CHAPTER FIVE

DEEP UNDERSTANDINGS OF MIGRATION AND PLACE
Background

The comparative study in the previous chapter revealed the diversity of values held about places within one locality at the same time suggesting the need for a planning method to reveal multiple readings of heritage and place. The values uncovered, however, merely touched the surface of how migration is manifest in places. Migration and its associated cultural pluralism have resulted in Australian heritage as not only multiply-valued (Lee,1986), but also as multi-layered phenomena. Despite recent work by Truscott (2000) on intangible heritage, the Australian Heritage Commission commonly locates heritage in tangible places and objects. Migrant heritage, however, is more complex because it is living heritage including cultural practices, ways of life, and values and beliefs, all of which are multiple and many of which differ from the mainstream community. Thus one needs to understand the inherent dynamics of places, if living heritage within an evolving contemporary context can be sustained. This concept has been alluded to in Raban's *Soft City* (1988) which he sees as a city exemplified by cultural negotiations and cultural diversity. This chapter takes on the challenge of finding a 'language' to interpret migrant heritage as living heritage through the art of hermeneutics.

It is clear that understanding place values derived from the experience of migration is not easy, particularly as there is a risk of essentializing both the concept and the cultural groups. The comparative study in the last chapter was effective in drawing out phenomena and associated places, however if hermeneutic analyses are to have depth, the essentializing tendency to equate 'phenomena' with 'things' in place studies needs to be scrutinized (Pickles,xxxx:249). To explore such issues, a workshop was conducted with significant scholars in the area of multicultural studies and leaders of different migrant groups. The object of the workshop was to speculate about the intentionality of phenomena associated with migration or the ways in which they are constituted. The outcomes of this workshop provided the impetus to develop a 'guide' for research with migrant groups on their heritage. A summary of this workshop, including the participants, is available in Appendix 2.

Hermeneutic studies reveal layers of meanings and are particularly pertinent when meanings encountered are not immediately understandable. In the last chapter, phenomena were derived from people's unstructured descriptions of their experiences. These phenomena were then used heuristically to show relationships between people, experience and place comparatively. This chapter is concerned with deeper understanding of the migration experience with a particular focus on how cultural continuity is evident. By interpreting discussions about migration as 'texts', it is possible to see different perceptions of heritage and how places become saturated with meaning. In some cases this evolves out of everyday life, in other cases it is the continuity of ancient cultural myths, expressions of which become altered in the new country. I have called these translocated and transformed cultural practices. Another concern is to show how the hermeneutic process can be a group process, designed as formalised steps which employ the hermeneutic circle (Kvale,1983; Patton,1990). By moving around the continuous circle of interrogation where understanding parts enables understanding of the whole, further facilitating understanding of the parts, a sense of coherence and depth emerges. In this work, the 'hermeneutic circle' allows different facets of phenomena to be linked, thus generating both inter-penetration and layered meanings. Such analyses, where analogies, metaphors and tropes play a key role, allow a form of 'language' to emerge that is pertinent to migrant heritage.

Chapter Five is not only concerned with hermeneutic analyses of migration experiences, it is also concerned with developing methods for identifying heritage values associated with these places as possible planning processes. To achieve this, given the subtlety of the issues involved, it was considered legitimate to build on familiarity with the project by using one of the discussion groups used in the comparative study. The Greek group was not considered appropriate because there were language difficulties for some of the elderly members. It was decided not to use the Vietnamese group because the settling process has not yet become 'time thickened' (Geertz,1983). Thus through a process of elimination, the Lebanese group was deemed suitable, providing cohesion, familiarity with the concepts and the added advantage of working across generations. This was possible because the extended family structure allowed the inclusion of some non-English speaking parents in the group. In keeping with the desire to engage with subjective and reflective responses, meetings were held in one of the homes of the group; a location which was more

comfortable for the non-English speaking parents and also allowed the women who had young children to participate in the group discussions.   But most significantly, it encouraged ownership of the project by all participants. To embed this ownership, an older members of the group was appointed leader of the project. He was provided with a 'guide' indicating the objectives of each meeting and a set of discussion points around which to structure meetings. The shift in ownership of the project was a significant development from procedures used in the comparative study where the researcher had been in control of the process and carried some degree of authority as the 'expert'.

Thus this chapter builds on the comparative study, both by developing and reviewing the process as reflection-in and on-action (Schon,1983) and by hermeneutic analyses of concepts of migrant heritage in Australia.

Hermeneutics in Multiple Languages

Issues about the appropriate language to use are complicated because the information derived from the research is intended for two interest groups, migrant groups and heritage planners. The Lebanese group indicated that they would normally use Arabic to discuss the research questions amongst themselves because of the familiarity of expressions.   The research process, however, involved both researcher and the group, so it was necessary to speak the language that both understood, in this case English. This group was particularly suitable, because they had come to Australia as adolescents and after fifteen years were comfortably bilingual. As a result the research team – the researcher and the group – were able to articulate and explore difficult concepts without language problems.

Designing the Process

The process used in the comparative study had been designed to compare specific issues within in one urban location over three meetings. Phenomenological analyses showed that this process had potential to uncover deeper meanings embodied in migrant places. A particularly fascinating aspect of this work related to how unselfconscious actions, drawn from many centuries of cultural practice, intersect with a new culture. To render such unselfconscious actions explicit required a new

set of meetings based on both an evaluation of the effectiveness of the meetings in the comparative study and the specific fields of knowledge needed for hermeneutic analyses in this study, shown in Figure 5.1. Transcripts of all the discussions were subject to content analyses and thematic development.

TABLE 5.1.

The Meeting Sequence

Meeting One: Understanding Heritage Concepts

Meeting Two: Mapping Lebanese Places in Australia

Meeting Three: Heritage as Cultural Practices and Living Traditions

Meeting Four: Interpreting Heritage Significance of Lebanese Places in Australia.

The following discussions about the meetings analyse key points first as simple dialogue and then in terms of layers of significance. It has been presented in a particular way. Initially, the process is described. This is followed by an analysis of focussed conversations. After the meetings, the process is reviewed under the heading 'reflections-on-action' (Schon,1983). Thus there are two processes happening, one the interpretation of Lebanese heritage in Australia, the other a critical review-in-action of the effectiveness of the process. In both situations, the research is carried out by a team, the researcher and members of the migrant group. Their role as researchers will become evident in their reflective conversations.

Understanding Heritage Concepts

Understanding the concept of heritage is complex. Studies on Australian heritage perceptions, described in Chapter Two, show that there is much confusion about the concept (Armstrong,1994; Lowenthal,1985, 1996). If cross-cultural examples are then introduced into an already hazy set of values, it become essential to identify the specific cultural context within which heritage concepts are located. Research shows that values of heritage and place are often conflated with concepts of culture and identity (Burgess,1988; Jackson,1984, 1989; Lowenthal,1985,1996). Most of the discussion about heritage theory in Chapter Two has Eurocentric biases, however, for

heritage planners working with non-Europeans within Australia, a shift in sensitivity is required. By way of example, Connerton (1990) in his study, *How Societies Remember*, brings out different shades of meaning associated with medieval crusades. He points out that for Muslims in the Middle East, historical writings about the 'Crusades' are described as attacks by 'Infidels', a different representation to Medieval Christian history with which mainstream Australians are familiar. Thus cross-cultural heritage work needs to recognise the cultural context of specific migrant groups. To address this, a process has been designed which leads the participants into the discussion through a series of steps. These are intended to provide a range of ways of seeing. Although such discussions facilitate broad conceptual awareness, they also open up the thorny issue of essentialising cultures in order to elicit values. As a cautionary note, this needs to be recognised and acknowledged.

The hermeneutic richness that groups provide also comes from their 'empathetic' and 'existential insideness' about their country of origin (Relph,1976:50). Accordingly questions for the opening meeting were developed to address general concepts of heritage within their original country. These reflections were intended to set the scene for subsequent discussions about heritage in Australia. Table 5.2 indicates the focussed questions used to open the meeting.

TABLE 5.2.

Questions focussed on Lebanon, Meeting One.

*   What is the special heritage of the Lebanese? *   What do you see as your heritage places in Lebanon? *   What places in Lebanon would you like to be protected for your grandchildren's children – their inheritance?

Lebanese Cultural Heritage

Discussions about the special heritage of Lebanon were subject to content analyses (Minichiello et al,1990). This revealed that heritage emerged as two categories, both related to places; those places remembered as part of their everyday life in Lebanon and places embodying appropriately 'noble' heritage qualities. The quotes all occurred during the first meeting and are coded LM2/1.

