the examples of Bethlehem and the neighboring towns of Beit Jala and Beit Sahour (Palestine). These cases illustrate that the place of origin becomes the communicative point of reference and the shared place of reference of global communities. The village community of the globally dispersed members can be interpreted as a personal, family-based or group strategy for creating and diversifying social and economic capital. But such centers of global community building also evolved in cities of other countries of residence as the comprehensive anthology about Arab migration published by HOURANI and SHEHADI (1992) has already demonstrated. Several anthologies support the thesis of globally distributed hubs: KLICH and LESSER (1998) for Latin America; NAFF (1993) for the USA; HAGE (2002) for Australia; PELEIKIS (2003) for West Africa, GHADBAN (2000), and ABDULKARIM (1996) for European countries.

A range of theoretical concepts may be used to describe and analyze the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian communities all over the world. These include diaspora (cf. TABAR 2005), ethnic spheres and ethnic community (cf. BOOS 2013), identity and ethnic field (cf. TABAR, NOBLE and POYNTING 2010), ethnic habitus (cf. NOBLE and TABAR, this volume), transculturality, ethnic colony and networks (cf. ESCHER 2006).

The wide range of papers in this volume could be seen as illustrating different dimensions of a single theme: the construction, negotiation and recreation of identities by Arabic-speaking immigrants against the background of local, national and transnational contexts.

Each of the chapters illustrates the powerful and pervasive presence that the homeland cultures have on the identities of immigrants. This can take many forms. For example, first wave immigrants in countries of the new world and Australia sought to define themselves as Christian, entrepreneurial and respectable and, in the case of Australia, to distinguish themselves from Asian immigrants. The community organizations established by first wave immigrants such as churches, mosques, cultural bodies and national associations were an important means of ensuring the maintenance of ties to their homeland cultures. The religious, social and political diversity of the homeland cultures was reflected in the bodies established in the diasporic countries.

The post-Civil War immigrants from Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East differed from the first wave in many respects. Many were displaced persons who had suffered from the Civil War in Lebanon and were unprepared to embark on a new life far from home. Their arrival and settlement coincided with the rise of Muslim fundamentalism around the world, culminating in the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York, USA and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These events provided a negative context within which Arabic-speaking immigrants were defined in many countries around the world. Poynting (this volume) cites cases in Sydney, Australia which led to a conflation of the terms ‘Arab’, ‘Muslim’, ‘Lebanese’ and even ‘terrorist,’ all with pejorative meanings.

In yet another way, the homeland culture is reflected in the lives of Arabic-speaking immigrants in countries of migration. This can be found in the churches, mosques,

welfare bodies and political organizations all of which derive from the homelands and maintain ties to equivalent bodies in the countries of origin. Some of these organizations provide for cultural nostalgia while others allow for continual involvement in the affairs of the country of origin.

Homeland cultures are not static as exemplified in the local sanctuaries in the Syrian Arab Republic. While some may be viewed as bridges between religions, others are symbols of ethnic and religious demarcation. Importantly, some change their nature and roles over time and under the impact of conflicts and through the contributions of Syrians in the diaspora.

The widespread emigration of Arabic-speaking peoples throughout the world provides a great range of national and local contexts within which they construct, negotiate and recreate their identities. While some undoubtedly sought to maintain their original identity, in other words, they defined themselves as 'Lebanese' or 'Palestinian' or 'Syrian,' most negotiated and reconstructed their identities within different national and local contexts.

In Brazil, the pejorative *'Turco'* was the term used to define the Syro-Lebanese immigrants, followed by the term 'Syrian' after 1892 and finally 'Lebanese' after 1926. In Australia, Arabic-speaking immigrants underwent a similar path of changing national identities, including from 'Syrian' to 'Lebanese' and, in some cases, to 'Arab'. In addition, some first wave Arabic-speaking immigrants in Australia sought to re-create their identities, claiming to be born in Europe rather than in Arabic-speaking countries. These attempts to re-create their identities were in response to the requirements of authorities for Australian citizenship. This concern to emphasize their 'whiteness' and respectability led to Lebanese adopting expressions of loyalty and acts of public spiritedness as a means of gaining acceptance by the local community. A small number of immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries to Mexico and Brazil, for example, were able to claim 'elite foreignness' which, together with their family connections and resources such as education and status, provided a formula for acquiring great wealth and an elevated status in their adopted countries. However, this elite group was always small compared to the much larger working or client class among Arabic-speaking immigrants in these societies. In any event, the majority of Arabic-speaking immigrants during this period were defined negatively by both host societies and governments. The impact of pejorative expressions such as *'Turco'* in South America and discriminatory legislation such as the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 in Australia lasted for generations as the pervading official identification of Arabic-speaking immigrants.

