



*Established 1964
Dedicated to the
Advancement of Education
of Assyrians*



NINEVEH

FIRST AND SECOND QUARTER 1991

VOLUME 14 NO. 1 & 2



***Milton Malek — an Assyrian — the inventor of
converted rice that came to be known as
Uncle Ben's Rice or Golden Pearl.***

CULTURAL — EDUCATIONAL — SOCIAL

NINEVEH

FIRST AND SECOND QUARTER 1991

VOLUME 14 NO. 1 & 2

Julius N. Shabbas Editor
Joel J. Elias Ass't. Editor
Ashour Mouradkhan Ass't. Editor
Assyrian Section
Peggie J. Hernandez Circulation

POLICY

ARTICLES SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION WILL BE SELECTED BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF ON THE BASIS OF THEIR RELATIVE MERIT TO THE ASSYRIAN LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND CURRENT EVENTS.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS MAGAZINE ARE THOSE OF THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORS AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF NINEVEH.

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ADDRESS LETTERS TO

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Assyrian Periodicals

We urge our readers to read and support the Assyrian publications. The active participation of all Assyrians is the only guarantee of the success of Assyrian periodicals.

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of publication**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Julius:

Enclosed please find a check in the sum of \$60.00 from ourselves and the girls to *Nineveh*. This is a small contribution for your good work and efforts.

Thank you.

Anonymous

Dear Julius:

I was very pleased to receive the last issue of *Nineveh* some time ago. I hope I'll be able to get it regularly. I must also mention how glad I am that you know our family as you mentioned in a previous letter.

No doubt you are following the news from the Middle East. I wonder if you have any relatives left in Baghdad. My husband and I have many relatives and friends who are in Iraq and are unable to leave. Some are even with the army in the south. It is very sad what is going on. Let's pray not much harm will come out of this.

With this letter I am including an article for *Nineveh* about Milton Y. Malek, an Assyrian, who is the inventor of Uncle Ben's rice. I am sure you'll find it interesting. Mr. Malek, who lives in Carmel, California, is sadly not known by our Assyrian people. A lot has been written about him in the foreign press but nothing in our Assyrian publications. It would be nice to do so, especially now that he is 81, and his German wife is 75.

I enjoy writing articles, etc., but my typing is terrible. I hope you'll forgive me for that, but I thought it would be clearer if typed.

Regards and best wishes.

Lucrece De Matran
Buckinghamshire, England

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

Thank you for your kind letter. I am enclosing some material for publication in *Nineveh* if you wish so. I am looking forward to future issues of *Nineveh*, which has become the major Assyrian magazine in the United States. We are all proud of the Assyrian Foundation of America.

Solomon S. Solomon
Chicago, IL

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

Thank you for your letter of October 20, and for the copies of *Nineveh* magazine that you so kindly sent us.

Our Assyrian broadcasters greatly appreciate your generosity, and will certainly acknowledge all material used on the air.

We look forward to receiving future issues.

Elizabeth Berky
A/Resources Supervisor
SBS Radio 2EA
Bondi Junction, Australia

Dear Julius:

The letter in Russian you re-addressed to me is of great interest. It came from Tbilisi, capital of Georgia and is written by Nikolay Betboonov whose family had been described in episode "The eyewitness tells his story" — chapter 1.

They have read chapter 1 in *Nineveh* magazine you had sent and they give their comments. These Assyrian readers, on behalf of which Nikolay writes, really are "characters" of the book who come alive and speak to us now. It is interesting! Enclosed please find a little shortened translation of Nikolay's letter. I find this emotional and dramatic letter worthy of publication in *Nineveh*.

Iliya Vartanov
Chicago, IL

Editor's Note: Nikolay Betboonov's letter appears in this issue.

Dear Editor:

Due to your commitment to excellence in publishing an Assyrian magazine, I have enclosed a fee to become a regular subscriber of *Nineveh*. Please regard this letter as a form of appreciation in acknowledging your accomplishments.

Dr. Manfred Alkhass
San Jose, CA

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

Enclosed please find my check in the amount of \$30.00 to cover:

Renewal of my annual subscription to *Nineveh* magazine for the year 1991;

One year's initiation subscription to your publication for my nephew, Edward Amirkhas.

Nathaniel Eshoo
Northridge, CA

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$15.00 for a subscription to your magazine.

Please begin with your next issue. Thank you.

Aida Arsanis
Van Nuys, CA

Dear Editor:

I would like to subscribe to *Nineveh* magazine. Enclosed is a check for the amount of \$15.00 for an annual subscription beginning from the first of January 1991. I will be very grateful if you would send me a copy of Volume 13 No. 4.

I wish all the best success to *Nineveh* magazine.

Sandra B. Petros
Sherman Oaks, CA

Dear Julius:

God's blessing to all the kind people of the world. Thank you ever so much for sending me the last issue of *Nineveh* magazine. I enjoyed reading it very much but at the same time I felt very sad, as it brought back painful thoughts of hard times of the past. During World War II our Assyrian men were taken to the front. Our mothers, young, without any education, were left with 2, 3, 4 and 5 children.

We lived in one of the Azerbaijan villages. Our mothers worked in the fields from early morning till night for nothing. Those were hard times. Only thanks to God and kind people of all nationalities who helped each other, sharing the last piece of bread, we survived.

I remember those days when our Assyrian friends from Tbilisi, Georgia, U.S.S.R., namely Basmat, Zozan (late), Nubar, Nargiz, and others, used to come to our village and together with my mother walked to the village in the hilly area about 10-12 km away from our village to exchange clothes, dishes, whatsoever they had, for corn, barley, flour, nuts, etc.

Here is one episode of their "journey" which was later on told by our friends. They used to remember those days whenever they came to our place to see us after the war. "One day Basmat, Nubar, Zozan, Nargiz, my mother (Dora) and Hadley walked to that village to exchange their things. They started on foot at dark so that they could reach the village early in the morning.

"My father's friend and his family lived in that village. They stayed at their place till midnight and after having exchanged everything they had to walk back again at dark. Each of them carried a heavy sack on the back and one or two bags in the hands, and plodded down the mountains.

"It was as dark as pitch. They groped in the dark through the forest, bushes and thorns. In those days there were many deserters in the forests and mountains. They often attacked people and robbed them.

"While moving slowly they all of a sudden heard Hadley scream at the top of her voice: 'Oh, they have caught me.' The others even didn't remember how they found themselves on the ground under the bushes, gasping with fright, moaning pitifully and waiting for the worst. No sounds could be heard but Hadley's groan. My mother appeared to be the bravest. She managed to heave herself up on her shaky legs and groped to the place where the moan was heard from. She could see nobody. Then she groped nearer and nearer. She saw Hadley lying on the ground moaning and groaning. Hadley could neither speak nor move. She had lost the use of her tongue. They didn't know what to do to save her. As they had no medicine, they made her drink her own water. They took off her load, then gathered together and picked her up bodily and groaning under the weight of the heavy burden, they plodded on."

Many Assyrian women were widowed by the war. All children from an early age, side by side with their mothers, worked in the fields to make their living. In those dreadful days, people lived in a sad state of poverty.

Many people perished from hunger. In order to survive, adults and children used to go to the fields to pick up wheat or barley-ears (shible) after harvest.

I'll never forget the day when I took a little sack and together with my sisters and many Assyrian women, old and young, walked to the fields. As the fields were rather far away from our village, we had to start early in the morning to have more time to search for wheat or barley-ears. Hungry, thirsty, with the torrid sun burning us, we searched on and on. Nobody even cared for bleeding scratches. The only desire was to find one more wheat-ear.

In the evening, hungry, thirsty and exhausted, but glad to have got some wheat-ears, people were going to go back home when quite suddenly three horsemen appeared with long whips in their hands. They surrounded us all and took away our sacks. I was a little girl of about 7, and I cried bitterly begging them to give back my sack. I thought those "giants" sitting on their horses would be sorry for a little girl whose father had given his life for their land, but alas! They were too wicked!

I suffered much. I couldn't stop crying though my sisters and others tried to calm me down. Only my dear, kind mother could assuage my sorrow by embracing me and saying with tears in her eyes: "You must not cry, you are your father's daughter." I am proud of my father though I don't remember him, but those who knew him used to remember him as the kindest, cleverest and bravest one.

Though there were wicked people who created much trouble and did much harm to poor, uneducated people, there were also many kind people, too. People of all nationalities lived and worked side by side helping each other. Having read your magazine I felt very happy to find out that we Assyrians are not orphans — we have a "Mara" (protector).

In conclusion, I wish to state that I am proud of the members of the Assyrian Foundation and their supporters for being so kind to and "Mara" of those who are in need.

God bless you all! Best wishes.

Nadya Davidova
Tbilisi, Georgia, U.S.S.R.

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

I wish to extend our sincere thanks for mailing us the *Nineveh* magazine issues 3 and 4.

We found the articles most interesting and very educational. Seeing the photos of relatives and friends made us very happy.

I am enclosing my personal check for \$50.00 for the annual subscription of *Nineveh* for ourselves as well as a gift subscription to Mrs. Emilia Moushoulof of Australia. If possible please start Mrs. Moushoulof's subscription with Volume 13 No. 3 Third Quarter, 1990.

Sweetlana Yaldaei and Victor Jamal
Bronxville, NY

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

I got your name from Mr. Iliya Vartanov in Chicago, and I understand you are one of the people behind *Nineveh* magazine, of which I would like to be a subscriber in the future.

As for myself, I am a Swedish scholar interested in questions of Ethnicity and nationality; and I especially have taken a great interest in Assyrians for many years now (ten years ago I wrote a book on Syrian-Orthodox immigrants in Sweden).

My current project is focused on Assyrians and Armenians in various parts of the Diaspora. As part of my work, I will be visiting the U.S. this spring. Thus, I am planning to be in the San Francisco-Berkeley area in late March, before going to Chicago.

While there (in San Francisco) I will try to contact you, as I believe you belong to the kind of people of the greatest interest to me; people who are, in whatever capacity, more or less actively involved in the "Assyrian question."

So I hope to be seeing you, and wish you all the best.

Dr. Ulf Björklund
Dept. of Social Anthropology
Stockholm University, Sweden

Dear Sirs:

Warm Assyrian greetings.

Please find enclosed herewith a check for the sum of \$100.00 as our subscription to future editions of your magazine *Nineveh*. Please credit our account accordingly.

We look forward to receiving *Nineveh* regularly in the near future.

Petros Sando Shamoon, Chairman
Assyrian Culture & Advice Centre,
Ealing, London

Dear Sir:

Thank you for sending us your esteemed magazine and I hope you have received the two issues of our newly-born bulletin.

If so, could you please advertise it so that Assyrians wanting to have some reading material in French could subscribe to it.

Especially worthy of publication are Iliya Vartanov's articles about the Siberian exile of Assyrians in Russia, articles we need with the utmost interest. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Jean-Paul Sliva, Chairman
Association Assyrophile de France
Saint-Jory, France

Editor's Note: You may subscribe to their publication at the following address:

*Bulletin d'Information
Association Assyrophile de France
39 Chemin du Canou
31790 Saint-Jory, France*

Dear Julius:

The painful war in the Persian Gulf is touching each one of us in one way or another. Here is the reaction of our 22-year-old Shumon which is expressed quite candidly. Having an Assyrian father and an American-born mother, Shumon's reaction may be worth sharing with your *Nineveh* readers, at least this is what my brother Mikhael Pius suggested too.

Also I am enclosing a second article, which recently appeared in our *Billings Gazette*, the largest Montana newspaper, about me. Sad as the occasion is, both of these articles have reminded many of our friends and community people to keep praying for our loved ones (those helpless victims in Iraq, whatever their ethnic origin, and the U.S. servicemen and women). I have received dozens of calls of support and short notes from people who have read the articles.

All we can do is **pray hard**, as we have been doing for a while, so that our merciful God will soon bring this horrible human slaughter to a peaceful conclusion. Amen.

With our best regards and appreciation for your dedication and hard work on *Nineveh*.

Wiska (Basil) Pius
Miles City, Montana

Dear Editor:

Enclosed please find a copy of an announcement regarding Mr. Hannibal Alkhas, the famous Assyrian artist and poet, and three books translated into Assyrian by his father, the late Addi Alkhas.

The announcement refers to three books, "Odyssey" and "Iliad" by Homer, and "Kiila O'Demneh." The translation of these books had been given to a person who lived and died in the United States of America.

It is our National responsibility to try to locate these translations and inform Mr. Hannibal Alkhas as of their whereabouts. You are free to translate the announcement into other languages and publish it and even pass it on to others as you see necessary.

Your assistance would be highly appreciated by this organization and Mr. Hannibal Alkhas.

Walter J. Yaeger
President, Assyrian American
Assoc. of Southern Calif.
No. Hollywood, CA

Hannibal Alkhas
3225 Harbor St. #23 A
Pittsburg, CA 94565
Tel: (415)439-1409

UNCLE BEN'S or UNCLE MALEK?

by Lucrece De Matran

The story of Milton Malek — an Assyrian — the inventor of converted rice that came to be known as Uncle Ben's Rice or Golden Pearl.

Milton Malek is an Assyrian American. He now resides in Carmel, Calif. with his wife Inge. He once proudly introduced himself as a Zeraya of the Jelu tribe.¹ He was born in Persia.² His wife Inge says in her article about her husband,³ "His father had become a Presbyterian through the influence of American Missionaries;⁴ with their help he was educated in the U.S.A., and became a U.S.A. citizen. Later he received his degree in divinity in Edinburgh in Scotland and went back to the country of his birth, but during the revolution in 1919 the family was to leave Iran." Here Inge is referring to the march of thousands upon thousands of Assyrians who walked hundreds of miles from Iran to Iraq seeking refuge from their enemies. While most of the Assyrians stayed in Iraq, some families left for the U.S.A. via India, departing from Iraq by ships from the port of Basra.⁵

Milton grew up in Richmond, Virginia, then moved to Oak Park, Illinois. He had watched his mother cook rice "each kernel separate like pearls." He never knew that one day his name was going to be given to rice. "It was a revolution in rice," says F. Taylor in his article written in 1948.⁶ He describes Milton as a . . . youthful good looking . . . American still in his thirties.

The story had begun in California one Sunday morning in 1938 when Milton and his friend Murray Brookman⁷ had gone horseback riding. Brookman had mentioned his concern about millions of pounds of rice going to waste in the upper Sacramento valley, because the States could not send rice to Japan anymore, California's main customer, for there was an embargo since Japan had attacked China. The rice merchants were having a bumper crop. Malek, as his friends called him and as he likes to be called, wondered why Americans did not use more rice themselves. The answer was that American housewives did not know how to cook it, especially the short grain. It became a sticky mess which nobody liked. Malek wondered if it was possible to can it. Brookman had answered, "If you can find a way of canning rice you'll be doing something that the biggest canners in the country can't do." This was a challenge.

Malek knew a lot about rice. He could cook it just as well as his mother could, "al dente," as Inge puts it. He also knew about canning for he had seen his mother canning fruit. He went right to her kitchen



and started experimenting with rice canning. He soon realized it was not easy, but would not give up. He wrote to a canning factory and asked them to can some rice for him as an experiment. They did. The result was a failure. Malek was an educated man and took refuge in books. He went to a library and read anything he could find about rice. He found to his amazement that there were 2,000 varieties of rice. One day as he was looking through the shelves of a library, he came across an old diary of an English traveler who described how the natives of Assam in India grew a type of rice called Patna and before milling it, while still in hulls, they semi-boiled it and then spread it to dry. The traveler also had made the comment that in those parts of India there was no beri-beri or pellagra.⁸ The boiling process and the non-existence of the disease of beri-

beri, which is caused usually by Vitamin B deficiency, especially in a community where rice is the base food, sparked Malek's imagination. He wrote to the State Agriculture College — Rice Experimental Station — at Biggs in the Sacramento valley in California, and asked them for some paddy rice with the husks still on. The director sent a small bag. Malek got some interns in a nearby hospital interested and persuaded them to let him use the hospital equipment to steam the rice in their sterilization vat. Then he spread it for some hours on the roof of his house to dry. It was then ready to be milled but there was no mill available to him. Luckily Malek found a scientist who had picked up a hand mill during his travels in Asia. Finally, he had some processed rice for canning. He took it to the canning company laboratory and they put it in cans. A few days later he opened the cans and the rice rolled out beautifully, "each kernel separate."

Malek had found the secret of canning rice. He was overjoyed. He was advised by friends to go and see a patent attorney. He did. He found that that was not as easy as registering your name in a book. The patent attorneys wanted a chemical analysis of the canned rice. "This meant," says Taylor in his article, "several hundred dollars and Malek had spent his final dollar." He read an advertisement that a chemist needed someone to feed his animals, i.e., mice and rabbits, so Malek went to see him and made a deal with him. He would feed the animals if the chemist agreed to do a free analysis of the rice. The results satisfied the attorneys. The rice had retained its vitamins, but there was still the California Rice Growers Association who would have their say. The directors wanted a more official analysis. The rice was then handed to Dr. Agnes Fay Morgan of the University of California, one of the top authorities on vitamins. This meant nine months of testing and a large sum of cash. The Association financed the analysis and retained Malek on a small job sending him to southern California to oversee the canning of 10,000 cans of rice for a sale test in Los Angeles. It was now up to housewives to accept or reject the Malekized rice.⁹

In fact, at one time when he was in the canning factory he boiled the rice himself, 500 pound batches each day and the helpers put it in cans. Sadly Malek had to enter a hospital for some medical treatment, so failed the Association in completing the job.

