

EI-636  
CHARLES AZZI  
BIRTHDATE: AUGUST 10, 1900  
INTERVIEW DATE: JULY 19, 1995  
RUNNING TIME: 47:52  
INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.  
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ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: KIMBERLY MAIER  
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LEBANON, 1912  
AGE 12  
PASSAGE ON THE "ROCHAMBOUD"  
PORT OF EMBARKATION: BEIRUT, LEBANON; TO MARSEILLE, FRANCE; TO  
CHERBOURG, FRANCE  
OLD COUNTRY RESIDENCE: GUDRA, LEBANON  
UNITED STATES RESIDENCE (S): LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS

ORAL HISTORIANS NOTE:

LEVINE: Today is July 19, 1995, and I'm here with Mr. Charles Azzi. I'm at his home in Lawrence, Massachusetts. His wife, Mrs. Azzi, is here, and his son-in-law, Mr. Kramer, is also here with us. Mr. Azzi came from Lebanon in 1912 when he was 12 years old. Today, Mr. Azzi is 94, about to turn 95 next month.

AZZI: That's right. That's right.

LEVINE: Well, it's a pleasure to be here. And I'll ask the questions and whatever you remember, you can mention it, okay? First, if you'll say your birth date? The date you were born.

AZZI: August 10.

LEVINE: And the year?

AZZI: 1912?

LEVINE: 1900.

AZZI: 1900, I mean. Yeah.

LEVINE: Right, and you came here in 1912.

AZZI: That's right That's right. Yeah. Yeah.

LEVINE: And where were you born? Where in Lebanon?

AZZI: In Lebanon, I born in Jehdra, Lebanon.

LEVINE: Do you remember how to spell it?

AZZI: You got to spell it, G-U-D-R-A.

LEVINE: And did you live in the same town up until you left Lebanon when you were 12 years old?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: And say the name of it again? Jedra?

AZZI: Yeah. Jedra.

LEVINE: Jedra. Do you remember, what do you remember about Gudra?

AZZI: I remember about Gudra. We going to school. Private school.

LEVINE: What kind of school?

AZZI: There was no common school there. Only one you pay. The man could pay for his school. He's go to school.

LEVINE: Was it a religious school?

AZZI: No. No. They, they give you religion sometime, ah, you know, pray and everything. Plenty of some prayer in the school. But not the religion school. They knew Arabic, read and write and everything.

LEVINE: What age did you begin school?

AZZI: Do what?

LEVINE: When did you start school?

AZZI: Oh, they start around five years old. Six years old.

LEVINE: So you were in school from that age until 12? In Lebanon?

AZZI: Not exactly every year one.

LEVINE: What would you do?

AZZI: The last year, we stay one year study at the end, in 1912. All, 1912, 'til I came to this country.

LEVINE: So what would you do, you'd go to school for maybe a year, and then not go?

AZZI: Sometimes the school stopped. Just in the school, see? They didn't have enough money. But the one I go to, the school that's being run by the English group, in Lebanon, they learn Arabic and save for a few dollars a year. [ ]

American people. They run in the old country. The school belong the Americans.

LEVINE: Uh, huh.

AZZI: And they pay for it.

LEVINE: So you went to that school too?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: When you think about school, do you have any moemories about being at school or things that happeend at school?

AZZI: Yeah. We remember, we going to school, we have ball, we play with the ball. And things. Kind of game like ah, team on the other side and play the ball, hold one, this kind of ball, I don't remember exactly how we play it.

LEVINE: Did you learn English in this school?

AZZI: No. Didn't learn English at all in the school. My, at the end, I did not stay long enough to start the English.

LEVINE: So did you speak Arabic at home?

AZZI: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: And that's what you, school was also in Arabic?

AZZI: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: And were you a religious family? Was your family religious?

AZZI: Yeah. (pauses) Catholic.

LEVINE: Catholic.

AZZI: Maronite Catholic.

LEVINE: Mor-, say it again?

AZZI: Maronite. Catholic.

