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ANTHROPOLOGY PAPERS, No. 1

KAFR AKAB, LIFE IN A  
LEBANESE VILLAGE

By

Carling I. Malouf

1976

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## KAFR AKAB: LIFE IN A LEBANESE VILLAGE

Carling Malouf

Acknowledgements: Sometime during the 1940's I began a modest ethnological type of study of a Lebanese village by querying immigrants from that community who were residing in the United States. Later, according to my plans, I would visit Kafr Akab and observe lifeways there myself. Several circumstances prevented this plan from being completed. (1) I found myself in military service during World War II which, of course, prevented me from contacting American Lebanese informants, and, (2) after World War II I found employment at the University of Montana where my research interests had to be diverted to other subjects. Yet, I had collected some information on the subject of Kafr Akab, its history, and the lifeways of the people who lived there during the late 1890's and early 1900's. Thus, I record here the results of my very modest efforts. It may even have some value to ethnographers in its present State of completion.

Most of the information I have recorded here came from two individuals, Edward I. Malouf, and Eblen S. Malouf. These two men were approximately ten years apart in age, with Edward being the older of the two; and, the two men left Lebanon at least ten years apart, with Edward coming first. Yet, the information provided by these two men complimented and supplemented each other, but on a few occasions it differed a little, and even conflicted. Part of these differences are obviously due to the fact that during the 1890's and early 1900's Lebanon had a rapidly changing culture, and that Edward Malouf, and Eblen Malouf grew up in a slightly different Kafr Akab. Their differences may be attributed to other reasons too, but the factor of a rapidly changing economy, and lifeways certainly was paramount among these reasons.

When Edward Malouf left Lebanon, about 1912, he was scarcely fourteen years old. With some sense of humor, he, years later, remarked to me that in his youthful mind he intended to come to the United States and earn enough money to buy a bicycle, and then he was going to peddle it back to Lebanon. Instead, he spent the rest of his life in the United States.

When Edward Malouf left Lebanon it was still part of the Turkic, Ottoman Empire. A few years later, when Eblen Malouf left the country, Lebanon, as an outcome of World War I, became a French Mandated colony. Eblen, however, had spent much of his life in Lebanon when it was under Turkish domination.

Following a rather brief discussion of the economics, social life, and religious life in Kafr Akab with Edward Malouf we also discussed genealogies. In this paper, however, we shall confine ourselves to the lifeways in Kafr Akab as Edward Malouf, and Eblen Malouf observed it during the early 1900's.



Lebanaon, in 1908, had a population density of 175 persons per square mile.<sup>1</sup> Kafr Akab itself numbered not more than 2,000 persons at that time, and by 1920 Eblin Malouf estimated there were from 200 to 250 families.

The name "Kafr Akab," Edward Malouf insisted, was derived from Assyrian, and meant, "Edgewood Village."<sup>2</sup> The town itself, as will be shown, is located in the mountains where it overlooks the great harbor of Byrouth, on the Mediterranean coast, about ten miles toward the southwest. The lands utilized by the villagers range in elevation between 4,000 and 6,500 feet, and according to Eblin Malouf, at least one peak above the community, still higher in the mountains, is called Mount Sunneen. Edward Malouf remarked that from the higher elevations in the mountains, on a clear day, it is possible to see the island of Cyprus, in the Mediterranean Sea, over 100 miles away. Eblin still fondly recalls the great beauty of the eastern end of the Mediterranean as observed from Kafr Akab.

History: Anciently, it has been written<sup>3</sup> that the Maloufs came from among the tribes of Ghassan, in northern Arabia. (The wells of Ghassan can still be located on any good atlas of the Middle East.) As some migrated away from this center their family name changed accordingly. In Spain, for example, it became "Gayson."<sup>4</sup>

The name "Malouf," according to Alexander Malouf,<sup>5</sup> came from a word meaning "exempt," although it is not necessarily Arabic, or even Semitic in origin (Possibly Turkic?). The members of this branch of the family, it seems, in later times had done something extraordinary for the persons who, at that time, were the rulers of the country, and thus these members of the family who were living in the vicinity were made exempt from certain taxes.

Once there were some Maloufs around Mount Harmon, between Damascus and Jerusalem. Here, it is said, the family name was "Stinson." Five brothers, however, moved away from here and they eventually became the "Maloufs," and eventually became centered in the mountains above Byrouth.

Up to this time, of course, the family history is partly legendary, but now more definite data places the Maloufs in the lower portion of the canyon where Kafr Akab is located, and across the stream from its present location. Then some other members of the growing family proceeded, in family units, to occupy more lands farther and farther up the canyon.

The Maloufs who established Kafr Akab actually had selected a site on the mountainside which had been occupied in ancient times. Older structures,

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<sup>1</sup> Malouf, Alexander Esoue, The Genealogy of the Malouf Family, 1907-8. Ottaman Press, Bhaadbarys. (Reference to this source will be cited hereafter as, "Malouf, Genealogy," p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Malouf, "Genealogy," pp. 176-7

<sup>3</sup> Malouf, "Genealogy," pp. 176-7.

<sup>4</sup> Malouf, "Genealogy."

<sup>5</sup> Malouf, "Genealogy," pp. 176-7.



however, were in ruins, and the town was completely rebuilt using many of the stones quarried and dressed by the ancient inhabitants. Other Maloufs occupied sites on the opposite side of the canyon, above Btatageren, which is now directly across from Kafr Akab. Others went beyond Kafr Akab.<sup>6</sup> It should be kept in mind, however, that some Maloufs still remained in the lower parts of the canyon, nearer Byrouth.

As mentioned, Kafr Akab had been occupied at least once before in ancient times, and many of the old buildings were dismantled for their building stones. Yet, some Roman writing, or Latin script was found to have once been identifiable on a nearby cliff. These, however, had a date of 1025 with them. This cliff was just below and west of the village. Alexander Esoue Malouf, in his genealogy book, said that he had been informed by a man named Von Castern that the script contained the names of some Crusader spies.

There are some old graves in the vicinity which are of unknown origin. There is also a tradition which claims that the site of Kafr Akab had once been used by a ruler as a headquarters during the hunting season. Anyhow, the Maloufs did not arrive on the scene until 1560, and whatever had happened before their arrival was only indicated by stark ruins. (A.E. Malouf, Genealogy, pp. 176-7)

After the villages in the mountains were settled some communications systems had to be maintained between them. One technique was to use signal fires. Travel across the canyons directly was extremely strenuous since it necessitated going up and down steep mountainsides. Signal fires, it was found, could be seen as far as eight miles away. At night, moreover, it was possible to yell messages to communities directly across the canyons. Today, for example, the voices of children playing in Btageren, can often be heard in Kafr Akab.

Some forms of communication were important since one of the reasons for residing in the mountains was for security from fanatical Moslem groups which occasionally made life hard on the Christian villagers.