Meanwhile the war broke out. Malek hurried to Washington and offered his canned rice as well as some of the steamed and dried rice to the army. By now he had come to the conclusion that what the world needed was not canned rice but dried processed rice.

He was now supported by Dr. Agnes Morgan's laboratory findings, "which had revealed that Malekized rice retained up to 65 percent of the thiamine (Vitamin B1) of raw brown rice, and 80 percent of

the pantothenic acid, or more than double the vitamin content of ordinary polished rice." The process of cooking rice while in husks under steam pressure drove the vitamins out of the bran and into the kernel itself, but more significant is that the germs in the end of the kernel that made rice germinate were sterilized. It also disintegrated the bran oil and hardened the kernel surface so that rice weevils were unable to gnaw into it.

It was then that things began to take shape for Malek. The quartermaster's food research officers, who were trying to find ways of improving food in the Pacific area, ordered 5,000 bags of processed rice to be shipped and tested in all areas of army operations. Malek at this time was in San Francisco and was summoned out to the Presidio. There he met the colonel in charge of the Cooks and Bakers School, who already had heard of him. The colonel was at that time actually testing some rice. He encouraged Malek to enlist in the school. Malek rose soon to the rank of sergeant and was then assigned to Fort Meade, Maryland, as instructor in the School of Dehydrated Foods. His chances of working on his invention were slim. Thanks are due to Colonel Paul P. Logan, assistant to the Quartermaster General in Charge of improving the army's diet, who secured Malek's release so that as a civilian he could get some processing machinery made for the rice millers in the army. The army wanted processed rice badly. His release from the army in 10 minutes after a telephone call, set a record and was written up in Ripley's Believe It or Not. Malek went to a number of manufacturers but had no luck. Finally he was able to induce the General American Transportation Corporation of Chicago, builders of tank cars and food processing equipment, to design and construct the huge pressure steamers, rotary driers and coolers needed by the millers to process rice. By now the California Rice Growers Association had spent half a million dollars on a processing plant in Sacramento.

Just when the war ended the plant was finished and ready for milling California's last two crops. The U.S.A. was equipped to grow great amounts of rice but there were not enough mills to cope with the rice production. Malek licensed General American Transportation Corporation with agencies around the world to manufacture processors and to license mills everywhere under his patent.¹⁰

Rice millers everywhere were asking for milling units and G.A.M. perfected a smaller unit for smaller mills. While the mills were rolling, Malek finally thought he had done what he had intended to do, i.e., to improve the rice for rice eaters by making it sterilized and more nutritious, and to help the rice growers to market their produce. He was ready to go

back to his original job, i.e., popularizing art. But that was not to be, for he was asked to go on a campaign for popularizing the rice eating habit. He was sent all around the world. China no less took the processing idea to heart. His wife Inge says in her article, "We now know that his process is used throughout China, naturally without even having to honor the patent rights," she goes on to say. "The patent ran out years ago."

There remains to mention that the Harvard Encyclopaedia of Ethnic Groups says of Malek, "M. Younan Malek . . . who invented a widely used process for converting rice and is now working to promote fortified adobe as an inexpensive replacement for cement in developing countries."¹¹

Mr. and Mrs. Malek are spending their retirement years in sunny California.

NOTES:

1. The Assyrians of Turkey and Iran before their migration to Iraq during the First World War were spread into many villages. Even though it has been about three quarters of a century since they left those regions they are still proud to make known which village they belonged to. Each village had its little hamlets, hence the reference 'Zeryaya of Jelu.'
2. The story why his people were in Persia near Urmia rather than in Jelu when he was born was very romantic as he told it to the writer. It was in fact an adaptation of Assley-Karam story, the well known Romeo-Juliet of the Van area. See *Assley Karam*, by Ishaia Ilisha Khanno, 1976, Chicago, Nineveh Press. There is also an opera of the romance in Azerbaijani Turkish.
3. Inge Malek, "Fame is when your name becomes a verb," *The Harold Weekend Magazine*, Oct. 9, 1988. Mrs. Malek is a free-lance writer. She has written for German newspapers, including *Die Zeit*, and her biography was published in Germany in 1986.
4. On the subject of foreign missionaries in Persia, see Eden Naby, *The Assyrians of Iran: A Reunification of a 'Millet'*, 1906-1914, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Issue 8, 1977, p. 237ff, reprinted in the *Assyrian*, Vol. 5, Issue 10, 1988, published in London.
5. See the *Assyrian*, *ibid*, Vol. 3, Issue 4, 1986 and following issues, where the story of another Assyrian family going on the same route to the U.S.A. at the same time has been serialized.
6. F. J. Taylor, *Revolution in Rice*, in *Collier's*, Jan. 10, 1948.
7. *Ibid*. He was a big businessman dealing with food in San Francisco.
8. Diseases.
9. See note 10.
10. See the trademark on page 1 of this article. Now the term Malekized rice is not used. Instead, the converted rice is known under such company names as Uncle Ben's or Golden Pearl, etc. M. Malik is not connected with the business any more. The patents ran out many years ago.
11. *The Harvard Encyclopaedia of American Ethnic Groups*, p. 160ff. Also on this note, the *New York Times* promoter M. Slade has this to say (in 1980) about, ". . . the Acadians and Assyrians" — "that ancient kingdom may have fallen, but 150,000 of its descendants live on in the United States" — "then goes on to mention Milton Malek, the inventor of converted rice."

YOU CAN'T BE AN ASSYRIAN!!!

by Odisho Bet Ashur

My father softly caressed his forehead to ease his tension. He searched for the proper words to say. After all, this was the University of Chicago, one of the leading universities in the world, an incomparable intellectual colony. The massive and elaborate neo-gothic buildings and structures and Victorian interiors demanded quiet veneration and rational contemplation. The best that enlightened Europe could offer would not stomach an Easterner's impassioned complaints about some minor pedagogical wrong doing.

After taking a deep breath my father walked forward. He was heading toward the museum guide at the Oriental Institute of the University. The guide had hurried our tour group of about twenty people past the Assyrian section of the museum uttering words like "ruthless" and "barbaric" when pointing to the stylized reliefs of ancient Assyria. Western man had so transcended the uncouth ancients that the tour group, chiefly composed of elderly Americans, smiled and nodded as they followed the guide, who often swung her arms wide and orchestrated her sentences with unreasonable confidence. No scholar worth his salt would dare to speak with such authority concerning a civilization as ancient as Assyria. This middle aged short lady with a beehive hairdo was in the bliss of boastful ignorance.

Father had stopped walking in the middle of the tour. He had to calm his temper. My father was no Assyriologist. He was at best an amateur historian and realized and accepted this fact. He had deep admiration and respect for Western scholars and seldom questioned anything they had put forth for consumption of the Easterners. However, when their orientalism got a bit out of hand, rendering his ancestors ruthless plundering savages, he was deeply saddened. While reading Carlton Coon's book *Caravan, the Story of the Middle East*, a book consulted habitually by journalists in the 1960s and 70s, father had decided that many in the West despised Assyrians and sought to blemish their honor. Coon characterized the Assyrians as a group of ruthless invaders and robbers who enjoyed "killing thousands of one people and skinning others alive by the dozens, cutting off hands and impaling some bodies, while decapitating others by the hundreds." By no means was Coon alone in his endeavor. Elementary and high school history textbooks all over the United States reminded school children that the Assyrians were the cruelest people on earth.

Father made his move at the museum guide when the tour ended.

"Excuse me," he said to the guide, "I want to tell you that I was very disappointed in the way you handled the Assyrian section."

The guide gave a puzzled look and asked why.

"You explained every little artifact in the Egyptian hall and then just rushed everyone through the Assyrian section. You didn't even talk about the Assyrian winged bull. It's the finest piece you have in the museum. And then to call the Assyrians ruthless and barbaric is just too much. You have no right!"

The guide took off her black rimmed, bi-focal glasses and sighed. "Look, my dear," she said. "People are not interested in the Assyrians very much . . ."

"People aren't interested?" My father's voice grew louder "You don't do this for entertainment do you?"

"No, I don't do this for entertainment! Why are you so interested in this anyway?" she asked.

"I'm Assyrian," he declared.

"Oh please," the guide shook her head, attempting to correct the nonsense she heard. "You can't be an Assyrian. Assyrians disappeared after the fall of their empire. You are one of those Iraqi Christians . . ."

In his book, Carlton Coon had stated that the Assyrians "have no direct linguistic or ethnic survivors, which is probably a mercy."

"Wait a minute," my father interrupted. "You have no right to say that. We say we're Assyrians because we are! You may not believe it and that's your choice. But you have no right to tell us we aren't Assyrians."

"Well . . . we're scientific here, not emotional," she said as she patted her beehive hairdo.

"Calling our people ruthless and barbaric is scientific?"

"Well, if they were and we say they were, we're on the mark, aren't we?"

"If the Assyrians were ruthless for killing people in battle," Father said, "then so were the Egyptians, the Romans, and the British — who hung severed heads in the Tower of London for all to see. And let's not forget the Americans who dropped atomic bombs on Japan. You don't pass cigars around in battle. You kill."

"The British and Americans don't make sculptures of barbaric acts, my dear," the guide retaliated. "They are a bit more civilized than that."

"So if the Assyrians weren't so honest as to document their activities in war, they wouldn't be so ruthless and barbaric. Being civilized, then, is being a good liar and deceiver."

The guide was not moved. "I think we are talking about your ancestry. You ought to read Oppenheim. He was a great Assyriologist."

"He was an idiot." My father was visibly angry now. "He never bothered to study modern Assyrians. It seems that the work of most Assyriologists ends with the fall of the Assyrian empire. What about the Assyrians that survived later on? Why shouldn't they be of interest to Assyriologists?"

At this point a bearded young Englishman approached us smiling. "I couldn't help overhearing your discussion. Sorry. My name is George. I am an Assyriology student. I don't like Oppenheim either, but I do have a tad of respect for him." He went on about why Assyriologists could not be involved with later Assyrian history, using perplexing social scientific words that my father, although versed in history, couldn't decipher.

Father finally turned his bearded face to show his Semitic profile for comparison with those of Assyrian reliefs. "Look," he said, "just look at this Assyrian face. How could you say we are not Assyrians?"

The Englishman made the point that, although we might look Assyrian, it did not make us Assyrians, for others looked Assyrian as well. If our speech was similar to that of ancient Assyria, it did not make us Assyrians because others spoke similar Semitic languages. Living in Assyria did not mean much since other ethnic groups lived in Assyria.

The common sense of the shopkeeper, Karl Marx once said, was at times more sound than that of a scholar.

After glancing at his watch, my father realized that I was late to Raabi Haido's Assyrian class. Before departing, father placed his hands on the shoulders of the guide and the Englishman.

"Why do you make things so complicated?" he asked the Englishman.

My father was both elated and saddened after we had departed. I watched him out of the corner of my eye as he smiled and quietly cursed the British to himself when we drove on Lake Shore Drive.

I never understood why my father has placed so much importance on his encounter with the guide at the museum. I was puzzled by his excitement. Would this be the case if my father was of another nationality? Would a Greek be so anxious at the thought of quarreling with a museum guide about his history? Would a German? An Arab?

I told him that I thought it wasn't that important to argue about such matters. What good would it do. Our ancestors had passed from the scene so long ago. It all seemed so pointless for us to be so concerned with them.

Father did not like my reasoning. He shook his head and quietly said, "It's your history, it's a part of you."

After my second year in college, my father passed away. He did not live to see me graduate with an MA degree in Assyriology, to have me stand at his side when arguing with scholars. I dedicated my degree to his memory, and to the challenging of all who sought to tarnish ancient Assyria's honor.

I visited my father's grave yesterday. The mint plants that my father so fancied, planted there by my mother, brushed his small gravestone as the

summer wind periodically stirred them, giving life to silence. Fond and painful memories drifted back and forth in my mind. So much that needed to be said would remain unstated.

Although somewhat delayed, my understanding of father's love of history has arrived. I now know myself better and perceive my place in the world. It's part of being an Assyrian. And no Western scholar could ever understand that. It is not trivial enough to be studied and revered in Gothic styled universities. Rational thought wouldn't know what to do with it, this love of ancestors.

KASHA KHANDO YONAN (1888-1950)

by Solomon Sawa Solomon

Among the Assyrian educators in this century, three names rise above others by virtue of the greatest impact they had in preserving the Assyrian language. All three had established schools that graduated large numbers of Assyrians. They were all patriots of the first order who loved and served their nation without seeking any material rewards. The educators I refer to are: Kasha Yousip D'Kalita (1869-1952), Raabi Yacoub D'Yacoub (1896-1988), and Kasha Khando Yonan (1888-1950).

Kasha Yousip had established the famous Assyrian school in Mosul in 1921. Raabi Yacoub established the Union schools in Hanaidi (1924-1938) and later in Habbaniya (1938-1944). The stories of both educators have been told in some detail in recent years and they are well known; that is why the purpose of this article is to tell the story of the third educator, Kasha Khando Yonan, who did much to preserve our language.

Kasha Khando was born in Tkhuma in the year 1888. After his primary education in Baz, he received his high school and theological education from the American Presbyterian Mission College of Urmia during the years 1907-1918. From 1918-1921 he taught in the school run by the American missionaries in Baquba camp and later in the Mandan camp.

In 1922 he opened a school in Baghdad by the name The Assyrian Evangelical School, which was affiliated with the Assyrian Evangelical Church. The pastor of the church then was Kasha Peera Mirza of Urmia. Rev. Peera left the church in 1928 to take up his new position as the pastor of the Assyrian Evangelical Church in Gary, Indiana, and in his place Kasha Khando was ordained the pastor of the church in Baghdad. He kept his position of principal of the school.

In 1935 the school was entirely left under the care of the Evangelical Church without any help from the missionaries. There were nine grade levels in the school for primary and intermediate classes. The lessons taught included Assyrian reading, writing, and arithmetic; algebra, bookkeeping; English, Arabic and Persian languages; and bible studies.

In 1937 the school was changed to correspond with the level of public schools. Thus it became a primary school only, and the name changed to the Taqadum School. This fine school was later taken over by the government in 1973.

Kasha Khando passed away in 1950 and the church elders asked Raabi Koorish Shlemon to take over as the new principal of the school. He accepted even though he held a full time position with the Iraqi railways. He managed both duties for twelve years before devoting his full energies to the school in 1962. He stayed on until 1972 when he emigrated to the United States. He now lives in Des Plaines, Illinois.

I wish to express my gratitude to Raabi Koorish, a fine educator, and author, for providing the material for this article. May God bless all who loved and served our nation.



Kasha Khando Yonan



Kasha Yousip Kalaita



Raabi Yacoub D'Yacoub



Raabi Koorish Shlemon



Appreciation

Raabi Koorish Yacob Shlemon was the honored speaker at the Assyrian Foundation meeting of February 10, 1991. He is an educator and author. His outstanding achievement and contribution have been in maintaining and perpetuating the Assyrian cultural heritage. A graduate of the American Presbyterian College in Urmia, Iran, *Raabi Koorish* has devoted his talents to teaching the Assyrian language and has actively participated in his church for many years. He has written several papers on Christianity and the Assyrian role in it. In his book (in Assyrian) entitled "Assyrian History from the 20th Century," *Raabi Koorish* gives details of many sad and warm experiences of his people during the two World Wars.

Raabi Koorish's speech to the members and guests of the Foundation was on "The Assyrian Schools in Iraq." He began by describing the events in World War I that led to the exodus of thousands of Assyrians from Urmia, Iran, to Iraq. He also spoke on the contributions the Assyrians made during their reign as an Empire in Bet-Nahrain, and subsequently during the Christian period in the fields of theology, philosophy, medicine, education and their magnanimous missionary enterprise. He reiterated the importance of acquiring higher education, as well as the learning of the Assyrian language.

Of the thousands of Assyrians who stayed in Iraq, most settled in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul. Others returned to Iran or emigrated to the United States. Those who settled in Baghdad established a church there. *Raabi Pera Mirza* of Abajaloo was ordained pastor of this Assyrian Presbyterian Church. Soon thereafter the church established a school consisting of nine grades under the principalship of *Raabi Khando Yonan*, a graduate in theology from the American Mission College of Urmia. For details about this school, refer to the article in this issue by *Solomon S. Solomon* under *Raabi Khando Yonan*. Later, *Raabi Koorish* became principal and the number of students increased from 150 to 320.

At the conclusion of his talk, *Raabi Koorish* was presented with a plaque from the Foundation in honor of his dedication to Assyrians and his achievements in perpetuating our language and cultural heritage.

Corrections and Clarification

Fourth Quarter, 1990, issue of *Nineveh*: On page 30, column 2, we inadvertently indicated that William Daniel is the president of Assyrian Sports and Cultural Club of Sydney, Australia. He was the president at the time the picture was taken in 1988, and the present president is **Jacob E. Yohanan**.



Joseph E. Benjamin, Certified Public Accountant, and a member of the Assyrian Foundation of America, was the guest speaker at the Foundation's meeting in February. Joseph spoke about pertinent 1990 tax laws and the tax changes for 1991. During the question period he responded to many questions relating to financial matters of various kinds, such as wills, trust funds, mortgages, tax shelters, capital gains taxes, etc. The members of the audience displayed great interest in the lecture and discussion. We wish to thank Joe for a very informative evening.