LEVINE: And do you remember any observances that you, any observances, religious observances that you celebrated when you were there?

AZZI: No. I don't remember. Only we have going to the school, and the school didn't mind what the religion you are. They take you. They didn't bother with the religion. They used to give us some time or so on like, they said, start [ ] translated to the Arabic. We used to say it in the school in Arabic. [recites song in Arabic]

LEVINE: You can say, that's what you're saying? Is this the Star Spangled Banner or the Pledge Allegiance? What?

AZZI: I think it's Star Spangled Banner, because the way it's said. [recites in Arabic] the country. Most of it.

LEVINE: Wow.

AZZI: I think we used to know it, in English we didn't know. My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty – that's what we, in Arabic, in English in our school. We used to say that song, finish it. But I forget all about it.

LEVINE: What was your father's name?

AZZI: My father. Shakir.

LEVINE: Shakir. And what was your mother's name?

AZZI: Mhabe.

LEVINE: Can you spell that?

AZZI: Hm?

LEVINE: Could you spell it? Can you spell your mother's name?

AZZI: Mhabe. H-A-P-A, I think.

LEVINE: Do you remember your mother's maiden name?

AZZI: My mother's maiden name?

LEVINE: Maiden name

AZZI: Yes. Azzi.

LEVINE: Before she was married?

AZZI: Look, I came here and my name is, I came here Kahil Shaker Khoury.

LEVINE: Oh. Spell that. You came here.

AZZI: K-L-I-L. I mean Shaker. S-H-A-K-E-R. Khoury. K-H-O-U-R-Y.

LEVINE: You came here, that was your name?

AZZI: Yeah. Under name, we did, we didn't put the family name. When I came here. Azzi. It's our family, is Azzi. But when I came here, I changed. You got to change your name when you got your citizenship, any name you want.

LEVINE: So in other words, you couldn't keep the name Khoury?

AZZI: No. I didn't keep it for long time. When I kept the citizen, I changed it. Charles S. Azzi.

LEVINE: So you took your mother's maiden name?

AZZI: Yeah. The maiden name Azzi, too.

LEVINE: And your father, what was his name?

AZZI: Shaker.

LEVINE: That was his first name?

AZZI: He's my father. Shaker, I mean Azzi.

LEVINE: (laughs) Okay, so your mother and your father had the same name.

AZZI: Yes. They were relatives.

LEVINE: Oh, they were related!

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: Were they like cousins? How were they related?

AZZI: Cousins.

LEVINE: Okay. Now, ah, did you have brothers and sisters?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: How many did you have?

AZZI: I have, my brother came with me.

LEVINE: What was his name?

AZZI: Said. Said or Sam. You could give him the name Sam.

LEVINE: And what would it be in Arabic?

AZZI: Said.

LEVINE: S-E-I?

AZZI: S-A-I-D, I think, Said.

LEVINE: And he came with you to this country?

AZZI: Yeah. I came with him.

LEVINE: And then what other brothers and sisters did you have?

AZZI: I have a sister here. Zahia. She was here before I came. With her father. In this country.

LEVINE: And how do you spell that sister's name?

AZZI: You know, they spell it all different kind. Z-H-, Z-H, Zah-, A-E-I.

LEVINE: Okay. So that sister was here with your father, and you came with your brother  
Said. And then your mother?

AZZI: Mother in old country.

LEVINE: She never came here?

AZZI: No.

LEVINE: And did you have any other brothers and sisters?

AZZI: Yeah. In old country. I have a brother in old country left.

LEVINE: And what was his name?

AZZI: The name Amine.

LEVINE: A-M...?

AZZI: I-N-E.

LEVINE: So your brother and your mother stayed in the old country.

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: Your father and sister were here.

AZZI: Yeah. We came with my brother here. To my father.

LEVINE: Now, do you remember, how old was your brother in relation to you? Said?  
Was he older, younger?

AZZI: Older me. He's, I think, when he came here, about 18 or 17 years old.

LEVINE: Did you have grandparents in Lebanon?