First wave Arabic-speaking immigrants around the turn of the 20th century tended to be isolated from family and other groups in their former homelands with only letters and infrequent visits being their sole sources of maintaining contact. However, over the past three decades, a major influence on the identities of Arabic-speaking immigrants can be attributed to their access to transnational contexts through easier, quicker and cheaper travel as well as their widespread use of cable television, the internet and related technologies. Not only has this reduced immigrants' isolation from their families but it has enabled them to maintain ties with political, religious and cultural organizations in their homeland and the diaspora. No longer is communication delayed, selective and brief but now the use of Skype makes it possible for immigrants to spend

hours with family members as they go about their daily business in Lebanon or their homelands. During times of crisis and conflict, Arabic-speaking immigrants are able to witness events in their homelands in real time. This can lead to active participation in political events as the internet is enabling transnational communication and mobilization of political parties and their supporters.

The chapters of this volume show that six key dimensions and concepts shape and configure Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian communities in the world: Ethnicity, identity, society, family, politics and religion. It is argued in the book that these concepts have to be understood as negotiated, fluid and dynamic dimensions of life rather than being fixed and unchangeable. These dimensions are perceived to be interconnected and they are addressed in various ways throughout this volume. Nevertheless, the main focus of each chapter is based on one or two of these dimensions and all chapters are therefore arranged accordingly in three sections, each consisting of four chapters.

The first section relates to the special role ethnicity and identity play in the development of Lebanese and Syrian or Syro-Lebanese communities settled outside Lebanon and Syria. In these conditions of living outside the land of their ancestry, ethnic elements and ethnic identity are changed but still the land of origin persists as a point of orientation in daily interaction and as a decisive element in the construction of individual and collective identities. In a ground-breaking study, Noble and Tabar demonstrate how immigrants experience cultural differences in their everyday lives in their adopted home. This analysis reveals ways in which they respond to local contexts and, in the process, are required to negotiate and reconstruct their identities. While the new contexts may be unfamiliar at first, over time they become part of the immigrant's 'taken-for-granted' world. Therefore, the authors suggest that the result of this complex process of negotiating belonging is the creation of an ethnic habitus, which is the embodiment of cultural elements from different cultural backgrounds. Paulo Pinto points out, that Arab communities in Brazil are well settled in and well connected to Brazilian society. However, they still distinguish themselves from other Brazilian inhabitants forming Arab identities. These identities are not fixed but fragmented, constantly negotiated and reinvented. Surprisingly, their fragmentation, flexibility and dynamic character ensure the durability of Arab identities in Brazil to this day.

The chapters by Anne Monsour and Scott Poynting highlight the importance of the "other" in the process of building a Lebanese community. Monsour illustrates that Australian policies privileging white immigrants and discriminating against non-white immigrants till the 1960s had a major impact on the self-conception of people of Lebanese origin living in Australia. Although facing the long-lasting pressure of assimilation, second and third generations still feel a great attachment to Lebanese ancestry today. Poynting finally shows that radicalized moral panics and attacks against people of Lebanese origin in Australia and also the global othering of Arabs are key elements in the negotiation and reinvention of Lebanese and Arab collective identities in Australia.

The chapters of the following section focus on the importance of institutional and family networks in processes of community building of Lebanese and Mashreqis communities in Australia and Mexico. Analyzing institutional networks of three organizations of the Australian-Lebanese community of Melbourne, Trevor Batrouney

traces the changes of institutional networks caused by globalization. He examines the networks of relationships within the Australian-Lebanese community, to Lebanese and Australian society and to Lebanese communities in other parts of the world. Nelia Hyndman-Rizk dedicates her chapter to the investigation of the relation between Lebanon and its diaspora, basing her analysis on the use of digital media within Lebanese families. Her findings indicate that although digital media facilitate keeping in touch with family members dispersed around the globe, it also deepens the digital divide between the generations. The chapter by Theresa Alfaro-Velcamp reveals the family strategies of Carlos Slim Helú who was the wealthiest man in the world between 2010 and 2013. Her investigation reveals that the ethnic-cultural background, being part of the Lebanese community and maintaining strong family connections led to his economic success in Mexico because it fits in with the conditions of neoliberalism and the logic of global economy. Camila Pastor de María y Campos traces the history of economic success of a migrant group in Mexico originating from the Mashreq. The conditions of postcolonial Mexico and the vast networks of patronage relationships enabled a considerable number of people of Syrian and Lebanese ancestry to become part of the Mexican economic and political élite.