Heritage as Everyday Places in Lebanon

The ways in which everyday places are described bring out Relph's concept of 'existential insideness' of place where unselfconscious patterns and structures result in 'centres of meaning' (Relph,1976:22). Descriptions also support Lefebvre's valued places as 'space of collective experiences' (Lefebvre,1991:25). Collectively, places related to everyday life can be summarised as 'coffee houses', the 'chick pea fields', 'caves' and 'the beach'. These places reveal how closely they are integrated with life in the Lebanese landscape and as a result are less able to be directly translocated to the new country. Fred explained the significance of the 'coffee houses' as,

> *...where we used to sit. I think it was very important to us in Lebanon. Like we were sitting down playing cards ... there are a lot of old men around from the villages ... they talk - little stories ...* [Men] *go to work early in the morning and then they come to 'the coffee' at 3.00 in the afternoon and may stay till 9.00 pm - 5-6 hours.*

Sam agreed adding,

> *...the value of these men's 'coffees'* [houses] *is that they are very simple - very humble - everyone can go and they play traditional -very, very old games ... There is a 'coffee' in Tripoli that I would like to be considered heritage. This is very old ... it goes back to the Ottoman Empire.*

For Sam, heritage places needed to be old and have significant history. In trying to explain the significance of the coffee houses, the group drew an analogy with the 'Aussie pub' where men relax after work. The trope 'Aussie pub' provides an insight into the cultural benchmarks the group used for everyday places in Australia.

Aspects of everyday life were often gender-specific. The women in the group spoke about the small market-gardens within the city of Tripoli where chickpeas were grown. Inaam explained,

> *...one of the things I would like to see kept as heritage in Lebanon is something they don't have here. We lived in high-rise apartments and behind us there was this land where they used to grow the chickpeas* [for humus]. *... People used to go and pick them themselves ... it was like a market-garden and the kids and parents used to go in the afternoon. ... It was very exciting, different ....*

Valued places were also age-specific. Memories of a child's life growing up in large apartments are revealed by Fred's evocative story, *'...the caves ... we lived in*

apartments and we were not allowed to have dogs or cats ... so we would get a puppy and put it in the cave and feed it cream ... we used to go to the cave and play with the puppies.' A number of places emerged as sites of childhood memories.

In these unselfconscious reflections, everyday life in a city of high-rise apartment blocks is evoked, an example of 'empathetic insideness' or an emotional involvement with place (Relph,1976). Mohammed, Sam's father who spoke no English, described how he valued the beach. Inaam translated,

> *...surrounding the Port was a beach...most of the people who worked in the Port when they finished work would go to the beach, swim and go home. As well, people used to walk on the promenade and fish ... It was like Bondi Beach - restaurants, coffee lounges, good views.*

Again the group used analogies with Australian places to explain qualities of places important to them, inadvertently providing insights into places they valued in Australia.

Heritage as Lebanese Cultural Inheritance

Because of the strategic location of Lebanon on the Mediterranean Sea, many of the places described evoked the sense of ancient traditions which go back to the Crusades or Infidels and other cross-cultural influences. Inaam left Tripoli aged nine. As she grew up in Australia, she was constantly drawn to the image of the 'fort' on Lebanese money. She explained,

> *...it was printed on the Lebanese money....I said to my husband, I would really love to go and see this place and he took me ... It was absolutely beautiful. To me that is the heritage. Coffee lounges and things like that, they are sort of common; but with the Fort, it is very rare.*

For Inaam, heritage places needed to be 'noble and rare' echoing traditional concepts of heritage derived from antiquarianism and connoisseurship (O,Keefe & Prott,1984). Sam, however, saw heritage value in the meanings places carried. He described the Port of Tripoli as having heritage significance because,

> *...the Port is a place for us because this is where we departed Tripoli. It is also a place which had very historical periods. When we have wars, the Port is all the paths to escape and when there is peace* ...[it is] *the place people go to another island* [for pleasure].

Places of departure and arrival, evoke strong significance in the migration experience. Description of changing meanings associated with the Port show how some places are

layered and 'saturated' with meaning (Strauss and Corbin,1990). They also bring out some of the symbolic meanings embedded in landscape, a phenomenon explored by Cosgrove in *Social Formation and the Symbolic Landscape* (1986).

Sam's observations prompted the group to think about their cultural and spiritual life in Lebanon. Sam indicated another important heritage place was

> *... the Hill ... is the place for major events*, [where] *we celebrate the beginning of Ramadan ... thousands of people go there with their families to sit between the olive trees and ... caves. The place itself has the value of long time tradition ...They call it* [the event] *Sayran Ramadan...Sayran means picnic.*

The combination of everyday places with historic and spiritual places and the way their significance is described can be used to inform an emerging 'language' for migrant heritage places. Analogies between Lebanon and Australia bring out many issues about living in an 'old country' (Wright,1985) compared with values in a 'new country' (Carter,1992). The places described and their associated traditions have made an unusual transformation in Australia which will become evident later.

Reflections-on-Action

The key to this hermeneutic procedure is that everyone is engaged in the research process. Instead of the traditional hermeneutic approach where researchers work with completed texts, this chapter seeks to show the interactive and iterative process of working with spoken 'text' as a form of 'reflection-in-action' (Schon,1983). Reflecting on the effectiveness of the process, it is noted that the group avoided the opening question 'What is the special heritage of Lebanon?', preferring to engage in remembering special places in Lebanon, the second question. It is interesting that the opening question did not engage them because the Greek and Vietnamese groups had no difficulty articulating concepts of heritage not related to place. In subsequent meetings, concepts about Lebanese cultural heritage emerged but it required the researcher to connect this through the hermeneutic circle. Most of the Lebanese group were young when they left their country which could explain their initial hesitation to expound on Lebanese heritage.

Lebanese Heritage in Australia

Having set the context for perceptions of heritage by considering what was valuable in their home country, the group was then asked to focus on migrating to Australia, and how they saw the new place 'through Lebanese eyes.' The question was designed to assist the group to reflect further about culturally specific ways of seeing. Table 5.3 indicates the questions.

TABLE 5.3.

Setting the Scene for the Migration Experience

What is Lebanese Heritage in Australia: the Lebanese migration experience?

Your heritage in Australia may lie in a number of areas:
* ***How you see the world through Lebanese eyes.*** What it is to be a Lebanese person with Lebanese values.
* ***Lebanese way of life and cultural practices.*** Your religious practices, family life, community culture.
* ***The experience of migration.***
   - leaving your country
   - what your country was like when you left
   - why you selected Australia
   - what you were expecting in Australia;
   - arriving in Australia
   - your reaction to Australia.

Inaam was drawn to the implications and significance of 'seeing the world through Lebanese eyes'. She mused thoughtfully,

> *…I just can't think off the top of my head, I have to think about it* [more] *because you are in two different cultures - you have to sort of adjust to one or other to be able to give the right answer. I am trying to forget there and be myself here, so that I can tell you what I think of here. Because here, the way of living is completely different to the way of living there.*

This evocative description of her state of transition echoes some of the comments made by individuals in the comparative study. Sam confirmed Inaam's thoughts,

adding concerns already expressed by the Greek group in the last chapter. He

commented,

> *This question raises the point - are you loyal to your culture as Lebanese or do you become different? As Lebanese you have the values of your family, your values as a man or woman. But you come to Australia and you find it is your life, because after the years, you get familiar with this society, to this way of living. So after years, you are becoming Australians and this is the hard part.*

The phrase 'this is the hard part' implies both a sense of loss as well as the difficulty of being able to sustain a Lebanese world-view.   He explained '*This question is not easy – we, as individuals, all have different ideas and experiences of how we understand the Lebanese personality and what we see through Lebanese eyes.*'   It is clear that Sam is aware of the problem of essentializing concepts.

In terms of articulating the experience of migration, Sam was the only member of the group to respond and he took a pragmatic view.

> *All these questions - the experience of migration; 99% of the Lebanese will say the same answer. They left Lebanon because of the war! What was your country like when you left? – war! Why did you select Australia? Because it was the only place I could go to! What were you expecting in Australia? A place which had security, safety, jobs, the good life.*

The criteria sought in Australia, 'security, safety, jobs and the good life', provide an insight into many of Sam's responses. He frequently highlighted egalitarianism, democracy and other humanist qualities as reasons why he values living in Australia. In contrast to the migrants of the 1950s-60s, this group did not focus on Australia as a place for gaining economic wealth.

The group were asked about their arrival experiences. Much of this had already been discussed in the last chapter and interestingly they did not repeat the earlier observations.   Instead their response was more reflective and inclusive.   Sam remarked

> *… it depends on the period of time when the Lebanese arrived. … It was hard for the people who came earlier but it was easy for us when we came* [1975] *because we had an open house ready to accommodate us. We had a good meal which we hadn't had in Lebanon. … In Lebanon whether you had money or not you couldn't get things* [food].

Both of Sam's comments bring out particularities of migrants as refugees, namely the inability to select where to go and arriving in a state of deprivation.

Reflecting-in and on-Action

During the opening meeting, the group consistently reflected with the researcher about the process. In part, this was attributable to the shift in ownership of the project but it was also related to the fact that the group fully comprehended the research question. This confirms the value of inter-subjectivity in this research, namely, where the researcher, through empathy, seeks to understand the group, and the group is engaged in understanding the research. This interpersonal knowing transcends the gulf between 'insider' and 'outsider' (Burgess,1988a; Hannertz,1980).