Usually, the Moslem majority in this country were tolerant of their religious minorities, such as Christians, and at one time, during the reign of the Ottomans, a great-grandfather, named Tanous (Thomas) owned an entire Moslem town. Still, such people still remained a Christian minority.

The Druse, a fanatical Moslem group were sometimes especially hard on their Christian neighbors, and even some of their Moslem neighbors occasionally

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<sup>6</sup> Some prominent Maloufs from this community who came to the United States were some brothers: Ernest, Bert, Billy, and Frenchy Malouf and their sisters. These men founded the Mode O'Day corporation, in Los Angeles, California, and several real estate enterprises. Ernest Malouf contributed funds to the Presbyterian, Westminster College, in Salt Lake City, Utah, for which this institution later awarded an honorary doctorate to his wife, Mimia. Other from this village were B.I. Malouf (a financier, in Los Angeles.) and Tommy, Malouf. (Malouf, Genealogy, p. 178.



felt the extent of their hate. One story related by Edward I. Malouf told how an overture of peace was actually a ruse for a Druse massacre. The Christians were invited to a feast of peace held in an old castle. The location and date of the massacre was not specified in the legend, nor does it appear it was directed only at some Maloufs. Nevertheless, the event had a profound impact on them, and their attitude toward the Druse thereafter. We have to assume that the episode occurred sometime between 1700 and the early 1800's. Edward Malouf related:

"As the Christians filed up a long narrow and spiraling stairway to the feast room upstairs they were seized, one by one, and quietly slaughtered. Only when the blood ran down the stairs did the others below discover the magnitude of the plot, and then they saved themselves by fleeing the scene."

During the latter half of the 1800's Lebanon began to attract the interest of Americans. The American University, for example, was established in Byrouth by Presbyterians, and to this day the institution has continued to have an impact on the Middle East, especially its medical school. Several Malouf families in the United States have become members of this church group. By now, of course, many Lebanese were migrating to the New World, particularly the United States.

Until the end of World War I Lebanon remained part of the Ottaman Empire, and technically part of the Axis powers. When the first World War erupted communications between the people in Lebanon, and their close immigrant relatives in the United States, of course, was disrupted. "Papa John" (John S. Malouf), for example, was in the United States making plans and preparations to move his family here to join him. The rest of the family at that time consisted of "Mama Julia," (his wife), and children Phillip, Joseph, and Eblin. Their story is now best told by Eblin, and it is clear that "Mama Julia" suffered severe emotional experiences in trying to keep her family together and healthy.

In 1978 Eblin described this period to me: "During World War I, in Lebanon, things were hard for us. Mother had taken us from Kafr Akab for several reasons. For one, most of our relatives left to concentrate more in another area around Zahle, which was over the mountain crests from us, maybe 15 or 16 miles during Summer travel, but in winter it was 25 to 30 miles because you had to go around the mountain ridges. Some of the Malouf family living around Zahle were relatively well-to-do, and we hoped we might be a little more secure there. By the way, Zahle today is an important mountain resort town."

"The Allied attack on Lebanon came as a surprise to the Turks. In response they placed depots of supplies around the country which included things like salt, grain, and munitions as well as other things in a little town about 15 miles from Zahle. But the Turks were 'put on the run' in retreat toward Jerusalem, and here was the last battle between the Turks and Germans on one side, and the British on the other, under General Allenby. So, the people started to take things from these depots, particularly the



grain and salt. Mother and a couple or three other women went over to the one near Zahle with bags to fill with salt. When she got there she got into an argument with another woman, but mother backed away because she was inclined to be a more peaceful type of person. So, when this other woman began digging a land mine exploded. Mother ran home sick from the sight she had seen, and almost went out of her mind. The people, of course, became more careful after that, and the government cleaned out those depots."

"I also watched air battles over Byrouth. We were just kids then and we thought it was fun to watch them fight in deadly earnestness since some of them fell in flames. They did not have bombs to drop on the cities though. It was each plane fighting another plane. We watched all of this from Zahle."

"As the war progressed Turkic Army detachments were sent into the mountains where they ransacked abandoned houses for furniture and other supplies. The villages had 'watchers' who gave notice to the people living there when they saw the detachments were coming, and then they would gather everything they could get ahold of, including their livestock, and then left for the mountains. Here they would have to live temporarily in shelters and caves."

"Survival actually wasn't as hard as one would think under the conditions. The trees and shrubs furnished food, and there was wild lettuce, carrots, dandelions, and other things to eat. They wouldn't have been able to survive altogether with just these wild things, but with the supplies they brought with them it was sufficient."

Eblin did not know of any of the family within 10 to 15 miles of Kafr Akab having been drafted into the Turkish Army, although many Lebanese elsewhere were taken into service. From their accounts it is known that life in the Turkish Army was not an easy one. So, life in the isolated mountains had some advantages. Eblin also felt that the German invasion of Lebanon, intended to bolster the failing Turkish wartime effort, was sudden, and he added, "I don't think the Turks had enough time to set up an efficient draft system. There were poor communications with the people in the mountains, so they were quite protected from drafting into the Army."

During this time Eblin's father, "Papa John," had arrived in the United States to prepare the way for a new home and life for his wife and young family still in Lebanon.. He went to Texas where some uncles of his were already residing. This must have been around 1913, but the war crippled his plans and the family could not reunite until 1920. In the meantime, "Papa John" enlisted in the United States Army, but was not called to active duty. His enlistment, however, helped him in acquiring U.S. citizenship, and through him it also automatically gave citizenship to his wife and children once they arrived in the United States. Eblin explains, "We came as U.S. citizens, and not as Lebanese." In those days U.S. law allowed the wife and children of a naturalized citizen to automatically acquire citizenship also. In Texas "Papa John" developed a healthy dry goods business.



After World War I Lebanon became a French Mandate, or in essence, a French colony. Trust the Frenchmen, of course, to insist that the children all now learn the "beautiful" French language on a large scale. There have been many more important changes in Lebanon too. Some crops once of primary economic importance have changed. Silk, once so important, for example, is replaced with fruit trees such as apples, and pears.

During World War II France fell to Nazi Germany, and the Lebanese availed themselves of the opportunity to become an independent nation. Still, throughout its recent history the Arabic, English, and French languages are important in the teaching of children in schools.

As an example of French influence today the parts of automobiles are not spoken in Arabic or English, but are French words. Thus, when Edward I. Malouf, and his wife visited Lebanon during the 1950's they had trouble with their new Lincoln-Mercury which they had purchased in Byrouth in order to have transportation throughout the countryside he wished to visit. The trouble was simple - the changing elevations required some adjustments to the carburetor. Edward Malouf's Arabic, of course, was native, and his English nearly so. But he did not know the word for carburetor in French.