The chapters of the last section discuss the major impact that politics and religion have in community and nation building processes. In the eyes of Aude Signoles and Jalal Al Husseini, the Palestinian collective identity is essentially shaped by political struggles for recognition of their national autonomy. Key features in the process of the creation and continuous transition of their collective identity are the Israeli-Palestinian "peace process", the diasporization of Palestinian people, state building processes in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the recent emergence of political Islam. Philipp Bruckmayr analyzes the relationship between Syrio-Lebanese and the Wayúu indigenous people living at the Guajira Peninsula, a border region between Colombia and Venezuela. The presence and the relationship of these two communities decisively influence the formation and development of a border society with its own identity formed by their particular economic and political networks. Oswaldo Truzzi shows that Lebanese Muslim families in São Paulo continually reshape their ethnicity and religiosity. He demonstrates that they change their self-conception as a reaction to stereotypes attributed to them. The driving forces for remodeling family self-conception are the generations born in Brazil, due to their embeddedness in Brazilian society. In his investigation of holy places in the contemporary Syrian Arab Republic, Gebhard Fartacek employs the concept of Communitas to examine the construction of ethnic-religious boundaries during pilgrimage. He finds that members of different ethnic-religious communities see local shrines as markers of distinctive ethnic-religious identities. Local shrines are connoted with religious plurality and, at times, tolerant attitudes between ethnic-religious communities.

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ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY: COMMUNITY BUILDING IN CONDITIONS OF MIGRATION

Learning to be Lebanese: Fashioning an Ethnicised Habitus in Multicultural Australia

Greg Noble and Paul Tabar

> *If faces and buildings and streets are unfamiliar, it is not only because we cannot recognise them, ... It is also because we cannot get them to recognise us ... Given time, we do overcome the foreignness of a place: ... it becomes part of our memory by force of habit. It is a matter of living there, of seeing and hearing and understanding. ... Migrants survive by growing body parts. New ears and new eyes are perhaps their most valuable acquisitions. New tongues are much harder to come by.* ABBAS EL-ZEIN

Popular and fictional accounts of migration typically highlight the sensuous dimensions of resettlement – the tastes, sights, smells and sounds of a place different to home, and the experience of *being* different, that mark the movement from a known setting to an unfamiliar one in which the migrant has to once again make themselves 'at home' in a new country. Hout, drawing on the work of Peters, argues that El Hage's *The Last Migration*, like the novels of El-Zein, demonstrates the diasporic condition of the necessity of living among strange lands and strange people. Yet rarely have the phenomenological dimensions of the dialectic of difference and adaptation been the subject of sustained empirical and theoretical enquiry.

This paper is born of an interest in the ways cultural differences play out in the everyday lives of migrants, their children and the worlds they inhabit. Central to this has been a preoccupation with the nature of difference and belonging, but such questions have largely been approached through the narrow prism of identity politics and representation (TABAR, NOBLE and POYNTING 2010). The migrant foregrounds quite powerfully, however, issues around the *embodied* nature of difference and belonging; the ways we understand the relationship between one's corporeal capacities, born of a lifetime of socialisation in one world, and the varied environments in which those capacities are brought to bear upon a newer world.

This paper will draw on the notion of the habitus to move away from identity-based understandings of migrancy and ethnicity to analyse the embodied transformation of the migrant into an inhabitant of the country of settlement. Bourdieu develops the idea of the habitus to comprehend the system of dispositions we possess – but focuses primarily on the ways social relations and history are internalised and experienced as 'second nature'. He emphasises the 'ontological complicity' of the habitus with the 'field', the social game, in which it is enacted. But what if the habitus doesn't fit? Drawing on Lebanese migrants' experiences of resettlement, this paper will explore the ways that these transformations open up the pedagogical dimensions of migration and belonging: how we learn to be otherwise. It will argue that these transformations entail the inhabiting of a peculiar condition of embodied ambivalence, not just as a diasporic condition of inhabiting contradictory subject positions structured by the binary of mainstream and minority (ABDELHARDY 2011: 45), but as a consciousness of being located within multiple and different differences. It is crucial then that we also move

away from the binary of assimilation or diaspora as the dominant form for analysing resettlement. We will characterise this embodied ambivalence as the acquisition of an 'ethnicised habitus', because it repositions the migrant as a subordinated member of the field of national belonging according to multiple logics of differentiation.

