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CHILD HEARING AND EARLY EDUCATION IN LEBANON

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by

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In this paper I wish to examine the child-rearing and educational practices of a people, who though divided ethnically, religiously and even geographically, are remarkably similar in their attitudes toward raising children, standards of behavior and expectations for their children. This conclusion has been based upon published information concerning Lebanese family life and education in the past and present personal experiences in Lebanon of this author, and interviews with Lebanese now living in America who were raised and educated in Lebanon.

Lebanon is a lesser-known country in the Middle East that has in recent years become prominent due to its role as a haven and striking point for Arab guerrillas wishing to recover Palestine. Americans who have heard of Lebanon think of it in the above manner or as a place in which technology is far behind the United States, when in fact Lebanon has automobiles, modern buildings and an array of consumer goods at least equal to that of the United States.

Lebanon has had experiences similar to those of the United States, including a diverse population composed of members of many ethnic and religious groups (although significantly, all are Caucasoid peoples), industrialization, great movement of the population to urban areas, efforts toward education of the masses and a capitalistic outlook of free enterprise which surpasses that of the United States.

This paper consists of four parts. In the first I will summarize the motives which led me to this study and briefly summarize the historical background of Lebanon. In the second I will explore the family life of the major religious groups in Lebanon, noting
similarities and differences, with particular emphasis on sex differences in all groups. The third part consists of an examination of the educational system, past and present, again noting sex differences and lack of change in the system since the French mandate. The fourth part includes the results of interviews conducted with Lebanese who have left Lebanon for reasons of financial gain, political safety or educational opportunity. These are the results of a questionnaire, also enclosed, plus informal comments made by those interviewed.

I first became interested in child-rearing and education in the early years in Lebanon when I visited the country in the summer of 1972. I had previously resided in Beirut from 1962 to 1964. My husband is a Lebanese Armenian and so, during my residence in Lebanon I had the opportunity to see the "real" Lebanon, not from the viewpoint of a tourist but rather as more of a native. During my stay there, I observed numerous interesting facets of the Lebanese character and particularly of Lebanese family life of various socioeconomic elements.

During my brief visit of 1972 I noticed that many more things had changed besides those physical things of which I'd been told, such as modern buildings, new shops and restaurants. Clerks in shops spoke English. The youth seemed to have become so Westernized, almost Americanized, in dress, speech and conduct. Girls in miniskirts, boys and men in gaily printed shirts and trousers, were freely interacting on streets both in the city and in the tiny village where we had our house. I wondered if Lebanese family life had also changed and if that family life and the school system were under the influence of
Western, especially American, examples.

To satisfy my curiosity, I visited several schools and spoke with teachers. Since summer session was almost concluded I did not really observe the normal daily school life in the country. Having a small niece as a frequent guest in our house I also was able to form opinions based on observations of the way the family and she interacted, as well as ideas from visiting friends of various ethnic groups.
History and its Implications for Education

In order to understand Lebanon's people today it is essential to briefly explore the history of the country and see the staggering number of invaders which contributed their blood and ideas to Lebanon, shaping the modern Lebanese and his country as distinctive entities in the Arab world.

Lebanon, although only recently brought to international attention as a battleground for the Middle Eastern power struggles, has been a prize throughout history of virtually all the invading peoples of the ancient Near East. It is perhaps best known as the home of the Phoenicians (who were given that name by the Greeks because of the purple dye they sold, called *phoenix*). The Phoenicians established the cities of Gubla (later Byblos, now Jbail) and Berytus (now Beirut). The Phoenician period was followed by a long line of conquerors: Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Seleucids, and Romans. By the coming of Mohammed the Arabs held the area and were newly converted to Islam. The Arabs spoke Aramaic until the thirteenth century and Syriac until the seventeenth.

During the Crusades Lebanon was invaded by the zealous Christians who thoroughly infiltrated the area. In many instances there was intermarriage between the Arabs and Christians and even today there exist entire villages of red headed or blonde people who claim Crusader ancestry. The Crusaders also left their mark with the many castles and fortresses still standing in Lebanon which are now popular tourist attractions.

After the failure of the Crusades and the withdrawal of the
Crusaders, the Turks, who had become the most powerful influence in the Middle East, governed Lebanon. The Turks embraced Islam as did most of the people in Lebanon. After the fall of the Mamluk Turks the Ottomans took Lebanon and ruled it for almost four hundred years, until "the sick old man of Europe" was dismembered by the combatants of the First World War. (Smith, 1969).

After the First World War, Lebanon and Syria together were given to the French as a mandate from the League of Nations. The French exerted much influence on Lebanese life and education even after their withdrawal in 1943 due to Lebanon becoming independent. French became the second language of Lebanon and French music, art and clothing was copied in the country.

Since the days of the Ottomans Lebanon has been a haven for various religious and national groups. This has not, however, resulted in the "melting pot" concept encouraged in the United States. Lebanon's geography has helped keep ethnic groups separate. Lebanon is divided naturally by its topography. Between the Mediterranean coast and the Anti-Lebanon range of the eastern boundary runs a range known as Mount Lebanon. This elevation has provided in the past a refuge for dissident minorities and separates the coastal plain from the Bekaa Valley traditionally linked to Syria. Beirut is a coastal city and has undergone modernization at a much faster rate than towns and villages in the valley.

Beirut is divided very obviously into ethnic and religious quarters although there are areas that are mixed. Each group prides itself on its lack of assimilation, while maintaining a pride in being
Lebanese as well. The capital is uncomfortably hot and humid during the summer and hordes of people seek the cool mountain weather. Many return to the villages of their origin where they or relatives may have land and houses. Others rent houses and apartments for the summer and it is obvious that even in the mountains the lines of ethnic identity are kept, with Armenians flocking to the villages of Dhour el Choueir and Bolonia and the Muslims to Zahle and the Christians to such villages as Aley and Bhamdoun. The mountains are, in fact, so highly regarded as a refuge, that during disasters, whether they be earthquakes or bombing, the Beirutis hastily pack necessities such as mattresses, pots and pans, leave their jobs, close their shops and flee to the mountains. In the earthquake of 1959, great panic ensued and roads were impassable as people attempted to reach the safety of the mountains. Most of the people killed and most of the damage done were in the mountains. Nevertheless, the Lebanese retain their feeling that flight to the mountains of their country means immunity from danger.

The Lebanese are almost all Arabs approximately divided evenly into Christians and Muslims. The Christians are composed of the majority which are Maronites allied to the Roman Papacy. Other Christian Arab groups are the Greek Orthodox, Catholics and a very small Protestant minority, small despite fervent attempts toward conversion by American and British missionaries.