AZZI: Grand?

LEVINE: Grandparents?

AZZI: Yeah. Grandfather? Yes. I have grandfather in Lebanon. I left them there.

LEVINE: What do you remember about them? Your grandparents?

AZZI: Well, I used to go to their houses and everything.

LEVINE: And what would you do, or what would they be doing?

AZZI: Well, playing. It's a farm, and we're going to the ocean. Swimming. All the children.

LEVINE: What kind of a farm did they have?

AZZI: Farm? Oh, all kinds. We raise everything in the farm. They raise rooster, chicken, cow, everything.

LEVINE: Did you grow things? Did you grow vegetables?

AZZI: Yeah. Grow vegetables. Tomatoes. Everything. Vegetables. We grow everything in the farm. And even we grow wheat. Make a flour for ourselves. We didn't use, buy it.

LEVINE: When you think about the farm and the town and everything, how could you describe it? Describe what it looks like.

AZZI: Just a, it looked like what? Looked like a land with everything in it. You would come by [ ] and wheat and everything. And we, we plant the wheat for the, we collect them at summertime, and make hay, and we send 'em, when we need the flour we send them down the ground, in the factory, they ground it for us and then we take it home to make bread out of it.

LEVINE: Do you remember that process, that grinding? Brining it to the...?

AZZI: No.

LEVINE: Your grandfather was a farmer?

AZZI: Everybody farmer, yeah. Grandfather, other, all the work. There is no factory in the villages. All farmer. We was farmer. My grandfather was farmer, and everybody.

LEVINE: Did you ever help out on the farm?

AZZI: I help out on the land when my uncle used to take care of, when we were kids, when I am not in school. We help him with anything. We take the cows to the field. To eat. Take it out to the field. Outside.

LEVINE: Do you remember the house you lived in?

AZZI: House? Yeah. It's being built by stone . Everything. They didn't build house there with wood. All stone.

LEVINE: Was it a lot of rooms? Was it one big room?

AZZI: Big room. Everybody sleep. There is no bed, nothing.

LEVINE: What would you sleep on?

AZZI: A mattress.

LEVINE: And how about a stove? Do you remember?

AZZI: Stove? We haven't got no stove. Some of 'em were, but not, we didn't have a stove. We had a, a fireplace inside the house. We do our, work, we make, want to eat. Sometime like different eat.

LEVINE: Your mother cooked on the fire?

AZZI: Yeah. Always the woman cook there.

LEVINE: Could you remember any dishes that your mother cooked, that you particularly liked?

AZZI: I remember those, everything. [ ], kibbe, what a, [ ], grape leaf, stuff grape leaves, cabbage, [ ] all that kind of, different cook we do. [ ].

LEVINE: Did you grandmother cook as well?

AZZI: Grandmother? She used to be there. She help my mother.

LEVINE: Do you remember what you wore, mostly? What kind of clothing you wore?

AZZI: I wear clothes on the, yeah. Clothes with the pants, so big pants. We sometime we used to start the, work in the pants for the kids like here. Buy it for a kid.

LEVINE: Were there stores in your village?

AZZI: No. Stores.

LEVINE: No shops?

AZZI: No. No store. They, you have to go down [ ], city, or Beirut to get something.  
Nothing in the village.

LEVINE: Did you ever go to those, to Beirut?

AZZI: Yeah. We came from Beirut.

LEVINE: Your family came from Beirut.

AZZI: Yeah. On the ship. Came from Beirut to Marseilles.

LEVINE: Right. But why was it, when did your father come to America?

AZZI: (pause) I don't know. I couldn't tell you exactly. He must be come, 1900.

LEVINE: Right after you were born? Before you were born.

AZZI: Yeah. After I born.

LEVINE: So you never saw him, before you came here?

AZZI: No. No. I never know him.

LEVINE: So how come you and your brother came to this country at the time that you did?

AZZI: What do you mean?

LEVINE: Your father was here.

AZZI: Yeah. We came to my father.