The migrant's habitus

Bourdieu's framework and the conceptual terminology he uses – forms of capital, social fields and habitus – have been particularly productive in a number of areas of research and yet is limited in terms of what we would call the pedagogic, generative and transformable dimensions of the habitus (NOBLE and WATKINS 2003). This is significant because the capacity of the migrant to make a viable life rests in the first instance on the forms of capital held: their ability to convert the social and cultural (as well as economic) resources they bring with them when they migrate and their ability to accumulate new forms of capital. Yet this capacity to exist anew turns partly on the habitus of the migrant, for these forms of capital are often profoundly embodied, belonging to a particular place and time, emerging from particular national and class fields. Bourdieu's (1990*b*) conception of the habitus typically insists on its 'ontological complicity' with a given field of positions and dispositions structured by relations of power and forms of capital through which the social actor can participate unconsciously in the 'social game'. But what if the habitus and field aren't complicit, and the body doesn't fit the game?

The issue of the habitus in the process of migration has, in fact, emerged as an interest amongst a number of scholars over recent years, framed in various ways – as a 'problem' of the migrant habitus (BAUDER 2005; MARSHALL and FOSTER 2002), the relation between ethnic affinity and habitus (CARTER BENTLEY 1987), the diasporic habitus (PARKER 2000), the transnational habitus (KELLY and LUSIS 2006; GUARNIZO 1997; VERTOVEC 2009) and the cross-cultural habitus in a multicultural society (WISE 2010), all of which foreground the dualistic dispositions the migrant embodies. This literature is interesting, but reflects rather than resolves the conceptual tensions between habitus as inertia and as propulsion, as unitary and as divided, as mechanistic and as dynamic: tensions which can only be adequately addressed empirically. Bourdieu (1990*a*) characterises the habitus as a system of dispositions each individual possesses which allows them to function effectively in a given social field – history is internalised and experienced as 'second nature' as schemas of perception and action which allow each individual to develop practical mastery of the games of social life. The habitus is thus both a means of social reproduction and yet generative of improvised human conduct in diverse games. Sadly, it is the reproductive function of the habitus which has come to dominate scholarly enquiry, often used to characterise an automatic adherence to a logic of social domination or tradition. This is despite the fact that, as Wacquant (2004, 389) points out, Bourdieu's early development of the notion of the habitus was centred on experiences of cultural disjuncture – such as the experiences of peasants and Algerian workers in contexts of social change and displacement. Yet across the bulk of his work, and the work in which his framework is taken up, it is the inertia and unity of

the habitus which is emphasised. So the BOURDIEU (2008) we invoke is that of 'The Peasant and his Body', a 1962 essay which analyses the awkwardness – the physical and social 'clumsiness' – experienced by bachelor peasants at a country ball in terms of their inability to fit into the marriage market shaped by the disconnect between the logics of modern urban society and peasant life, and who learn to fit differently by inhabiting a consciousness of this awkwardness.

This analysis of this embodied dilemma has significance for the transformations experienced through migration when the 'practical mastery' of the games of social life is no longer automatically effective. More recently, scholars have focused on this dilemma to argue that ultimately 'being a migrant' is equivalent to 'being a human'. 'Being a human' in this context in conceived in terms of having a transformative and not only a reproductive capacity. However, the argument focuses more on the cognitive aspect of the migrant experience than its corporeal dimension (GRØNSETH 2013). In this chapter we argue that the body is not just a site of the reproduction of social relations, but is the medium of our being in world. Sayad famously argued that the emigrant is compelled to see their body in a different way; but he focuses primarily on the reduction of the emigrant's body to a tool for work, to 'just a body' (2004: 203–4). But the body is more than this; it is the means through which we experience the world and orientate ourselves to it, shaping the ways attempt to make ourselves at home in it (BOTTOMLEY 1992: 123; RICATTI 2011: 10). Rather than move into an analysis of habitus and class or gender, then, we want to stay within what we might call the phenomenological dimensions of settlement, to capture the embodied experience of disorientation and reorientation, and then work outwards to a more conceptual elaboration of the pedagogical experience of adaptation, appropriation and transformation. To do this, we analyse a number of interviews focusing on the settlement narratives of established Lebanese migrants. All of our interviewees had been in Australia for over twenty years; they were evenly divided in terms of gender, and they came from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, but had stable employment and settled family lives.