Shortly after World War II the United States government began a world-wide program called "The Marshall Plan." It was named after General George Marshall, who was now Secretary Of State of the United States. The purpose of the plan was to provide funds for allied countries which had been ravaged by World War II, and the hope was that it would prevent them from becoming interested in communistic approaches as solutions to their economic problems. Some of these Marshall Plan funds went to Lebanon, and Kafr Akab was allocated a portion of it to build a motor car road into their village. Now automobiles could be driven to a place which had been accessible before only along narrow mountainous trails by walking, or by using camels or donkeys.

The reaction of some Kafr Akabites was ambivalent. One moment someone remarked, "What do the Americans want for this?" "What is the catch?" "They will probably make us pay in someone." Then, a few minutes later, the same person was saying, "I wonder how we can get some more of that American money?" Appreciation seemed to be the least matter of concern to them.

Currently Lebanon is in the midst of a terrible Civil War involving Syrians, Palestinians, Israelis, and Moslem Lebanese and Christian Lebanese. Kafr Akab is once again cut-off from communications with American family members. The outcome, of course, must await the processes of time and human events far beyond the tiny boundaries of a country like Lebanon - Russia, China, United States and France to name a few...



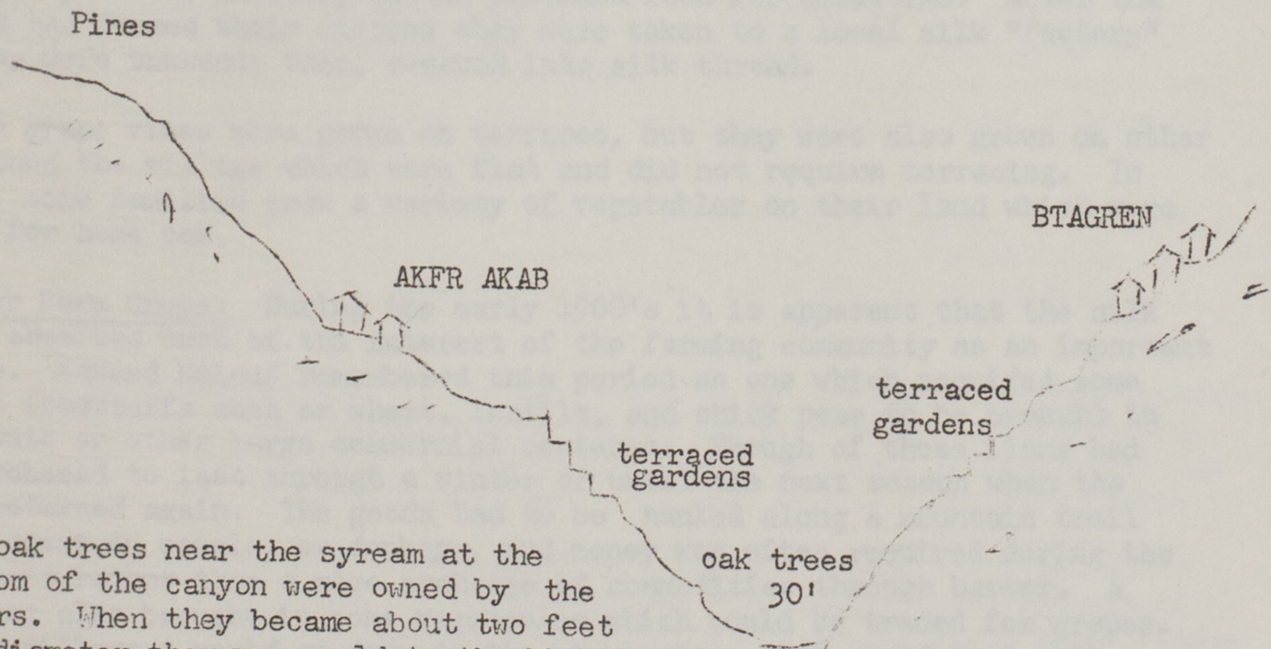
KAFR AKAB ETHNOLOGY

Economy

Land Use: The village of Kafr Akab is located on the side of a canyon which descends from mountains and a high plateau above. A stream of water, about thirty feet wide flows through the bottom of the canyon. It is called "The River Of The Dogs," but the informants could not provide any stories accounting for the origin of its name.

Great cedars used to grow on the ranges above Kafr Akab, but the demand for these timbers since Egyptian days has been so great that nearly all of them have been cut down. Local inhabitants, too, have cut them down for use as fuel, construction, and other purposes. Large pine trees, however, still grow there.

Edward I. Malouf sketched a cross-section of the canyon, and located both Kafr Akab and Btagren. Notations about terraces, oak trees, and other features are from his memory as it appeared about 1905.



The oak trees near the stream at the bottom of the canyon were owned by the Baders. When they became about two feet in diameter they were sold to the highest bidder who converted them to charcoal for fuel. The oak trees extended down to the river.



Kafr Akab is basically an agricultural community relying considerably on terracing of the mountainsides for cultivation. There are a few pieces of relatively level lands, and there are grazing lands in the mountains and plateaus above. The land base is, nevertheless, is small, and its mountain-side location requires an extraordinary amount of labor for production.

The mountainside locations of the villages isolated them from one another, hindering trade and specialization of craft manufacturing. Kafr Akab was estimated to have no more than 2,000 inhabitants in 1910, or perhaps about 150 to 200 families trying to eke out a living with, perhaps, five to ten acres of land, and around 1900 there were a few people trying to sustain themselves with as little as one acre. Thus, said Eblin, "Much of what was grown here was utilized in the community, and there was virtually no surplus available for exchanging for goods and commodities beyond the village."

Terraces: Terraces are about two meters (about 7 feet) high. Around 1910 much of this terraced land was planted in mulberry bushes, although there were also some vineyards. The terraces were about 50 meters long (160 feet), and about five meters in width (18 feet). Nowadays, I understand, the mulberry bushes have been replaced with apple or pear trees.

In the past the mulberry bushes provided food for silkworms. After the silkworms had formed their cocoons they were taken to a local silk "factory" where they were unwound; then, rewound into silk thread.

Some grape vines were grown on terraces, but they were also grown on other types around the village which were flat and did not require terracing. In addition, some families grew a variety of vegetables on their land which were intended for home use.

Other Farm Crops: During the early 1900's it is apparent that the silk industry absorbed much of the interest of the farming community as an important cash crop. Edward Malouf remembered this period as one which required some important foodstuffs such as wheat, lentils, and chick peas to be brought in from Byrouth or other large commercial centers. Enough of these items had to be purchased to last through a winter or until the next season when the traders returned again. The goods had to be hauled along a mountain trail from the coast on camels, or donkeys, and money was often required during the transactions rather than a mere exchange of commodities through barter. A few traders also brought in some vegetables which could be traded for grapes. Sometimes villagers would go down to the river where they could meet with people from other communities in the canyon, and then trade with them.

Later, however, Eblin said that wheat, lentils, chick-peas, and many types of vegetables familiar to Americans, such as cucumbers, carrots, beans, peas and others were grown locally in Kafr Akab.