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Note: Contributions not listed will appear in the next issue.

WEDDING BELLS RANG FOR

Grace Shawo, daughter of the late Awitar and Mrs. Janet Shawo of London, England, was married on January 5, 1991 to Dijla Babilla, son of Charles and Maryam Babilla of So. San Francisco.

The wedding ceremony was conducted by Rev. Robin Dummer, Rev. George Shahbaz and Archdeacon Nenos Michael at Grace Covenant Church, So. San Francisco, CA. A beautiful dinner reception followed at Holiday Inn, Foster City, CA, attended by many relatives and friends of the couple.



Mariana W. Shabbas, daughter of the late William and Olga Shabbas, was married on March 16, 1991 to Romeo Samo, son of John and Judith Samo of San Rafael.

The wedding ceremony was conducted by Archdeacon Nenos Michael of the Assyrian Church of the East at St. John's Catholic Church, El Cerrito, CA. A beautiful dinner-reception followed at Boundary Oaks Country Club, Walnut Creek, CA, attended by many relatives and friends of the couple.





Left to right: Romeo, Mariana, Shamiran Khofri (Maid of Honor) and Sankhiro Khofri (Best Man).



Romeo and Mariana flanked by the parents of the groom, Judith and John Samo.



Romeo and Mariana flanked by the brothers of the bride: to the left Daniel Shabbas, to the right Sankhiro Shabbas (next to Mariana), and Sargon Shabbas.



Mariana Shabbas Samo and Romeo Samo flanked on the right by her sisters, Shalim S. Tatar and Semiramis S. Huwe. On the left by Diana George Messih and Peggie Hernandez.

Janet Yonan, daughter of Juliet Yonan of Hercules, CA, was married on February 2, 1991 to Alexander S. Yoseph.

The wedding ceremony was conducted by Fr. Oshana Kanoun at Mar Yosip Cathedral of the Assyrian Church of the East, San Jose, CA. A beautiful dinner-reception followed at Dunfey San Mateo Hotel, San Mateo, CA, attended by many relatives and friends of the couple.



FROM HAKKIARI TO . . . HABBANIYA

by Mikhael K. Pius

WHO WERE THE HABBANIYA ASSYRIANS AND WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?

Origin Rooted in Misty History

Briefly, the Habbaniya Assyrians were the distant descendants of the ancient Assyrians who lived and ruled for many centuries before Christ between and across the twin rivers of the Tigris and the Euphrates in Bet-Nahrain, the present-day Iraq; those who conquered and ruled over other nations, built mighty empires and blazed the early trails of civilization until their downfall and the destruction of their capital city of Nineveh in 612 B.C.

The Habbaniya Assyrians were also the descendants of the survivors of the downfall of Nineveh, the downfall of Ashur-Uballit of the Assyrian royal family who escaped and was proclaimed king of Harran near Edessa; those survivors who fled to the north of Bet-Nahrain and settled in Kurdistan and the southeastern part of Turkey where the great Assyria became a small kingdom under the Roman mandate. This little kingdom of Edessa endured until 336 A.D. when the Romans and the Persians again were engaged in a war, with Edessa in the forefront. It was at this time that Assyrians were dispersed throughout Asis Minor, taking refuge in Syria, Persia and the mountains of Kurdistan.

Assyrians Carry Cross of Christ

Noteworthy among the Kingdom's rulers was King Abgar V Oukama who ruled during Christ's lifetime on earth. Afflicted with leprosy, King Abgar brought himself and his Kingdom into the limelight by his message to and belief in Jesus Christ as the Savior, by whom he was later cured and, along with his nation, baptized and blessed through a mission undertaken by Christ's disciple Mar Addai (St. Thaddeus).

Following this eventful conversion, a church was established in Edessa. This church was the Eastern Church, the first

Assyrian and Christian church, from which Assyrian missionaries went forth to preach and Christianize peoples throughout the East, for having shed their spears, the Assyrians took up Christ's wooden cross in earnest!

During the advent of the Assyrian Christianity many truly memorable names stand out, such as Bardaisan, Tatian the Assyrian, followed by Mar Aprim the Assyrian, Rabulla of Edessa, Ibas, Bar Sauma, Bar Aba, Mar Babai the Great, Mar Narsai (called Harp of the Holy Ghost) and a host of others.

It is also important to mention the role of the great educational institutions of Edessa and Nisibin in producing great men of learning in the fields of theology, literature, medicine, philosophy and canon law. Many of the graduates became teachers of the Arabs. They transmitted the heritage of Greece to the West in the latter Middle Ages. Some of them served in the courts of Arab Caliphs in prominent positions, as well as in the field of medicine.

The Habbaniya Assyrians were also the descendants of the remnants of those hardy Christian generations that managed to survive, along with their faith, language, customs and traditions down many centuries since King Abgar's reign, despite oft repeated persecutions and executions by Persians, Romans, Mongolians, Turks, Kurds, Arabs and others.

But more recently, the Habbaniya Assyrians were the survivors of the terrible Assyrian Exodus of the Great War! They were the remnant of the people who were mauled and massacred, displaced and dispersed, and decreased, during the centuries, from millions to hundreds of thousands and finally to tens of thousands when the trials and tribulations of the First World War caught up with them!

Assyrian Former Homelands

When the First World War began, the

Assyrians were living in tribal villages, some in the vastness of the Hakkari Mountains in southeastern Turkey and others on the plain west of Lake Urmia in northwestern Persia, off the eastern border of Turkey. The mountain Assyrians, though under Ottoman rule, were living more or less semi-independently under their tribal chiefs headed by their spiritual and temporal leader, the Patriarch of the Church of the East, while the Persian Assyrians lived mostly in villages under Kurdish or Persian landlordships. In spite of occasional strife and blood-letting between them and their Moslem neighbors, the Assyrians in both areas managed to survive in relative safety at the time the Great War began in August 1914, except for a treacherous attack in 1843 on unsuspecting villages mounted by Kurdish tribes under a bigoted chief named Badr-Khan Beg of Bohtan, when thousands of Assyrian men, women and children were murdered. The horrors of this massacre have been described as the worst since the ravages of the Mongolian conqueror Timur Lane!

Missionary and Moslem Pressure

Through their political agents and religious missionaries, the Western powers had created not only denominational division but also an exaggerated conviction among the Assyrians that they needed political protection from their Moslem rulers. So when the Ottoman Empire entered the war in November 1914, on the side of Austria, Hungary and Germany against the Entente powers of Britain, France and Russia, the Moslem Turks were unreasonably suspicious of the motives of the local Christians because of the latter's history of dealing with the Western missionaries!

Being good fighters and strategically situated, the mountain Assyrians were in fact approached by representatives of both Britain and Russia to join the fight against the Turks. At first the Assyrians tried to resist the pressure and stay neutral. They even contemplated the option of siding with Turkey in order to preserve their lives and hold on to their lands. But they had serious doubts about the Turkish lavish promises! And their worst

fears were soon confirmed by the Turks' horrible massacres of Christian Armenians and Jacobite Assyrians and the licensing of Kurdish tribes to sweep across the border, looting, kidnapping and massacring Christian villages. So after months of deliberation and indecision, the Assyrians did finally decide to side with the allied nations as the "Smallest Ally." This course of action was taken not only because the Moslem Turkish Government would not safeguard them but also because the Christian Assyrians naively believed that their allies were powerful Christian nations that would help them against their enemies and afford them security and independence at war's end.



Mountains of Jelu in the Hakkari region. Homeland of Assyrians for many centuries.



City of Urmia, Iran, where Assyrians lived for centuries.

The Early Pangs of War

In the early days of the war, there had been some skirmishes, killings and plunderings between the local Christians and Kurdish tribes on the Turkish-Persian border. But the first fighting actually took place in neutral Persia in December 1914, when Ottoman troops and Kurdish irregulars crossed the Turkish border and drove the Christian inhabitants of Targawar towards Urmia, calling on all good Moslems to rise up in a holy war against all Christians.

At this time, there were Russian troops in Urmia. They gave the Assyrians arms and ammunition and helped them to beat back the Moslem aggressors, while a Russian column also wreaked havoc on another Kurdish force down south at Dol, clearing that area too. But the Persian Assyrians suffered heavily soon after when they were suddenly stranded by the Russian forces! The war was not going well at Russia's Caucasian front and so they withdrew their forces to Russia in January 1915, leaving the beleaguered Assyrians and other Christians to fend for themselves.

Being surrounded and left at the mercy of their merciless enemies, a general panic took hold of the Christians of the city. As a result, more than ten thousand Assyrians alone, fearful of their fate in Persia, followed the Russian troops and fled into Russia, while thousands of others crowded into foreign missions for protection, only to suffer a worse fate under appalling conditions!

At this time, many atrocities and small massacres took place. To mention just a few: sixty men, including a Bishop Mar Dinkha, were marched out and killed near Gulpa-shan, a batch was slaughtered on the "hill of Jews" in Charbash, while some 70 Bnai Gawar residents were murdered a few miles outside the city.

By April 1915 the massacre of Armenians had grown into horrendous proportions! But the Turks, aware of the Assyrian mountaineers' fighting mettle, were still trying to avoid a head-on collision with them. Instead, they were attempting to gain their loyalty by empty lavish promises.

During this time the Russians advanced

and occupied the devastated Van region — where the worst Armenian massacres had occurred — and reoccupied Urmia, calling upon the Assyrians once again to rise and fight against the Moslems. Although deserted by the Russians once, the Assyrians once again rallied to the fight and controlled the city, generating a spell of peace and quiet.

Assyrians Join Allied Cause

After long and painful deliberations, the Assyrian nation threw in its lot with the Entente powers and declared war on Turkey in May 1915. But soon after committing themselves thus, they were let down again! The Russian troops withdrew to Van and left the Urmia Assyrians, surrounded by their Moslem enemies, holding the line!

On the Hakkari front, the Assyrian mountain warriors, though outnumbered and out-gunned, stood up to the Turkish armies and Kurdish irregular forces. Unable to obtain assistance from anywhere, other than a small supply of rifles and ammunition from the Russians, they fought on bravely against unceasing attacks and the struggle continued well into July. Then their situation grew grave. And to dampen their spirit, the Patriarch's brother, Hormis, who was studying in Constantinople, was held hostage by the Turkish government. And because Mar Benyamin Shimun would not agree to ask his people to lay down their arms, Hormis was brutally murdered!

Requests were repeated to the Russians for help. Nothing was offered! But it was said that in August 1915, the Russians did send up a detachment of 400 Cossacks from Urmia to the mountains. This, however, was treacherously tricked into an ambush in a gorge and massacred by the Kurdish tribes of Oramar and Shamisdin.

At this time, the Turks, with help from the Barzan Kurds — whose chief the Assyrians had once helped escape from the Turks — mounted a massive assault. Four major Assyrian villages, namely Tkhuma, Tiari, Baz and Jelu, were savagely ravaged and their churches plundered and desecrated!

The Mountain Plateau Siege

Driven away from the valleys, the Assyrian tribes retreated, with their herds, flocks and families, to their summer pasturelands up on the mountain plateau in September. They were soon beleaguered by their enemies, but their stronghold was accessible only by certain narrow and dangerous pathways which were well guarded. Although they were attacked time and again, they easily managed to repulse the assaults. The Kurds then waited and hoped to starve the Assyrians down into their volleys of firepower. But the mountaineers were able to endure for a while, even small parties sneaking down at night to bring up supplies of corn from their villages' secret granaries. And in a desperate venture, Mar Shimun, Malik Khoshaba Yosip and two others, broke through the Kurdish beleaguers and made a perilous trip to Salamas to ask for Russian help only to return empty-handed! Finally realizing that their people would all perish of hunger and of the approaching winter cold, they decided to take a chance on breaking through the siege and heading their people toward Urmia.

The majority of the Kurdish forces opposing them were on the East, blocking the roadpaths to Urmia. The mass of fugitives, some 25 thousand strong, however, struck out to the opposite direction, westward, where no one would suspect them to go. Marching in two bands to give one a chance of escape in case the other one was cut down, they took a longer way through harsher rugged terrain. They crossed the Zab River over a flimsy wooden bridge near the mouths of Diz and Tal valleys, made a wide circuit northward and met again on the farther side of Julamerik. Then another day's trek and they made the pass leading to the Salamas Plain.

Although chased by harrassing bands of Kurds, they left the bulk of their enemies up on the plateau quarrelling over some of the flocks and herds they left behind as bait. The Assyrians lost almost twenty percent of their numbers up on the mountain plateau and on the long desperate flight, through disease, starvation and killing, but it was a miraculous escape for the rest as they joined their

From Hakkari to . . . Habbaniya

Persian brethren and the Russian troops who had retired to Salamas and Urmia!

It was November when the 20 thousand mountaineers finally entered Urmia City. They were hungry and destitute, having lost most of what they had. Although they generally behaved well, they helped themselves to what they needed, usually at the townspeople's expense! The fighting men were then rearmed and reorganized by the Russians. Determined to survive, they carried out a number of raids against their Kurdish enemies and fought on, loyal to their cause and their allies. The Assyrians had the upper hand now and with the help of the Russian troops they controlled Urmia the whole of 1916 and well into 1917. But by this time the Russian defenses were beginning to show signs of a breakdown!

The Russian Debacle and Mar Shimun's Murder

The breakdown finally came when the Russian Revolution broke out in October 1917, and the Russian forces pulled back from the war and returned to Russia. This was a hard blow to the Assyrian defenses! Some of the White Russian soldiers loyal to the fallen Czar and to the Assyrian cause, however, stayed behind to fight with the Assyrians.

The British and French, on the other hand, were planning to block German designs on India by forming a defense line between the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea. For this they had in mind an alliance between the Armenians in Van, the Assyrians in Urmia and the Shekak Kurds headed by their chief, Ismaiel Agha known as Simco. This matter was discussed by the British agent with the leaders of the three groups concerned. Mar Shimun and the Armenians' Hampartsunian were suspicious of Simco the Kurd, but their fears were soon allayed by the British.

It was now just before the spring of 1918. The war was not going well for the Allies! The Russian front had entirely collapsed and the Western front was not doing well. There was a general feeling that the German alliance powers were winning the war. Encouraged by the events, the anemic Persian government sud-

General Agha Petros with his retinue during the war.

From Hakkari to . . . Habbaniya



This historic photo was taken on March 25, 1918, at Urmia after the return of the Assyrian army from their great victory over the Turkish army under Haydar Pasha at the battle of Barandoz river. This engagement stopped the Turks and saved the nation from destruction. Seen in the photo from left to right: Malik Khoshaba of Lower Tiari, Agha Mirza of Baz, General Agha Patros of Baz, and Russian Commander Kondratoff.

Photo and information submitted by Solomon S. Solomon

denly ordered the Assyrians to lay down their arms. When this did not work, in league with the treacherous Simco it then hatched up a plot!

Under a pretext of discussing mutual defenses, Simco requested a meeting with the Patriarch. Suspicious of the Kurd's motive and forewarned by the Armenians against such a meeting, Mar Shimun was reluctant to attend. But once again he let the British pacify his fears and persuade him to go. Having laid the trap, Simco then had the Patriarch, along with a chosen group of Assyrian tribesmen accompanying him, assassinated immediately following their meeting in the Armenian village of Koni Shahr in February 1918!

The tragedy was the hardest blow the nation had received! In the initial heat of

their outrage, Assyrian tribesmen went on a rampage and massacred Kurds in Urmia. But their chieftains soon intervened and put a stop to the carnage. Then the deceased Patriarch's younger brother, Polous, was soon elected to become the new Patriarch, and to avenge the death of Mar Benyamin Shimun, an Assyrian force under the leadership of Mar Shimun's brother Dawid, Malik Khoshaba and Agha Petros, pursued Simco and his murderous hordes. Simco's criminal army was routed and his castle at Chara was captured. To their bitter chagrin, however, proper revenge eluded the Assyrians when Simco himself made his escape — to harrass and murder yet another day until he was, ironically enough, treacherously gunned down, some years later, by his very same Persian accomplices!



Mar Benyamin Shimun XXI.

The Aborted Assyrian-Armenian Alliance

During the spring of 1918 the Assyrians were in a tight position. They were in control of Urmia and had some supplies of arms and ammunition from the abandoned Russian arsenals, but they were surrounded by Ottoman soldiers and Kurdish and Persian hordes. Because the Assyrians were a serious threat to the Turkish northern flank engaged in heated battles against British expeditionary forces in Mesopotamia and in southern Persia, their enemies intensified their assaults on them. Assailed from all sides, the Assyrians fought with tooth and nail, but their ammunition and supplies were running low and they were cut off from all assistance. The Russians were gone and the British were far away in the south and could do nothing for them except urge them to continue the resistance, promising them funds and proclamation of independence of their nation when victory was won — which promises were, of

course, never fulfilled! Their only hope was from the Armenians. But the Armenians were, unfortunately, disunited. Armenian Bolsheviks were battling Turkish Armenians, and their revolutionary parties of Tashnak and Huntchak were at each other's throats! Antranik Pasha, the best of their leaders, was abandoned by the Russians. And when he employed Armenian troops only against the Turks, the tainted Russian Armenians deserted him in battle and betrayed his campaign to the Turks! The Turks overpowered his armies and all the ammunition, guns, transport and supplies sent by Entente powers to the now-departed Russians were captured.