The sensuous nature of migrant experience

As El-Zein suggests, migrants survive by 'growing' new body parts, new sensory organs that allow them to exist in a new physical and affective domain. We started by trying to grasp the sensuous experience of difference: the sights, sounds, smells and spaces of the new world in which migrants found themselves, the 'material and experiential processes of emplacement' (BÖNISCH-BREDNICH and TRUNDLE 2010: 4). So we asked interviewees about the day they arrived and their earliest memories of being in Australia. Fairuz said: 'I remember vividly, lots of uncles came to pick us up at the airport, and dad, driving a Holden station wagon, all of us in car, I remember looking at the grass, so much green and so much space, as a child that excited me ... it actually felt like, when a child you dream of an ideal place, and when I came here it felt like I was in a dream place'.

Aspects of the environment, both natural and urban, were typically what were remembered - streets, houses, gardens, shops, grass, flies. Hazif said that 'Trees, air,

rocks, everything was different'. Sharif voiced this eloquently: 'you feel that you are entering a strange world, a different world. And there is something clean and people's faces were calmer and more beautiful. And of course people's talk in English and other different languages. The whole atmosphere was mysterious ... I felt the light was clearer, one can see at a longer distance, these were my first impressions, and I noticed the green colour, there was a lot of greenery..., and I noticed that all the houses were the same level, no stories, different floors. ... I felt a sense of calm and quietness, an environment that was closer to the rural atmosphere. It's a city and at the same time like a rural area.'

A sense of being both attracted and repelled was common: Sharif continued: 'you see flowers, but can't see anyone, you see only empty houses, first feeling like vacuum, like empty planet in science fiction; houses are aligned with beautiful gardens in front of them, physically compared to houses in Lebanon, like graves and tombs ..., it was well organised, it was clean, I did like the discipline'. And yet: 'I cried so much I missed the mountains, green is a different colour in Lebanon'.

This acknowledgement of the physical differences of Australia was paralleled by the recounting of the different organisation of public and private space, often at length. Many talked about the different spatial organisation of their new homes, both inside and out, as well as the different ordering of suburban life. This had distinct affective consequences: Sharif said in having his own room, he 'felt in it a kind of psychological stability'. But for most of the interviewees this was only a small part of the picture. The new forms of public space posed a challenge; to know this place they had to explore the various spaces. All the interviewees talked about the amount of walking and driving they did just as a way of becoming used to the place they were in. Nada said that on their second day here the first thing they did was to go 'walking in Holden St, Lakemba, [it was] another world, different to the souk': 'everything looked different'. But this wasn't simply pragmatic; mastering movement through complex spaces enables social and economic life. The various modalities of movement—but particularly walking—are fundamental to the embodied and sensory acquisition of sociality (SEAMON 1979). A satisfying human existence requires links in locality, producing an 'at-homeness', a habituality of place which fosters an existential insideness which not only produces a geography of local responsibility but a wider open-ness, a comfortableness in moving into the wider world.

Mastering urban space meant mastering public transport, which entailed some peculiar anxieties. For Hazif: 'By train, Hurstville was end of the world. I wasn't going to go any further in case I got lost.' Countering such anxiety required effort: Sharif said he'd 'occasionally catch the train all the way to the [end of the line] and then come back, [just] to get used to the distances.' As time passed, the car became crucial to social life in a way that it hadn't been in Lebanon.

These challenges to embodied experience were crucial in another way: the rules of everyday life changed dramatically, often producing misunderstandings and disorientation. Sharif recounted how, 'whenever I heard the [newspaper boy] whistle while [I was] driving, I used to pull over and stop my car, it took me time to realise that this was the whistle of the paper boy [and not a police whistle].' Fairuz commented on

the novelty of pedestrian crossings and traffic lights: 'in Lebanon you had to cross among traffic no-one stops at lights, here everything more systematic, much quieter'.