Fig trees and olive trees were in considerable numbers scattered in and around the community. On the other hand, apricot trees were scarce; Eblin estimated that there were approximately a half a dozen of these trees, one of which was in their yard. Tangerines, oranges, and lemons, though, had to be brought in from Byrouth since they could only grow on or near the sea coast,



and not in the mountains scarcely 25 miles away.

Products locally grown were mostly for home use. Much of the crops were powdered or dried, and then stored for winter use. "Winter," said Eblin, "were some times severe in the mountains, and at these times there would be no way of getting in or out of the villages to seek help from other villages."

Land Inheritance: In ancient days throughout the Middle East it was customary that the oldest son inherit all property from a deceased father. Indeed, the custom is mentioned in the Bible, and it still persists in some parts of the Middle East such as among pastoralists on southern Russia. The family was regarded as a communal unit. Thus, the oldest son managed the property in a manner which would usually also allow for care of his younger brothers. This was the law in Turkey before World War I, even though the Koran, the Holy Book of Islam, introduced changes. When Mohammed introduced a new system the women were now allowed one-third of an estate - a tremendous innovation in Mohammed's day.

"But," said Eblin Malouf about Kafr Akab, "under the Turks if an older son wanted to share the inheritance with others he could do this." Eblin provided one example of the process, explaining, "Like my father - in Lebanon he had some land, but he had a brother who wasn't so well off. So, father relinquished his right to my other two uncles. We were making a fair living in this country, so father decided to let those still in Lebanon try to improve their lives this way. Besides the land there was also a house on it."

Livestock: Animals grown for local use were goats, sheep, a few cattle, and chickens. Actually, this mountainous country was not suitable for the raising of livestock on a commercial scale, or as a source of commercial income.

A few people might buy a cow, but it had to be sheltered from the weather. Cows furnished milk, but goats, however, were far more suitable for raising in this country. They could eat the leaves from acak trees and other foliage which cows avoided. Both goat meat and their milk became a source of food.

Edward Malouf spoke of sheep being so important around 1910, but Eblin felt that in his day, later in Kafr Akab, they were losing their importance in favor of goats. "Occasionally," said Eblin, "a family might have a sheep which was fattened, and consumed by them," as Edward Malouf also described. Earlier, in Edward's time, sheep were raised by grazing them in the mountains above the village. Some herdsmen had their own flocks, but every family had at least one of these animals. The local butcher was apt to be the owner of one of these flocks.

The animals weighed from 100 to 150 pounds each, and during the fall they were force fed by hand to increase their weight, and their yield of fat. In the fall the flocks and herds were returned to the village, and animals which did not belong to specific families were sold in a market area located near the church.



Eblin, who saw Kafr Akab at a somewhat later time, said that there was no herding of sheep, but most at that time were being raised lower down in the plains areas of Lebanon, particularly to the east, toward Damascus, Syria. Goats, however, as mentioned before, were now more important to the families.

Eblin said that "chickens were commonly raised and both their meat and eggs were eaten. They were not the common American white leghorns, but nevertheless they were big and fat. They had to be kept in shelters because of the weather, and to protect them from predatory animals such as wolves, and animals similar to American coyotes. A whole flock could be eaten up in one night. The people also kept dogs outside to keep the predators away."

Eblin continued with his description of the raising of animals. "The houses," he said, "were built long and flat, and at one end there was a room for a cow, chickens, and goats with suitable partitions to keep them separated. During very severe weather the dogs were allowed to come inside with the livestock. The dogs and stock were used to each other and they would not bother one another. In many instances these animals had grown up with each other."

"Besides domesticated plants and animals the people in Kafr Akab gathered wild things such as berries, pine nuts, and even birds. During the fall some people went higher up into the mountains and collected pine nuts. Many of the Maloufs who now live in the United States are still familiar with the nice touch of flavor that pine nuts can add to mishy, kibee, or koosha mishy. The pine nuts here are fairly large in size." Eblin added, "Sometimes, like on a Saturday, some would go into Byrouth and sell the pine nuts, or they would go into some other town where there might be a market for the."

Eblin continued, "There were a lot of berry bushes around the village, like blue berries, and they were cooked into delicious things like preserves, and things like that."

"There were not many game animals around - a few hares, and bears, but very few people had guns, so hunting was uncommon. Through some of our history, in fact, the government tried to keep guns from us. Maybe a half a dozen people in town owned guns. Those who hunted would sometimes borrow a gun, especially if they wanted to hunt bears. The bears were native to this country."

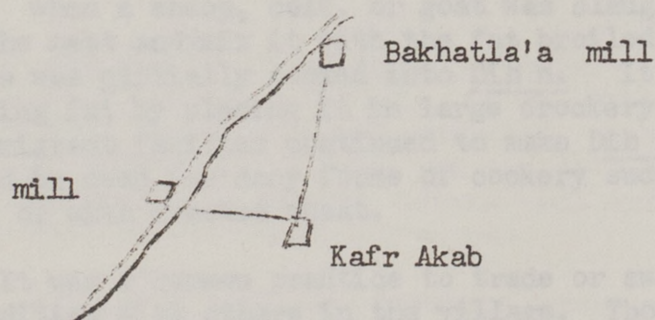
"Occasionally, certain migratory birds flocked into the area. They were about the size of a robin, and they arrived in huge numbers. Since there were very few guns the people had devised a kind of snare which they mounted on sticks about the thickness of your finger. These were placed in trees, and the birds would come and sit on them and get caught. We used to catch a lot of these birds that way until the government stopped it."

"There were a lot of native birds we used to catch. One method of getting them was rather cruel, but the people needed to eat, you know. Little birds still unable to fly were caught, their heads cut off, then were eaten. Sometime the 'kids' would go out with a half a dozen nets, and the birds would be caught before they could fly; then, they were brought home and cooked."



Food Processing: In the processing of grains, Eblin explained, "Some of the wheat was kept was cooked, and then dried for future use. They had a way of removing the chaff from the grains. After it was cooked and dried the kernals were broken into halves. It could be mixed with vegetables. It is still used these days in the United States where it can be bought at many import stores."

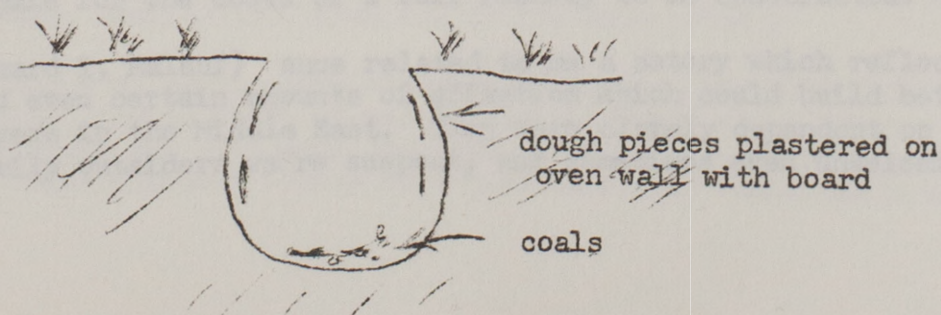
Kafr Akab had no flour mill of its own, but there were some other villages that provided this service. Water power was necessary to turn the heavy milling stones, and Kafr Akab was high above the river. So, the mills had to be built along the stream in the bottom of the canyon. There was a mill just one mile below Kafr Akab, but travel straight up and down the canyon sides was very difficult. So, Edward Malouf said it was easier in 1910 to go to another mill two or three miles away to a place called Bakhatla'a, where the trail was longer, but was along an incline easier for walking.