The group constantly reviewed whether the process was achieving the goals. They assumed responsibility for the process by initiating discussions about the relevant language to be used, in particular the use of 'big words' when many Lebanese in Australia had been unable to complete school. They also commented on the time needed to reflect on some of the issues and the importance of recognising variations within any one migrant group. They explained that for the Lebanese, there were different cultural groups in different locations in Sydney. It was clear that the broad question about the concept of 'heritage' used to open the meeting was difficult for this group. This question appears to be introduced too early or groups need more adequate preparation through preliminary information about the concept.

At other times, the group responded in a highly analytic mode, using analogies, tropes and metaphors to explain phenomena. When describing the coffee houses, they compared them with the role of the Australian pub. Similarly, when describing a particular place in Lebanon, the Koshida Cave, they compared it with Jenolan Caves in NSW to ensure that the experiential qualities were understood. They also related certain cultural activities, such as the sacrificial killing of sheep to ensure the health of an ailing child, with an Australian practice of throwing money into wishing pools. Thus by actively seeking to ensure that the researcher understood, they were taking on the role of experts in their field, namely, the knowledge of the phenomenon of 'being Lebanese'.

At the end of the meeting, by way of a summary and to set the scene for the next meeting, the guide contained an explanation of why they had been discussing particular points and how to prepare themselves for the next meeting, indicated in Table 5.4.

TABLE 5.4.

The Guide: Bringing Closure to the first Meeting.

How does this discussion lead to heritage place identification
The places which are important to you as Lebanese in Australia will relate to your personal experiences of coming here and making Australia your home. Your shared memories will help you understand each other's experiences.

The kinds of places which could be heritage places for you may
- be important to your group as landmarks,
- have strong group attachment over time,
- have a history of social gatherings for your group,
- have group memories of unhappiness and pain,
- reflect the Lebanese enterprising spirit as migrants in a new country,
- be associated with particular people in the Lebanese community in Australia.

These are discussion points for you to think about before the next meeting.

To prepare yourself for the next meeting
- talk to your friends about these issues,
- bring photos of the early years in Australia,
- find out about the Lebanese in Australia before you arrived.

Mapping Lebanese Heritage Places in Australia
Contextualizing the Australian -Lebanese.

The intention of the second meeting was to bring out the seamless presence of the Lebanese in Australia by encouraging the group to reflect on their stories within context of the Lebanese who came before them. A further prompt was given by encouraging the group to discuss special Lebanese people in Australia. Through this process, it was hoped that the group would see the value of anecdotes as a way of revealing collective memories thus determining social heritage significance (Connerton,1989; Johnston,1993). Table 5.5 provides the preamble and the discussion questions used to establish this context. All comments from the second meeting included here are coded LM2/2.

TABLE 5.5.

The Guide: Preamble and questions to set the context, 2nd meeting.

What was the existing Lebanese heritage in Australia?
After the first meeting you have an idea of the broad concepts of heritage and heritage places. As well you have had time to discuss and think about your Lebanese heritage in Australia.

Before discussing what could be your Australian heritage places it might be useful to record the history of the Lebanese in Australia before your group arrived.
- When did the Lebanese first come to Australia?
- Where did they settle?
- What places tell the story of the Lebanese in Australia before you arrived?

Special People
In the history of the Australian Lebanese there are special people who have done important things for the Lebanese community and for Australia. There are also special Lebanese writers who have written about Australia. There may be Lebanese who have been pioneers or particularly inventive in dealing with the Australian environment.
- List these people and any places you associate with them and their work.

Questioning the Context

The intention was to set this group in the context of earlier Lebanese groups. Members of this group, however, were concerned to establish a context for their heritage within Australian cultural heritage rather than Lebanese heritage. Sam asked, '*Cultural heritage for Australians – what is it? How do we fit in? What is different to Australians about us?*'

In responding to this question, the researcher briefly summarised the four main categories of cultural heritage used by the Australian Heritage Commission, that is, historic, scientific, social and archaeological. She also mentioned the role of historic themes such as pastoral history, mining history, political history etc. When Sam was given the Australian frame of reference, he clearly felt more comfortable and as a result, rapidly summarised what he considered to be the existing Lebanese heritage in Australia, as

> *…when talking about [history], for our background it is George Street, you have the heavy posts that hold up the Bridge [pylons], the Town Hall, the old buildings, Andronicus coffee. There was a place called Ali Baba Restaurant - very old - reflected Lebanese heritage in Australia.   - Scientific themes, [when] we came to Australia [we brought] the people's medicine - the herbals, like bush medicine. - The clairvoyants – fortune tellers -the culture of the Mediterranean...*

Reflection-on-Action

The researcher's reply summarising Australian cultural heritage seemed to satisfy the need for an Australian context at that point, but it interfered with phenomenological and hermeneutic processes.   In discourse analysis, it is the open, less directed process which is most effective in facilitating the emergence of phenomena (May,1994; Kneale,1995).   Thus while Sam's response was interesting, it nevertheless risked closure by inhibiting further detailed discussion. As a result, the researcher brought the group back to discussions about the history of earlier groups of Lebanese-Australians.

Repositioning the Context

Early Australian-Lebanese History

The group considered the different Australian-Lebanese written histories were able to supply adequate contextual information, so they did not answer the historical questions explicitly. Instead, in general discussions about earlier migrants, some valuable insights into the experience of migration emerged. Content analyses of discussions revealed that there were three important phenomena related to early Lebanese migration experience. These were the significance of special food given to travelers for the long journey by boat, the translocation of traditional village ways of trading and the contrast between difficult experiences of earlier migrants with those who came later. Ali described the significance of food from the homeland indicating,

> *…when they used to come …the Mums and Dads used to give them a supporting life on the early trip via Alexandria through the Suez Canal – used to take thirty days. And the food they used to bring with them – one of them is 'shangleish'* [the cheese] *and the other is oregano.*

The metaphor 'supporting life' applied to special food given to the traveler is a symbol of family love. Likewise the trope 'Mums and Dads' implies the care and concern felt for migrants as they embarked on the journey.

Discussions about history in the 1920s prompted Sam to muse about the translocation of the village way of trading,

> *…the Abboud family came early. They came to NSW, … They used to trade in the village way – the traditional way. Sometimes they carried goods and they go to rural Australian villages to sell from carriages. They carried everything. This is how Mansours* [a Lebanese chain of drapery stores] *actually started.*

In contrast, the Lebanese in the 1950s –60s were described as city-dwellers living in Redfern. Again Sam described,

> *…our group,* [the Muslims from Tripoli] *we have been in Australia since early 1950. – from Redfern, some went to Punchbowl, some to Dulwich Hill, some stayed in Redfern. … they have very interesting stories to tell. They used to go to the factories where they lived – how many people lived in one room – how they shopped without English, using body language.* [They] *used to walk long distances because they couldn't use the public transport* [because of their inability to speak English]*– used to walk from Marrickville to airport simply because they came from the villages, so it was a tradition to walk.*

Recognition of the hardship experienced by earlier migrants also emerged in Greek group discussions in the comparative study. Such hardship seems to take on mythic characteristics which were as much associated with humiliations experienced due to the Australian community's reaction to difference, as they were to the hard work and poor living conditions they experienced.

Special People

Discussions about special people revealed different frames of reference between the researcher and the group. The researcher anticipated that they would talk about the Australian-Lebanese writer, David Malouf. But they did not mention him. Instead they spoke of the Dahdah family because they '*owned the Penrith Panthers* [a football team]'. Content analyses of discussions highlighted that particular Lebanese families such as the Abboud, Gazal, Mansours, Scarfs, Dahdah, and Moubarak families were 'special' Lebanese people. Interestingly all these families were successful in the textile industry. They had established textile and clothing factories and associated retail outlets. There are a number of places which reflected this heritage such as the first Scarfs' shop, selling men's suits, recently demolished, and the Gazal textile factory site in St Peters, still existing. Joseph Saba's shirt shop in Flinders Lane, Melbourne is another example of the early Lebanese connection with the clothing

industry. The group suggested reasons for the Lebanese success in the clothing manufacture area could possibly be traced back to early traditions of silk production, but also to travelling traders who carried fabrics to Lebanese villages, a practice they continued as migrants. According to the group, trading traditions, described by Sam as '*the Phoenician trading tradition*', were continued in Australia by early Lebanese migrants, such as the Mansour and Scarf families, who started trading as 'hawkers' in country areas in the early 1900s (Batrouney,1985).