LEVINE: How come you came in 1912? Why was it that you came here in 1912?

AZZI: The people they, from ship say, my brother, he wants to come here, so I says to my mother I want to come with my brother. She let me go with my brother and we came here.

LEVINE: Did you think you would be coming back?

AZZI: Oh, yeah. We were thinking coming back. Even my brother and my father. My father when he come here he tried to come back. And he come back. He left us here.

LEVINE: Oh! What had you heard? Did you write to your father when he was here?

AZZI: Oh, we used to write to him. Yes. And he used to write to us.

LEVINE: Oh, so what did you know about this country before you...?

AZZI: I didn't know nothing about the country. Just America. You go to work there and have a, when you get there you good work, and have a good time, and you make money and come back to the old country. That's all I heard before I came here. They said America. You want to go to America? You stay few years, couple of years, you get few dollars and come back. That's all. Lot of them come here, they never come back.

LEVINE: Do you remember saying goodbye to your mother and your grandparents?

AZZI: What?

LEVINE: Do you remember saying goodbye to your family?

AZZI: No.

LEVINE: And so what, you and your brother left for Beirut.

AZZI: We left from Beirut, yeah.

LEVINE: And then how long did it take you? You left from Cherbourg? No.

AZZI: No. From ah, Marseille.

LEVINE: Marseille, and then you went to Cherbourg and took the ship?

AZZI: Yeah. We got off Marseille on the train, to Cherbourg and have the ship to United States.

LEVINE: So how long did it take you to get to Cherbourg? How long did it take you from the time you left the little town, 'til you travelled...

AZZI: From where?

LEVINE: You went from Lebanon, to...

AZZI: Take me eight days to get to Marseille from Beirut. And take about 12 hours to get from the Marseille to Cherbourg. About eight hours on train. And then we get the trip to United States. Take us, we stay nine days in the ocean to get to Ellis Island. (laughs)

LEVINE: Was there anything that happened? Anything that you remember about the trip?

AZZI: No.

LEVINE: From, the trip from Lebanon to Cherbourg? When you were taking the train?

AZZI: From Lebanon, we didn't take the ship from Lebanon to the United States. We take it from Cherbourg to the United States.

LEVINE: But when you were taking the train before you got to the ship, do you remember anything about that? Any things that you saw?

AZZI: No. We stay on the train and we pass east of it. Five minutes we didn't get off in Paris.

LEVINE: You didn't.

AZZI: No. We stayed [ ] when we got there. When we going on the trip.

LEVINE: How did you and your brother feel? Were you excited about going to this country?

AZZI: I feel good. We come to my father. I feel good.

LEVINE: And the name of the ship?

AZZI: Rochamboud.

LEVINE: And what do you remember about those eight days when you were on the ocean coming here? What was that like, your ocean trip?

AZZI: Was good day and everything. They sing in the ship and everything. We were kids, you know? I didn't remember anything. It went wrong on the ship . There is no wrong thing in the ship. They were going very fine . There is no high sea, or anything. We didn't get dizzy, nothing.

LEVINE: Oh. So you said there was singing?

AZZI: They sing. A lot of people sing on the ship and playing guitar and everything.

LEVINE: Where were most, where were the people from that were on that ship?

AZZI: All over. Italian, all over. Arabic people, all over. All kind of people. Different language on the ship.

LEVINE: Now, do you remember when the ship came into the New York Harbor?

AZZI: Yeah. Remember, get to Ellis Island.

LEVINE: What do you remember? What were your impressions when the ship first came in?

AZZI: First time we got off on the ship and we stay on the line for examination.

LEVINE: What kind of examination did you get?

AZZI: Eye. Eye. And pull my hair. Everything. Went my head and all this, kind of disease in the eye.

LEVINE: Trachoma.

AZZI: Trachoma. But I did not have it. If you have it, put it out.

LEVINE: Did you, what was it like? Do you remember what Ellis Island looked like?