Much wheat was grown in Lebanon in the plains of Baalbeck, to the east, and this area still provides both Lebanon and Syria with much of their grain. Some grains, however, can be grown in smaller quantities locally.

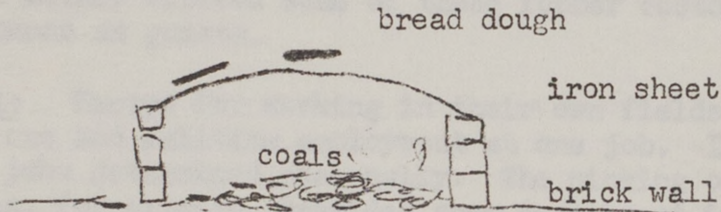
Processing Bread: Small bakeries were available to householders which were scattered, in 1910, throughout the village. When originally constructed a hole was originally dug in the ground which was four or five feet deep, and then was lined with fire-baked clay, or a sort of cement mixture. After it was finished then a fire was built in the bottom to heat the sides. Then flat, thin layers of dough was plastered on the walls of the oven and baked. A flat, thin board was used by the bakers to keep the bread from getting burned, and to avoid burning one's hands.

Cross Section Of Earthen Oven For Baking Bread:





Another type of oven was made by placing an iron plate over a fire, thus:



Figs: Figs from trees scattered around Kagr Akab were mixed with mollasses, and thus could be stored as well as prepared for immediate consumption. Production, however, was never sufficient for any more than just home consumption.

Meat Processing: when a sheep, calf, or goat was slaughtered common practice was to cut up the meat and mix it with the fat broiled from the animal cuts. The mixture was partially cooked into Dih n. It was stored for future use as a cooking fat by placing it in large crockery jars. Even in the United States immigrant families continued to make Dih n although with less frequency. It could be used for many forms of cookery such as frying eggs, cooking with rice, or with cracked wheat.

Local Commerce: It was a common practice to trade or swap small amounts of surplus commodities with others in the village. Those who grew a considerable amount of wheat, for example, had very little space where they could store it in quantity. Thus, the excess above what they required for their own use would be swapped with those who grew an excess of, say, beans, leas, or lentils. A small amount of commerce also occurred with persons who had special craft or skills needed by local people, such as leather workers, masons, or cobblers.

Commerce: During the days when silk was in great demand external trading was extensive. Not much of the silk was made into cloth locally though. Some cloth was made in Kafr Akab, but it looked like denim. Most of the cloth used locally to be made into clothing was bought in Byrouth.

Transportation: Until after World War II there were few methods of transporting persons or goods other than walking. Some traders from Byrouth came in with camels or donkeys loaded with goods, and a few people who were disabled might have a donkey or a burro to travel up and down the mountain trails, or down to Byrouth. After World War II Marshall Plan funds from the United States paid for the costs of a full roadway to be constructed.

My father (Edward I. Malouf) once related to me a story which reflects the dependency, and even certain amounts of affection which could build between sellers and buyers in the Middle East. They were mutually dependent on each other. Ordinarily outsiders were suspect, and sometimes even unwelcome.



Among some Bedouins, for example, strangers might even be killed. Edward Malouf's father, at one time, was a trader who traveled somewhat extensively in the Near East. Evidently, he traded camels. Yet, long after his father died he and his mother visited some of these former customers and were given excellent treatment as guests.

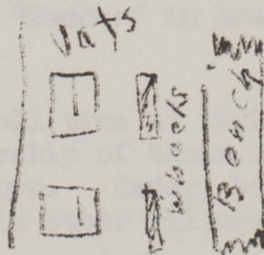
Employment: Except for working in their own fields in the community, practically no one had fulltime employment at one job. Instead, there were just part-time jobs determined seasonally. The picking of cacoons from mulberry bushes, for example, provided some employment in the fields for some persons for about one month of the year. Others worked for a short time in the plants where the cacoons were unwound.

Industries: The parsimonious land base limited the ability of the local residents to establish any more than the most modest commercial ventures. Employment, as mentioned, was highly seasonal, both in agriculture, and in any related industries.

#### FARM INDUSTRIES.

SILK: For several decades the silk industry flourished in Kafr Akab. The first silk mill in Kafr Akab was built in 1884, and by 1888 a system of raising cacoons and processing the strands was completed. According to Edward Malouf there were three silk processing plants, and by 1920 there were six of them. But the greatly changing textile markets around 1940 and thereafter, doomed silk markets. Kafr Akab had to change its crops.

During the "hey-day" of the silk industry, however, some owners of the silk processing also owned mulberry fields, but they also purchased cacoons from other growers in the vicinity. When in operation the silk plants employed 40 to 50 girls and women over a period of three months. Each employee at the plant had a vat in front of her which contained hot water. There were also wheels on a shaft in front of the vat:



The girls placed the cacoons in the hot water, and then wound up the loosened strands onto the wheels. Some strong men were employed to turn the shafts. These men worked in turns of two hours each during a period of twelve hours, and the plants were kept in operation 24 hours a day during the season. B.I. Malouf's father, incidently, owned one of the silk plants.

Eblin said that some people wove some of the thread into cloth, and then it was taken down to Byrouth where it was traded for other goods. After both Edward and Eblin Malouf had left Kafr Akab the silk market collapsed entirely, and the terraces where mulberry bushes once grew have been replanted with other crops.



GRAPES. Grapes grown on the terraces of Kafr Akab constitute<sup>d</sup> another major agricultural crop. Some of the grapes were made into mollases while others were prepared into wines. The distribution of the grapes and products from them involved a complex number of procedures. In Eblin's words, it was described: "For example, suppose a grower had a quantity of grapes to dispose of. The grapes were spread out closeby the processing plants on the terraces, and the owners awaited their turns for them to be processed. The mollases plant had copper vats which held approximately 1000 gallons. The grapes were first mashed by tromping on them with bare feet on a cement floor, though some people used a hand press. In the plant these juices ran into the large vats through drains under the floor."

"After the crop was processed the grower received a portion of the yield while the plant owner retained another portion for his profit, and to provide an income for his employees. One processsing plant was said to have been owned by B.I. Malouf's family, and some of the Baders."