The 'Phoenician trading tradition' is a trope heavily laden with multiple meanings. It implies ancient connections with the sea as well as exotic Middle East trade in spices and silks. Reflecting on this significance, Sam recognised the depth of cultural meaning embedded in this expression. He said,

> *…one thing I would like to tell you – maybe deeper than history – is that in Lebanon, all the mountains used to be very famous in silk production – many thousands of years – and all of the areas were covered by blackberry [mulberry] trees – and the Lebanese – 2000 years ago, they discovered the dyes – the dark red colour. They used to dye the silk and they were the first in the Mediterranean.*

Reflections-on-Action

The recognition that there are phenomena that are 'deeper than history' contrasts with Sam's initial summary of Lebanese heritage in Australia, prompted by trying to fit Lebanese heritage into Australian heritage criteria. The intriguing heritage implications opened up by the discussion of 'special people', namely linking the current Lebanese involvement with textile and clothing manufacture with Lebanese silk heritage and Phoenician trading traditions, confirms the value of open-ended discussion and validates the design of the first stage of Meeting Two.

Locating this Group in the Australian-Lebanese Context

The second stage of this meeting was designed to elicit group reflections about their settling in process in Australia, much of which has already been discussed in the comparative study. Despite this or possibly because of this, the discussion did not repeat what had already been said but instead built on existing knowledge with different insights. Table 5.6 shows the process of this stage.

TABLE 5.6.

The Guide: discussion points to locate group's migration experience.

Your Experiences as Lebanese in Australia
Your own history in Australia will help you decide what you think are your heritage places. In discussing the following questions you will see which memories or associations with places your group shares. Also in discussing the questions and telling stories about your life in Australia you will realise how your migrant experience has created heritage places for you.

Lebanese community places - places with collective histories
Consider the following questions and record the different places which are mentioned.

* where did you first live?
* where did you meet other Lebanese men and women?
* where was your place of worship?
* where did you shop?
* where did you work?
* where did you go for special events in the Lebanese community?
* where did you spend your leisure time?

* what are the stories about settling in to Australia and making it feel more like home?

Discussions about Lebanese community places, as a result of content analyses, have been grouped into three categories, 'where Lebanese resided', 'working in Australia' and 'leisure and recreation'.

Where Lebanese Resided
The group had already gained insights into their particular Lebanese enclaves of houses, small parks and local shops. The character of the houses that they first lived in and the ways in which they made the transformation from a Lebanese way of life to an Australian-Lebanese way of life were now understood. Taking this as a given, the group embarked on discussions about broader aspects of where the Lebanese community lived and why, as well as deeper understandings of the heritage significance of their own houses.   Sam remarked

> *…when we came to Australia – [he gives the address of the house] –we were all single. That house is our heritage!   We begged the owner to sell it to us many times but she won't.*
> *If you were able to buy it, what would you do with it?* (Researcher).

Move our parents in and keep it. (Sam).

This is a somewhat contradictory response, given the phenomenon of 'pragmatism' evident in the last chapter. The complexity and paradoxical nature of values, which emerge continually beg further research beyond the limits of this study.

The group again stressed that they were only one example of the complex Lebanese community in Sydney. Sam explained that, apart from the earlier Lebanese who lived in Redfern and then moved to Canterbury, Punchbowl and Dulwich Hill, there were spiritual reasons which determined where the Lebanese lived '…*for example, the Shi'ites have experiences in Rockdale and Arncliffe and they have areas in St George area too …the Christian people who came from Beirut, they live in Parramatta.*' Thus the Lebanese in Sydney reside in an interlocking net of enclaves based on their spiritual affiliations and the needs of extended families.

Working in Australia

Descriptions of places where the Lebanese worked provided a time-line which not only described the history of Lebanese migration to Australia but also the changing nature of work from the turn of the century to the 1990s. Sam talked about the early Lebanese in Australia who '…*traded in the village way – carried the goods to Australian villages.'* They also discussed how in the 1950s some of the Christian Lebanese '…*went to Dubbo, Broken Hill –* [towns in the west of NSW] *because very similar to living in Lebanon'*. Sam explained that *'They worked on the farms but they concentrated in grocery shops.'* The fact that earlier migrants went to country towns was also true for Greeks and Italians. As a result, migrants who came immediately after World War II were the group who established the strong Mediterranean presence in Australian cities.

Migrants who came in the 1950s –60s worked in factories in the city. Sam described his father who *'lived in Redfern and walked to Leyland factory in Waterloo.'* Many worked in a brewery in South Sydney, others worked in sheet metal and white goods factories, some also worked in the large textile mills in Marrickville, unaware of the significance of the embryonic Lebanese-dominated, heavy duty clothing factories just starting. In the early 1970s, Lebanese migrants, particularly those with qualifications

which were not recognised in Australia, chose to work as porters at Central Railway and Darling Harbour. Reflecting on why this occurred, Ali suggested that onerous factory work and the humiliations migrants were subjected to, all of which he had experienced, were unacceptable to educated Lebanese. Working as porters was less strenuous, less demeaning and provided quiet times when Lebanese could study English in order to practice in their professions. Less well-educated Lebanese worked in the building industry as skilled tradesmen or owned smallgoods and fish shops. By the 1990s, issues of unemployment were resulting in many Lebanese returning to Lebanon. Thus unlike the Greek and Vietnamese groups, sites of work are more diffuse.

Recreation and Leisure

The group's response to the question 'where did you meet other men and women?' was '*...parks in general, beaches, nightclubs, mosques and churches.'* In both the comparative study and this study, the group made frequent reference to large gatherings in different parks. In the last chapter, Ali had described the way they would go to Royal National Park in a convoy of cars. The significance of the Lebanese picnic was beginning to emerge from this question. Earlier Sam had said *'...back to traditional things, we have a Lebanese BBQ, sha –wi, meat is cooked on the coals and salad.'* Frequent references to gatherings in parks also highlights Sam's reflections in the first meeting about 'Sayran Ramadan' or picnics associated with Ramadan.

In contrast to extended family gatherings in parks, some of the Lebanese community enjoyed the Lebanese nightclubs established around Cleveland Street, Surry Hills. The group spoke of '*Beirut by Night'* and '*Le Roi Rouge'* which had '*red satin walls and ceiling'*. They also described the '*Ali Baba Cinema'* in College Street near Hyde Park which screened Arabic movies. Hala reminisced '…*extremely romantic to go to the* [Arabic] *movies...'*, a description that is a far cry from the Greek experience of movies in the 1950s described in the last chapter.

Reflections-on and in-Action

Meetings had been designed so that each would open with a brief summary of the outcomes of the previous meeting, given by the researcher. In this case, the summary

was a list of the places in Lebanon the group had discussed. Reflecting-in-action, the group concurred that the summary was accurate but were anxious to point out that their heritage was not in places but in the culture related to places.

Reflecting-on-action, discussions about heritage revealed the need to understand how Australians perceive cultural heritage. This was also was evident in other discussion groups in this research. Remaining open and letting meanings emerge, rather than limiting the process through explicit frames of reference, is the dilemma posed when using hermeneutics in active discourse instead of completed texts. Such frames close down possibilities of lateral and creative interpretations. Thus, recognising that collaborative processes used in this research require Australian frames of reference for migrant groups; the challenge is how to supply referential frameworks without being prescriptive.

By the end of the second meeting, discussions had revealed that there were clear connections between each era of Lebanese migration to Australia and that their heritage was evident as a mosaic of places, both urban and rural. Hermeneutically, connections were starting to be made between the heritage of silk trading and the way the early Lebanese established themselves in Australia. These connections were explicitly related to different Lebanese families, all of whom now dominated heavy-duty clothing manufacturing. At another level, the value of community picnics in large parks was also emerging. The issue of heritage embedded in ways of life could now be explored in the third meeting with a clear sense of why such issues were important.

Lebanese Cultural Practices and Living Traditions in Australia

Lebanese Heritage as Ways of Life

The third meeting was intended to reveal how cultural heritage is embedded in everyday life. Intriguing aspects of this phenomenon for migrants are that some cultural traditions are able to be transferred to Australia unaltered, a translocated heritage; other traditions have been modified by living in Australia, transformed heritage. A third issue of heritage significance is that some cultural practices

translocated to Australia, have been sustained unaltered. They have become frozen in time and as such, are a form of cultural heritage for the country of origin.

The meeting was designed as a set of prompts to focus discussion on aspects of everyday life. Given the comments about remaining open, these prompts may appear prescriptive. Phenomena associated with everyday life in different migrant groups, however, are so rich and engaging for the group that the prompts were also used as ways to contain discussion. Table 5.7 shows how the discussion was introduced, all discussions included here are coded LM2/3.

TABLE 5.7.

The Guide: Introduction to Meeting Three.

Lebanese Heritage as Ways of Life
During the last meeting you looked at places which tell of the story of your migration to Australia and how you settled in. Your heritage places can mean more than this. They can also reflect your ways of life and allow for your living traditions to continue.

Detailed cultural heritage

The following points of discussion might help you identify those aspects of your heritage related to your ways of life.

Points for discussion:

* language	Do you speak the same Arabic or has it changed?
	Has the Arabic spoken in Lebanon changed since you left?
* cooking	Did you create special shops to get the food you like?
	Has the food you prepare and changed in Australia?
	Where are traditional ingredients available?
* houses	Have you changed your Australian house?
	What have you changed to make your house suit your way of life?
* gardens	Did you have a garden in Lebanon? Do you have a garden in now?
	What have you planted? How do you use it?
	Do your friends come to the garden?
* music	Do you have special Lebanese music and dancing?
	Can you still practise this in Australia? Has it changed?