AZZI: Looked like some other city. Looked like, we didn't stay long on Ellis Island. They were in different room. Those going to different places. They were [ ]. We didn't go walk around on the island. We didn't walk around at all on the island. They keep us in the room and the ship come and take us to New York.

LEVINE: And then to the train station, you went?

AZZI: Yeah. The one, they want to go to the Fall River Line. When they want to go on the train, they take 'em in the train.

LEVINE: So nobody met you at Ellis Island?

AZZI: No! No. We have the number, they wrote the number and everything on our chest, where we going. The street and the number, Lawrence, Massachusetts. The conductor take care of the people.

LEVINE: Do you remember if you had to show a certain amount of money?

AZZI: No. We didn't show our money. I don't know if they asked. I'm a kid, if they ask. They didn't ask for money because we come to our father. If you didn't get nobody, sometimes they ask you how much money you have.

LEVINE: Was your father a citizen by that time, or not yet?

AZZI: No.

LEVINE: So, you took the train then, to Lawrence.

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: Well, why was it that your father came to Lawrence to begin with?

AZZI: He came to work at the, work and get money from USA. They need work.

LEVINE: But why Lawrence? Why did he happen to come to Lawrence instead of...?

AZZI: They said lot of factory in Lawrence. They could get a job, soon to get to the Lawrence, they give him work.

LEVINE: This was what, a textile mill?

AZZI: Cotton. Woolen.

LEVINE: So your father had a cousin, or not?

AZZI: Huh?

LEVINE: Did your father have any relatives in Lawrence when he came?

AZZI: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: So your father was a farmer when he was in Lebanon.

AZZI: Everybody farmer.

LEVINE: And then he came here and he worked in the factory.

AZZI: Yeah. In the factory, here.

LEVINE: So what do you remember as being new and different when you first came to this country? Do you remember things that struck you as different?

AZZI: Well, I came here, it's different all. We was on a farm. Here we came to the city. See? That's the difference. We used to be on a farm. Like here, somebody I know they said they on a farm, like we was have a farm in our country. That's all the same. Different city for us. I went to school here, because they wouldn't give me a work 'til I reach 14 years old.

LEVINE: Do how was the school here different from the school you had been in when you were in the old country?

AZZI: Well, in our country it's different from here. They learn you, they start you with the ABC – same they start in here.

LEVINE: So it was pretty much the same kind of thing.

AZZI: Yeah. The school I go, almost, almost look like the, start learning in Lebanon like I used to learn here, in English. But they learn you Arabic there.

END SIDE A

BEGIN SIDE B

LEVINE: Can you talk about what it was like for you learning English here?

AZZI: Huh?

LEVINE: How was it for you? Learning the English language?

AZZI: (laughs) I think they start, the teacher give you a story. The teacher, when I go, send me to the school here, they get a special school for immigrant kid here in Lawrence.

LEVINE: Oh. There were a lot of them? A lot of immigrant children?

AZZI: Yeah. Lot of them they was in school here. Immigrant. The children came from all countries. I went there and my English, she said, Kahlil! Yes. Stand up – I had a no what she say. I didn't answer. So the kids there. They before, they told me, stand up. They want you. She told me, read on page so and so. I just came to this country. I didn't know how to read. I didn't know the page.

I didn't know the 26. I didn't know. I didn't answer. And it must be the kids told her they didn't know nothing about English, so stop the... Call the principal, the principal, especial place for those who they didn't know nothing about English. They teach them all alone. That's where we start.

LEVINE: So you were with a small group.

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: Were there other children speaking Arabic in your group?

AZZI: Yeah. Lot of them. All that go to the high school at night. When you go to work, you want to go to school at night 'til you get 20, 18 years old. You have to go there. If you working.

LEVINE: Did your brother have to go?

AZZI: Yes. My brother go, I go to the night school. I go at the day school, then when I got the work, I have to go to night school.

LEVINE: Oh, until you're 18.

AZZI: Yeah. 18, 17. Or even, they take examine. If you pass the examine, you didn't have to go anymore.

LEVINE: Now where were a lot of the other immigrant children from?