"Besides mollases, grapes were also used for making wine - a commodity which was consumed almost entirely locally. Sometimes the wine was further reduced to alcohol, although the quantity was small. This was used, it was said, for medicinal purposes."

#### Industries.

LEATHER PROCESSING. There were two small leather processing plants in Kafr Akab. Most of the skins came from sheep and goats. About six to ten people, in season, were employed, and the finished products were sold. The leather was mostly used to make the upper parts of shoes, but the soles had to be brought up from Byrouth. Saba Malouf (brother to Edward I. Malouf) was a shoemaker, and sometimes his brother, Edward I., in the United States, was able to send him old shoes which could be repaired and sold - tha t is if Adeeb (a nephew) or someone else didn't get to the mail package first and appropriate its best contents. Besides Saba, one of the tannerys was owned by a Bader (pronounced "Badder" in Arabic.) who was an uncle of Edward Malouf.

Cobblers worked almost full time at their crafts, but they also were able to earn some money from ownership of their own flocks since they sometimes owned a few animals of their own. Bader, besides gathering hides locally, also bought them from people in other villages too.

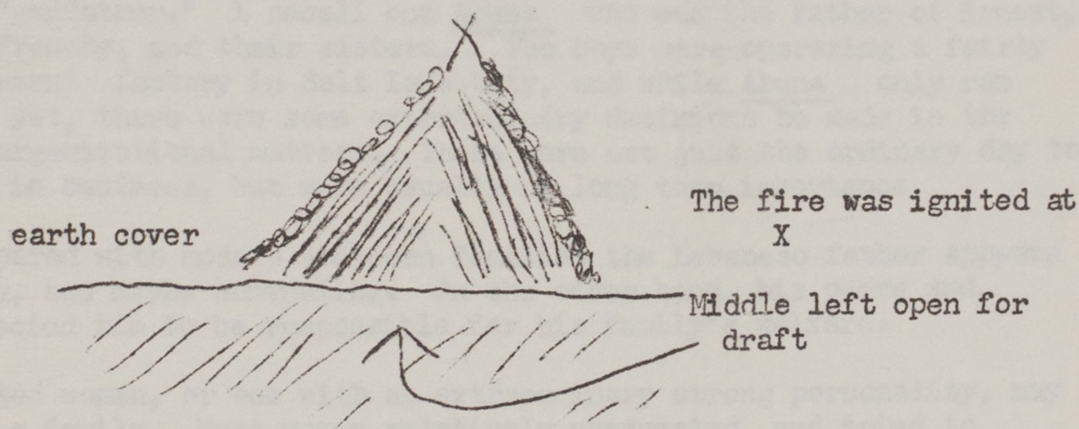
FUEL. Fuel for cooking and heating, and for a few industries, was obtained by gathering wood fallen in the forests. Earlier a few groves of oak trees below Kafr Akab provided charcoal fuel, but this appears to have been of lesser importance due to the length of time it took for the oak trees to grow. Oak trees grew below the terraced area of the mountainside, and the groves extended down as far as the river. Such groves, of course, had owners.

Avout every ten years, kafter the trees had grown to be fairly large in size, the oaks were sold to the highest bidder. Most of the successsful bidders, according to Edward Malouf's observation, were from Kafr Akab, but sometimes they were from outside Kafr Akab. If the price was regarded as



'too low' the grove owners might decide to cut down the trees themselves. Sometimes as many as three families might combine in order to make a successful high bid on the sale. A successful bid in those days would bring the owners, perhaps, \$200 to \$300. Edward Malouf said that Papa John's father and his brother (S.J. Malouf) owned groves."

"Charcoal was prepared for use by piling the trunks and larger branches into a conical pile thus:



It has been mentioned already that over many years the supply of wood from the forests have been ever on the decrease as the trees are chopped away.

**ROCK INDUSTRIES:** A very minor occupation in the past, always part-time at best, was the making of lime in kilns. There were also some contractors who cut stones for construction work. Papa John sometimes did this kind of work for about two months of the year. Eblin said, "We had no bricks in Kafr Akab. Hence, all of the houses were made of blocks of stone quarried from nearby pits. Sometimes the stones were large - 1000 to 2000 pounds, and it took several men to move them. They also had to be raised through manpower, and sometimes they had to be lofted as high as six feet or more."

A gunpowder plant was constructed in 1842 - the first in Lebanon, but an Austrian who was an official in the Ottoman Empire, Omar Pasha, had it burned down. After all, it was a risk to the Sultan.

**Crafts:** Other than cobblers, and a few weavers, there were no other special crafts made in Kafr Akab. No pottery was made except for one's own use. Likewise, there were no basket weavers in town.

**Medical.** As late as 1920 the countryside lacked many things that are taken for granted in "developed" areas. There was no water system, and there were no inside conveniences, nor were there any roads - just trails. However, the little town was relatively compact, and the houses were beautifully built. It had the appearance of a beautifully built resort town in the mountains. The pine trees around the countryside added to its beauty.

The absence of dentists and doctors was a deficiency noticed by the residents. Like pioneer communities in the United States there were people around who would try to help. If there were real serious cases someone could be counted on out to other communities to see if they could get a doctor to help.



help.

## S ocial and Political Life

Family Life: We may briefly describe some facts on Lebanese social life, and interpersonal relationships, especially within the family units. First, Lebanese families have a strong tendency to be patriarchal. Not only within the nuclear family (father-mother, children), but in lineages as well, beyond the immediate nuclear family. Many Lebanese families which have immigrated to the United States retained their "Abuna," a patriarchal head, like a "godfather." I recall one Abuna who was the father of Ernest, Bert, Billy, Frenchy, and their sisters. The boys were operating a fairly successful garment factory in Salt Lake City, and while Abuna only ran the elevator, yet, there were some extraordinary decisions he made in the business and organizational matters. These were not just the ordinary day to day decisions in business, but were usually of long term importance.

When compared with modern American families the Lebanese father appears very demanding, and maybe dominating. On the other hand, his peers and relatives expected him to be responsible for his family's welfare.

An educated woman, or one with an extraordinary strong personality, may also dominate a family. Most women relatively uneducated, and tried to manage her family by keeping things "smooth" by employing various behavioral techniques such as withholding information from the father when a child had misbehaved, etc.

### Life Cycle:

Prenatal: Eblin could not recall any special customs or practices such as tabus, etc. regarding prenatal care of mothers. But after all, he was in his "teens" when he left Lebanon. He did comment, however, that "as a rule, the father had complete control over the family. The father would worry, of course, just as my father was when mother was in labor. There was not much dependence on relatives at these times."

"There was help if needed though within larger family groups. As a whole they stuck together. An uncle, on my father's side, was just a short block away. My mother's mother was just a block away, and her brother and some cousins were a block away. We just clustered in certain areas in the village, and we helped each other as much as we could."