Summarise the discussion and list changes that have occurred in Australia and places which are associated with these aspects of your cultural heritage.

Many of these issues have already been discussed both in the comparative study and in the first two meetings. One interesting aspect of everyday Lebanese life is the way in which trading is undertaken. This is of particular interest because it supports the heritage connection between early Lebanese travelling 'hawkers' in rural areas and subsequent Lebanese clothing and drapery shops. This heritage is not just a reflection of the 'grand' tradition of the 'Phoenician silk traders', it is also the 'little' tradition of everyday market bazaars (Stilgoe,1982). Two quotes supporting observations about 'little traditions' are,

> *Talking about traditional ways of trade; I went to my uncle's place in the village. He sells ice-cream - no money, bartered. It still existed in the 1960s. (Ali LM2/3)*

> *My mother found it difficult when she came here ... I used to get embarrassed ... In Lebanon they are used to bargaining and when she came here she used to make me bargain for her. It is difficult, really embarrassing. In her mind it was still the same, nothing has changed. (Inaam LM2/3)*

The following is an abbreviated summary of content analyses of the animated and extensive discussions occurring around everyday life.

Language

Discussions centred on the lack of existing purity in the Arabic language because of the influence of the French, British and Turks as well as variations in dialect. There was also discussion about their language in Australia and how expressions were reordered in Arabic to reflect Australian syntax. The group had many amusing anecdotes of how the mixture of English words in Arabic caused confusion. The role of language in the process of migration has been explored in a series of essays called *Displacements* edited by Brammer (1994). Brammer suggests that language is both 'carrier of national and familial traditions and emblems of cultural and personal identity (1994:xvi).' In another essay, Kaplan (1994:60) explores how the migrant in mastering English has to lose his/her family tongue which is the 'intimate, private, family language' whereas 'English is the language of the public sphere.' Hirsch (1994:79) adds that the most distressing aspect of having to live in a new language is that the signifier becomes severed from the signified. She evokes the power of this by explaining '… "river" in Polish was a vital sound, energised by the essence of riverhood, of my rivers, of being immersed in rivers. "River" in English is cold – a

word without an aura.' These are the phenomena related to language that the young Lebanese migrants experienced.

Issues around migration and language have also been explored by Chambers in *Migrancy, Culture, Identity* (1994) where he describes a form of Creole which exemplifies the modern migrant. Because the Lebanese language is a form of Arabic already influenced by many cultures and constantly changing in Lebanon, there was a lack of concern about changes in the language in Australia. The significance of the local schools, however, as places where Lebanese children were humiliated because of their language difficulties highlights the complex values in place meanings. The lack of concern about changes in language is in strong contrast to the intensity they felt about the changes in food and cooking.

Food and Cooking

The group was unanimous about how Lebanese ways of cooking and types of food eaten in Australia had changed. Not only have they modified their eating to conform to Anglo-Australian norms, they have also been influenced by other cultural groups in Australia such as the Indian community whose shops are interspersed with the Lebanese shops in Surry Hills. Food was a consistent theme during the first two meetings. Ali had spoken about traditional food as '*a supporting life*' given to the early migrants travelling by ship. There were also many stories of the distress they felt, when gifts of special food, given to them when leaving their country, were thrown away by customs officials. Clearly these items of food were laden with deep value adding to the significance of points of arrival in Australia. There were also Lebanese individuals renowned for their skills in relation to particular foods. Sam, when describing the heritage significance of the Port of Tripoli added,

> *In the Port of Tripoli there was a place which is very famous for its ice-cream ... everywhere in Tripoli they came to that place ... the owner - Hadler - he emigrated to Australia. He is in Bankstown and he makes the same ice-cream.*

Discussions about their food in Australia centred on three main changes, the introduction of new foods, often from other migrant groups, the lack of time to prepare traditional dishes and the fact that some Lebanese foods tasted different when prepared in Australia.

> *The availability of contents [has changed our food.] We had to use something else. Plus being here we learned other cooking such as Turkish, English, Chinese.* (Hassan, LM2/3)

> *Women have taken to easy cooking - for example stuffed vine leaves, by the time you prepare it - it takes six hours - especially as we are a large family. Believe me, this is one of the cookings that is fading away. Now we only do it once or twice a year.* (Ali, LM2/3)

> *In Lebanon, my Mum used to always cook the cracked wheat with chickpeas and she used to boil lambs tongue and put the juice on the cracked wheat and humus. Over there it used to taste beautiful but when we came here she cooked it a few times but nobody liked it any more. It tasted completely different. We never cook it now*. (Inaam, LM2/3)

Some traditional dishes, still prepared, were described. The preparation and eating of food is an important part of the Lebanese cultural heritage in Australia where most meals are eaten in the home, except for large family picnics. The ritual of specific foods prepared and eaten these large picnics places adds to their significance. Throughout the discussions in each meeting, places where large picnics were held were emerging as important to this group.

Houses and Gardens

Houses have already been discussed in the last chapter. The Lebanese found that the Australian inner suburban house did not allow for the customary large family gatherings, so they selected a particular type of house which allowed them to open up the interiors. As apartment dwellers in Lebanon, they did not have gardens, so their relationship to their gardens in their Australian houses was ambivalent. Initially they were self-mocking, describing their gardens as 'green concrete,' despite the fact that many front gardens of Australian-Lebanese homes are paved with richly glazed tiles, shown in Plate 5.1.

PLATE 5.1.

Lebanese front garden with glazed tiles bordered by rose beds,

in Marrickville. (A.P.1994).

Sam, however, indicated that were symbols of the Lebanese landscape in their gardens, such as the Cedars of Lebanon and olive trees both of which have ancient meanings for the Lebanese. The Cedars of Lebanon are considered to have been the timbers of the fleets of the ancient Phoenician traders (Macoboy, 1979). The olive tree is also closely associated with the history and culture of Lebanon. In some places olive groves are said to be older than the villages themselves (Macoboy, 1979). The olive, greatly valued for its culinary oil, was also used as the basis of the exotic Middle East scents. Inaam described the rose used for traditional Lebanese rose water as another element in the Lebanese gardens. Back gardens contain extensive beds of parsley, mint and other vegetables used in Lebanese cooking. Thus the heritage of a number of Lebanese traditions, seen by the West as exotic, are evident in even the most humble of Lebanese gardens in Australia.

Dancing

Exotic traditions are also associated with Lebanese dancing, particularly the 'belly dancing' performed in Lebanese nightclubs already mentioned. There is an Academy of Dance in Lebanon, which constantly changes the traditional dance. As a result, the traditional dancing done by many of the older Lebanese in Australia is a form of culture frozen in time. The group spoke about how much the younger people, including themselves, had been influenced by popular Western dancing resulting in new hybrid forms of Lebanese dancing. This hybridization, resulting from intersecting cultures associated with contemporary migration, has also been explored

by Chambers (1994).   Thus new hybrids are developing along side the 'frozen in time' traditional dancing of the 1950s.   The group suggested there are particular places associated with music and dancing.   Some have been established in Sydney since the 1960s and are known about in the mainstream community, such as nightclubs and restaurants.   Others, established in the 1970s, are located in large rooms above local shops in Bankstown, Punchbowl, and Parramatta and are only known about within the Lebanese community.

Calendar of Cultural Life

Ways of life and cultural ceremonies have traditionally been associated with specific seasons.   This is also applicable to spiritual worship. When migrants from the Northern Hemisphere come to Australia, they find that many of their significant cultural events occur in opposite seasons.   In most cases, however, they maintain the same calendar and the same rituals with some subtle modifications.   This has been true of all the migrant groups starting with the British.   In order to see whether there are Antipodean modifications, the guide asked for a 'Calendar of events'.   Being Muslims, the group spoke of Ramadan and the picnics they hold both before and after the fast, a tradition they followed in Lebanon.   Some of the large parks already mentioned have significance for the both Arabic people in general and other Muslims. They spoke of Steele Park in Marrickville as the place where they all used to gather for Arabic Day. This has now been replaced by Gough Whitlam Park in Arncliffe.

Reflections-on-Action

The sequence of meetings is intended to be an iterative process where places become saturated with understandings about the migration experience, a form of constitutive phenomenology and the phenomenology of appearances (Spiegelberg,1975). At this stage the group was helped to see where their discussions were leading in the form of a summary of outcomes of each meeting and the ways in which this summary could be used.

It is clear that translocated and transformed culture is richly embedded in the 'little' traditions of everyday life. The enthusiasm for discussions about changes tended to overshadow the reflective process. In many cases, this was the first time the group

had considered how much their everyday life had altered since being in Australia. Interestingly, unlike the 1950s Greek group, who considered they had changed the culture of Australia as much as Australian experiences had changed them, the Lebanese did not comment on their contribution to the Australian way of life despite the physical evidence of Lebanese culture in large Australian cities.