Joe described what he said was a 'moving experience' when he was completely overwhelmed by the human traffic on the sidewalks and the rules of its organisation:

> I stand for a few minutes questioning myself, where am I, ... walking along George St getting off at Town Hall, first day of work, walking on the right hand side, and bumping against people, I saw an old man, and he said "excuse me sir, let's talk. I know you are new here, look sir, have a look at the cars and how they drive, and we shd walk the same way as the cars drive, and I shd be walking on the left side". He said "don't get upset, you are new here, that's how we do things in this country".

Joe captures nicely the doubled problem of not recognising, and not being recognised by, foreign faces, buildings and streets, to which El-Zein refers.

The consequences of not knowing these conventions could be even more dramatic: Fairuz talked about how 'sometimes [the train] stops before the platform and we thought we had to get out there so we jumped out on the tracks, but it was just stopping waiting for another train to pass and people were yelling at us – we didn't know how to catch a train'. These new routines were shaped by different temporalities: several talked about different shop hours and Fairuz recounted how it was a different use of time shopping at Roselands, then the biggest shopping centre in sthn hemisphere: 'all the shops together, a trolley to walk around to shop – diff – in L if you wanted a bag of rice yd go down and get it – you didn't buys lots of things and store them yourself.' For Nada it wasn't just a question of space or time, what was 'also diff was being left alone to choose' in a store compared to the constant approaches of sellers in the souk. Sharif expressed a sense of wonder at the then practice of delivering some goods by vehicle to people's homes: he described as 'a miracle' the delivery of milk, bread, and soft drink'. Social conventions around gender, sexuality and bodily display also posed a challenge. Hazif was amazed by 'the way people dress; shorts, barefoot, topless'. Sharif was also taken aback when he saw people 'walking barefoot'. Several interviewees, like Sharif, commented on their first experience of nudity on beaches.

As a consequence, a loss of physical and social bearings was commonly voiced. Joe explained that, 'for the first four months, I was disorientated, I had been looking for my identity'. This disorientation is significant not just because it reveals the mismatch between habitus and setting, but because it entails several responses: after the initial novelty, there was often a strong, negative judgement of the otherness of Australian life. As Nada said, Australia was 'quieter, more organised, clean, but [it] became boring, I was used to being in road in centre of Tripoli, with lots of neighbours in apartment, here cannot remember knowing neighbours at all'. All the participants complained about the lack of communal life, the social distance displayed by Australians and the absence of an intimacy with neighbours that they saw as one of the most valuable things they had in Lebanon. Joe complained that it was 'every neighbour to himself, ... I tried to get near the fence in order to get near the neighbour, in order to say hello, good morning, how are you, I wanted to learn what he has to offer in talking, it didn't satisfy me to say hi how are and nice weather, no I wanted more from him, it didn't satisfy me, this is something that you miss, and you will always miss in this country ....'. This struck

Fairuz at the very core of her sense of being human: 'There [in Lebanon] I felt like a member, not a number; here sometimes I feel like a number, there I felt like a member of a community'.

Akin to this criticism was a sense of discomfort: Fairuz talked of how people drinking after work, at friends' places and in pubs made her 'uncomfortable'. Joe and others also complained about pubs – 'the smell is of urine', Sarwa insisted. For Hazif, 'migration [generally] is a misery ... everyday there is a new question you have to answer, everyday day there is an issue you have to deal with ... you don't feel comfortable.' This discomfort reflects a degree of ontological *in*security (NOBLE 2005), but the point we're making here is not simply that migrants experience both viscerally and socially a sense of out-of-placeness, a well-documented phenomenon (ABDELHARDY 2011), but that there is a complex shift in what we might call the pedagogy of difference. Their criticisms of Australia imply that interviewees were still in a mode where they perceived that the 'difference', the 'otherness', lay in Australian life. The sense of discomfort, on the other hand, suggests that they begin to recognise themselves *as* the difference. Joe talked about how 'at work, people look at you and assess you'. For Sarwa this was experienced though jokes: 'it took me a while to understand the sense of humour, I understand it now but not relate to it; you feel like an outsider, still feel I am an outsider'.

This sense of being outside compelled them to find a way in. As Joe said, 'you have to do the work yourself, you have to adapt yourself, you have to get in.' They all expressed the ways they found of reshaping themselves not simply to 'fit in', but to 'get in'. Fairuz found that playing sport well gave her a way in that was valued in an Australian school setting. She also recounted the day she arm wrestled the school bully and won and gained a new status amongst her classmates. Being involved in sporting activities later in life also gave her a place in the local community that was valued by Anglo Australians.