"Older children helped in raising younger siblings a lot more than is done in the United States. They also help the mother when she needs them. We had no maids or help like that." In Arabic there are separate words for Old Brother and Younger Brothers, Older Son, Younger Son. These are all single words and what is important, it reflects the relationships between younger and older siblings. Older siblings assume more responsibility in the raising of those who are younger - and they have some authority to accomplish this.

Eblin continued his explanation: "The older son is expected to be more privileged as well as more responsible, but he does more work around the house than do the younger ones. I remember one time, even after my father



returned to Lebanon in 1920 to move us to Texas - he could only spend three years in Lebanon now because the law said that was all he could spend there. We went down into the valley to a place only a mile or two to cut a lot of wood. The bundles of wood were bound together, and with a piece of leather we placed the load on our back. One bundle was larger than the other. My older brother, Phillip, was there, but Dad said for me to carry the heavier one because I was stronger. So, I was climbing up the trail with the heavier one, and Phillip was behind me. All of a sudden he slipped off his load, sat down, and said, 'Dad, I want to ask you a question. Who is the oldest brother?' Dad said, 'You are.' Phillip said, 'I must carry the larger bundle.' Dad said, 'Fine.' Phillip said, 'It is my duty as the oldest son.' So he struggled up the trail. It was hard on him to carry that heavier bundle."

Marriages: "In some parts of the country marriages were arranged by parents, there is no doubt about that. But in our part of the country the parents talked about it among themselves. One was say, for example, 'Wouldn't my daughter make a good wife for your son? Eould dn't my son make a good husband for your daughter?' This was carried on in secrecy, amidst 'hush' 'hush,' through which their children were glorified. Sometimes it worked out fine, and sometimes it didn't. It helped a little bit, but not to the extent to which they would be forced to marry each other. In the process these youths would become very attentive about it. The process continued among immigrants in this country such as when Mima Malouf tried to promote Frenchy's marriage to Daisy Fadel - a marriage which actually a few years later ended in a divorce."

"Marriages were nearly always held in churches."

Political Life: Eblin described the political structure in Kafr Akab. "There was a headman in the village, sort of like a mayor. He had a little authority given to him through politicians in the major cities. He served primarily as an administrator, and as a Justice of the Peace. He, among other duties, solved problems when they occurred among the villagers. Usually he was one of the wealthier and more respected persons in town, and maybe a lot of relatives to back him up in case a decision was unpopular. Actually, there were not many things that they people had disputes over. There was a lot of mutual respect for each other. Most cases were settled between the parties concerned, but sometimes more important cases were brought to the headman."

Taxes: "The collection of taxes was very irregular. Sometimes the government outside of Kafr Akab would send out someone to see if the people could pay it. The people were poor, without income except what came from friends and relatives in America. So, there wasn't anything to tax. Already, then, most young people had migrated out of Lebanon, or to larger cities in Lebanon."

The Water Supply. "There was no regular water supply in Kafr Akab. There was a spring in the middle of town that had been improved sufficiently so that people could get water out of it easily. Each family had a large vat which they filled with water. Water for home use was warmed up for baths and washing. This was done inside during bad weather - outside when it was warmer."



Fires: "Fires were rare in Kafr Akab. Indeed, Eblin remarked, "I don't recall ever having seen a fire in Kafr Akab."

"Houses and buildings were mostly made out of stones quarried from local rock outcroppings, and the use of wood was minimal. The walls of stone were painted inside, so there wasn't much to burn. If a fire should have broken out there was probably very little the people in town could have done about it. There wasn't enough water to have gained control over anything except small fires. A number of people maintained cisterns where rain water collected, and bucket brigades could be formed. Otherwise there were few ways of putting out a fire if one had occurred."

Education: (Most of the information in this section was furnished by Eblin Malouf, and applies to the period of the early 1900's rather than the present.)

"Even though we were rather isolated in the mountains from the main centers of Lebanese life, where there were some great educational sources in cities like Byrouth, and other places, we had a very nice public school in town. It didn't cost very much per pupil to operate it, and the school building itself had been built by a relative of ours, and he donated it to the town, and this helped immensely to keep the education costs down."

The Church of England maintained a private school one could attend, and a French monastery also had one where you could go to get a good education. These schools, among other subjects, taught French, English, and Arabic. The private church schools, however, were a few miles away from Kafr Akab, but quite a few pupils went to them. One school in particular was interesting to me. It was operated by an individual, but was supported by the Church of England. It did not have many teachers, but this man had a degree, and a certificate to be a teacher."

"He had the upper classmen teach those in lower classes. For instance, seniors taught juniors, and juniors taught sophmores, and so forth. He taught the upper classes himself. His technique accomplished two purposes: (1) it reduced the expencse of hiring additional teachers (2) it gave the upper classmen to learn to teach at the same time they were learning new things themselves. They were very thorough in their education. At that time they were much more exact in arithmetics, history, and geography than they are now in this country. When we came to the United States I could have really started in college, but the colleges wouldn't accept all of my credits, so I had to go to high school even though I already knew enough geometry, algenra, and calculus for college. In Lebanon they had emphasized those subjects. In Lebanon, too, the people were really anxious to learn. I found out this difference when I came to this country where there also is a general lack of ambition. A lot of people here have great opportunities, but they don't take advantage of them."

"There was not much instruction given in the churches in Kafr Akab. One private school in Kafr Akab had teachers who were well educated, and certified to teach, but they didn't even begin to use those skills and knowledge in the classrooms."



Recreation: "Religious organizations sponsored dances and picnics as a part of the community's social life. Religious holidays especially provided the opportunity for festivities with Easter being especially important. Colored paper was used to decorate the church building in those days, and candles were lit. Melachite and Orthodox Catholics, however, celebrated Easter at somewhat different times since they were under two different calendar systems. Sometimes they were a week apart, and at other times could be separated by two weeks difference."

"Families prepared for these occasions ahead of time cooking foods like lentils, and other things. On these days people used special greetings toward each other such as, 'He has risen.' 'The Messiah has risen,' and there were many congratulations extended to each other."

"In town there were a few shops where grown ups played games such as backgammon, and dominoes. Card games were also common even as late as the 1950's when Edward Malouf revisited his home town."

"Kids played simple games based mainly on running, and touching. Racing was another activity. In one game the children would divide into two groups and stand about 100 yards apart. Then one from each side would start running. The ones who got touched first would have to join the other side. Thus, the ones who were touched all the others first and got them on their side won the game. It could be a rough game though."

"Weight lifting was encouraged among some of the young men who had talents for it. Neal Malouf, and myself (Eblin) were among these. People who were strong almost could make it a profession by going from village to village challenging any comers. They couldn't make a lot of money this way since most villagers had very little cash to spend, but they had enough to make the contest interesting."

### Religion

Churches: One of the major reasons for occupying villages in the mountains, or alongside steep mountain sides had its origin in religion. Before Mohammed, around 600 A.D., Christianity under Byzantium was strong in the Middle East. Islam, however, spread throughout the region, and those who sought to remain Christians found it prudent to flee the more urban or populated areas, and move to more isolated places. Thus, Christianity survived in little enclaves. Many of the Maloufs, it appears, were among those who sought to retain their beliefs and ways of living as Christians. Kafr Akab was only one community founded on these principles.