AZZI: All over, all over. Italian, [ ]. All kinds. There was about 15 language in Lawrence. Different. Yeah, they say the 26 in Lawrence. I remember, they said different. Italian...

LEVINE: 26?

AZZI: Yeah. 26 different language. In Lawrence. Once, they say.

LEVINE: So after you left school, did you go to work in the mill also?

AZZI: Yeah. I work in the mill?

LEVINE: And what was that like? What was your job?

AZZI: Oh, I used to, cut, assemble. They make clothes. Cloth, you know. And the printed kind. They print the cloth different print and everything. I used to take the sample and take it the office, the girl write it what kind of clothes and everything, and come back. I left the printer and run the machine.

LEVINE: So did you continue working there?

AZZI: Hm?

LEVINE: Did you keep working at the mill?

AZZI: Yeah. I work there for a while. And then I stay out for a long time, and then went work in weave room. I learn to weave. I used to work weaving, that's all. When I work, I was weaving.

LEVINE: Did you like that better?

AZZI: Yeah. It good pay at that time.

LEVINE: So then did you stay doing the weaving, is that what you continued to do?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: For your whole work life?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: And when did you decide that you weren't going back to Lebanon?

AZZI: I didn't decide when I going back at all . I tell you truth.

LEVINE: You just didn't...

AZZI: It's just that my father come back and my brother stay here. We didn't, and after, I got married and stayed here.

LEVINE: What was it like seeing your father? Tell me about when you first arrived in Lawrence and you saw your father? Cause you had never really remmbered him?

AZZI: I didn't remember.

LEVINE: What was that like? When you met him for the first time?

AZZI: (laughing) Yeah. Yeah. We, you know, he met his son, two sons, you know the way it is come, and look. They kisses us and everything.

LEVINE: Was he like you expected him to be? Did you recognize him? Was he what you expected?

AZZI: I can't look at him, I didn't see him before. He just came to me. And I know he's my father when he...

LEVINE: Where did you meet him? The train station?

AZZI: No. In the street where he live.

LEVINE: Oh, you went to the house.

AZZI: Yeah. They brought us to the house. From the station. Train station.

LEVINE: Now your brother, Said. Was he, was he glad he had come to this country? How did he feel?

AZZI: He feel same thing. He feel, he liked this country and he went to work. He's 18, 17, 18, he could work. But he have to go to school at night, see?

LEVINE: So did you and your brother move in with your father? And was your sister there also?

AZZI: Yeah. My sister married here. She has her house of her own. She rent a house.

LEVINE: What was it like seeing her?

AZZI: (laughs)

LEVINE: You remembered here? You remembered your sister?

AZZI: No. I didn't. I didn't see her at all. I didn't remember her. She came before I recognize her. They told me, you got sister in the United State, with her father.

LEVINE: So then, how did you meet your wife?

AZZI: How'd I meet her? I don't know. Tell her how I meet her. (laughing)

LEVINE: No. You have to tell me for the tape. Do you remember?

AZZI: Her sister got married. And I was my best friend for my cousin. And she was her best for her sister. I met her, that's when [ ] got married and everything, I know her. We talk to her, talk and everything. That's when I met.

LEVINE: And do you have children?

AZZI: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: How many children?

AZZI: Four.

LEVINE: And what are their names?

AZZI: Barbara, Alice, Elaine and what's the third one – Barbara, Alice, Elaine, three.  
And Victor.

LEVINE: And your wife's name, and her maiden name?

AZZI: Victoria Naffa.

LEVINE: N-A-F-A

AZZI: N-A-F-A

MRS. AZZI: -H

LEVINE: N-A-F-A-H? Okay. Now, was there a big, or a sizeable Lebanese community here in Lawrence?

AZZI: Lot of Lebanese. They full the street, always. If you came here in that time, you got to the clothing store, you can Lebanese. In grocery store, Lebanese. In bakery, Lebanese. Wherever you got. Big community Lebanese. You stay here, you didn't have to, to be, learn English to go to here. You got yourself Arabic speaking, speaking Arabic here. Big community for Lebanese it was, when I came.