Interpreting the Heritage Significance of Lebanese Places in Australia

The Synthesising Process
The fourth meeting was designed to synthesise all discussions and arrive at a hermeneutic of migrant heritage for this group. Phenomena associated with the migration experience were summarised as four lists;

- existing Lebanese places in Australia,

- list of places associated with special Lebanese people in Australia,

- list of Lebanese community places with collective memories,

- list of places associated with the Lebanese way of life in Australia.

Hermeneutically it was possible to determine how these places had distinct Lebanese significance, rather than merely expressions of migration. Hermeneutic studies require fields of knowledge within which interpretations can be located and substantiated. In this study the initial knowledge field was Australian heritage theory, in particular criteria used to designate heritage significance for listing places on the Register of the National Estate. By working through the criteria, it was possible to identify layers of Lebanese significance in particular places. Where places were multi-layered, they were considered more significant than other places. Nevertheless, there were limitations to this field of knowledge as will be shown in the following discussion.

Working with Lists of Places Derived from Previous Meetings

Four lists were developed as summaries of categories derived from content analyses of all discussions over the previous three meetings. The first two lists show significant people and existing Australian-Lebanese places, from the 1900s to the 1970s, mainly in Sydney. This provides a lens through which to view the context of the Lebanese in a large Australian city. The other two lists provide summaries of

post-1970s Lebanese migration experiences in Sydney. The lists not only generate categories and summaries, they also reveal how some places reflect many aspects of Australian-Lebanese life. Tables 5.9-5.12 detail the lists.

TABLE 5.9.

Existing Lebanese Places in Sydney and Melbourne

Sydney suburbs where the Lebanese Lived
Redfern,   Punchbowl,   Parramatta.
Marrickville,   Bankstown,

Lebanese factories, clothing and drapery shops
Mansours, Scarfs,
Gazal Factory, Tempe
Joseph Saba's shirt shop, Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Important Sydney Parks for the Lebanese
Redfern Park, Sydney   Parramatta Park, Parramatta
Carrs Park, Blakehurst   Steele Park, Marrickville
Enmore Park, Marrickville   Royal National Park.

Early churches and mosques
St George Orthodox Church, Redfern, (established 1901)
St Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church, Melbourne (1931)
Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church, Harris Park (1930s)
Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church, Melbourne (1956)
Muslim Mosque in Surry Hills Hall, Cleveland St
Sun'ni Mosque for Lebanese Muslims, Canterbury (1950s)

The first list, Table 5.9, summarises places existing in Sydney before this group arrived in the 1970s. It includes where the Lebanese lived, their particular economic niche, the importance of parks and places of spiritual worship. The second list, Table 5.10, provides another way of understanding the Lebanese community, namely the role of various significant Lebanese people in Australia.

TABLE 5.10.

Some Special Lebanese people in Australia.

Significant Lebanese People	Places
Families with textile and clothing factories and retail outlets	
Abboud family Moubarouk family	Their factories
Dahdah family Mansours	and shops
Gazal family Scarfs	
Writers	
David Malouf	South Brisbane
Lele Saklawi	
Other Special People	
Mayor Nicholas Shehadie,	
Former Lord Mayor of Sydney	Sydney Town Hall
Dr Nini Alain, famous Lebanese herbalist	
	practice in Campsie.
Michel El-h-Yek, traditional Lebanese	
clairvoyant.	practice in Bankstown.
Hadler, famous in Tripoli	ice-cream shop in
for his ice-cream,	Bankstown.

The third list, Table 5.11, summarises the Lebanese community places reflecting community memories in Sydney.

TABLE 5.11.

Muslim Lebanese community places in Sydney.

Places where the Muslim Lebanese lived
1950s, Redfern, Punchbowl - in rooming houses
1960s, Redfern, Marrickville, Punchbowl, Bankstown
1970s, Marrickville, Dulwich Hill, Arncliffe, Punchbowl, Bankstown.

Places of work
Central Railway, rail yards in Darling Harbour - as porters
Factories - Leyland, Resches, Lindemans, AGL, Vicars, Pye, Email.
Smallgoods and fish and chip shops.
Building industry often as stone masons and bricklayers.

Food and Shopping
Paddy's Market
Al-o-mawi - first Lebanese pastry shop (Moorhead St, Redfern)
Cleveland Street, Surry Hills –restaurants and shops.
Marrickville, Punchbowl and Bankstown shopping streets.

Places of Worship
First Muslim mosque, Islamic Federation Centre, Surry Hills
First Arabic mosque, Lakemba.

Places for Recreation
Carss Park, Blakehurst
Steele Park, Enmore Park, Marrickville.
Beirut nightclub - Le Roi Rouge - Chalmers/Cleveland St, Sydney.
Arabic Cinema - Ali Baba Cinema, Anzac House, College St, Sydney.
Place of Political significance
Glen Street, Marrickville - notorious for Lebanese street gangs

The final list summarises places derived from discussions about ways of life, shown in Table 5.12.

TABLE 5.12.

Places associated with the Muslim Lebanese way of life in Australia.

Lebanese Restaurants	Ways of Life
Cleveland St, Surry Hills }	
Dulwich Hill, Marrickville }	for Lebanese food
The Parks -	for Lebanese picnics
Steele Park, Enmore Park, Marrickville	
Gough Whitlam Park, Marrickville	
Carss Park, Blakehurst	
Lebanese nightclubs	for music and dancing
Community Centres	
144 Addison Road, Marrickville }	for continuing Lebanese
44 Carrington Street, Marrickville }	culture
The Mosques	for worship
Lakemba	

Reflections-on-Action

Preliminary lists were prepared as a result of rapid analyses of the transcripts between meetings. Lists were developed iteratively over meetings and were confirmed with the group before each meeting. They were later refined by orthodox content analyses of transcripts (Patton,1990). Of particular interest are the factories and retail outlets for clothing manufacture associated with successful Lebanese families.   Another category of interest is the 'Park'. Parks appear to have been important for early groups and also continue to be important for Arabic picnics.

From these lists, the group then worked through the eight criteria for Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) significance (Pearson & Sullivan,1995). This was undertaken to determine which places had sufficient significance for the group to be worthy of consideration for listing on the Register of the National Estate as an example of Lebanese heritage in Australia.

Hermeneutics Informed by Heritage Theory

As stated, heritage theory was used as the field of knowledge. In the previous chapter, the focus was on limitations of statutory processes at State level, namely heritage studies as precursors to Local Environment Plans. As indicated in Chapter Two, broader conceptual approaches to heritage interpretations are undertaken at the Federal Government level through the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC). The criteria for heritage significance prepared by the AHC are an effective vehicle to take the conceptual process, hermeneutics, to an applied process, heritage planning.

As Pearson & Sullivan (1995) point out, it is not enough to have general agreement of value by the community to designate a place as significant. In heritage planning, the term 'significance' is used to mean 'the degree to which a place possesses a certain valued attribute' and why it is valued (1995:17). As was shown by the places valued in Lebanon by this group, communities tend to value places for their historic, aesthetic and social attributes. Pearson and Sullivan indicate that different cultures have different traditions about the past (1995:20). As a result, the AHC's formalised and categorised systems for heritage assessment may not be the most appropriate way of dealing with values held by minority groups. Such limitations will become evident through the application of this field of knowledge for hermeneutic interpretations.

Accordingly, the group was given an explanation of the eight criteria of significance developed by the AHC. Working through them, the group first tried to understand what the criteria were looking for and then which of their valued places, if any, was appropriate for each criterion. Table 5.13 shows the way in which the group interpreted their valued places according to these criteria. A number of culturally specific insights emerged through this process. The historic criterion, A, included places which reflected the history of the Lebanese in Australia. Criteria B and C were not considered relevant. The representative criterion, D, was seen to be applicable to the migrant experience rather than items that were representative of Lebanese culture. Accordingly, the group selected boarding houses as representative of a certain class of place pertinent to Lebanese migrant experiences. Fred mused '*Some people rented the houses and rented the people in them*' (LM2/4). He described a number of places in Redfern that were examples suitable for this criterion.

Criterion E, the aesthetic criterion, prompted much debate about what was an aesthetically beautiful place. Inaam said '*I think the National Park is beautiful'*. Fred agreed but Sam remarked, '*It is not the beauty, really.*' To which Inaam responded '*It is the nature – the waterfalls.*' Fred put forward a different idea of beauty when he suggested '*What about Gough Whitlam Park – it is beautiful for all ethnic groups* [because of] *Multicultural Day.*' The issue of aesthetics in cross-cultural discussions is complicated. The Greek group in the comparative study had revealed the same varied responses to perceptions of a beautiful view and landmarks. Perhaps one of the most interesting responses was Hala's reaction to criterion F, creative or technical achievement. She suggested the recent discovery of an Arabic shipwreck off the coast of Australia. The awareness of the importance of the Arabic shipwreck in heritage interpretations is sophisticated in heritage assessment terms. Sam supported Hala's suggestion by linking the Lebanese Muslims to other Muslims. He explained,

> *…actually you could analyse that from the history of the Muslims – from Malaysia – or - the story is the Muslims came to Australia … and did trade with the Aborigines and there was a mosque in Western Australia and that one is from the Afghans. If so, maybe the Arab traders could* [have] *come with the Afghans – camel trains – came via India. … take silk and spices. India is well known in our histories and stories. In our stories, there is a huge sea – after that land – this could be the land of Australia. They spoke of the Sea of Darkness.…*(LM2/4).