Muslims are divided into two main groups, the Sunnis, who are in the majority, and the Shiites. The Shiites, Ismailites and Nusayris are sects that split from the main body and were persecuted
by the Sunnis for allegedly helping the Crusaders. Six per cent of
the total Lebanese population is Druze, a non-Muslim outgrowth of
Islam who settled in the southern part of the Mount Lebanon area to
escape persecution in the eleventh century. The Druzes took their
name from their leader named Darazi and little is known about their
religion by outsiders, since it is a carefully guarded secret, even
kept from most Druzes. This has led to rumor that they worship a
golden calf (Prothro, 1961).

The only Christian non-Arab group is the Armenians. The Armenian
Lebanese are relative newcomers to the area but have exerted great
influence in business and other aspects of Lebanese life. During
the First World War the Turkish government committed genocide against
a large segment of their people, the Armenians. More than one and
one-half Armenians were killed by the Turks. Nearly 100,000 of them
that escaped fled to Lebanon and greatly strengthened the Christian
position in the country (Prothro, 1961). They are composed of members
of the Gregorian (Armenian Orthodox) church, who are the majority,
Catholic church and a small minority of Protestants. Many Armenians
have become rich and powerful in Lebanon and are treated as first
class citizens.

Lebanon has other small minorities which were not considered in-
fluential enough to enter in this study. They are Jews, most of whom
live in a guarded section of the city of Beirut and whose numbers have
greatly decreased since the Israeli Arab war in 1967, and Palestinians,
many of whom live in refugee camps maintained by the United Nations.
Lebanon is still considered a refuge in the Middle East, its constitu-
tion guarantees freedom for all, and it is one of the few countries in the world which does not have an extradition treaty with the United States, serving as a haven for criminal elements escaping from the United States.

Lebanon has often functioned as a bridge between East and West and this has been one of the country's greatest economic assets, being economically superior to other Arab states except the oil rich sheikdoms such as Kuwait, Bahrain, Abu-Dhabi and Qatar. It has the highest rate of literacy in the Middle East, estimated as high as 95% (Prothro, 1961).

Lebanon is dependent on its exports and tourist industry for economic growth. Most of the tourists are from the desert countries of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The people from these countries go to Lebanon in the summer and escape the heat in the mountains, as the native Lebanese do. Their money is welcome in Lebanon but the Lebanese much resent the foreigners buying off huge lots of Lebanese land and buildings, as well as their desert clothing, leather masks on women and lack of cleanliness and "class."

The result of this diversity in Lebanon is that ghettos exist in schools as well as neighborhoods. Muslims go to private Muslim-run schools if the parents can afford it. If not, they go to public schools which are attended almost exclusively by poor Muslims and have become breeding grounds for Arab nationalism, Nasserism and for those who identify Arab nationalism with the Palestinian guerrillas. Armenians go to Armenian schools, and to further segregate segments of the population, usually the Armenian Catholics, Gregorians and
Protestants have their separate schools. The same situation exists within the Christian Arab religions, so Lebanon is sharply divided in its educational system, not only ethnically, but religiously.
The Family in Lebanon

Although there is much information written in Arabic, French, Russian, Turkish, Armenian, and English about Lebanon's political and economic history there is little information concerning the development of a contemporary Lebanese. In 1910 Chemali wrote of Lebanese family life and since then there have been several valuable studies concerned with different facets of Lebanese life. It is valuable to study the family life of the Lebanese for politicians, to understand if possible, the attitudes and national character of the people and for the educator and psychologist to compare methods of child-rearing with those of the United States and the resulting adult that appears from these methods.

The traditional Lebanese is family-oriented, whether he resides in the villages or in the city. Recently, due to Arab nationalism and Western influence there has been a noticeable shift from a kin-centered society to one of nationality, specialization and freedom of association (Williams, 1968). The Lebanese has been traditionally thought of as one who resists change. However, the changes are now apparent and the Lebanese is faced with the problem of changing without breaking with the past, as the decline in kinship grows and the society becomes more individualized, stratified and class-conscious.

Village life and city life are different in Lebanon as in many countries. This is also true for different religious groups. Fuller and Williams (1966) (1968) in their studies of Muslim village life present striking pictures of the small world in which these people lived in the 1930s and 1950s.
Most of the people in the villages were engaged in agriculture. Very few had their own land but worked on farms owned by large landowners. Men and boys worked together. Women worked in the house, took care of children and frequently also worked in the fields. The family was an extended unit and grandmothers too old to work in the fields would stay home and take care of children. Older daughters were also given the duty of taking care of younger siblings.

Especially among Muslims, first cousin marriage was usually preferred because the couples involved knew each other and would have few adjustment problems (British College for Women, 1969). Also, children would ensure the continuation of the clan and of the faith. The newly married couple frequently moved into the same house as the husband's family although a room, usually made of mud and straw, might be added. Procreation was considered a religious duty. Numerous children helped to propagate the faith and strengthen the ranks of believers. Also, children would strengthen the rather precarious marital tie so important for women, as among Muslims it is only necessary to declare, "I divorce thee," three times in public for the marriage to be dissolved. Cousin marriages among Muslims and Maronites would be dissolved for reasons of infertility usually, with all assuming that it was the fault of the woman. In all other instances of divorce the family would attempt to reconcile the couple. The kinship ties' importance to both Muslims and Maronites is demonstrated by the much-quoted old Arab proverb, "I against my brother, my brother and I against my cousin, my cousin and I against the stranger."

Girls among all groups of Lebanese knew their place was marriage
and children and only in these functions were they considered useful. Girls not able to produce children were pitied and scorned by members of the community. There were no other areas in which girls could channel their lives. These feelings have changed on the surface as Lebanese women slowly become more emancipated but the spinster, career woman or childless woman is still very much out of place in Lebanese society in all ethnic and religious groups. Barren wives were in the past and are still given charms and amulets to cure their curse, which is still thought to be the result of the "evil eye" having been invoked by an evil person.

Preference for Boys and Their Superior Treatment by the Family.

The birth of children was a great event in both village and city, and still is among all classes and religious groups. In the villages doctors were seldom available and not wanted. The midwife delivered the child with assistance from other women of the village, usually kin of the pregnant woman. Frequently children were present at the deliveries especially since living quarters were so small and so very early became aware of the nature of birth. Before the event the women of the village would prophecy the sex of the child. This is still widely done in both village and city and it is not uncommon for a stranger to greet a pregnant woman on the streets of Beirut with the news, "It will be a boy," or "Haram (Pity) it will be a girl, but next time you will have a boy, inch Allah (if it be the will of God)." One common method for determining the sex of the unborn child is noticing if the posterior of the mother is protruding or not. If it is, the child is
a girl. If it isn’t, the child is a boy. Unscientific though this may be, this author has seen the accuracy of these predictions perhaps twenty times, including the birth of her own sons. Another method of foretelling the sex of a child is reading the grounds in a cup of Arabic coffee. Ancient methods were reported by Chemali (1910) in his study. A relative would hang fabric to a wall outside the house of the pregnant woman. If a man passed it first, the child would be a boy. If a woman passed first it would be a girl. Also, in a house, a pair of scissors and a knife were hidden under cushions. The pregnant woman was invited in to visit. If she sat on the cushion under which the scissors were hidden the baby would be a girl, and if she sat on the other it would be a boy. Finally the walk of the woman was watched. If she put right foot forward first the baby would be a boy. Left foot first indicated a girl. This, interestingly, coincides with the world-wide belief that right handedness is more desirable than left handedness and can even be extended to the fact that among many Arabs food is eaten only with the right hand, the left hand being considered dirty since it is used for bathroom purposes. Pregnant women in Lebanon still, as in the past, avoid looking at ugly or deformed people, being certain that those characteristics will appear in the unborn child. This author recalls as recently as 1963 a Lebanese Maronite friend repeatedly gazing at photographs of Elizabeth Taylor, hoping that this would make the child beautiful. She also hid photographs of her mother-in-law for obvious reasons.