Antranik and his five thousand men turned south, hoping to link up with Agha Petros' forces in Urmia. But having controlled the interior lines, the Turks prevented the linkage. Agha Petros and Antranik Pasha then planned to meet between Salamas and Khoi. But the Assyrian advance to Salamas was also checked and Agha Petros' forces fell back, as the Turks turned back upon Antranik Pasha and defeated him after a furious battle in the streets of Khoi. Yet another attempt by the Assyrians to get help had flopped and the Armenian leader retreated to Caucasia and was never heard of again!

The Scramble for Supplies

Although the Assyrians were beaten they were not defeated yet. For the next three months, they alone held the front against all three adversaries. They beat back a series of assaults to both north and south of Urmia and won many an engagement under Agha Petros' leadership. In one battle, they took more than 300 Turkish prisoners, including two dozen officers, and many Kurdish tribesmen, magnanimously — and for economic reasons — releasing the Turks after a few days.

The Assyrian forces, considering their limited numbers and resources, fought well. But they gradually ran low on ammunition and in July their situation turned serious. Then a

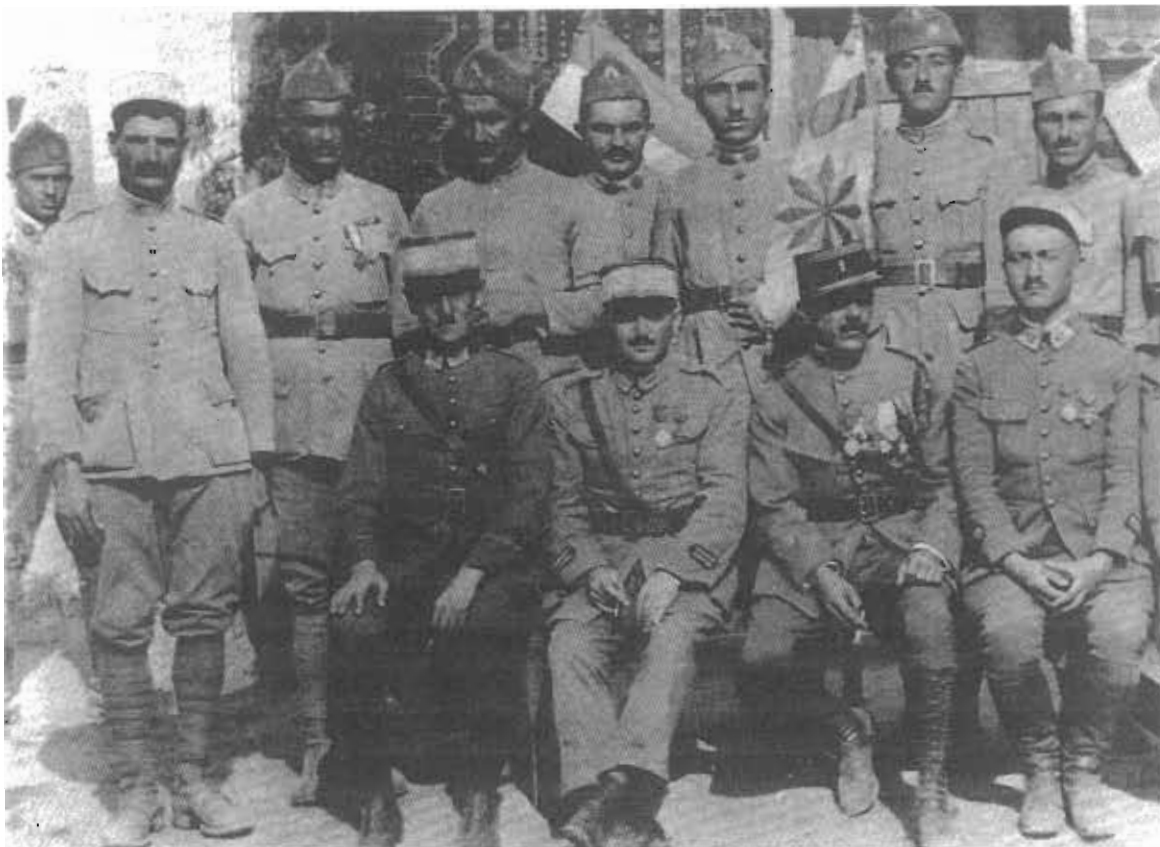


Armed Assyrian fighting horsemen of Mawana just prior to Great War, with some of the village houses in the background. Mawana, situated in Tergawar, in the southern east part of Urmia Plain close to the Turkish border, was made up of some 20 clans consisting of about 300 families. It was a big and prosperous village and Bne-Mawana had the reputation of being hard workers and good fighters, kowtowing to no Kurdish tribe's dominance in the area. Among its leaders was the well-known Sarhang Baijan Toma (elderman), his son Shmouel Khan Baijan (assassinated with Mar Benyamin Shimoun), and his grandson Avoo Shmouel Khan, one of the subordinate commanders of General Agha Petros Elia during the war.

Photo submitted by Odette Murphy and information by Mikhael K. Pius



A group of Targavar Assyrian warriors with Col. Baijan (with decorations) seated on the left.



Malik Kambar (seated on the left) with Assyrian and French soldiers. An Assyrian soldier is holding the Assyrian flag.

British pilot named Captain Pennington landed among them. He was a god-send at that moment! He urged them to hold on and promised them officers, money and ammunition, the first installment of which, he told them, was ready and waiting for them to pick up at Sain Kalah, 100 miles south. This not only bolstered their sagging morale, but also fortified their hope.

In the meantime, Urmia was threatened by the 5th and 6th Turkish Divisions north and south of the town. They were reinforced by hordes of Kurdish and Persian irregulars. Although it was a formidable force, it was decided that the Assyrian Salamas division would hold the 5th Division in check while the Urmia division led by Agha Petros would break through to the south and attack the 6th division. Agha Petros would then leave the bulk of his force to contain the enemy and then march, with a small force, to Sain Kalah to collect the British military aid.

The first phase was done successfully. The 6th division was defeated at Saj Bulakh and

driven away to Rawanduz hills. But instead of leaving a strong force to guard the defeated Turks, the whole force marched off to Sain Kalah. Arriving a few days behind schedule, they found no British and no supplies! The British force was, however, only a day's march to the south and the Assyrians marched on and made the linkage.

Meanwhile, when the Turkish 5th division at the north learned of the departure of Agha Petros and his army, it mounted a strong attack on the Salamas division. The Assyrians were beaten and pushed back to the city. The situation became critical, causing a general panic! The whole of the Assyrian population, 70 thousand strong, including thousands of Armenians, abandoned the city and stampeded, along with their beasts and what belongings they could carry, down the south road to Sain Kalah in a desperate attempt to escape the terror and the agony of the situation and reach the safety of the British forces.

The Torturous Trek

Defended by out-manned, ill-equipped and exhausted groups of warriors, the frantic humanity forced its way through a hundred miles of hostile land, constantly attacked on all sides by enemy guns and molested, mauled, murdered and kidnapped by marauding packs of Kurdish and Persian human wolves. But after endless plodding, the fleeing refugees eventually caught up with Agha Petros' force in Sain Kalah, where the starving ones were temporarily fed and the seriously sick or injured treated by the British garrison and then sent on their way to Hamadan. They continued to march and finally about September 1918, after weeks of a frantic, frightful flight, the wretched humanity stumbled into Hamadan, having lost a third of its original number through exhaustion, thirst, starvation, disease, kidnapping and killing in their four-year ordeal.

Being less used to the rigors of life, the Urmia Assyrians fared worse during this terrible exodus, while the mountaineers were more capable of taking care of themselves. They not only were able to defend their families from the pursuing packs of Kurds and Persians, but they even raided Moslem villages and looted left and right to keep alive! Despite the mood and the conditions, however, there were virtually no reports of Assyrian men molesting or even mistreating Moslem women.

Tented Sojourn in Baquba

In Hamadan, the devastated refugees were taken under the wing of the British authorities. Foreseeing the Assyrian potential for local military service, the British formed the irregular Levies into a battalion and placed it under their control. They gave emergency relief aid to the rest of the masses and then brought them down to the town of Baquba in Iraq, 25 miles from Baghdad, and settled them in tent camps prepared for them.

At Baquba, a second battalion of the mountain Assyrians was formed, under British officers. Actually, it was originally intended to form the second battalion of the Urmia men, but a dispute between Agha Petros and the British over better terms of service scuttled the plan. The British used the Hakkiari men instead who were more eager to enlist under any conditions.

Baquba camps were situated on the bank of Diyala River. They were well organized in regard to order and discipline, sanitation, ration and clothing distribution, medical facilities and even children's schooling. The refugees were generally well taken care of. Some people even enhanced their lives by providing for themselves a little extra by cultivating vegetable gardens or tiny "farms" or taking up a simple skilled trade, such as shoe repair, carpentry or such.



Assyrian refugees at Baquba Camp, Iraq.

The two Assyrian Levy battalions were well trained by their British officers and the eager Assyrian recruits soon proved themselves skilled soldiers. They were used by the British in military campaigns against rebellious Kurdish and Arab tribes. They did so well that they were lavishly praised by their British superiors for both their marching and fighting abilities.

The Assyrian refugees lived in the camp during 1919 and well into 1920, on British charity. But an absence of leadership cohesion on their part and a lack of earnest willingness on the part of the British authorities to repatriate or resettle their war-time refugee allies kept the problem dragging on without a solution. And to make a bad situation worse, the British suddenly decided to disband the Assyrian Levy contingent on the pretext of a disciplinary breach in the force. And when the idle men retired to the stagnant atmosphere of the camp, morale in general began to slump, and the British officials and the Assyrian leaders

began to irritate each other! And to add to the depression, at this time the nation lost Patriarch Polous Mar Shimun, its titular leader even though a frail and sick man for a long time.

Britain was now restlessly anxious to get rid of the Assyrians who had become a yoke upon its neck. Caught up between its imperialistic interests and designs, the reluctance of its colonized Arab hosts and its moral obligations to its "Smallest Ally," the British didn't know how to "dump" their load!

Freedom Force Fiasco

At this time, Agha Petros came up with a plan to lead the nation up north, sufficiently armed, and occupy a part of the land between the Hakkari Mountains in Turkey and the Urmia Plain in Persia and settle the Assyrian nation there practically independent but



Rab Khaila (Commander) David d'Mar Shimun with Assyrian Levy Officers — 2nd Battalion in Kirkuk. Middle row: (left to right) 2nd person: Israel Pityou d'Tkhoma. 3rd person: Yacoub d'Malik Ismael d'Tiari Illaita. 4th person: Rab Khaila David d'Mar Shimun (father of the late Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII and brother of the late Mar Benyamin Shimun). 5th person: Agha Ezaria d'Eiel. 6th person: Rowil, brother of Mar Yosip Khnanishu d'Shamizdin.

under the British protection. A contingent of armed men would go first and seize the land and the families would follow later.

This scheme not only had the possibility of getting the Assyrians off the British back and out of the antagonistic Arab land, but would also serve as a buffer state for the area of interest to the British. As such, it was quickly agreed to by the authorities in Mesopotamia and forcefully urged on the Assyrian people. Under pressure, it was accepted by the majority, though the Patriarchal House and some of the mountain tribes rejected the plan. The British, however, ignored the objections under the assumption that the reluctant section would follow when it found itself left behind.

The British then made preparations to break up Baquba camp and transport its inhabitants up to another camp at Mandan near Mosul as the station for the repatriation move. There the men were to be trained and armed for the expedition.

It was necessary for the mass of people to reach their destination at the higher land and establish themselves before the cold weather set in. Unfortunately, unexpected problems cropped up and bogged down the scheme, causing delay after delay! First, the British made a change in the central authority. They removed from office the Acting Chief Commissioner because he had approved a policy which, the British politicians in London thought, was more expensive than anticipated. Then his replacement made, on orders from London, extremely slow decisions, and when approval was finally given to begin the scheme, the Arab uprising of 1920 threw a monkey wrench in the plan! Britain asked the Assyrian fighters to come to its aid. Also it needed its transport elsewhere, and so the Assyrian scheme had to be shelved. The Assyrian camp was also attacked by Arab tribesmen, and was in grave danger from the uprising. Despite this, the British were confident that the Assyrians could defend themselves, having forgotten that they had not only disbanded the Assyrian contingent but also disarmed it! And when they dispatched a trainload of arms for the camp defense, it was derailed by the Arabs some miles from the camp. But a group of camp Assyrians, only

sparsely armed, attacked and rescued the train and its content and from then on the camp was safe.

Meanwhile, more than half of the people at Baquba had been transported to Mandan under Agha Petros' leadership. At this time the other half, opposed to the repatriation plan, decided to elect and consecrate the 12-year-old nephew of the deceased patriarch as Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII. This act caused much ill-feeling and divided the nation, because the traditional affair should have been shared by all and not by just half of the people!



Assyrian monument at Baquba Camp in memory of the Assyrian martyrs of World War I.



Assyrian Refugee Camp at Mandan, 1920.



Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII at age 12 when he was consecrated Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East.

The Arab uprising gradually died away, but because of the various delays, summer had already slipped away and October was fast approaching when cold rains and snow would begin at the higher land the liberation force was heading to. Despite warnings about the elements, however, two columns composed of five thousand trained and armed mountaineers and plainsmen stationed in Akra moved up. The British had supplied the expedition with arms and ammunition and mules for transport, plus three British officers, as advisors only, but the force carried only several days' rations and little medical supplies. The British authorities were relieved to see them off on their way, regardless of what the outcome would be!

The force crossed the frontier and the swollen Zab River and moved up steadily. It attacked and wiped away resistance from Barzan and Zibar Kurdish tribes and stormed and burned the Barzan village. Then the expedition bogged down! Its provisions ran out, the relentless cold rains caused sickness

and death among both animals and men, particularly among the Urmia men who were not used to such harsh conditions of travel and difficult terrain. Hundreds of the plainsmen gave up and returned to Mandan, abandoning their arms and gear.

Meanwhile, the mountaineers who formed the western column of the advancing force, pursued defeated Zibari Kurds with such gusto that they soon found themselves in their own mountains. It was an opportunity for them to get back at some of their former enemies! They attacked, looted and burned a few Kurdish villages, and although the Agha of Chal responded to their call to cut off the retreat of the fleeing Zibari tribesmen, the Tiari and Tkhuma avengers burned his village too! Their hot pursuit of their former tormentors had now brought them again to the Zab and Barwar. But in their enthusiastic chase, they had also burned down Nirwa and Rikan, two villages loyal to the British!

The British were furious at what the Assyrians had done. They asked Mira Rashid, the most powerful Kurdish brigand representing them, to block the Assyrian advance. He gathered his forces and held the bridge over Zab, as the British political officer from Dohuk, supported by a sizeable police force, hastened to the scene. The officer stopped the culpable Assyrian mountaineers and persuaded them to return to Mandan. This then rendered the column of the Urmia men virtually impotent. So they, too, retreated and returned to the camp, thus rendering the whole operation a fiasco to the nation, a loss and displeasure to the British authorities — for the Assyrian problem still remained a thorn in their flesh — and a tragic disaster to one of the accompanying British officers — who killed himself! — because the retreating Assyrians sold to Kurdish tribes on the way back all the British equipment and pack animals for which he was responsible!

Assyrian Levies and Hinaidi Air Base

Mandan camp was reorganized and both the Assyrians and the British settled down in the tents for the cold winter, grumbling at

each other like angry bears. The Assyrian prospects of a homogeneous homeland were no better now than they were when they first arrived. But in the spring of 1921, the British authorities began a process of "resettlement" of the refugees in the northern areas of the country through a distribution center in Dohuk. They moved the mountaineers to vacant villages in various districts, supplying each village a quota of rifles for self-defense and giving each person a grant of 120 rupees. It was a makeshift solution of the Assyrian problem, and most of the villages they occupied were derelict, infertile and infested with disease, famine and — local foes! But the British called it resettlement and the settlers grudgingly accepted it as home and tried to eke out a living the best way they could.

At this time, the British made definite plans for the formation of the Assyrian Levy force, because the recruiting of local Arab and Kurdish tribesmen for Levies to guard and defend the land did not prove successful. So they tried to regather the Assyrian Levy force they had so unwisely disbanded. The attempt did not work out smoothly at first. For one thing, Agha Petros' demands for his people did not sit well with the British. Then, too, there was a friction between Agha Petros' leadership plans and those of the Patriarchal family. But the British soon solved the problem by sending Agha Petros out of the country — to die later of suspicious causes! — and by installing the Patriarchal family into the English Mission House in Bebaiydi.

With the blessings of the Patriarchal family, British officers traveled to remote Assyrian villages and recruited a few thousand men more. Assyrian villagers, due to their economic need and their continued hope of an eventual Assyrian homogeneous homeland, enlisted willingly. An Assyrian force, several thousand strong, called the Assyrian Levies, commanded by British officers and led by the Patriarch's father, David D'Mar Shimun, as Rab Khaila, assisted by Assyrian officers, was equipped and trained in 1922 and placed under R.A.F. control the following year.

The Assyrian Levy force was to relieve British and Indian troops in Mesopotamia and to police Arab and Kurdish tribes and to put

down uprisings and rebellions all over the country the British had rid of the corrupt Ottoman rule on behalf of the Arabs until such time as the country's army was trained and ready for the job! The force was used with success in a number of military campaigns.