Through techniques of 'localisation' (RAPPORT 2010: 184), these settlers developed new competences – those habits of 'living there' that El-Zein refers to – and which produce a transformation that Hazif described as being 'born again'. These could be quite banal competences or skills of great moment. Fairuz talks of her excitement at being able to make toast, alongside her mastering of English, in terms of gaining a sense of feeling 'at home'. Many talked of conventional markers of this – getting a job, learning English, buying a house, having kids, etc. – but for Sarwa it was being 'able to serve, ... serving community, doing the best I can in order to make a difference, able to achieve something. Feeling you are a citizen with duties and rights'. This feeling also came when she received her first gas bill – she was happy because she could pay, but because it also brought her into a direct relation of trust with the government when it returned a small amount she had overpaid. She couldn't believe the government would give her back money – she experienced as a kind of recognition of citizenship. But work was paramount:

> I have this fear I haven't achieved enough, this anchor, I stabilise myself, the more I produce proper work, the more I feel I belong here. ... simple achievements on daily basis are giving me the feeling of satisfactions and belonging and feeling that I am building something for my daughter and leaving behind some seeds for her; feel that we belong

> here, feel comfortable, ... [my] community and work I did helped me feel not at home but useful, do something that has meaning.

For others this 'practical mastery' of the rules of Australian social life could be more idiosyncratic. For Hazif he said he first felt 'at home' with his first sexual contact: 'the first time I had sex with a woman made me feel I'm master of the whole eternity, I am lord, I am local'. He also felt this 'when I got to stage where I can insult people if they insult me, if I can make fun of people if they make fun of me, most of the time I was on top ... aggression, I feel comfortable, you can put shit on them if they put shit on you'.

For several participants involvement in the Lebanese community was significant for producing a feeling of being at home. As with Sarwa, for Nada 'working with the community ... helped settle here, helped me to find the life here more enjoyable.'

It is important to stress that fashioning a new existence in Australia is not simply about assimilating nor about constructing a homeland identity as some simple bulwark against the anxieties of displacement, but about finding ways to reorient the habitus as productive and effective. Sometimes this entails practices that may seem assimilative, sometimes it entails practices through which diasporic networks are built and rebuilt. But as a consequence they all feel ambivalent feelings of being at home in Australia, and as a consequence the intensities of belonging were situated: as Fairuz said, 'with Australians I am quite Australian, and with Lebanese I am quite Lebanese'. This was no simple biculturalism, it was also historically contextual and dynamic. Sharif generally feels at home but, referring to the Cronulla riots, when large groups of young Anglo Australian men attacked people of 'Middle Eastern appearance', he said 'there are 'stop stations' when you don't – Cronulla – fear, outsider, etc. Cronulla events made me feel the *ghorbah* [exile] on the top of the *ghorbah* that already is in place'. For Sharif, the Cronulla riots showed this ambivalence was profoundly existential: 'when my very existence is questioned, that is you are an Arab or you are not Australian or you are black and the like, this is something that you can't get out from, it's your skin, so you are threatened as an entity, here you feel a kind of a paradox.' As Sharif explained, 'I felt that I belonged to a minority. It was a wakeup call. There was somebody making your life difficult by telling you "you are not Australian".

This comment is significant because in referencing oneself as 'in a minority' these interviewees hold together a sense of a collective ethnic experience, but one that is in relation to a 'majority', a something greater that is constitutive of the 'ethnic' identity. This is significant because the process of settlement entails both grappling with the difference of the receiving country, and then identifying *as the difference*: an inside outness, an included outsider, an awkwardness built into the very fabric of daily existence. It is also significant because that difference is by necessity part of something larger, and not contained by the opposition between majority and minority.

Sharif reflected that 'as migrants, we don't know anyone in the whole street, we don't visit anyone and no one visits us, but at the same time we are not left out, there was an inside feeling that we were not left out'. He also admitted that at first he thought it odd that people didn't speak to each other on the train, and just read by themselves, but then 'I didn't find it surprising if the Australian or any person foreign to me did not speak to me. I found it semi-normal' ... I wanted to do the same, ..., I didn't feel alienated, on the contrary I felt this was a civilised act.' As Joe argued: 'If I said I'd