At the time of the birth of a child the Lebanese father was conspicuously absent. These things were considered women’s business and
the father as usual went to work in the fields. After delivery, the afterbirth in some cases was buried in front of the house to keep the evil eye from the child. The sex of the child determined whether there would be rejoicing or sorrow. If the child was a boy, great celebration took place. Relatives and friends from the village would bring presents as they were able, a sack of rice, some beans. More affluent families presented gold coins. A special array of foods would be presented, again according to the family's wealth (Fuller, 1966). These practices still exist in Lebanese society and even in the city when a boy child is born a special pudding called mishly made from wheat, nuts, and fruits is prepared. If the boy is the first born boy child he may receive an added honor. Among Muslims parents unofficially drop their given names and are called "father of Ahmed" and "mother of Ahmed." It is clear that boys, then, are preferred over girls. The extremes to which these feelings are carried are illustrated by Williams, as she relates a time when a child in the village was ill, and she went to visit the child. She was stopped by a woman villager, who, when hearing where she was going, expressed surprise and told her, "Don't go, it is better that she should die, she is only a girl." On occasion she was told by a woman, "I don't mind being a woman as long as I can be the mother of sons."

The first born boy of a family was referred to as mahrous (treasured one) by the family. He was better dressed than the rest of the children and better groomed. It was not an uncommon sight to see one well-dressed child in a family and the rest in rags and dirty. The family would sacrifice much to obtain special treats for this son.
Other children were singled out for special attention. They were children who were blonde or fair-skinned, children who had been long awaited, who had survived an illness when expected to die, and children who were especially clever or responsive (Williams, 1968). The woman of sons, meanwhile, would attain her first real importance in the community, and would be given new status and prestige. So essential was the possession of sons that parents, when asked how many children they had would frequently count the sons only, thus condemning their daughters to oblivion.

Girls in a family, especially the first girl, had very short childhoods, since they were trained very early in the various facets of the female work role. Little time was spent in play and when they did play they would play "wedding" or "bakery." Boys were usually engaged in aimless milling about when they were not engaged in work in the fields. This still is a striking feature of Lebanese youth in the city as well as the village.

The Newborn Baby in Lebanese Society.

The newborn baby is treated with much care in Lebanon, to protect him against the evil eye. If a baby becomes sick, parents and relatives try to recall individuals who entered the house and might have given the evil eye to the child. In the city a specific relative may come to the mind of the parents, or a stranger who looked at the child strangely. Among some Muslims and Armenians, Catholic nuns are considered carriers of the evil eye and if they cannot be avoided, the person whose path a nun crossed may scratch his posterior to be rid of
the evil eye. In remote villages there still exists the fear of bachelors, spinsters or menstruating women bringing bad luck to the child, and frequently these people are not allowed to enter the house or the area where the new baby is kept.

In city and village families alike and especially among Armenians the new baby may not be bathed for forty days. The forty day period, in fact, is used for many occasions, dating back to many Biblical references, such as the flood and the years of the Hebrews in the wilderness. To further protect the child a blue ceramic stone, hand, or eye is pinned to most children in Lebanon whether they be Christian or Muslim. Christians also pin charms with saints pictures to the baby’s clothing, and Muslims affix a miniature gold charm of the Koran.

Most babies are still at least partially swaddled because of a belief that swaddling not only makes the baby easier to care for and gives him warmth, but that the practice enables the child's limbs to grow straight and strong. If the child is not swaddled he is dressed in very warm clothing even during the hot summer months. The head and face of the child is also covered, not only to protect him from the sun and insects, but from the gaze of strangers who, again, may possess the power of the evil eye.

Babies in the villages and cities, then, are treated much the same as they were thirty or more years ago, the main differences being of class rather than religion. Girl babies have a higher death rate, no doubt because they are not given the same care as boy babies, especially among the poorer classes of all groups. Most babies in the lower classes are still nursed by the mother, although there has been
a move toward bottle feeding in all classes. In the cities proper sterilization equipment may be easily obtained, but in the village many babies are fed with makeshift nipples attached to soda pop bottles. These are seldom boiled, washed or refrigerated and contribute to infant mortality.

Harfouche (1965a), in his study of feeding and weaning practices in Lebanon found that among Sunni, Maronite and Armenian mothers who breast fed their children for no less than six months, 58% of his sample used no supplemental food during this period. Boys were given the breast longer than girls in all three groups and in some instances boys were fed as long as eighteen months. Some mothers stated that they stopped nursing their girls for fear that they would become spoiled. This is another facet of the preferential treatment of boys that occurs in all classes of Lebanese society. Weaning in the same study was usually accomplished in two or three days. This was done by the mother leaving the child with a relative or neighbor for a few days to let the child become accustomed to being without the breast, or by applying bitter substances to the breast such as quinine. Among Armenians black colored substances such as coffee or cloth were taped to the breast in the belief that black was a frightening color and the child would reject the breast. Most mothers reported upset children after weaning.

Toilet training is another interesting aspect of Lebanese child-rearing. Lebanese children in the villages were (and still are, in some remote places) strapped to their cradles and a hole was at the bottom of the cradle with a pot at the bottom to collect the child's
waste materials. To ensure that these materials would go into the hole and the pot, a tube was attached to the boy's penis and a rag inserted into the vagina of the girl (Williams, 1968). When the child was out of the cradle the mother would seem unperturbed if the child soiled her or the house, and simply mop up after the child as though it were an untrained puppy. Some mothers used rags as diapers but this was considered wasteful. Perhaps most curious was a kind of porous white dirt used as a diaper in some areas of the country. Presently, diapers can be found in the cities and many village shops and are used by most people.

Formal toilet training starts in Lebanon at six months. The child is put on a potty when the mother knows it has to be put on, so it is really the mother who is trained, and although this training starts early and is extremely strict with slaps and spankings given for forgetfulness, training is not completed before eighteen months to two years, which is the same for American children who begin much later (Harfouche, 1965b).