During the ensuing three years there was a constant Turkish threat to invade the Vilayet of Mosul with help from instigated Kurdish tribes. Assyrian Levies were applied effectively both against Turkish troops and Kurdish irregulars. They inflicted telling defeat on the Kurds, not only putting out the fire threatening to consume the new country of Iraq but also, ironically enough, refueling the Moslem Iraqi's hatred against the Assyrians themselves.

In the meantime, the Urmia section of the refugees numbering more than ten thousand still had their eye on their lost lands in Persia. They did not want to be villagers in Mesopotamia and so rejected the land offered them. They too were given the 120-rupee grant and told to seek their own destiny. Although the British could not guarantee their return to or protection in Persia, they were also issued with an international travel document. Some of them emigrated to America, several thousand gradually filtered back to Persia through Kermanshah and Hamadan and Tabriz, while the rest stayed on to work in civilian jobs connected with the British control of Mesopotamia — and its black gold!

Within the next year or two the British established an air base near Baghdad called Hinaidi and gradually settled their Assyrian Levy soldiers and civilian workers and their families in several local camps, in close proximity to the air base, such as Maharatha Lines, Levy Lines, Cota Camp, Coolie Camp, and Chey Number Camp.

This, then, was the segment of the Assyrian nation that finally ended up in Habbaniya a decade or so later following the surrendering of Hinaidi air base to the Iraqi government.

Bitter-Sweet Memories

To the average Assyrian survivor of the former R.A.F. air base, the name Habbaniya

today probably stirs memories that are at once bitter and sweet! Sweet, because Habbaniya represents a unique era in recent Assyrian history when that section of the nation lived a simple but orderly and closely-knit community life in harmony with other resident races and religions. Except for occasional petty interracial (or even intertribal!) jealousies and rivalries, they all worked, played and lived together peacefully, each race secure in the practice and preservation of its own language, religion, customs and traditions, and somewhat safe from external interference.

And bitter, because they perhaps feel that despite the "room and board" repayment by the British in return for their four decades of hard work, gallant military service and loyalty and sacrifice during two world wars as their "Smallest Ally," they were used and exploited as a nation in the interests of a treacherously materialistic policy of His Britannic Majesty's government, and then cheated and abandoned in British-connived antagonism with the government and people of their host country!

Author's Note: This article is based on personal information derived from various sources and from consultation of accredited books on the subject. Read about other aspects of Habbaniya and its people in the coming issue of Nineveh.

"How did the Assyrians achieve, over many dark centuries, the miracle of survival in other lands in the face of total destruction of the decimated self-same Assyrians in their peoplehood? It was due to their unbeatable optimism, respect for their ancestral past, and faith. Because of such heroism. I wish to remain an Assyrian.

"It was that heroism that has been pivotal in the survival of the Assyrian people through the ages. It is that which has united each Assyrian with his ancestors from time immemorial. And it is that which, wherever he may have been originally, relates him with all whom we regard as Assyrians."

Dr. David Barsum Perley

THE FOLLOWING LETTER, ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN RUSSIAN, WAS SENT TO NINEVEH MAGAZINE TO BE FORWARDED TO ILIYA VARTANOV:

Dear Iliya:

We have read chapter 1 of your book about Assyrians in the Siberian Exile. Our family really had been in the focus of the events you described in the chapter. And also the eyewitness David S. was, indeed, our neighbor. The only correction I would like to make is that our family's last name is Betboonov and the family of Bet Kashas lived next to us. You managed to express surprisingly exactly all that horror and suffering our family and most of our closest relatives lived through . . . Those tragic events remained in our mind and memory forever.

My mother Nazra — you mentioned her in the book — is still alive. She often tells us of what had happened to our family and to the other ones when she was young. My father Michael — also mentioned in your book — passed away in 1988.

Yes, we lived through very hard times and sufferings but, thank God, the life is going on; we, children of Nazra and Michael, have grown up and now we have our own children. My brother Omari got married to an Assyrian woman Lyooba and they have two children; my sister Makvala has three children and my other sister Seema has two. I myself am married and have four children: Marika, 9 years old; Seema, 7; Nazra, 5; and son Gevargees, 2 years old.

Dear Iliya, I'd like to take this opportunity to personally give you my great thanks. Also all of us, our relatives, friends and me personally, deeply thank the *Nineveh* magazine staff, for they have begun publishing this book about the tragedy of exiled Soviet Assyrians.

Again, thank you, dear Iliya, for your work, for your faithful memory, for your dedication to the Assyrian recent history, to our bitter past. And it doesn't matter whether one is "bohtanaya" or "djilvaya" or "tkhoomnaya" or else "tyaraya" and so on; the major thing is all of us are "Assooraye" (Assyrian), i.e., one nation. And I believe whatever state frontiers are between us and separate us artificially each from the other, our mutual great love, the love of one Assyrian person for another Assyrian person is above all and knows no bounds.

May the memory of perished Assyrians live forever. I believe they would be happy to read such an honest book as yours.

We wish you and the *Nineveh* magazine staff every success and happiness.

On behalf of other Assyrians the following are signatures of:

Nicolay Betboonov
Mzeeya Bet Kasha
Nazra Bet Jammoo

Tbilisi, Georgia

UM Student Struggles with Heritage, Patriotism

by Gina Boysun

Montana Kaimin - January 17, 1991
(University of Montana Student Newspaper)

At the moment the United States and its allied forces attacked Iraq Wednesday, the reality of danger and the possibility of the loss of lives hit home. For one UM student, the reality is twofold.

Shumon "Shu" Pius has a brother, Dan, in the Navy, but he also has two cousins, native Iraqis, who live in Baghdad.

His cousin Ashur is a veteran of the Iran-Iraq war and there's no doubt he'll be called to fight, Pius said. The other cousin, Eshu, was too young to fight in the Iran-Iraq war, but is now old enough to fight.

"As soon as I found out about the bombs flying, I got a lump in my throat," he said. "Now that I know they hit Baghdad, I fear for their lives."

Pius, a senior in radio-television, said he called home to Miles City to talk to his parents. His mother told him, "not to worry," he said, but it "didn't help much."

Pius said he has been struggling with his feelings about the Gulf crisis.

"One one hand, I'm pretty patriotic. I support the U.S. soldiers, although I don't really support the cause," he said. "But this is my family we're talking about."

Pius' father, Basil, was born, raised and educated in Iraq. The elder Pius came to the United States to attend graduate school and after receiving his master's degree, he chose to remain in the United States.

One aunt and one uncle stayed in Iraq, Pius said. They wanted to leave, but because his uncle, who is "mentally retarded," could not fill out an application for a visa, they stayed in Iraq, Pius said. If anything else was keeping his relatives in Iraq, Pius said, it was their Assyrian roots.

"I think they are (patriotic) to the extend that they love their culture but not the politics or political party," he said.

Pius lived in Iraq for two months when he was four years old, but "that's back when it was peaceful," he said.

Although he has relatives living in countries on opposite sides of the Mideast conflict, Pius said his father has kept in frequent contact with his relatives in Iraq.

He said he doesn't think there will be any hard feelings within his family because "they know it's the politics and the leaders doing everything and not the families themselves."

Now that war is a reality, the draft is a very real possibility. Pius has also been pondering how he would feel about being drafted.

"The question isn't so much whether I'd go or not, it's whether I could live with myself after killing someone with their blood in my veins."

Pius said he is very nervous and very concerned.

"No matter how America does or how Iraq does, I feel I'm going to lose somebody," he said. "If it isn't Dan, it might be Ashur and Eshu."

The only thing Pius said he can do now is "keep praying."



Shumon Pius



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ASSYRIANS

In The Siberian Exile — 1949-1956 — Memories

by *Iliya L. Vartanov*
(Translated from the Russian by the author)

Abridged version especially for Nineveh Magazine.

This book is dedicated to my sisters Marta, 18, and Elza, 16, and to hundreds of innocent Assyrians who all died in Siberia of cold, hunger and other tortures.

CHAPTER III

Massacres by Turkey and Escape to Russia

Chapters 1 and 2 recapitulated how masses of Assyrians of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus were captured from their homes during the night by special troops of the KGB and the Red Army forces and then exiled to wild forests of Siberia as well as to uninhabited steppes of Kazakhstan (the Soviet Asia region). The first two chapters included a unique story of a witness of how it happened to them. Also, Chapter 2 dealt with a background of the Assyrian people who had lived in the mountains and the valleys of the Middle East before World War I.

How changeable are fate, destiny and fortune! A powerless people or a weak person may be taken away as if a straw by any wind of circumstance . . . At one moment my memory takes me back to a path in the wild and endless forests of Siberia, to the very last part of our great journey of suffering, where Assyrians had been taken for their life-term exile in 1949. At another moment, my memory takes me to the past of my parents and grandparents, to the mountains of Turkey and valleys of Iran where our people used to live for centuries up to the beginning of World War I.

Each family has its own father. All Assyrians, Christians of the Middle East, known under the name of Nestorians, had one father, the only spiritual leader and civil ruler: Patriarch Mar Benyamin Shimun. My father told me that the Patriarch's power used to be absolute and that his will was undisputable law for Assyrians. The word of the Patriarch used to be accepted by simple Assyrian people as God's word. If the Assyrian Patriarch ordered his people to throw themselves into the fire they surely would do that, my father says. And they really did do that when the tragic events of World War I had occurred.

The Patriarch was unhappy with the situation of his people and living conditions in the Ottoman empire. Generally, Assyrians used to live peacefully among their Moslem neighbors, i.e., Arabs, Kurds and Turks. Yes, it might happen from time to time that an aggressive boy or a tribal leader would attack Assyrian dwellings or take by force their sheep and goats. Assyrian shepherds could return to their villages with nothing because they had become victims of robbery in the mountains, my father said. But, mostly, there was a civil relationship between different people and nations as the case should be between good neighbors. There was no shortage of sun,

sky, mountains, valleys and God's mercies for each and every one so why quarrel with each other?

The father of the Assyrians, Patriarch Mar Shimun, sought a better fate and destiny for his people. One hardly could explain clearly today what the Patriarch intended to achieve exactly: self-governing and safety for his people, or an independent Assyrian state or something entirely different. At any rate, he linked all of his dreams and hopes to Russia and Great Britain. The Patriarch thought that, besides being great allies, they were also great friends of the Assyrian people; the two countries' diplomats promised him a great deal . . . orally.

A few months after World War I began, the Assyrian people revolted against Turkey, following the order of Patriarch Benyamin Mar Shimun, in consultation with his advisors, who had been influenced by Russia and Great Britain's officials. Thus, the Assyrian people became the smallest ally for Great Britain and Russia. As my father recalled, the Turkish authorities reacted like a snake. The worst catastrophe happened. The Turkish government decided to physically eradicate the whole Assyrian population. No one Assyrian man or woman, adult or child, should be left alive. Turkish authorities ordered their troops and Kurdish irregulars to massacre Assyrians wherever they lived. The rewards were lives of Assyrians and their property . . . Savage and heinous atrocities were committed on these Assyrian Christian men, women and children. They would surround a helpless Assyrian village, slaughter and butcher all of the male children, the old men and the aged and unattractive women; they raped all young women and little girls, of which many died while being tortured. The murderers smashed heads of babies upon rocks and laughed about it, they had much fun. Only young and pretty Assyrian ladies were given a chance to remain alive because they could be used as good merchandise; they were sold to Turkish harems and earned big money. They hunted for Assyrian people not unlike a hunter seeks wild animals and beasts.

The Assyrian people were in a deathly agony. The young Assyrian Patriarch himself was entrapped by the leader of a Kurdish tribe, who invited him to his place to have peace negotiations; they wildly killed the Assyrian Patriarch. He was in his twenties. He is remembered as the great Assyrian martyr, along with thousands of other Assyrians who died on the altar of martyrdom.

Numerous massacres of Assyrian Christians were committed in different places and times long before

World War I; the ravages in the 13th Century by Tamer Lane, the king of the Tartar and Mongol tribes; in the 19th Century by the infamous Badr-Khan Bey, the Kurdish tribal leader who butchered Assyrians in the mountains of Hakkari. But this time it was different, and for the first time Assyrians as an entire nation were near disappearance from the face of the globe. Where were the "great friends" and powers — Russia and Great Britain — at that tragic time for the Assyrians? Why didn't they rescue these miserable people? A great nationalist, Yossif Mar Youkhanan d'Gavilan (deceased 1973, Tbilisi, Georgia, USSR), said that after the Russian Revolution of October 1917, new Soviet authorities pulled the country out of the war and the Soviet government forgot forever the promises given to the Assyrian people. As for Great Britain, it played excellently "the Assyrian card" in the Middle East campaign and then betrayed the Assyrian people in cold blood when British big policy didn't need Assyrian "special service" any longer. That is what the late Yossif Mar Youkhanan said. Anyway, let researchers find a reasonable answer to this extremely complicated issue. What I know is that poor Assyrians fled in all directions to different countries to save their lives and had been prompted by the only feeling, as the French say: "SAVE QUI PEUT!" ("save yourselves if you can . . ."). Nowadays these homeless people are scattered all over the world, and are forgotten by God and by history and by the international community. It is doomed to a slow national death among other stronger and more prosperous nations.

Goodness! I've lost the thread of my story, and it happens every time I think of the unhappy destiny of our Assyrian people. Let's go back, my dear reader, to the Gezira Bohtan area in the mountains of Turkey, where the Assyrian population, seized by mortal fear, waited for the unknown. Three Assyrian villages, Roma, Borb and Shvata, waited also. Autumn of 1914 was coming to its end. One day a young Assyrian man got to our village, Roma, to warn his relatives. His name was Shamoon and he came from the distant village of Sharbet telling a terrible story. There was no Sharbet, nor twelve other neighboring Assyrian villages any more; Turkish soldiers had demolished them completely by fire and sword. Their people had been butchered; soldiers ripped open pregnant women's stomachs with "yataghans" and crucified priest Joseph just for the enjoyment; many other victims were thrown into bonfires. Then a Kurdish man, who sympathized with the Assyrians and was in friendly relationship to our village head Nersoo, came at night to warn him that Turkish soldiers will get there the next day. Thus, only one more night was left to save the peoples' lives.

Nersoo was a brave and quick man. He immediately gathered the village people and told them he was going to lead them in the direction of Iran, where the Russian army was still taking up positions. He ordered them to leave all property behind except for ropes which might be useful. The last few nights many people slept in ravines outside the village instead of their homes for fear of being attacked and caught by the Turks. So did my grandfather Pirtoo with his two sons, Joseph and Lazar, 19 years old (the latter would become my father 30 years later). It took some time to gather all the village people. Prior to escape my grandfather Pirtoo opened the barn-door and let all the sheep go out, then gave a tender kiss

to our cow called Zare between her horns. This detail of my father's story surprises me because generally sentimentality wasn't a characteristic feature of the fierce mountainous Assyrians. But then that sudden act of my grandfather reflected, I think, a foreboding that neither him nor his children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren would ever return here . . . Thus, it was nothing but farewell, forever. A farewell to fatherland, where our forefathers lived for centuries!

And so the Assyrians fled. It was a dark night. The horror made people move as fast as they could physically. The people of Borb, Roma and Shvata took part in this nightly unprecedented march, some 1,200-1,400 people. There were old people, pregnant women, many children, the youngest ones ran holding onto the hems of their mothers' dresses. Babies cried loudly, and in order to quiet them Nersoo asked all mothers to breast feed the babies. Listening to my father's story I could imagine the terrible night escape, pitch dark, narrow and twisty mountainous path, people gasping for air because of their fast marching to get out of this dangerous area.

Dawn was fast approaching and as the sun's early rays were shining, the fugitives reached a river, not wide but with extremely impetuous stream. There was safety and life for Assyrians on the opposite bank of the river because Armenian fighters dominated there and they were friends and allies.

There was still fear that the Turkish soldiers could come any moment. As I was listening, my father was describing in detail the construction of a temporary bridge over the wild stream. Emotions rose from hopelessness and despair, as they failed first, to the greatest rejoicing when they succeeded in making the passage. It was a battle between life and death. The priest, Jacob, with a big cross and the Gospel in his hands, was the first to cross, followed by women, children and old people and the rest. When everyone had crossed, the fugitives, filled with fear, glanced back to assure themselves that the Turks didn't chase them. The passageway was destroyed. They were safe.

Among these suffering villagers there was a 19-year-old fellow, Lazar, and a 10-year-old girl, Meske, who would become my parents many years later. Two more Assyrians appeared across the river, confused and helpless. These were the village shepherd Barkhoo from Shvata and his 80-year-old blind mother. There was no bridge now. At this moment Turkish soldiers on horses appeared. The escapees could see how Turkish soldiers killed Barkhoo and his mother with their sabers, venting on them all their anger for the successful escape of the masses from under their very noses. There was an exchange of fire between the Turks and the Armenians, but the bullets could not reach the masses.

Assyrians persistently took the road to the north toward the Russian border, but they were still in Turkish territory. Stopping meant death and movement survival. On their way they kept far away from the big towns where Turkish troops were camped, and so they passed Betlis, then the town of Van and Lake Van. More and more new refugees joined the main group during this unprecedented march and this miles long stream of population rushed toward Russia. Upon reaching the area of Urmia, Iran, they found the advance guards of the Rus-

sian army. They decided to stay there under the protection of the "blue-eyes," as they called the Russian soldiers, and were treated very kindly.