The group did not pursue these speculations, however, Hala and Sam's comments highlight how a non-professional group can bring refreshing and innovative perspectives to heritage criteria sometimes perceived as jargon.

TABLE 5.13.

Australian-Lebanese heritage significance according to the AHC criteria.

CRITERION	AHC SIGNIFICANCE	AUSTRALIAN-LEBANESE SIGNIFICANCE
A Historic	A place which is important in the pattern of Australia's natural or cultural history. e.g. places which show the unusual richness of plants, animals, landscapes or cultural features. e.g. places which are associated with events or cultural phases which have a significant role in the evolution of the nation.	The group felt that a number of places could be considered, Redfern Park, as a meeting place for Lebanese migrants from 1920s – 1970s, the first Scarfs' shop, as an example of the Lebanese clothing production, and Audley, in Royal National Park, as a site for early group picnics.
B Rare & Endangered	A place which shows rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.	None of the Lebanese places seemed to fit this criterion.
C Educational	A place which reveals information about Australia's natural or cultural history.	None of the Lebanese places were considered appropriate for this criterion.
D Representative	A place which is a model example of Australia's natural or cultural environments.	The group considered that the rooming houses where Lebanese rented out rooms to other Lebanese could be relevant to this criterion.
E Aesthetic	A place which shows a particular aesthetic character valued by the community or a cultural group.	Members of the group suggested, waterfalls at Royal National Park or Gough Whitlam Park
F Creative or Technical	A place shows a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular time.	Hala suggested the site of an Arabic shipwreck found off Western Australia as an appropriate place.
G Social	A place with strong associations with a particular cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.	This criterion prompted intense discussion and clearly had the most relevance to this group and many places were suggested.
H Special people	A place which has special associations with the life or work of a person, or group of people who have been important in Australia's history.	The group did not think that the people that were important in their community had significance for the wider Australian community. This is interesting as David Malouf, the Lebanese writer, is of Australian significance.

Reflections-in and on-Action

Omissions of significant places brought about by conforming to AHC process are just as important as insights gained. By maintaining the rigour required by heritage practice, one can see the limits of the process even though it was possible to locate some places of heritage significance within relevant criteria. The choice of heritage

theory as the field of knowledge, nevertheless, is too limited for a full hermeneutic analysis for migrant groups. Thus by using the process of the hermeneutic circle we can re-engage with interpretations using a different field of knowledge. It would appear Criterion G – community places with social value - is highly pertinent for this group. Accordingly, engaging in place theory as the knowledge field, other layers of understanding can be derived for community places.

Hermeneutics Informed by Place Theory

Place theory, particularly cultural landscape theory, seeks to identify the ways in which places become layered with changing uses over time (Sauer,1925; Relph,1976; Riley,1992; Taylor,1999). Recent interest in place and the politics of identity have explored the value of locality and everyday life (Lefevbre,1990; Hayden,1995). The AHC has taken up the challenge of finding value in local places through the work of Johnston (1993) in *What is Social Value?* As a result, the AHC uses five exemplars to determine whether a place has social heritage significance. These are indicated in Table 5.14.

TABLE 5.14.

Guide for identifying places of social heritage significance.

> * a place which is important to the community as a landmark;
>
> * a place to which ethnic communities have strong collective attachment;
>
> * a place which has a history and ongoing use for social interaction;
>
> * a place to which the community has a strong enduring attachment;
>
> * a place or an event which has a profound effect on the Lebanese community.

The following discussion reveals how slippery heritage terms can be for different cultural groups. The concept of 'landmark', the first point, prompted much interest. The group felt that Glenn Street, Marrickville was a landmark because it was notorious. Hassan explained

> …*some youths formed a gang – related to the Lebanese and other multicultural groups. Used to hang out in Glenn Street – police would*

come. Glenn Street had a lot of units. When the kids get bored, they come down to the street … People thought it was a big gang and TV making out it was 'colours' gang, plus they were not angels. … A lot of media attention was focussed on that street (LM2/4).

This concept of a landmark created by the media is in strong contrast to the way 'landmark' was interpreted in the comparative study. It raises some pertinent issues in terms of media driven perceptions of place evident in the recent work of Burgess (1993).

The second point, a place to which ethnic communities have strong collective attachment, was seen to be relevant to Steele Park, Marrickville, shown in Plate 5.2. The group explained that it was not only a place of importance to them, but it was used by other ethnic groups as shown in the following discussion between Sam and Hassan. Sam indicated,

The Greeks [use the park].
Islanders, Fijians, South Americans -not Turkish – but the Greeks because of the soccer. They have a club there. (Hassan)
This spot is very famous for walking, BBQs – (Sam)
Picnics, sports, birthday parties, Multicultural Day. (Fred. LM2/4).

This brings out the phenomenon of places with multiple values, layered over time as well as being meaningful for a number of groups.

PLATE 5.2.

Typical Lebanese picnic in Steele Park. (A.P.1994).

The remaining three points, while pertinent to migrant places, did not fully address the significance this group was seeking.   By this stage, the group felt there were two places of high heritage significance, the first was Steele Park, Marrickville as an example of a place with a history of Lebanese use facilitating on-going traditional everyday life.   The other was a place which told of the transformation of their 'Phoenician trading heritage' into the Australian context.

Hermeneutic Reading of a Socially Valued Place

The AHC criteria indicated that places which convey most significance for the Lebanese group are places with social significance, Criterion G. The group decided to test their interpretations by nominating Steele Park, Marrickville, for the Register of the National Estate.   Table 5.15 shows their assessment of social heritage significance using the five exemplars to establish their context.

TABLE 5.15.

Assessment of social heritage significance.

- The park was *not* considered to be a *landmark,*
- The park was considered to have *strong collective attachment for ethnic communities*; the Lebanese, the Greeks, the Islanders, the South Americans.
- The park was a place which *has a history and ongoing use for social interaction*,
- The park has a *strong enduring attachment* for the Lebanese community, for example it was the first park they used for family picnics, all the birthdays are held there, Multicultural Day in November is held there. The Lebanese picnic has particular characteristics which reflect their cultural heritage both in Lebanon and in Australia
- The park has *not* experienced an event which has a *profound effect* on the Lebanese community, rather it is in *continuous use as a place of pleasure and recreation*.

(Derived from Group Discussions LM2/4).

Under the current processes of heritage assessment, at this stage a Conservation Plan would be undertaken which would include a Statement of Heritage Significance, conservation policies and strategies for implementation. According to Pearson and Sullivan, a Statement of Significance is 'a succinct summary of the reasons why the place is of value' which can be supported with appropriate documentation (1995:130). The following Statement of Significance was prepared collectively by the researcher and the group.

> ### The Heritage Significance of a Lebanese Picnic in Steele Park – Criterion G. Social Significance
>
> *Steele Park has been used by the group for traditional Lebanese picnics since they first arrived in Australia in 1975. The use of Steele Park marked the change from single Lebanese men gathering in Enmore Park before 1975, to large family picnics with the arrival of families due to the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon.*
>
> *A Lebanese picnic involves at least 30-40 people. The group arrive at 10.00 am and start the barbeque. They use the picnic tables in the park as well as bringing their own chairs, in order to accommodate the extended family. They bring Arabic music which is played on a cassette player, the 'bong' for smoking, cards and games. The group stay until sunset. The children and some of the adults use the sports facilities, fish, ride bicycles. Such picnics in Australia are a continuation of practices carried out in Lebanon and remind them of those places. The open spaces in the villages were an important aspect of their cultural heritage because seasonal festivals were held there including the picnics before and after Ramadan. Because of the high density living in Tripoli and Beirut, people go to the villages every weekend for large family picnics.*
>
> *Apart from continuing a culturally specific way of using recreational parks, group picnic continues Lebanese traditions of food and music. Food brought to the Australian park consists of traditional dishes. It starts with a late breakfast of shangleish, olives, bread, coffee. Lunch includes chickens, kebabs, kefta, barbequed on special charcoal. There are garlic dips, tabouli, chickpeas, coffee, tea, beer. After lunch, the coffee pot is put on the barbeque and the group play cards, sport etc until sundown..*

It is clear that the group have a strong collective attachment to the park. It is the first park in Australia that they used for their picnics and they have been using it for over twenty years. They celebrate all the family birthdays in the park and it allows the group to maintain their strong family traditions which they see as their cultural heritage in Australia. They had documentary evidence in the form of photographs from 1975 to support the social heritage significance of this park.