Feeding and food are of much concern in Lebanon, although there is little thought of nutrition as we know it in the west. Economic considerations determine diet. In poor areas children may live on beans, rice, bread, onions, olives, and oil. The Lebanese diet is in all cases extremely oily. Food is not treated hygienically and meat may lie hanging from a hook in a butcher's shop for many days before it is all sold. Raw milk is widely consumed, as is raw meat in the national dish, kibbe, and there is much gastrointestinal disease in the country. Babies are encouraged to eat the shank of the lamb,
called *mazaat*, which is thought to have special strength-giving powers. This may be one of the first solid foods a baby has, besides yogurt.

**Role of the Father**

The Lebanese father has very little to do with the rearing of the child at home or at school. It has already been noted that the father seems disinterested in the birth of the child and only cares that the child be a boy. Even if the child is a boy, the father has little to do with his raising except to teach the boy to work with him in the fields if they are farmers (Fuller, 1966). The mother teaches the child manners, moral standards, religion and anything else the community values. The father is called on for discipline however.

Harfouche (1965c), found that among the three major groups, Armenian mothers were much more strict with their children, expected good behavior but did not reward it. It is also important that Armenian mothers were rated as least warm. They were less interested in fostering independence in their children but did want the children to keep from underfoot. Both groups of Arab mothers gave more autonomy to their children than Armenian mothers and 60% of their children had been separated from them for at least a twenty-four hour period in their lives (Harfouche, 1965c).

**Values of Child Behavior**

In all strata of Lebanese society the child that is quiet, obedient, clean and polite is valued. These standards are the same for boys and girls; however, the girl is also encouraged to be bodily
modest and is told she is "bad" if she does not comply (Beirut College For Women, 1969). According to Harfouche (1965c) 45% of his sample from all three groups said they "beat" their children (the children in the samples were five years old) for bad behavior, 19% used scolding and only 8%, mostly Maronite mothers, used reasoning. The rest said they did "nothing" for infractions of rules. It is necessary to note that both in Arabic and Armenian the mothers said they "beat" the child and it is translated into English correctly. However, the beating usually consists of slapping the face and spanking, which, though perhaps damaging, is not the American conception of child-beating. When fathers discipline, they are more likely to discipline boys than girls. Although observers often think of the mother in Middle Eastern society as the protector of the child against the father, most mothers backed up the father when he administered discipline, especially the Sunnis, although it was also found that Sunni fathers are least strict disciplinarians and Armenian fathers most severe.

Child Labor

A very important area and one which the average American will find difficult to understand (although it has its parallels in the situation of the American migrant worker) is that of child labor. It is first necessary to state that although Lebanon has many laws governing children, workers, women and the like they are seldom enforced. Even the income tax levied on citizens is seldom paid. There are not enough people to inspect and enforce laws and there is a feeling of laxity in
Lebanon which to the observer may seem very much like anarchy. According to Lebanese law, no child under thirteen may be employed. However, one may see throughout Lebanon children as young as three begging for their families, and children of seven or so acting as messengers for the numerous shops in the cities. Children in the village are put to work helping their families in the fields, as previously mentioned, and girls are kept home to mind smaller brothers and sisters. But perhaps the greatest and most unfortunate aspect of child labor is the child servant problem. Frequently large families, particularly Muslim ones are unable to take care of all their children and so they lease one or more of them to middle or upper class people who want cheap labor, since presently in Lebanon an adult servant may command as much salary as a teacher (around 300-400 Lebanese pounds). These are always girl children, who, although conditions are hard at home, do not want to leave their families but are forced to do so with beatings and threats. In a strange home they are not only deprived of education and childhood itself, but of the companionship of their kin. One such example was brought to the attention of this author in her in-laws summer home in the summer of 1972. A child of eight was brought to the house to help the other servants. She had been leased from her family for three hundred Lebanese pounds a year for three years. She was expected to remain in the kitchen and do as the head servant told her and when there was no work, to sit on a small stool in the kitchen. In the evening she could share a room with one of the servants, sleeping on a mattress on the floor. After several days in the family she attempted to take a ball away from the author’s son and
when punched by him threatened him with a butter knife. She was quickly packed off to her village with someone to make sure the money would be returned. It was assumed she would be severely beaten by her father for the loss of income. Another much more serious case was reported in the Lebanese press that same summer. A young child in charge of a three year son of the family that had leased her from her family was so unhappy and resentful at being taken from her home that she threw her young charge down a well. She was condemned by all as being a "child monster."

Summary and Implications for Education

Childhood has been traditionally short in the villages, when, the child who has been hovered over for a year or more, and may have been recently weaned, is expected to keep from underfoot at least, and may be expected to begin to do chores such as carry water and fuel. Girls are expected to learn their workroles and both girls and boys are frequently displaced by a new sibling, (Williams, 1968). So, there exists shock to the child who has been so protected as he or she finds himself or herself thrust outside with other children and not under the close care of the mother. One of the results of this are reported cases of upset during weaning and after, as babyhood abruptly ends.

The role of girls in Lebanese family life has been determined for them from the moment the unhappy parents realize they have produced a girl. Girls are made to understand that they have little importance, and although this concept is gradually changing with increased admission of girls into school and increased independence, the most
sophisticated and well educated Lebanese family will still sigh with despair when presented with a newborn girl. Girls are less well treated than boys in all classes, and therefore it is no surprise that they receive far less education and schooling.

Children, both boys and girls, are tightly controlled in Lebanon, especially during the first year, when they are swaddled and confined in their cradles. Variation in their diets is small. Their behavior is also controlled from without, although some mothers expect children to control their own behavior. Strict standards of discipline are maintained and children vigorously punished for infractions. This standard of discipline is carried through in schooling.

For the child who is eligible to begin school the transition from home to school is not great as he finds that the same standards at home are expected of him at school and the teacher has replaced the mother for much of the day. School and home are allied in their desire to mold the child into a model of obedience, politeness, quiet, and honesty.

The Lebanese child in early childhood is a happy, quiet, controlled child. He is secure at home and school, secure in the consistency of life in both places. The child is surrounded by adults who have taught him from infancy that they are in control of all situations and of him, and that they know best. His peers are raised the same way and even those children who are not of the same class are raised similarly, though they may have more material benefits. Children are molded in the ways of their parents through threats, physical punishment, withdrawal of love, and shame. Parents and teachers have no
guilt feelings or fears of damaging the psyche of the child because they are largely unaware of these things and are very sure of the correctness of their actions.
Values and Characteristics in Lebanese Education

There has been very little research concerned with early education in Lebanon. Interest should be greater because of the cultural differences within the country and the large percentage of private schools in Lebanon, which in Beirut alone, teach ninety per cent of the population attending schools, (Smith, 1969). Furthermore, it is interesting to determine the influence of schooling on the Lebanese and the Lebanese family. Finally, since the Lebanese have a tremendous selection of private schools of international and religious groups as well as public schools, does this lead to confusion and great differences in the education and values received by Lebanese children?