LEVINE: Were there like social clubs that people belonged to?

AZZI: Oh, yes! The coffee house, everything. You can stay together, drink coffee. Everything. They, they have places like we used to have in old country. They have it here in the United States.

LEVINE: And is that true now? Is it true now, today?

AZZI: Not much today. Different today. They didn't have those things. All the old people die, or the new generation is born here. They do whatever some other thing, American.

LEVINE: How is this phase of your life, now that you're retired?

AZZI: Good.

LEVINE: Good?

AZZI: I think now life is good. And that I go some places, I go three times in Lebanon and come back.

LEVINE: Oh.

AZZI: After I retire.

LEVINE: How did you feel when you went to Lebanon?

AZZI: Good. I feel I like to stay there. But my children here. I want to stay. And I got lot of relatives in Lebanon, too. My nephew. My cousin. Everything.

LEVINE: Do you consider yourself part Lebanese and part American?

AZZI: Hm?

LEVINE: How do you consider yourself? Part Lebanese and part American?

AZZI: Yeah. I can say the two. Two of them. I got my children here. I got nephews there and everything. Same thing.

LEVINE: Do you think you still carry on some of the ways of the old country?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: Like what do you do that is something that you learned in Lebanon that you keep doing in this country? Is there anything? Any habits or customs? Even attitudes that you carried over from Lebanon?

AZZI: Well, you see, in Lebanon, we used to be a farmer. Nothing else. But now, I'm here. The city. We used to movie and everything. They didn't have it in Lebanon. Movie and everything like they have it here. That's why. When I lived there, I like it. I like Lebanon, but I can't do it now. With family here, I have to live with my family. I like to go to visit. I got three times to visit Lebanon. And come back.

LEVINE: What do you feel satisfied about? Is there anything that you've done in your lifetime that makes you feel good? Anything that you've done that makes you feel like you achieved something or makes you feel good that you've done?

AZZI: Well, I feel good I came here, and I work and make home and everything. I feel good about that. See? Because I make home, I got children, and I have the things I have. Stay here, I got money, that's why I feel good.

LEVINE: And did you ever have any heroes? People that you looked up to, that you thought were really someone special? Do you remember every having heroes in your lifetime?

AZZI: Well, I like the scenery in the United States. I went to Niagra Fall and those different place. And I like that. I went to Lebanon. I like to see Lebanon all over again. That's why I come back here.

LEVINE: Is there anybody that's influenced you in your life? That was very important influence on you?

AZZI: Anybody?

LEVINE: Any person you looked up to?

AZZI: What can I tell you? I got a lot of people I care for. In old country, used to get my brother. He died. I got children. My nephew. I'd like to see him and everything.

LEVINE: Is there anything else? Do you have grandchildren.

MRS. AZZI: No.

AZZI: No.

LEVINE: So is there anything else you can think of, as far as your coming to this country and making a new life and anything else that you can think of that you want to say? Did you become a citizen?

AZZI: Yeah.

LEVINE: What was that like? You had to take an exam?

AZZI: Yeah. Take an exam. Some question they ask you from the constitution of United State.

LEVINE: Yeah.

AZZI: Yeah. I answered the questions. And they give me the citizen. But now, easy. You wrote it. Sometime you didn't have to answer questions. They give you citizen. These days.

LEVINE: Oh, really? Okay. Well, in other words, in a way, you'd like to go back to Lebanon, but you're quite satisfied with your life as you lived here.

AZZI: Yeah. I'm satisfied to live here. I'll go for Lebanon for seeing, and see my relatives and come back here. It's my, my life, my kids and everything here. Like to live here.

LEVINE: Okay. Well I want to thank you very much.

AZZI: You're welcome

LEVINE: Very interesting interview. And I've been talking with Charles Azzi. And we are in Lawrence, Massachusetts. It's July 19, 1995, and this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I'm signing off.

END INTERVIEW