According to Alexander Esoue Malouf's researches the town of Kafr Akab was settled initially on July 16, 1560, and about ten years later, 1570 (?), their first church building was dedicated. Apparently there were some delays in its construction caused by the Maloufs in the community bickering over where it should be located. Each faction wanted it to be located nearest them so that they could avoid having to walk a distance to church services, and certainly to reduce any necessity, if they could, of having to climb up



and down the mountainside between home and the church building.

The church, when finally dedicated, was called "The Saint of The Ruins" because it was built on some ruins of a previous structure. The first priest was George Shaded Malouf. It is not known, however, whether this first church was Orthodox Catholic or Melachite Catholic. A.E. Malouf, p. 181). Evidently, most Maloufs who lived here were Orthodox Catholics, but after some more family squabbles a group broke away and joined the Melachites - a group of Orthodox Catholics who retained their eastern Byzantine rituals and customs, even including the right of priests to marry, but they had the recognition of the Roman Catholic Pope. (More on this later.)

In 1650 the church building was enlarged, and one part was used by the Orthodox while the other was partitioned off the Melachites. Both groups occupied the building, but in their activities they remained aloof from each other. In 1771 a second church was built on land which cost the sum of three piastres, or \$28 (if you like minute data).

Between 1900 and 1910, Edward estimated that Kafr Akab were about 90% Orthodox Catholics while the rest were Melachites, or, given the figure of 200 families, then 177 were Orthodox while 23 were Melachite, or Roman families. The Orthodox rituals were spoken in Greek, but this was not fully necessary for the Melachites. It was not uncommon at all, however, to have the priests in both of these churches a Malouf.

Immigrants to the United States found it very difficult, except in very large cities, to find an Orthodox Church. Thus, many attended Roman Catholic services. Indeed, it appears that most Maloufs became Roman Catholics, although some became Presbyterians, Methodists, Mormons, and others when they had to live in towns where there were no Catholics.

The Melachites: We shall pause here to describe the Melachites in Lebanon since our readers may not have much knowledge of the subject. The Melachites were originally Orthodox, or Byzantine Catholics. Yet, several centuries ago they joined the Roman Catholic fold under conditions that would not be favored today. It might be assumed that the great movement to Protestantism encouraged the Pope in those to allow people joining (instead of leaving) unusual concessions. The Melachites were allowed to retain their Orthodox type of rituals, their robes, and customs, including the right of the priests to get married and have families. Pope Benedict XV said of the union:

"We are all One in Faith and in Moral. The accidentals alone are different."

For those Maloufs who are Roman Catholics (and others too) it may be of some interest to describe the rites of the Melachites. On December 10, 1946, the Melachite rites were held in the Cathedral in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Mass was given by Archbishop Joseph Maloof, of Balbeck, Lebanon. Edward Malouf and his wife, Maggie (Madge) Malouf were there to witness the rites. A mimeographed "hand out" was distributed to the congregation to explain these



rites and their origin. For the benefit of those interested the following extracted from the mimeograph sheets given to the congregation:

"The Melachite Rites use the ancient liturgy of St. James of Jerusalem and of the churches of Antioch, later reformed by the Great Fathers of the Eastern Church, St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. (Read Pius XI's encyclical, 'Rerum Orientalium.') The profound bow, 'metania,' is used instead of the genuflection."

"As in the early days of Christianity, lay readers are used at Mass and Communion is given under both species, the faithful approaching the center of the rail, two by two, and stand while receiving. Byzantines make the sign of the cross by touching the right shoulder and then the left. When Melachites attend Mass they usually stand through the services, a practice which is even seen today in the Roman Mass, 'omnium circumstantium.' There are two processions during the Mass-Liturgy, once to honor the Gospels, then the bread and chalice of wine. The Melachite Rite has retained many of the practices of the early church which the Latins have modified, abbreviated, or omitted. After the Gospel procession, the great hymn of the Eastern Church is chanted: 'Hagios ho Theos.' -Holy God, holy Strong One, holy Deathless One have mercy on us.' This hymn is greatly revered, sung three times, accompanied by the sign of the cross each time. The singing of the Gospel is readily recognizable in all rites by the solemnity of the ceremonies accompanying it. The words of the Consecration are sung aloud and answered by the people or servers with 'Amen.'"

The procedures of the Melachite Rite held in New Orleans were distributed for the Latin type congregation. These are the steps:

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|--|--|
| 1. Procession from the Rectory                                 | 17. Mass proceeds from Altar                                   |
| 2. Prayers: foot of altar.                                     | 18. Kiss of Peace  |
| 3. Vesting at Altar  | 19. Credo  |
| 4. Throne  | 20. Preface - Canon - Consecration                             |
| 5. Sermon: Fr. Murphy  | 21. Commemorations of Saints, Living and dead.                 |
| 6. Incensing of Altar  | 22. Incensing: by Fr. Bardwell                                 |
| Archbishop and Congregation                                    | 23. Mass continues   |
| 7. Mass begins   | 24. "Pater Noster."  |
| 8. 1st Procession honoring the gospel                          | 25. Elevation & Fraction                                       |
| 9. The Proper: & Hagios ho Theos."                             | 26. Preparatory to Communion                                   |
| 10. Epistle: Fr. Schutten                                      | 27. Go to Center for Communion                                 |
| 11. Incensing  | 28. Return to Altar  |
| 12. Gospel: from Pulpit  | 29. Incensing of Archbishop                                    |
| 13. Return to Altar  | 30. Thanksgiving & Dismissal.                                  |
| 14. Archbishop's Sermon & Fr. Bardwell's Instruction           | 31. Archbishop on Throne while side Altar ablution.            |
| 15. Return to Altar  | 32. Recession: Returning to the Rectory down the center aisle. |
| 16. Incensing & 2nd procession with Oblations from side altar. |  |



Besides basic local Christian rituals, beliefs, and practices Kafr Akab had its share of beliefs, some of which may even have come from pre-Christian days. One described by Edward Malouf prescribed that a sacred dough be placed in trees on the Anniversary of Christ's baptism. Unleavened bread was hung in trees in a piece of cloth. The day the pieces of dough were made into cakes shaped something like doughnuts. Edward Malouf described how he and another youth decided among themselves that they were going to determine whether these trees actually bowed down at night, as the local myth had been reported. So, they tied strings to the dough bag in a way it would have to break if the tree actually bowed over. The strings did not break.

Eblin Malouf reported that in earlier days in Kafr Akab it was believed that eclipses of the sun and moon were attacks by monsters, and pans and other noise makers were beaten to scare the monster away. This, of course, is a very common idea in most parts of the world whose knowledge of astronomy is virtually nil.