Most research has been on family life and early child-rearing practices. Perhaps the reason there is such a paucity of material on early schooling is the lack of importance given to early education, although children frequently begin school at age three. This early age of entrance is largely one of status and most of the children entering at that age are from middle or upper class families. Nevertheless it is important to evaluate the influence this education has on young children as well as the relationship between school and family.

Lebanese education has changed little since the French Mandate except in its availability to more of the population. The school system is based on the French model and in spite of American influence in other areas of Lebanese life, the schools remain essentially unchanged.
As early as 1788 Christians in Lebanon were given resolutions for the education of their children. Briefly, they consisted of:

1. Living in fear of God.
2. Early education toward piety and worship while they are immune to the corrupting influence of evil habits and pernicious practices which obstruct readiness to learn and turn the spirit away from the teachings of the church.
3. ... guiding boys to the practice of every virtue in thought, speech or action, (girls were dismissed as "they should be entrusted to nuns").
4. Universal education—schools should be established in well-known towns and villages.
5. Education for the poor and orphans should be free. For those who can pay, one half of the teachers salary would be paid by the church, the other half by the parents.
6. All children should be taught writing, psalms, the Book of Mass, and the New Testament. ([Beirut College For Women, 1969]).

Brighter children were selected for more advanced programs.

During the nineteenth century free primary schools were begun for Muslim children and the Muslim Benevolent Society, the Mukassid, provided new interest in learning for Muslims. ([Beirut College For Women, 1969]).

During the French mandate free public primary education was established and public examinations were set up. Even in private schools curriculum was molded in the French pattern and brought indirectly under government control.

After Lebanese independence the state increased the number of public schools and established teacher-training schools.

An official syllabus was organized primarily to keep religious instruction at a minimum and insure that Arabic would be taught in all schools.
Differences in Village and City Education

Schools in the villages as recently as 1945 were much as the one described by Bushakra, attended by her step granddaughter, as she, stick of wood under her arm, skipped down the mountain to start school in the village. It was a beginning for long-neglected little girls. The building was old and had no glass in the windows and had plain board benches. There were books, pencils, and chalk only as the children could afford to bring them, and there was heat when and if they brought the wood.

Schools in villages are only recently bringing adequate education to children of the rural areas. Although schools were occasionally found in remote villages due to the generosity of the benevolent societies of Muslim and Christians, they were poor places and not conducive to learning. Muslim children were taught the Koran, gymnastics, reading, and arithmetic. The schoolhouses were small and barren. In some cases they were never completed, as is the condition of many buildings in Lebanon when funds are depleted before completion of the projects. There were narrow, closely set desks and benches. As Williams reported in her study, (1968), at the peak of attendance the school in the village of Haouch el Harimi taught one hundred children. When field work began hardly any came. Among the students, girls were less than twenty per cent of the total. Girls, indeed, were not encouraged to go to school, started later than boys and dropped out earlier. Those who were permitted to go did so because they were being prepared for marriage with a cousin in Brazil (where many Lebanese have gone in the past to seek their fortunes) or because they
were especially valued by their families. Girls in the above mentioned village, when interviewed by Williams indicated that their time in school was the best of their lives and they were sorry to leave. Boys, on the other hand, were generally happy to leave school. These reactions can be understood by the facts that the girls were very realistic in their expectations for themselves and knew that their time in school would be limited and that they would still have a life like all the other women in their village had before them in spite of their education, and in fact, seemed content with those prospects, only desiring a kind husband and a comfortable life with their families. Boys, however, perhaps since more was expected of them and their self-concepts were more nourished, expressed unrealistic expectations of their lives, and believed that they would become businessmen, clerks, or even doctors. When after a few years of education they realized they would be farmers like their fathers they became discouraged.

When girls ended their education it was because of the insistence of families because they were needed at home or because they were too old and there were no other girls their age at school, (Villettes, 1964).

Girls, rather than boys in the village and no doubt in many other such village, tended to feel more useful than boys because of their acceptance with their lots in life. Also, girls, being constantly with the family and not allowed to go out alone, were kept busier. Boys in their free time would congregate and idly mill about the village. This is an activity that is still observed throughout Lebanon and the casual visitor is struck by the seemingly endless
idleness of boys and men in the villages and also in the city. Girls were forbidden to journey to the town or city unless there was a very special occasion and then were heavily chaperoned. Boys took frequent trips and so were able to absorb new ideas while girls were often unaware of any life other than the ones they led in their small kinship group.

Recently, girls have begun to attend schools in villages much as their brothers do, but still, attend for a much shorter time. Most do not reach secondary school although exceptions are becoming more numerous, (Touma, 1958). In general, families in the villages are still quite poor and if they can possibly save enough money for a child to continue to secondary school, that child will be a boy, not a girl, (UNESCO, 1958).

While in the villages schooling is erratic, in the cities, especially in Beirut, which has a large Christian majority, most children do go to school, at least to primary school. Public schools are not considered good so parents will endure much hardship to keep children in private school. Provided with the selection available in Beirut it is possible to obtain many kinds of educations for children. There are of course, schools run by native Lebanese for their own religious and ethnic groups. In addition, there are French, Italian schools; German, British, American, and Japanese schools. These schools are largely open for foreign nationals working in Lebanon but one finds status-conscious Lebanese also paying the exorbitant fees charged by these schools. The result is that foreign ideas are creeping into the Lebanese mind but not into the Lebanese schools.
Lebanese schools are traditionally operated in the French manner, with the strict curriculum and discipline that the Lebanese have adopted as their own after hundreds of years of French influence. Also, the Arabs are known for their respect for learning so these standards were perhaps not ever foreign to them.

According to the UNESCO World Survey of Education, (1958) state responsibility for education has increased since Lebanese Independence but the remoteness of some areas and the scattered population has prevented many people from taking advantage of educational opportunities. UNESCO states another reason for the unequal attendance between boys and girls, that of parents' fear of girls becoming fatigued and the danger of being molested between home and school. UNESCO also states that as long as the media are absent, the cultural level in some areas cannot be raised.