One or two months passed quietly and January 1915 arrived. Masses of Assyrian refugees gathered in the area of Urmia. Then all of a sudden there was disaster. The whole Russian force retreated to Russia as the main Turkish army was threatening Batum. There was no warning, a secret order was given to leave immediately, leaving the people whom they had just rescued to the mercy of their enemies. Several thousands of Assyrians followed in the tracks of the retiring Russians and fled to Russia, finding safety in this way. My parents-to-be were among those poor miserable Assyrians. This is just one episode among the many tragedies that befell the Assyrians who were living in the mountains.

By November, some 20,000 men, women and children from the mountainous area, led by Patriarch Mar Benjamin Shimun, arrived in the Persian district of Salamas and Urmia. During the next three years the Assyrians suffered continually. I need not describe the sufferings of the Assyrians throughout the long, tedious and hazardous journey from Urmia to Hamadan when the nation lost more than one half of its population. These have been well documented by many Assyrian and Western writers. Indescribable eye witness accounts have also been related to me by Yosip Mar Youkhanan d'Gavilan, who was in Urmia during this period.

To conclude, the lot of the Assyrians has been a tragedy, a betrayal by the so-called honorable nations.



1915. Assyrian refugees from the Hakkari Mountains.



Mar Shalita Assyrian Church of the East. Built in 1689 it was the Patriarchal Church in Qochanis. It was abandoned in 1916 during the Assyrian exodus from the Hakkari region.

CHAPTER IV

First Experiences in Siberia

Now, let's return to when Assyrians were condemned to the Siberian exile in 1949. We could see them just at the moment they were taken on carriages with horses harnessed. They rode on unknown paths through endless Siberian forests. The Assyrians were taken to such zones (so-called "collective farms") as Asino, Kolpashovo, Bakchar, Podolsk, Salnikovo, Pobedim, Makarovka, Vorobyevka, Chemokaevka, Malinovka, Porotnikov and so on. These were the same Assyrians who had fled from Turkey to Russia 35 years previously to escape massacres.

The population of Porotnikov watched us with a great curiosity as the "caravan" of carriages filled with black-headed people of eastern appearance — never seen in Siberia before — arrived in this area. It was surprising that people lived there. We would learn afterwards that before the Russian Revolution of 1917, no one ever lived in these wild forests until the new Soviet authorities started exiling "hostile" classes in the 20's and 30's, fulfilling the campaign of "collectivization." Actually, these were innocent people and their only guilt was that they owned 1 to 3 cows or horses and they didn't want to give their property to newly organized "Soviet collective farms." Immediately after our arrival we were given the command to gather by the so-called "Kommandant office." The commandant, i.e., superintendent in charge of our zone, was a captain, tall and heavy. He told us his last name was Shaposhnikov. The crimson color of his big nose made us guess in what way our brave captain used to fight his "ennui" (boredom) in this area of bears . . . From the very first look at Kommandant's military hat with a red band, exiled people began to call him — covertly, of course — "Krasnoshapka" ("the red hat"). So, "Redhat" with the gun in a holster on his hip, told us the zone/collective farm regulations. He said, "Citizen-residents of the special zone, you know now you are exiled here because you had become enemies of our Soviet people and agents of Turkey. Forget about going back, forget forever. The main thing here is strict discipline, and keep in mind first, every exiled person 16 years of age and older must come to the Commandant's office every day between 8 and 10 p.m. to sign his name in the lists of availability; second, nobody is allowed to go out of Porotnikov farther than 9 miles without a special pass; third and final, you must do all collective farm jobs without any discussions, at any time and in any weather! If you violate the zone regulations you'll be punished severely." Then "Redhat" introduced his two aides whose last names were Sootkin and Shvetsov. Both of them packed guns on their hips. They were our guards as well as general supervisors.

Collective farm jobs started by dawn and ended late in the evening. It was a kind of slavery. Besides the commandant and two guards, there were four foremen in the zone. Early in the morning, 4:30-5:00 a.m., the foremen rode horses all over the zone and ordered the different jobs of the day. Every morning our foreman, Varakin, rode to the barn which used to be our family dwelling for the first year (the same regarding other Assyrian families) and, still on the horse, he would knock intensively with his whip's end at the so-called "window" and shout,

"Hey, Vartanov! (to my father) — You will stub plants and dead tree roots to clear the land! Hey, Vartanova! (to my mother) — You will do field jobs!" His shouting would awaken us children, and we got to be afraid of his yelling.

There were 5 girls and 2 boys in our family, and other families had even more children. We often became ill, but no one parent could refuse to go to work and stay home to care for a sick child. My mother yelled in reply to the foreman's order, "I won't go to work! Let it go to hell. My child is sick!" The foreman yelled back, "You'll go anyway, f—ing mother. I say you'll go. Just try not to get to the f—ing workday." And then we could hear all expressions of the Russian foul and obscene language used by the foreman. So everyone was forced to do every day's jobs. There were various kinds of punishments imposed to "educate" an undisciplined exiled person. The simplest one was to deprive the "guilty family" of the mouthful portion of flour, and therefore, the family had no bread for a month. In Siberia, every family baked its own bread. The combination of the foul language, lack of bread and threats of severe punishment caused our childhood to end too early.

Assyrians, being excellent workers, were never shy of hard jobs. But we had to survive under extremely hard living conditions. The first few months we lived in rat-infested barns. One day as one of my sisters was lifting an empty box from the floor she was severely bitten by a large rat. Even today I recall her crazy screams. In the first period we had our meals from the collective farm's kitchen, i.e., some terrible lentil soups, potatoes, no meat, no vegetables. There were limits on bread. Bread baked from pea flour initially gave most children stomach aches. Then they provided us with break baked from oats, which was better. There was never enough as we always had intense feelings of hunger.



The first summer in Siberia. My older sister Mariya and her daughter Valya. In the background is the barn in which our family lived for a year.

Initially, the local population treated us with suspicion and even with hostility. Afterwards we learned the reasons for such treatment. One of the Siberian women, Sviridova, said: "They warned us that many Turkish criminal people are going to be brought over here and that all of them are black and aggressive. Also we were told the expected newcomers were enemies of our Soviet people, spies and agents of Turkey. Naturally, we became afraid as we have never seen such people here before . . ." Such was the information provided by authorities to the local population. But it did not take long for the local people to see that we were a peaceful people and hard workers. Hard work is highly regarded by the Siberian people. Besides, these "black headed" people were so lively, enjoyed good jokes, treated each other in a very friendly manner, and were so communicative that one couldn't believe how these newcomers were "enemies," "aggressive," "agents," and so on.

„ЗА ДОБЛЕСТНЫЙ ТРУД
В ВЕЛИКОЙ ОТЕЧЕСТВЕННОЙ ВОЙНЕ
1941—1945 гг.“



АЦ № 042370

УДОСТОВЕРЕНИЕ
ЗА ДОБЛЕСТНЫЙ И САМООТВЕР-
ЖЕННЫЙ ТРУД В ПЕРИОД
ВЕЛИКОЙ ОТЕЧЕСТВЕННОЙ ВОЙНЫ
Варшанов
Ласоре
Варшанов
УКАЗОМ ПРЕЗИДИУМА ВЕРХОВНОГО
СОВЕТА СССР от 6 июня 1945 г.
НАГРАЖДЕН МЕДАЛЕМ
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ОТ ИМЕНИ ПРЕЗИДИУМА ВЕРХОВНОГО
СОВЕТА СССР МЕДАЛ ВРУЧИЛА
28. апреля 1946 г.
Александр пред. РИ
К. П. *Шенников*
ПРИМЕРНОЕ ПОДПИСАНИЕ

My father and many other Assyrians were awarded the "Medal for Labor Valor" during World War II with Stalin on the face side, and the words, "Our cause is right — we will win a victory." However, Stalin charged these Assyrians as "spies" and exiled them to Siberia.

Gradually the local people's treatment of us changed positively. But the name "Turkishmen" given to us by authorities and accepted by the local population stuck during all the years of our exile. Assyrians didn't argue, though deprived of their nationality. Even after years of exile we left this land of forests, ice and snow under the name of "Turkishmen" or "Iranian citizens." Truly, we were a lost people . . .

Local people weren't natives of Siberia. Most of them were originally "Cossacks" and lived in the area of Kuban near the Black Sea (the main city Krasnodar, former Ekaterinoslav before 1917). They were exiled to Siberia some 20 years before us in the late 20's and early 30's. At that time the Soviets created all over the country collective farms ("kolkhoz" in Russian), and these people were exiled to Siberia as a result of the Soviet's policy of "dispossession of the class of kulaks." "Kulak" is the Russian word created by the revolution, and if you take away the policy it means nothing but an honest peasant

who worked hard on his land and managed to earn money and own cows, horses and other kinds of property.

When the Cossacks were brought to Siberia there were no dwellings in the gigantic Siberian forests. They showed us various huge holes in the earth located in line outside our village. "Look," one of them said, "here are the holes we survived in as beasts in the first year of our exile. Not all of us survived . . . Now you came, it's different. You are luckier, this area has become like a health resort, if we compare it to the past . . ." Possibly, he was right but, Siberia of the 1930's and the 1950's was and remained a gigantic laboratory where everyone faced the choice of dying at once or fighting for survival in the severest conditions ever seen.

This became obvious to us when it first snowed. The Siberian summer is very short, and it was August when we arrived in Siberia. It started snowing in September, and we were not prepared for the severe winter. There was no warning or gradual climatic change. It was instantaneous. It was a dilemma for the Assyrians. Local, experienced people sympathized with us and warned us to quickly get warm clothes and "valenki" (Russian word for a kind of thick felt boot), otherwise you'll die the very first winter. We were barefooted and without warm clothes. How could we get proper shoes and clothes? Could we make them ourselves? We had no fabrics, no materials, no sewing machines. To buy them one had to go to the area's main town, Bakchar, which was 30 miles away. And it was impossible, anyway, because to go there one needed a special pass issued by the commandant. He always refused such trips. For him it was safer and quieter not to allow exiled people to get farther than 9 miles from the village of Porotnikovo.

The first Siberian winter did not simply come, it fell upon us, it attacked us with the ringing wild frosts. He who had not seen them with his own eyes could hardly be able to sense the suffering of these poor Assyrians, bent and shriveled because of the killing cold, with their noses getting bluish from the frost, and their eyes watery. They worked in the outdoor "kolkhoz" every day! Many workers didn't get warm felt boots and they worked in regular boots even when the temperature was 40 degrees and more below zero. Many people were frost-bitten, and this occurred often. Their hands, ears, noses and cheeks were getting frost-bitten. Non-experienced Assyrians, when frost-bitten, would rush into warm lodging, which was the wrong thing to do. Because after warming up, the frost-bitten part of the body hurt badly and caused burning pains and then the skin would come off the frost-bitten part. Local people told us to massage immediately and intensively the frost-bitten part of the body with snow until the skin begins to turn from white to pink, which is a sign of resumption of blood circulation.

Assyrians loved Siberian mittens made of dogs' fur which protected their hands against the frost. But what filled Assyrians with indignation most was that human civilization did not invent a special item to protect the nose, this being the most vulnerable part of the human body. The nose suffered the most from frost and, as it is well known, our Assyrian noses are not small. Thus, the nose got frost-bitten first of all, and the ex-inhabitants of the sunny Caucasus (Assyrians) found a solution for the nose problem. They made small wool mittens, sort of a

large "thimble," in which they hid their noses, with a small hole to breathe through. The Siberians were astonished with this "invention" and laughed. They had never seen anything like this in Siberia.

One day, commandant "Redhat," when supervising his garrison, saw my father carrying feed for the cattle on the sled. As usual it was very cold and frosty, and the commandant wore a sheepskin fur coat and a fur hat provided especially for military officers serving at the North Pole. He was about 6 feet, 10 inches tall and his uniform made him look like a giant. My father wasn't a short man, but he, having been bent and shriveled because of the burning icy wind, looked at that moment small and weak. Having watched the miserable figure of my father, wearing light clothes, the commandant called him by waving his finger, "Hey you, come over here!" My father obeyed. He then grabbed my father's overclothes and shook him intensively. "Hey, you mustn't be like this," he said, "otherwise you'll die soon! The wind is blowing under your clothes; use a waist-belt over your coat. Look at me, do like this!" Redhat poked his finger into his belt tied over his thick warm sheepskin fur coat. My father replied timidly: "The thing is that I have no 'belten' (my father confused the word because he had little knowledge of Russian)." "No belten!" the commandant angrily mimicked my father. "If you have no belt, then use any rope or cord, or string and tie it around your waist 2-3 times and tighten well. Do it, if you don't want to die. Understand?"

Assyrians, indeed, did what "Redhat" commanded. They found cords in kolkhoz' storage house and tightened them over their clothes, saving their lives in this way. But not all Assyrians survived the first Siberian winter. My 16-year-old sister Elza had no coat. She walked to the village school, about 1 mile away, and instead of a winter coat she wore a big shawl tightened around her waist, chest and back. But this didn't save her from the cold. It was madness to dress like this, but our reality didn't leave us any choice or chance. Very soon Elza got the worst kind of pneumonia. There was neither a doctor nor medicine in the village, so pneumonia meant death. My parents had to take Elza as soon as possible to the town of Bakchar, over 30 miles away. They lost a few days begging "Redhat" to give them permission. Then they lost a few more days applying to the kolkhoz management for a sled and horses (the latter were in short supply in the collective farm). At last, my parents managed to take our sick sister to a hospital. However, within a week we received a cable demanding that we pick up the sick young lady because it was a hopeless case. My father and my two older sisters Maria and Anna went to pick Elza up. They found her in a dirty and terribly cold ward, so cold that one could see the exhalation going out of one's mouth, and the hand became numb with cold. Poor Elza was in a terrible state, and she got delirious. "Pick her up and take her home," said an exasperated man, who was in charge of doctor's duties. "We can't help her, she is dying." Elza died quietly at home, not regaining her consciousness.



1950. My sister Elsa, age 16, died in Siberia.



1950. Funeral of my sister, Elsa. At the head of the casket, the smallest boy is the author, Iliya Vartanov.

A month later death visited our family again. This time it was my 18-year-old sister, Marta. She had finished the 9th grade in the Caucasus and all her teachers recognized her excellent mental abilities. Marta wanted to go on studying but no high school existed in our village. One had to go to Bakchar town to complete his high school education. So Marta appealed to "Redhat" for permission to go to Bakchar to study, but the commandant laughed at her when hearing her request. He said, "Look, what strange dreams come to your mind. So, you are a dreamer! What do you attempt to become, a professor? In what field? It's funny to hear that. Listen, you'll never need to study here — it is useless here. We want

you to work, honestly and hard; the kolkhoz has a lack of working hands, so get working!" Thus, the commandant put an end to school. Instead of a classroom Marta found herself at the kolkhoz's grain elevator, using a threshing machine. This was a terribly hard job, a deathly one for any young lady under 18. One day she got extremely tired and wanted to go home for only half an hour of rest and to warm up. Supervisor Sootkin, who was referred to by the people as the "dog" or "he bitch" because of his bad treatment, was on duty that day and he didn't allow Marta any rest. Marta was so exhausted that she couldn't stand it any longer, so she lay on the cold floor of the elevator, having put straw under her and had a short break. Most likely this was the initial stage of the deadly illness.

It happened to her again in May, as well as six weeks later, when she was taken by sled to Bakchar's so-called hospital. Another Assyrian woman, Mariam, got delirious and was taken on the same sled, screaming and yelling. It was snowing. My older sister Maria held Marta, who had high fever and difficulty in breathing, in her arms covered with a blanket with high winds blowing. As it turned out afterwards, we shouldn't have tortured our poor Marta with this 35-mile ride. She stayed in the hospital for only two weeks when my parents were notified to pick her up as it was hopeless. Unlike Elza, Marta never became delirious and she knew clearly why she had to be sent home. The doctors wanted her to die at home instead of at the hospital as it was not in their best interest to show in the hospital's records one more death.



1950. My sister Marta, age 18, died in Siberia.

Marta was dying slowly. June had just arrived and the trees began to blossom. The late Siberian spring was on the horizon. It was the last spring in the life of 18-year-old Marta. She was alert up to the very last minute of her life, and as we gathered around her bed, she said, "I feel deeply sorry for all of you. What will happen to you? How will you go on living? . . ." Marta spoke truth in her dying words. We were alive and had to go on living, but to live under such circumstances as ours could mean only one thing — suffering. We mourned our dying people and they, when departing this life, felt deeply sorry for us.

Many years have passed since our Siberian tragedy. We have lived in Georgia in the 1970's. I have just ended my 3-year service in the Red Army and returned home. When digging in our family archives I found an old Assyrian Bible with some pencil notes in Assyrian written in one of its pages. It undoubtedly was written by a peasant's hand. It said, "Elza died March 16, 1950; Marta was born in 1932 and died in June 1950; Oraham died in 1951; Ketone, my mother, died September 15, 1952."

Oraham, mentioned above, was our close relative and Ketone was my grandmother. The Siberian climate, along with sufferings and torture by cold and hunger, had killed them as well. One more death, one more small note on the Bible's pages. In this way, seemingly with no emotion, with no unnecessary words, my father recorded these sorrowful dates. She died . . . , he died . . . , she died . . . The chronicle of the deaths in our family had been written. Every Assyrian family had its own chronicle of deaths in Siberia.