Hermeneutically, this Statement of Significance is more than a simple description of a locally valued park. Connerton (1990), in his study on *How Societies Remember*, devotes particular attention to those groups, such as migrants, who have broken with an older order. He calls these communities, 'self-interpreted communities', and indicates that there is always an attempt to mark a beginning. He says that 'The attempt to establish a beginning refers back inexorably to a pattern of social memories.' (1990:13). Relph's observations add to the reasons why this park has value. He remarks in his study on *Modernity and Reclamation of Place*, that 'places

are made largely through the involvement and commitment of people who live and work in them. Places have to be made from the inside out.' (Relph,1993:34). Interestingly, Steele Park was one of the new parks created in the early 1970s as part of the program to revitalise the environmental state of Cooks River by creating a number of riverside parks. It would appear that the Lebanese community was one of the earliest groups to colonise the new park, adding to the sense that the park marks their beginning in Australia.

Hermeneutic Reading of an Historically Valued Place.

The other aspect of Australian-Lebanese heritage, namely translocating the 'Phoenician trading tradition' to Australia and its transformation from the early 'hawkers' working in Australian country areas, to drapery shops in country towns and ultimately to the successful factories and retail outlets associated with heavy duty textile and clothing manufacture, was not easily addressed within the current heritage assessment procedures.

Valle and Halling (1989) discuss the process of transformations in qualitative interpretations. Their observations provide insights hermeneutic processes involved in moving from a trope, 'the Phoenician trading tradition', to identifying places which embody this meaning in a new country. They suggest that this is accomplished by two processes, 'reflection and imaginative variation' (1989:55). Reflection involves immersion in the concept, a process already clearly demonstrated. Imaginative variation requires that the researcher intentionally alter the meaning through imagination and analogy. Thus by intentionally altering the meaning of 'hawking' to 'Phoenician trading tradition', a cultural connection could be made between ancient cultural myths and contemporary everyday life in a new country.

Despite this, the group, as Lebanese, struggled with the concept of a factory being a Lebanese heritage place. There was also difficulty in fitting the particular significance of these family factories into Criterion G, social heritage significance. After many attempts to get a Lebanese clothing factory to conform to Criterion G, the research team finally suggested that there should be an extra criterion of heritage significance for migrant places. Ali suggested it should be a place which reflected

'pride and success', a concept which was strongly endorsed by the group. Hassan suggested the criterion should be '*a place which tells the story of migration.*' It is interesting to see the developing heritage expertise that emerged in the group over the four meetings. Finally, because of the uncertainty about which place to nominate for this aspect of Lebanese heritage, it was agreed that I, as prime researcher, would consult an accepted leader of the Lebanese community whose family had been in Australia since the 1920s.   He confirmed that the interpretations of Australian Lebanese heritage were correct and that the site of the first Lebanese clothing factory was in Redfern, shown in plate 5.3, and would be appropriate for nomination (Interview NS. 12/6/94).

PLATE 5.3.

The former Stanton Melick warehouse building in Redfern. (A.P.1995).

The shift from trying to reflect transformed cultural practice by a 'representative' place to the 'first' place enabled the heritage significance to be broadened to include Criterion A, historic significance, that is, 'a place which is associated with a cultural phase which has a significant role in the evolution of the nation' (AHC,1990). It was also possible to attribute representative heritage significance, Criterion D, as an example of a factory where post World War II migrants worked.   The significance as a place which represents transformed cultural practices, however, was still not addressed adequately. Criterion G, social significance, does not fully allow for the complexity of cultural changes involved in the phenomenon of migration.

The following statement of significance explains the heritage significance of a Lebanese clothing factory in Australia.   Despite the clear evidence of historic

significance, the desire for heritage significance to be applied to successful migrant experiences was important to the group. Clearly the heroic nature of the migrant experience is one that many groups want recognised.

Stanton Melick Warehouse Site, Elizabeth St, Redfern –
Criterion A: Historic significance

Criterion D: Representative significance
Criterion G: Social Significance

This site reflects Lebanese heritage in Australia as a translocated cultural practice of trading silks throughout the Lebanese countryside to early travelling traders in fabrics in rural Australia in the 1900s. In the 1920s, the Lebanese established drapery and clothing shops carrying the names of large Lebanese families such as Mansours and Scarfs. By the 1940s, factories for clothing manufacture were established such as the Gazal, Dahdah enterprises. The Stanton Melick factory is the site of the earliest examples of Lebanese heavy duty clothing manufacturing in Sydney. It is a representational example of a heritage site with historic and social significance for the Lebanese community in Sydney.

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*The **representational significance** lies in the history of the Post World War II migrant program with its focus on providing workers for Australia's industrial development. Many of the migrants who came to Australia felt that they were contributing to Australia's economic development. Because there was a lack of recognition of professional qualifications many highly trained people worked in the factories, along with people who had come from an agrarian village life. Collectively, the factories are redolent with stories of hardship, humiliation and humour. Some factories became the focus for specific migrant groups who had specialised skills such as the Portuguese women who worked in Paramount Shirts because of their skill in needlework. The Stanton Melick factory is a representative example of such a migrant heritage place in Australia.*

***Historic significance** lies in early Lebanese clothing factories in Australia. Many Lebanese migrants from 1900 to the 1920s travelled throughout the rural areas in Australia bringing fabrics to isolated farming women. Their 'Phoenician silk trading' tradition was known as 'hawking' in Australia. Later they settled in rural towns opening clothing and fabric retail outlets. Scarfs and Mansours are retail outlets which are examples of this process. With increasing economic consolidation Lebanese families opened clothing factories, particularly focussing on the manufacture of heavy-duty clothing. The Melick factory site has historic significance as one of the earliest examples of these factories.*

FIGURE 5.2.

Statement of Heritage Significance for a Migrant Heritage Site.

Reflection-in and on-Action

The process of synthesising all discussions and working towards understanding the heritage significance of places which not only reflect the migrant experience but also show translocated and transformed culture was difficult for the group. Unlike the first three meetings there was suddenly a shift in ownership because one of the group, the researcher, was the 'expert' in heritage practice. The group could be described as 'working hard' as they wrestled with the process of determining heritage significance, however it was agreed that they could not have undertaken the process on their own. Ali remarked

> *…in some instances, since the first session and here now – some of the things we said we thought was not valuable. But now we see everything has value.* [What] *we were focussing on at that time*, [we thought] *it is not heritage. But now you* [the researcher] *widen it up* (LM2/4).

Despite their reservations, I could not have interpreted Lebanese heritage places in Australia without the group as part of the research team. The process of four semi-structured meetings appeared to be appropriate and the sophisticated understanding of the process by all team members verified the method. Because of the high level of understanding, limitations in the current system of designating heritage places became evident.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to find a 'language' to interpret migrant heritage by addressing three issues; the use of hermeneutics in migrant studies, cross-cultural understandings of heritage and the development of an effective process to reveal the many layers of meaning involved in the experience of migration.

Hermeneutics is an art and skill as well as the theory of interpretations. Although hermeneutics is most commonly used with completed texts, it can also be used to understanding the significance of human actions and utterances (Bullock et al.1977). The richness of hermeneutic studies lies in the layers of meaning and multiple ways of seeing. In this chapter I have tried to show how perceptions and meanings can shift as migrants moves from one culture to another, but also how ways of seeing can remain culturally specific. This state of 'betweenness' is part of the 'language' needed to

interpret migrant heritage. It is here that one can unravel the complexity of the experience of migration and the way this is manifest in certain places.

The chapter looked at cross-cultural concepts of heritage for one specific migrant group, the Muslim Lebanese in Sydney. Notions of heritage in the country of origin were Old World history and myths as well as contemporary everyday cultural life. Heritage for migrants in the new country is evident as the continuation of everyday life and cultural mythologies as transposed culture which often becomes transformed when practices are adapted to the new culture. Heritage for migrants is also embodied in the experience of migration and the process of settling in to the host country.

The third concern of this chapter has been the development of a process which facilitates an analysis of the experience of migration; namely a process which leads people through the steps needed in order to interpret values. This was done through a series of semi-structured meetings where the migrant group and the researcher explored concepts while at the same time reflecting on processes. As a result of this process, two places were seen to embody the cultural heritage of Muslim Lebanese in Sydney and these places may well be representative of other places in Australia. One place reflects a form of translocated culture as living heritage, a park for the traditional Lebanese picnic. The other place tells of an aspect of the history of the Lebanese in Australia and the unusual way cultural traditions can became transformed in the new country; namely an old factory marking the transition from silk trading in Lebanon to fabric traders in rural Australia and ultimately to heavy–duty clothing manufacture in large Australian cities.

In the process of interpreting this heritage and seeking to make the heritage significance relevant to Australia's cultural heritage, it became apparent that current forms of heritage assessment do not give significance to transformed culture as a result of migration. The richness and pervasiveness of this phenomenon within Australian history requires that its heritage significance be addressed.