Influence of Media

Cinemas abound even in or near small villages, although it is true that the remotest still do not have this luxury, which is a pity since film is the most graphic method of opening windows to the outside world. Since the mountains have become such meccas for city people, cinemas have become more numerous. It is true that libraries are almost non-existent in rural areas, but radios are very common and Lebanese are offered a wide choice of programs, not only from Lebanon, but from Cyprus, Israel, Syria and Egypt. Not mentioned by the UNESCO report but much a part of contemporary Lebanese life is television. One sees television antennas jutting from the rooftops of the poorest
hovels and even color has come to Lebanese television. Adults are offered programs from soap operas to variety shows, most of them in Arabic with a few in French. In addition to these are popular American shows in English with Arabic titles, such as Mannix, Gunsmoke, and the like. These programs have brought America and things American very much to the attention of the average Lebanese and even contributed to his recent desire to learn English. Children's television is even more in the dark ages than American television for small children. Stories are told, ancient American cartoons are shown, there are clown type entertainers amusing children with humor of a very low sort, and finally, extravaganzas by schools chosen for their excellence in training children in singing and dancing. This possibility of reward by performing on TV may influence children. It is delightful to see children of three, four, and five performing native dances, ballet type dances, singing and reciting poetry which has been so painstakingly learned. This is indicative of the kind of creative expression that exists in most schools. During art times children are expected to copy exactly, models of clay figures or paintings or do coloring. Deviations from the examples are not encouraged and in fact frowned upon. Children who cannot reproduce tolerably well are told to try again. Singing and dancing are daily activities in most schools but are also very carefully guided. Poetry is memorized at a very early age. Creative writing or dictation is virtually nonexistent. Still, Lebanon produces extremely fine artists in all areas of art and these children are products of rigid Lebanese schooling.
Social Class and Ethnic Difference in Achievement

It is interesting to note that Dennis (1957a) has done two research projects concerned with Lebanese children in several types of schools and both from city and villages. One was the Goodenough Draw-A-Man Test and the children were first tested at age five. The results were that children from lower class homes did not do as well as those from middle class homes, especially among Armenians. After the age of six, the trend of IQs was steadily downward, beginning at a mean of 100 at age five and reaching 80 at age ten, indicating that cultural handicaps affect children strongly after age six. Dennis noted that "children's experience relative to representation of the human figure was limited" (page 429). Also, Muslim children did quite poorly no doubt partially due to a former taboo in Islam against the representation of the human figure which may have been a reaction against Christianity. Significantly, Dennis also tested children who attended the primary school of the American University of Beirut which included many Lebanese children and they scored considerably higher perhaps because they had become exposed to a more Americanized education and were more affected by Western culture than the other native groups tested who attended traditional Lebanese schools.

In a second project Dennis (1957b) was concerned with rewarded behavior for fourteen categories. The major categories were:

(a) Academic performance, (b) Helping mother, (c) Helping father,
(d) Being polite and obedient.

Since the majority of schools in Lebanon stress academic achievement, most rewards were for that achievement, especially among
Armenians, but the rewards declined with age. Christians and Muslims did not differ in praise-giving for academic achievement but boys, predictably, were praised more. Helpfulness to mothers was second in importance for all groups and helpfulness to fathers received very little importance, also predictable since the father in modern Lebanese life in both village and city has little to do with bringing up children and most important, the father in Lebanon does not engage in tasks at home which would require help, such as American fathers would with do-it-yourself projects, woodworking, making models and the like. Manual labor is very much sneered at in Lebanon and the object is to keep oneself and one's children from such labor even if it involves hobbies or improving the family home.

Also interesting was that Lebanese children in the sample were praised more by mothers than by fathers and, in other categories, were praised more for helping relatives than friends. This is understandable considering the importance on the kinship group in all groups of people in Lebanon, and that the Lebanese child relates more to adults than to peers as the child is with adults much of the time and they exert great control over him both at home and school. Furthermore, although it is traditional among Arabs especially to have honor, charity and kindness and great praise is given to those who give alms to the poor and unfortunate, family obligations are first and foremost and the aforementioned virtues have not been translated into civic responsibility and community spirit. (Beirut College For Women, 1969).
Attempt at Centralization

Although the Lebanese schools are very diverse in backgrounds the government has attempted to place them all under some control. Arabic must be taught in all schools that teach Lebanese citizens. This is done, but in many schools so poorly that numerous Armenians in the country hardly speak Arabic although they were born in Lebanon. Curriculums are almost identical throughout because of the French influence. During the summer of 1972 the author visited a new nursery and primary school operated by two Lebanese women, one Arab (Maronite) and one Armenian. They were attempting to gear the curriculum along the lines of the American system and Lebanese were staying away from it in droves because they have heard of the permissiveness of American education and do not approve. As a result, only foreigners attended. They also noted that it was difficult to lure children away from servants to whom children may develop strong attachments. That is, many mothers, even those who work, prefer to leave their children with servants although the servants pay little attention to the children with the exceptions of feeding and putting them down to naps. Early school experience and socializing with other children is not only given no importance, it is not even considered.

The government has set up a rigid schedule of state examinations strictly modeled after the French system, and under the control of the Ministry of National Education. Officially, school may begin at age three. Special attention must be paid to cleanliness, games, music, singing, numbers, reading and moral stories relating to the pupils' environment and country, (Gulick, 1955). This is followed by the
primary school for five years ending in the first examination, the Brevet, which if passed, may entitle the child to proceed to the seven-year secondary school or four-year higher primary school, which prepares people for the teacher training schools if they wish to teach primary themselves.

Teacher training is accomplished in schools for this purpose, and there is quite a difference between the caliber of teacher obtained by primary and secondary schools and by the private and public schools. Firstly, teachers, earning very small salaries, are not greatly respected as successful people, although while a child is in school a parent will demand that children respect teachers and back teachers' decisions regarding their children completely. Kindergarten and primary teachers are not required to go beyond the higher primary grades, and after a course that includes practice teaching, methods, and pedagogy, they are hired. Salaries usually range from the Lebanese equivalence of one hundred to two hundred dollars a month, and since most if not all of these teachers are women the salaries are considered most adequate. Few of these teachers of young children continue teaching after marriage.

Also a problem in rural areas is the recruitment of teachers. Since the kinship structure is very strong and outsiders are not made very welcome, teachers who accept rural posts are lonely and do not stay long. Teachers who are considered most competent are offered posts in cities and so the incompetent teacher with little education is often found in the villages. Female teachers, having less ambition than males, would accept jobs in these areas but it is not considered
proper for a female to be alone and the female teacher would be miserable indeed in a rural area, unless she is from the area herself.

Secondary teachers are usually men, and they hope to eventually obtain government jobs of importance and leave teaching. Their salaries and education are somewhat higher than those of primary teachers. They must pass the Baccalaureat examinations to become secondary teachers and many schools will not hire anyone who has not the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. Those who do not pass the examinations after repeated attempts may still teach at public schools which are not strict about certification, a strange fact since they are the government schools. There exists in Lebanon a teachers syndicate or union but it has very little impact on the life of teachers or on education.

The author, after speaking briefly with a few Lebanese school teachers and interviewing former Lebanese students concluded that Lebanese kindergarten teachers are warm and motherly, strict and demanding. In short, they are identical to Lebanese mothers.