When I was a lad of about 16 studying in Moscow, I had read the renowned book entitled *The Diary of Anne Frank*. It was about a girl who found herself and her family under the Nazi occupation regime (1940-41) in Holland, where she recorded daily all the sufferings she and her family members underwent. When I was reading it, my mind was wandering through our experiences in the Siberian hell. Another world-famous diary had been written by a Soviet schoolgirl, Tanya Savichev, in Leningrad, while the city was under siege for 900 days by German troops in World War II (1941-1944). Tanya's family members died one after another because of hunger, cold and exhaustion. The little school girl recorded events thoroughly in her notebook as follows:

Grandmother died last Friday . . . Mom has been killed by a shell-splinter . . . My little brother Kolya died yesterday because of hunger. No more bread is left at home. Potatoes and macaroni had been finished last week. Grandpa died today.

I have been left absolutely alone. I'm going to die, too. It's chilly in the room. No food. Because of the cold my fingers hold the pen with difficulty . . .

Thanks to the mass media both Anne Frank's and Tanya Savichev's tragic stories had become known throughout the world. I believe every individual's life has its own worth and every human tragedy is worth being mentioned. I guess in every Assyrian family in Siberia there was somebody to write records, just like my father Lazar, of the deaths of close and beloved relatives and friends. People were dying, people were suffering, not in war, not by an external enemy, but by our own authorities . . . systematically. The evil that men do is endless and unlimited. I know of our family's and of the hundreds of other Assyrian families' tragedy in Siberia. Another person, whether a Jew, or Georgian, or Tatar, or Armenian by nationality, knows of his people's tragedies. Millions of "small" and "great" human tragedies have occurred in our country and have been buried in silence. So, let every individual tragedy, every evil and crime committed by men, be known. Maybe less evil in the world will be committed if we turn the light of our memory onto our past, however sorrowful and dramatic it may be.

Chicago's Assyrian-Americans Are Helping Keep Alive the Dream of a Nation for Their People Carved from Iraq

by *Stephen Franklin*

Chicago Tribune - January 10, 1991

As Ashur Bet-Sargis, a highly popular Assyrian singer, began his favorite song about his lost homeland, nearly everyone in the Far North Side restaurant rose, linked hands and joined a dance line that soon snaked around the room.

Middle-aged husbands in dark, conservative suits and wives in colorful dresses paraded beside young, fashionably dressed couples; all seemed familiar with Bet-Sargis' song.

There was a feeling of intense camaraderie in the small, smoky room of Chicago's Arbela Restaurant, and owner Hany Baba, a slightly nervous man standing in a corner wearing a bright pink rose in the lapel of his jacket, appeared pleased.

To a visitor, the scene suggested a celebration as patrons sang along with the Iraqi-born musical star in Syriac, the language of their ancestors but one that hasn't been used officially by any nation in the last 2700 years.

The words of the Western-style song, slightly drowned out by the beat of an electric organ and the sounds of Bet-Sargis' guitar, had equally ancient roots. They were the rallying cry of Assyrian warriors as they set off to defend their kingdom, which existed for 1000 years in Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

That land is known today as Iraq.

The singing and dancing seemed a moment from another time and another place, a moment out of synch with the contemporary world, and that is how many Assyrians view themselves today. In their minds they are a stateless Middle Eastern people nearly wiped out by discrimination, massacres and the persecution of despotic rulers, a people clinging to a cultural identity that is a mystery to most of those around them.

They are Christians who, despite the location of their ancestral homeland, insist they are not Arabs. They speak Syriac, an ancient Semite tongue closer to Hebrew than Arabic. Some, like the Jews of the Diaspora dreaming of a home in Palestine, talk passionately of creating a nation of their own in Iraq. But outside their community few have heard of their cause. And, as they unhappily admit, they lack the power to make their dream real.

More on their minds these days is the military confrontation between the allied forces in the Persian Gulf and Iraq, a standoff that stirs deep emotions among many of the Chicago area's 60,000 Assyrian-Americans, the largest community of its kind in the U.S.

As a showdown approaches, many of these immigrant Americans fret about the fate of relatives and friends among Iraq's 200,000 Assyrian citizens.

They also find themselves in the difficult position of explaining to their fellow Americans, who often know little about the ethnic and cultural makeup of the Middle East, how most Assyrians are linked by blood and history to Iraq.

Nothing To Do With Iraq

"Americans get confused. They don't understand who you are," said Davis Shalimo, 38, seated one night recently at an Assyrian restaurant off Devon Avenue on Chicago's far North Side, a neighborhood where many Assyrian-Americans live.

"It's scary telling people that you come from Iraq," added his friend Sam Jallou, 33.

"I always tell people I was born in Iraq, but I have nothing to do with it," said another of Shalimo's friends, Terry Haddad, 37.

Shalimo, like Haddad a native of Iraq, reached into his shirt pocket and pulled out a carefully folded, mimeographed sheet. He uses it, he said, when asked about his origins. The statement begins:

"YOU ASKED ME WHAT NATIONALITY I AM. HERE IS A BRIEF HISTORY OF MY PEOPLE.

"I am an Assyrian-American. I am not to be confused with Syrians from Syria. My ancestors were a rich and powerful people of Mesopotamia, which was located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, just north of the Garden of Eden. Today this entire area is now Iran and Iraq."

Marie Oshana wrote the brief history 16 years ago, and she figures she has given away more than 1000 copies. A stewardess for Trans World Airlines, she grew tired of long, complex explanations to airline passengers, who, she said, noticed her dark hair and dark eyes and wondered aloud if she were Greek or Italian.

As she revised the printed explanation over the years, she made extra copies at her father's printing press in Chicago to hand out.

"You tell [passengers] you are an Assyrian and they say they've never heard about Assyrians in their lives," she said. "Most of the time, after I give them the paper, they ask me to sign it and then they want to keep it."

As her history points out, the Assyrians were among Christianity's earliest converts, accepting the faith in the 3rd century. Nineveh was the capital of their kingdom, an enormous territory that stretched from the Nile to the Black Sea. After Assyria fell in 612 B.C. to the Medes, the Assyrians were dispersed, and many settled in the mountains of what is today eastern Turkey and western Iran.

During World War I, their descendants sided with the Russians against the Ottoman Empire. But they were defeated and many were resettled in Iraq, which was carved from the Ottoman Empire.

Amid hopes of creating a homeland in Iraq, the Assyrians clashed with the Iraqi army in 1933. The army said it was putting down a revolt. The Assyrians called it an unprovoked massacre. Hundreds of Assyrians were killed and dozens of villages destroyed.

New Tide of Refugees

They were caught up next in a 14-year conflict

between their neighboring Kurds in northern Iraq and the government. Because many Assyrians backed the Kurds, thousands fled to America when the Kurds were defeated in 1975.

This brought a new tide of refugees to Chicago, where Assyrians had been settling since the turn of the century. By the end of the fighting, the Chicago area had gained more than 33,000 immigrants, according to the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation, created in Chicago in 1978 to help the refugees.

Since 1985, the Assyrian-Americans have been caught in another dispute between the Iraqi government and the Kurds, creating yet another wave of refugees.

Most Assyrian-Americans are critical of Saddam Hussein's rule of Iraq, but they are careful not to condemn the government publicly. If it learns of their comments, they say, relatives or friends in Iraq may be punished.

"It is the fear of this guy [Saddam Hussein]. The fear that makes them say they won't take sides. They know he will truly hurt their parents if he wants," said Kief Mkrdichian, 38, a Chicago Realtor who is part Armenian and part Assyrian. Mkrdichian said he fled Iraq 19 years ago because of the persecution of Christians.

He is unafraid, he said, of the Iraqi government, and proudly explained how he has been an ardent Assyrian activist and critic of Iraq's Ba'ath Party leaders, dating to his school days in Baghdad and his formation of the Assyrian Student Association of the U.S. at the University of Illinois in 1971.

The fears of the Assyrian-Americans appear well-founded.

The U.S. government last February indicted a former doorman at Iraq's United Nations mission in New York, charging him with accepting money from an Iraqi agent to kill a leading Assyrian critic of the Iraqi government who lives in California, and another unnamed Iraqi, reportedly a Kurdish leader, in the U.S. The U.S. attorney in Sacramento, Calif., said the Iraqi has been a fugitive since his indictment.

Keeping the flame of hope for a homeland in Mesopotamia alive is a group of Assyrians in the U.S. and around the world who call themselves the Bet-Nahrain Democratic Party.

They regularly catalog what they see as the Iraqi government's abuses of Assyrians, including, for example, its refusal to allow Syriac to be taught in public schools, a step they view as destructive to their culture.

And they file appeals with the United Nations, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, which held the League of Nations mandate over Iraq until 1932, to force them to carry out promises made by the Western powers after World War I to safeguard the rights of Assyrians in Iraq.

"We are like the Jews. We'll die out if we don't have a homeland," said Ben Daniel, an English teacher at Chicago's Lakeview High School for the last 25 years, and an Iraqi-born member of the Bet-Nahrain group.

A passionate, slow-speaking man who publishes the Assyrian Guardian Monthly, Daniel explained that he threw himself into the cause 20 years ago when he realized that "the Assyrian nation will be lost."

John Yonan's interest in safeguarding the rights of Assyrians in Iraq is equally strong, but he has no hopes for an Assyrian homeland. "If 7 million Kurds can't do it, and they are well-armed, how are we going to do it?"

asked Yonan, 61, a cheerful, outgoing businessman whose late father came to the U.S. and a job in Chicago's stockyards in 1928.

A deeply religious man upset by the Assyrians' plight during the Kurdish conflict, Yonan helped create the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation in 1978 to assist Assyrian refugees. Today he is its ambassador and coordinator for refugee affairs, a title that, he said, helps him win access to diplomats.

Older Assyrians such as Yonan frequently wonder if future generations in the U.S. will feel as strongly about their ethnic identity as he does.

To be sure, they are more than 10 churches and a number of thriving social and athletic clubs in Chicago that act like a glue for the city's Assyrian community.

And if weekend nights at the Arbela restaurant are any indication, the answer about the future is a positive one. The restaurant, named after an ancient Assyrian city in Iraq, has become what owner Hany Baba envisioned when he opened it five years ago: a family gathering place where Syriac can be comfortably spoken and Assyrian music played.

Covering the sand-colored walls are paintings of fanciful desert scenes and elaborate portraits of Assyrian kings and queens.

The night of the performance by Ashur Bet-Sargis, the room filled quickly. The tall, handsome singer, who has recorded four albums in Assyrian since coming to the U.S. 20 years ago, had recently returned to his home in San Jose, Calif., from a concert in Australia.

Hany Baba had prepared the restaurant's basic meals, as he always does, gone home to dress, and arrived back in time to welcome his regular customers with a smile.

Waving and smiling at each other as they entered, patrons soon filled the chairs at every table. Most spoke Assyrian. Bet-Sargis performed several songs that kept the dance line circling the small room, and then delivered one he had composed only recently.

It is called "The Wind of the Winter," and it tells the story of an old man in an Assyrian village who hears the wind knocking at his door. He mistakes it for his missing family, which, he concludes joyfully, is returning to him. But when he discovers that it is not, he bitterly curses the wind.

Outside, a freezing drizzle iced the darkened streets, and a chilling Chicago wind howled. Inside, few of the restaurant's patrons seemed to notice. They were lost in song and dance, celebrating the beauty of a country that lives gloriously in their imaginations.

"A cultural minority with a proud and ancient heritage is fighting today for its survival, but few seem to notice or to care. The Assyrians . . . living in and around Mosul and other parts of Iraq are keeping alive a special Christian tradition using the very language today that was spoken by Jesus Christ. But the Assyrian heritage goes back much further than that, to the dawn of civilization of the year 3,000 B.C."

**Dr. James J. Watkins
Professor of International Law (1981)**

Introducing the ISHTAR Project: A Commentary

A common criticism of the Assyrian associations is that they are merely entertainment clubs and do not fulfill the community's basic needs concerning the maintenance of the Assyrian language and heritage, as well as other cultural and educational needs. They even fall short of their own constitutionally stated goals.

Let us attempt to find the basic reasons for these shortcomings. Two conditions need to be present for any association to meet the various needs of the community it is serving. First, it needs to have a source of funds in order to finance meaningful projects for members of all ages. Second, it needs to have a place where programs can be implemented.

Most of our associations do not have adequate space or facilities and to survive at all financially, they depend on a limited source of income from donations and parties. As sources of funds, these are not reliable. Moreover, they are a burden on community members. In sum, in most cases, it is the lack of funds and adequate space which has crippled our associations. Often dedicated and capable Assyrians volunteer their time and money to run these associations; but because of the above-mentioned deficiencies, they become frustrated and their efforts end in failure.

I find the ISHTAR project which is proposed by the Assyrian American Association of Southern California very promising and exciting because it assures future financial self-sufficiency of the center. In the meantime it provides space to meet the cultural and educational commitments of the association. What is even more promising is that this project does not put a burden on the community because the income to generate the proposed changes is not based on donations (unless voluntary), but on interest bearing, tax deductible loans.

I suggest that the reader take a few minutes to closely examine the ISHTAR project because it can serve as a blueprint for other Assyrian associations to turn their organizations into fund-generating and efficient community centers.

Let us not kid ourselves. It is of utmost importance now for our associations to go beyond being mere entertainment clubs, because our very survival as an ethnic group is in danger. Associations cannot perform miracles unless they have a source of income to finance meaningful projects, and adequate space to implement those projects.

Ashur Moradkhan

ISHTAR PROJECT COMMITTEE

Chairman & Coordinator Sargon Ishaya
Co-Chairman* Victor Saroukhanioff
Secretary Juliana Bacchus
Treasurer* Robert Baba
Controller* Neron Mansouri
Legal advisor Victor Alexanderoff
Technical advisor Charles Begini
Graphical exhibits Ashur Banipal Mansour

Fund raising coordinators:

Assyrian sources Emanuel BetMaleck,
George Warda
Non-Assyrian sources Yvette Alexander,
George Gevarges

**Check signing authorities*

1.0 DEFINITION

Ishtar is a major development and remodeling project designed to convert the Assyrian Center of Los Angeles into a potentially profit generating facility.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

2.1 To generate a sustained cash flow needed for the promotion and enhancement of all the programs of this Association which are now in a state of dormancy.

2.2 To increase the level of interaction between the Association and the Assyrians of our community.

2.3 To make the Center a useful facility for all Assyrians and Non-Assyrians of this community.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT

- Addition of 6500 sq. ft. of offices and classrooms
- Conversion of the floor to single level
- Expansion of kitchen space and equipment
- Reconstruction of the washrooms
- Increase in seating space
- Construction of a storage space
- New floor and complete interior remodeling
- Increase in parking space
- Improvement of fence and installation of gate
- Planting of tall border trees
- Reconditioning of the parking area

4.0 TIMING

Target date for the start of construction is April 1, 1991, and completion is expected in approximately 6 to 8 months.

5.0 COST

Estimated not to exceed \$500,000.

ISHTAR PROJECT



A NEW CENTER FOR ALL ASSYRIANS

ܐܡܝܪܝܐ ܕܢܐܡܠܟܐ - ܐܡܝܪܝܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ

Assyrian American Association

of Southern California

5901 Cahuenga Blvd. • North Hollywood • CA • 91601 • (818) 506-7577

Non-Profit Organization

6.0 SOURCE OF FUNDING

- 6.1 Interest free loans, 2 to 3 year term
- 6.2 Low interest loans, 3 to 5 year term
- 6.3 Donations (Assyrian and Corporations)
- 6.4 Other

All the sources and types of contributions will be made public.

7.0 SOURCE OF PAY OUT

- 7.1 Hall rental with catering services
- 7.2 Day care center
- 7.3 Public Bingo night
- 7.4 Various government grants
- 7.5 State and National conventions
- 7.6 Office space leasing

7.7 Membership dues

7.8 Other fund raising programs

8.0 PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Demolition	\$12,400
Excavation & grading	8,500
Concrete work	23,300
Carpentry & framing	84,000
Metal units	12,400
Plumbing & materials	24,000
Air conditioning	12,500
Electrical work	21,000
Insulation & caulking	3,800
Roofing	11,000
Doors & windows	8,800

Interior finishing & decoration	74,000
Fire sprinkler system	25,000
Additional kitchen equipment	50,000
Fence improvement & gate	8,000
Parking space improvement	8,000
Border trees	6,000
Support services	12,500
Insurance & workmans comp.	4,800
Sub-Total	\$410,000
10% contractor's fee	41,000
Total Cost	\$451,000

ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENSE after the completion of the project

It is anticipated that at least 50% of the funds collected will be donated prior to, or soon after, the completion of the Ishtar project. Therefore, the Association will face a maximum loan of \$225,000 to pay back within a 2 to 5 year period after the completion of the project.

9.0 ESTIMATED ANNUAL GROSS INCOME

Hall rental (with catering services)	\$120,000
Other rentals	10,000
Day Care center	6,000
Bingo	10,000
Government grants	16,000
State & National conventions (average)	10,000
Membership dues	12,000
Banquets & New Year's eve	12,000
Total Income	\$196,000

10.0 ESTIMATED ANNUAL EXPENSE

Full time manager	\$30,000
Full time secretary	18,000
Insurance	10,000
Water, power & telephone	14,000
Maintenance, repairs & yard care	12,000
Incidentals	6,000
Total Expenses	\$90,000

11.0 ESTIMATED ANNUAL NET INCOME

INCOME	\$106,000
Until the pay out of the loans, gain to be shared by:	
Ishtar committee for loan payment	
80 percent	\$85,000
Administration for the programs	
20 percent	21,000

Remarks:

- With \$85,000 of the annual income for the Ishtar committee, the \$225,000 loan can be paid off easily within a three-year period.
- For simplicity of cost estimation, some of the costs have been included in the programs in which they may occur. For example, the cost of the cleaning after a wedding is included in the estimation of net income from that wedding.