The school is an extension of the home, and so there are no conflicts between home and school. Curriculum does not vary from year to year, nor do methods of teaching. Teachers are very quiet and uncritical, at least publicly, of the schools and their principals. Little attention is paid to individual differences of children. Teaching is done to the total class. Children who excel in any area are publicly praised. Children who do not conform to the standards are reported to their parents and admonished against laziness. There are parent meetings at some schools in which individual problems of
children are discussed. Tuition ranges in private schools from six hundred to three thousand Lebanese pounds approximately, and it is accepted by teachers and parents that the higher the tuition, the better the teaching staff and school. One concern of the Lebanese government is, however, that with the greater interest in quality education each year by a larger segment of the public, private schools are opening and charging exorbitant tuitions for shoddy education.

Schools are both segregated sexually and coeducational. Most of the Maronite and Catholic schools are separate, with nuns teaching girls and priests teaching boys in different schools. Boys and girls in the kindergartens and primary grades are taught the same things, but at about the age of six or seven boys are introduced to saws and hammers and girls to sewing and needlepoint. When the author inquired whether or not boys would be able to learn how to sew and girls to use hammer and saw if they wished to do so, the question was usually laughed at and the interviewer thought of as being strange. Boys and girls would never want to do such things and if they did, which would be impossible, everyone would laugh at them so much they would quickly give up such preposterous ideas. As one would expect, girls are given dolls in schools and boys are given guns and soldiers. (In spite of the expected results of this type of play, in a study of Harfouche, 1965c), both Christian and Muslim Arab mothers, and Armenian mothers stated that they did not approve of aggression in their children, although Armenian mothers believed that their boys should learn to fight, in case they needed to defend themselves. This belief has no doubt become reinforced in the Armenians due to Turkish and other persecu-
Parents and teachers had similar expectations of children. Girls were expected to become wives and mothers eventually, but after school could become laboratory technicians, teachers, shop girls or secretaries until marriage. Boys, whether of lower or middle class families, were expected to become shop clerks, doctors, engineers or a vague classification called "government employees."

Children who are not mentally capable of performing as expected in schools are withdrawn by the parents voluntarily or upon request by the school. Those who are truly retarded are frequently sent to "special institutions" out of the city. Physically handicapped children are sent away to "special schools" about which no one would or could elaborate, or kept home. There seemed to be great ignorance of teachers concerning parts of their population who were less fortunate than the children they taught and they knew of no efforts to actually train or educate those segments of the population.

Even in the villages there exists little desire for children to enter vocational school and learn trades in building or other industries. This has resulted in a great shortage of skilled workers in Lebanon and an overabundance of secondary school graduates who wish to enter the business world or government service. (Beirut College For Women: 1969).

Although the American observer may consider both the Lebanese parent and teacher totally ignorant of child development and individuality it is essential to realize that the Lebanese society is not based upon individuality, but rather the welfare of the group. There
is little of "doing your own thing" if it does not also happen to be the thing of the family. Due to recent Western, especially American influence in the area, however, certain subtle changes are noticeable in Lebanon. These changes seem to begin at the young adult level and do not extend to early childhood. There are presently said to be twenty thousand Americans in Lebanon. This may be an exaggeration on the part of overwhelmed Lebanese, but one sees Americans everywhere. English is being spoken more each year and may soon replace French as the second language of the country. American films and television programs are very popular. American style clothing and music are seen and heard daily. Young girls are still considered daring when they date boys without chaperones but there is less furor each year. Still, schools exist much as they did thirty or more years ago, with the same curriculum and type of teachers. American education is said to be permissive and, most shocking, the lack of respect Americans give to their teachers.

It is the author's conclusions that although obviously very structured the Lebanese methods offer security of clear and congruent expectations between home and school. Lebanese children do not threaten to run away from home. They know at all times what is expected of them and know these expectations will not change. They know what will be the results of "bad" behavior and are actually told that they are bad, which they accept. They know precisely what are their relationships to their families and friends, and their obligations to both. They know their roles and those of everyone in their environments.
Parents of these children are not faced with alternatives. They send children to the schools which suit their financial capabilities. They know both the school and its teachers. They frequently feel kinship with the school since it is usually of their own religious group. The school is not a threat to parents or their values, since the schools values are the same.

The Lebanese system offers children consistency in their lives, security, and little choice in the early years. Adults who grew up in this system and have lived in the United States for ten years or more comment that they always knew who they were, how they were to behave, and what was expected of them. They always knew what their limits were and this knowledge gave them security. They are critical of American child-rearing and the confusion of American youth. They are most critical of the lack of respect of even small American children for parents and teachers. Parents newly arrived in the United States with their children are very much concerned that their children will be spoiled and indeed ruined by the American system.

Summary and Conclusions

The Lebanese school system continues the child-rearing patterns of the family. Although there are great differences in ethnic and religious groups as well as class differences and schools are varied and independent of each other, most Lebanese children's early school experiences are surprisingly similar. Despite the existence of these unassimilated groups many of their values are difficult to separate into Muslim, Maronite and Armenian categories.
Ninety per cent of Lebanese children attend private schools due to the belief that public schools are inferior because they hire uncredentialed teachers and are free. As in countries with higher standards of living, the middle and upper classes receive better education than do the poor although many poverty families with a deep respect for the benefits of education sacrifice much to send children to school.

Although schools are private and independent they must conform to government standards if their graduates intend to take the state examinations. There has been a trend, however, for many students, especially Armenians who really do not learn Arabic thoroughly, to ignore the examinations and enter the secondary schools or universities by letter of recommendation from teachers. This practice is not looked upon favorably by the government.

Girls are not given the same opportunity as boys to attend schools, especially on the secondary level although there are many more girls than there have been in the past and the numbers are greatly increasing each year.

As the country becomes more urbanized the family structure is gradually loosening. Girls are marrying later and more frequently keeping their jobs after marriage. The prospect of more females being in the labor force longer and in more skilled jobs than in the past has provided the impetus for greater schooling of females.

The large family model is becoming less prevalent especially among Christians. This may enable the Christian parents to send more children to schools and for a longer time. The Muslims still cling to
the large family model among the poor in both city and village, which will prevent them from moving upward. The problem is obvious that poor Muslims will soon outnumber the more affluent Christians and civil war could result. Much propaganda is directed toward the Muslim masses from Egypt and Syria, encouraging the Lebanese Muslims to overthrow the Christian leaders in the government and expel the Christians.

The feeling Muslims have that they are the downtrodden masses could possibly be partially relieved with great expansion of the public school system and upgrading the quality of instruction, materials and facilities. Education for people in the remoter villages could be hastened by organized programs, salary increases and living expenses for qualified teachers, and attempts to train promising local students as teachers, that is, those who wish to remain in their villages.
Interviews with Lebanese Residing in Los Angeles

Table 1
Analysis of Interview Respondents

The following table describes respondents of the interviews. They consisted of Muslims, Maronites, and Gregorian Armenians who were born in Lebanon and who spent at least their early years there. All were middle class families in Lebanon.

Attempts were made to contact many Lebanese in the Los Angeles area. Ten were successfully contacted. Since Lebanese are a rather private people, there was some difficulty in persuading them to be interviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maronites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorian Armenians</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questionnaire and Results of Interviews

In order to assess first hand the effect of Lebanese Education on a group of people who experienced the system, the following questionnaire was developed and administered in semi-structured interview in the Spring of 1973.

Section A - Entrance into school and reasons for entry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Who took care of you before you entered school?</td>
<td>Eighty per cent were taken care of by the mother exclusively, 20% by a servant and occasionally by the mother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. At what age did you begin school?</td>
<td>Seventy per cent of the respondents began at age three, 30% at age five.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Why did you begin school?</td>
<td>Twenty per cent began school because they wanted to (females), 20% because cousins had begun school and the parents did not want to fall behind in status in the family, 60% because their parents, especially mother wished them to begin.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Section B - Curriculum and teacher behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What type of school did you attend?</td>
<td>All attended schools affiliated with their religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Were there both boys and girls at school?</td>
<td>Seventy per cent attended schools in which only their sex was represented and 30% attended coeducational schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Describe a day at school. Seventy per cent described a day at school as beginning with lining up in front of the school, saying prayers, singing songs, doing physical training, having a hot lunch sent by mother in a special canister for this purpose, mapping, doing writing exercises, beginning reading, playing outside with toys and classmates. Thirty per cent declared that there were few toys because toys were considered "for babies" after the age of five and they hadn't begun school until that age. Otherwise their day was the same.

4. Did you have homework? All stated that they did have some sort of homework which was written in a book by the teacher. The parent (usually mother) saw to it that the assignment was done and helped the child if necessary, then signed the book.

5. What kind of discipline was administered? All said that some form of physical punishment was used for misbehavior ranging from speaking during lunch or lessons to "laziness" in doing homework or schoolwork well or quickly. The punishments mentioned were slaps in the face, pulling ears, slapping the wrist or knuckles with rulers. The Armenians all mentioned being threatened with a dark place or "the mouse room" a room filled with hungry mice where "bad" children would be put if they didn't behave.

6. What was the attitude toward and what was done about children who seemingly couldn't learn? All said these children were considered lazy. Seventy per cent said if the child was really retarded he might be considered "crazy" or "stupid" and the parents would be asked to take him elsewhere. Thirty per cent said the child would be kept and extra efforts would be expended to make him learn. Of those respondents, two were Armenians, one Muslim.
7. Was everyone taught the same thing at the same time?

All said yes, and two, both Armenians and very recent to American ways, thought the question was strange and stated that everyone must learn that way, or else some would be ahead of others and the teacher could not be expected to control the class.

8. How did you regard your teacher?

Sixty per cent said that they regarded their teachers with warmth and respect and added that although the teachers were strict they were warm to the children and ready to help with problems, and could even be called motherly. Forty per cent said they did not remember their earliest teachers but were certain they were respected. Twenty per cent, who attended schools in which priests taught, said they feared more than respected their teachers.

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**Section C - Peer relations.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you play after school with school friends?</td>
<td>All responded negatively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. If not, why?</td>
<td>Eighty per cent said that they had enough cousins and siblings to play with. Twenty per cent added that transportation was not available to visit friends and they did not live near each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What did you do after school?</td>
<td>All said they played in their rooms or on the balconies of their apartments with toys and relatives. The males stated that they could sometimes go downstairs with a servant and play in the small garden near the house.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section D - Relations between parents and the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did the school have any contact with parents?</td>
<td>Sixty per cent said yes, forty per cent didn't remember. Of those who answered yes, they said the contacts consisted of parent-teacher meetings (attended by mothers), telephone calls and home visits by the teachers in case of great problems of behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What were your parents reactions to teachers complaints?</td>
<td>All reported that parents were very angry. Males said that if the complaints were frequent, father would step in and punish. Females said they were never punished by father, and 90% of the females said they never did anything at school to make a teacher angry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How did parents react to your complaints about teachers?</td>
<td>Eighty per cent said parents defended teachers always and didn't want to hear complaints about them, believing that the teacher knew best. Twenty per cent (one Armenian and one Maronite female) said that fathers would try to comfort them but still maintained that teacher was right.</td>
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</table>

Section E - How early schooling influenced your life and attitudes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Looking back, does your early education seem to have been a happy time?</td>
<td>Ninety per cent said yes, although forty per cent said there were times they were not happy. Ten per cent (Armenian female) stated that she did not like the strictness yet prefers it for her own children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Has your early schooling influenced your life? Sixty per cent said it influenced their lives in that they wish to bring up their children in a similar manner. Thirty per cent said that they learned respect for authority and noted that American children do not seem to have the respect for parents and teachers that they were taught to have.

Additional unsolicited comments were:

1. That American schools give children too much freedom.

2. Children must know who is in authority.

3. The family was everything, the most important thing in a child's life and it is changing in Lebanon and becoming like America.

4. Children never argued with or answered back a parent or teacher.

5. Parents did not argue with the teacher about what or how she should teach.
Discussion of Results of Interviews

Although those Lebanese interviewed were an extremely small sample, they did provide an indication of how Lebanese regard family and school. The sample was of the middle class but it has been demonstrated in this paper that other classes of Lebanese, past and present, have similar attitudes and experiences.

In informal conversation with the respondents it was interesting that Armenians bristled when this author suggested that Armenian mothers were less warm than other Lebanese mothers. It was mentioned by one of the Armenians that since the Armenians were subjected to terrible and numerous persecutions they became hardened and attempted to harden their children to the attitude toward them which they may find in the world. This could explain Harfouche's finding that Armenian mothers fostered the most aggression in their children.

When the topic of other religious groups' education was mentioned both Christians and Muslims were certain that completely different and even bizarre events took place in the other's schools.

The interview respondents bore out the assumption that the three major groups don't integrate in schools, yet their school experiences are strikingly similar. Attitudes toward school, teachers, and family are similar with slight differences. Lack of participation of the father in child-rearing was borne out. Adults interviewed declared the early training they received established many of their attitudes toward their own families when they married.

Females interviewed agreed that they were not expected to achieve academically as were boys, and noted that sex roles were
established even before entrance into school.

In general the results of the interviews tended to corroborate the results of Part III of the study. In Section B, Question 1 the results were as stated in the study concerning children attending schools which were affiliated with their religion. This tends to keep the population from assimilating, as is also stated in the study. Again in that section, Question 2 obviously shows the French method of education existing within all the major religious groups and points out the indelible stamp that French occupation left on the country. Discipline of children as described in the study is further borne out in Question 5 of that section. It is most striking that similar forms of punishment are mentioned by members of all three religions. In Question 8 of that section those interviewed stated that teachers in Lebanon are respected and obeyed, which also corroborates material found in the study.
References