12.0 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

12.1 The Ishtar committee was confirmed by the General Body at the annual meeting held on November 18, 1990.

12.2 The committee shall be empowered to enter into contractual arrangements on behalf of the association as required to implement the project.

12.3 The committee shall report to the General Body on a monthly basis by way of comprehensive report.

12.4 The committee will implement the project independent of the board of directors and officers of the Association.

12.5 The committee shall have the sole authority to deal with a myriad of details anticipated by the project. However, any change orders over \$35,000 must be approved by the General Body. In the event a quorum is not present at a properly noticed General Body meeting, the Board of Directors shall have implied authority to approve such changes.

13.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

13.1 At the completion of the construction phase, the Center will be turned over to the Administration of the Association which shall be charged with the responsibility of generating income for the repayment of construction loans. The methods utilized shall include but not be limited to:

Hall rental, Day Care, Bingo, Catering services, Obtaining government grants, Conventions, etc.

13.2 80% of the gain from the foregoing activities shall be used for the repayment of construction loans.

13.3 20% of the gain shall be applied to other programs of the Association.

13.4 The committee shall operate independent of the board of directors and officers, and shall report to the General Body on a monthly basis.

13.5 The committee shall automatically dissolve when all construction loans have been repaid.

Sargon Ishaya
Ishtar Project Coordinator
November 18, 1990

"In their day, the Assyrians were the shepherd-dogs of civilization. The great majority of their wars were wars of civilization, either to bring within the range of cultural influences savage tribes or to hold back these savage tribes from destroying the thin line of civilization in the Fertile Crescent."

A. T. Olmstead

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

by Solomon (Sawa) Solomon



- The first European missionaries among the Assyrians were the Carmelite Fathers who came in the 17th century. The Carmelites managed to proselyte the Assyrians of Salamas. This mission was suspended in late 18th century.

- In the year 1142 A.D. a reconciliation took place between Mar Audisho II, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, and Dionysius, primate of the Jacobites; and from that time the two bodies granted mutual recognition to each other at every opportunity.

- According to official statistics, in 1976 there were 30,000 Assyrians living in Iran with fifty percent of the total staying in Tehran.

- In 424 A.D. the council of the Church of the East met in the town of Markabta of the Arabs and the title of Patriarch was applied to the Catholicos Mar Dadi-shu for the first time.

- H. W. Saggs, the author of the book *The Might That Was Assyria*, stated that there is no evidence that the Assyrian population of rural Assyria had ever left the country or was destroyed after the fall of the empire.

- There was a cell in the Church of Mar Kyriakos in Dizan where madmen used to be left for one or more nights, and in many cases they were cured.

- In June, 1886, Archbishop Benson of Canterbury sent a mission to help the Assyrians of Hakkari. They stayed there until 1915. Among the heads of the mission were Rev. W. A. Wigram (1907-1912) and George S. Reed (1905-1914).

- Deacon Eshai Benyamin, a half brother to Patriarch Mar Rowil Shimon (1841-1903), married Asiat Kambar of Iyel and raised a large family. Among his children were Patriarch Mar Benyamin, Patriarch Mar Poulos, Rab Khaila David, Surma Khanim, and many others.

- The Mongol Emperor Jenghiz Khan was very tolerant of our Assyrian Church of the East ("Nestorian") to a degree that a writer reported seeing eight hundred chapels on wheels in one Mongol army camp alone.

- The practice of medicine in Assyrian Hakkari was hereditary. The medicines were made from herbs, and the formula was kept a trade secret.

- In 1898 the "Nestorian" Bishop of Urmia along with his flock was admitted to the Russian Orthodox Church. This move was forced on our people because of persecution by local Muslims.

- And last, there were many treasurers in the house of the Patriarch in Kochanis. Among them was a firman given by Mohammed the Prophet of Islam to our church; a silver and coral knife inlaid with gold. They were all preserved until the time of Badr Khan Beg in 1845.

LETTERS TO THE ASSYRIAN FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

God bless you all for your time and the good work you are all doing.

Please accept the enclosed small token as a support towards the noble cause you have taken on your shoulders. Do not give up. Keep going.

Odisho Warda
Des Plaines, Illinois

I want to thank you so much for the scholarship you awarded to me. I can tell you that it will be well spent on my books when classes start in January. Who knows how I would have paid for them otherwise? Thank you once again for thinking of me.

Jenan Shabbas
Berkeley, CA

Once again I am honored to be a recipient of your scholarship for education. I can think of no greater goal in life than to be educated. It is a proud testament to the Assyrian community when everyone can clearly see that education is a top priority to that community. My books are fortunately paid for by my scholarship, and every time I read those books I am reminded of the Assyrian dedication to education.

I can always remember my grandfather (Raabi Babajan Ashouri) taking an interest in what I was learning. The memories are still with me of how important it was for his grandchildren to do well in school. There was no pressure, but I could feel that it was important to him and that importance was instilled in me. I have observed the same emphasis placed on education by all Assyrian people, and there is nothing that makes me more proud to be an Assyrian.

Ben Ashour Kingsbury
Clayton, CA

I feel very privileged to send you a thank-you letter for the third year in a row. The help the Assyrian Foundation extends to students of Assyrian heritage, both financial and moral, is deeply appreciated. I am very honored to have the support of the Assyrian Foundation of America through my academic studies; and as an Assyrian American, I am very honored to know that the Foundation takes such an interest in the education of its youth.

The financial support I received this year will be put towards my registration fees at the University of California, Riverside. The moral support I received, with the acceptance of my scholarship, gives me an added incentive in my studies.

I am currently a junior, majoring in English and minoring in History. I am also an active member of the Highland Clan, a volunteer organization on campus, and Co-Chairperson of the U.C.R. 1991 College Bowl. I will be graduating June of 1992 and hope to be accepted in a Teaching Credential program. I plan to teach English and History in a high school in the Bay Area.

Thank you again for all your support and help throughout my college career.

Lisa May Kingsbury
Clayton, CA

Enclosed is my donation check, for the Assyrians of Turkey, in the amount of \$50.00. With my best regards.

Sarkis Sargon Elia
Pasadena, CA

It is Spring '91, the beginning of a new semester. Your generous scholarship was received and went toward my tuition fees. My classes this semester consist of statistics, English, French, and anthropology. Without your help, I could not have enrolled.

I would like to thank everyone on the committee for your kindness and for sympathizing with a person who is in real need. My last semester at Modesto Junior College will be in the Fall of '91. Hopefully, I will move on to bigger and better things, i.e., a university. Your generosity is always deeply appreciated, and forever meaningful. Thank you.

Liliane Abi-Chahine
Modesto, CA

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$100.00 as a donation for the Assyrians of Turkey. Regards.

Sarkis Sargon Elia
Pasadena, CA

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$50.00 as a donation for the Assyrians in Turkey.

Wishing you a Happy Easter, and may the risen Christ bless you for your unselfish service to our people. God bless. Regards.

Sarkis Sargon Elia
Pasadena, CA

Enclosed please find a check in the amount of \$50.00 to go towards student education assistance.

Dena Babella
Millbrae, CA

Editor's Note: In the recent past when Dena was a student she was a recipient of the Assyrian Foundation's education assistance. She graduated and is now working. We appreciate Dena's donation and applaud her concern for those in need. The Foundation's good deeds are bearing fruit. Dena is Julia Warda's granddaughter.

Now that the Easter holiday is approaching and we are all preparing for the joyous festivities, I'd like to share some of our jubilation with our refugees in Turkey. Please find enclosed a donation of \$500.00 for Dennis Sarhad-Zadeh (the paralyzed and bedridden young man) in Istanbul, Turkey. He is always on our minds and in our prayers.

In closing I'd like to thank the Assyrian Foundation for the complimentary issues of *Nineveh* magazine and the beautiful novel, "The Constant Endeavor," by Phrydon E. Badal. We have truly enjoyed reading *Nineveh* and we anticipate the arrival of the next issue. I especially enjoyed reading Mr. Badal's novel, and from the bottom of my heart, I would like to thank him for sharing such a personal and warm story with us.

We wish you all a Happy Easter.

Layla Benjamin
Los Angeles, CA

BOOK(S) FOR SALE

Youel A. Baaba has recently published in Assyrian the poems of Avikam d'Bet Kelaita. The book consists of 64 pages. These include introduction as well as the biography and works of d'Bet Kelaita.

Mr. Baaba has undertaken the task of collecting and publishing such works so as to make them available to the reading public. Last year he published the poems of an Assyrian poet and writer, Eshaya E. Khinoo, whose work was never published. Of d'Bet Kelaita's poems, though previously published, only a handful remain. We applaud Youel for his initiative and dedication in the propagation of our literature.

To order write to:

Youel A. Baaba Library
50 Dias Court
El Sobrante, CA 94803

The book sells for \$5.00. We recommend it highly. Or you may order these books from the Assyrian Foundation of America at a cost of \$5.00 and \$15.00 (for Eshaya E. Khinoo's).



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Nineveh's youngest reader

Ashurbanipal DeKelaita, the son of Robert and Ester DeKelaita, was born on September 18, 1991 in Chicago. He is attracted to books and magazines. No wonder, his father is the chairman of the Ashurbanipal Assyrian Library in Chicago.

'Caught Between West and Iraq' Assyrians in Central Valley Deal With War

by Michael McCabe

San Francisco Chronicle - February 21, 1991

Modesto - A large contingent of an ancient and proud race concentrated in the Central Valley is watching events unfold in their homeland with a growing sense of frustration and horror.

They are Assyrian Americans, a community of more than 10,000 people, many of them recent immigrants from Iraq. Driven by wave after wave of war and repression since the beginning of this century, they have resettled all over the world. Many have found their way to Modesto, Ceres and Turlock, where the weather and farming land — and in recent years, the culture — remind them of home.

For many Assyrians, the gulf war has sharpened their sense of who they are and what Iraq means to them.

"We are caught between the West and Iraq," said Yatroum W. Zia, 52, present of the Assyrian American Civic Club of Turlock and an Iraq native. "It is difficult

for Americans to understand us. We are Americans, yes, and if called to fight, we will. But if your son goes over there to fight, he kills the enemy. If our son goes, he kills cousins.

Added Gabriel Montaz, 41, a Modesto businessman who also was born in Iraq: "We all have relatives over there, and we don't know who's dead, who's alive. Our lives are constant anxiety. We never get to bed until 2 a.m. because we are watching the news on CNN."

Mostly Christian

Part of the bind Assyrians find themselves in stems from the blurred image the world has of them as a people. For starters, Assyrians are not Arabs, and since the first century A.D. they have been almost exclusively Christian.

Like other immigrants from the Middle East, some Assyrians fear a backlash of violence and resentment as the gulf war continues. Some have received threatening telephone calls or been harassed on the street, Zia said, but no overt acts of violence have been reported. Before the war, such incidents were unheard of; Assyrians have been an integral part of the Central Valley community since before World War I.

The pull of Iraq has always been strong, however, and since the war began January 16, it is more intense than ever. Assyrians claim to be the original inhabitants of Iraq. They lost their kingdom, first to the Persians, later to the Arabs. Since then, the deepest wish for many Assyrians is to regain an equal claim to their homeland. Their name for Iraq is Bet-Nahrain, the land of two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, an area often called the cradle of civilization. Their language, Aramaic, which was spoken by Jesus Christ, is one of the oldest in the world.

In the Modesto-Turlock area, which holds the largest concentration of Assyrian Americans outside Chicago and Detroit, most Assyrians live in modest homes scattered within and outside the cities. Inside their home, memories of Iraq are evident with photographs on the walls of the Iraqi countryside or pictures of Assyrian Christian leaders. The favored jobs are in banks, real estate and factories. Some Assyrians, like their ancestors, continue to farm, growing grapes, almonds and walnuts.

In Iraq, however, where estimates put the number of Assyrians at perhaps 400,000 out of 17 million Iraqis, they are lower-class citizens, Zia said, although they are among the best educated. They were the commercial elite, running many businesses and schools. The reasons for their subordinate status are many, including the fact that they are not Muslims and resentment over their claims to be the original inhabitants of the land.

Like those of the Kurds, an even larger minority in Iraq, scores of Assyrian villages have been demolished, and thousands of Assyrians have been executed, imprisoned or are missing, several Assyrian Americans in the valley said.

Yet, Assyrians also serve in the Iraqi armed forces and the elite Republican Guard. The Iraqi foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, is Assyrian, and some of Saddam Hussein's personal bodyguards are said to be Assyrian.

"Every country we Assyrians have lived in, we have always been loyal," said George Geevargis, 51, a Modesto real estate investor. "We are trusted. And besides, what choice do we have in Iraq but to go into the army? We probably would be shot if we resisted."

Assyrians in the Central Valley are tightly knit culturally. But as in other ethnic groups, the older, foreign-born generation fears that the younger generation will be lured from the ancient roots. To combat that, almost every Assyrian church in the valley has a school where Assyrian American children keep up with the Assyrian culture and language.

Attitudes Toward the War

Every Assyrian seems to have a slightly different view of the Persian Gulf war. If they no longer have relatives there, they may turn their back on it. But most Assyrians do have relatives and friends in the gulf area. So they are

either outspoken against Saddam Hussein, or, fearing for the safety of loved ones, publicly express a guarded neutrality.

"Personally, I'd like to see Saddam Hussein executed," said one young Modesto woman named Carol who asked that her last name be withheld for fear that her relatives in Iraq would be harmed.

Carol's situation illustrates just how torn Assyrian Americans can feel. She has cousins in Iraq, several of them in the army. Her fiancé also has relatives in Iraq, including one in the army. Carol's brother enlisted in the U.S. Army in September. He is now in Saudi Arabia. "When my brother went over there my reaction was horror," Carol said during a recent interview at a fast food restaurant in Modesto. "My parents, my whole family here, are terribly upset. We fear it will be Assyrians fighting Assyrians, just like it was in the Iran-Iraq war."

Hopes for War's End

Others see the war as a chance for Assyrians to regain some measure of equality.

"This is the biggest opportunity for the Assyrian people in a long time," said Sargon Dadesho, 42, chairman of the Assyrian National Congress, an international group that has protested the Iraqi government's treatment of Assyrians.

"We want a short war, and then we would like to see a democratic government come out of it, where we can see all the nationalities, Assyrians, Kurds, Arabs, live in peace and dignity with human and civil rights. We have been living in fear for so many years — we are fed up."

Monnachie Tamraz, 46, a Modesto general contractor, agreed. "We want to cry out to the world. We are a lost people. Otherwise, in 50 years no one will remember us."



TIES TO BOTH SIDES

Torn Between War, Family

Miles City Man's Son in Navy, Other Relatives Still in Iraq

by Jill Sundby

The Billings Gazette - February 4, 1991

Miles City - Basil Pius is a man torn between his family and his country.

As Americans worry about their loved ones being killed by Iraqis, Pius fears for his brother, sister and her family in American-bombed Baghdad.

But, despite the harm that could come to his relatives in Iraq, Pius — a native of Iraq and a naturalized U.S. citizen — supports the U.S. action.

"War is sad. It costs lives and money and fear. I am especially concerned because I still have people there," said Pius, an instructor at Miles Community College for 25 years.

"I was hoping they (the U.S. and Iraqi governments) could have tried other alternatives, but on the other hand, there's no other way except using force on some people — they don't budge.

"Now, I have to support my country here, America. Since the commitment to war is under way, I would say we have to stick with it."

Pius is very close to his sister, Christina, who lives in Baghdad and cares for their mentally retarded brother. Her husband is dead, but her children Ashur, 35, Marta, 27, and Eshu, 24, live in Baghdad.

Ashur, a veteran of the Iran-Iraq war, was just released from the Iraqi army, after serving for 10 years. When Christina telephoned another brother in California the week before the Persian Gulf war began, she told him her two sons had not yet been drafted.

She said the family had enough food to get by. Living two miles from an oil refinery — a war target — and having had missiles land nearby during the Iran-Iraq war," she said she was afraid, very afraid," said Pius.

That was the last time her brothers in the United States heard from her.

"I am hoping and praying that they are still there. They're still alive, I believe. But we don't hear from them any more," said Pius.

Pius' face tightens with concern for his sister and her family. His mind searches for a resolution to his inner struggles, but the only answer he finds is that war has no answers.

The war between his country of origin and his adopted country also sets up the anguishing possibility of pitting cousins against cousins.

Basil and Babs Pius' son Dan is in the U.S. Navy, stationed on a ship near Long Beach, Calif. Having completed four years in the service, Dan was to be released in April, but the Navy is retaining him because of the war.

Because Dan is a medical corpsman, trained to give first aid to injured Marines, he probably would not fight Iraqi soldiers. But Dan feels too close to Iraqi people and "he's not happy with this war at all," said his mother Babs.

She described Dan as being "pro-peace."



Gazette photo by Larry Mayer

Iraqi native Basil Pius' son Dan is a medical corpsman for the U.S. Navy.

Another son, Shumon, a University of Montana student, expressed his feelings to a reporter at the University's student newspaper, the Kaimin.

"No matter how America does or how Iraq does, I feel I'm going to lose somebody," he said. "If it isn't Dan, it might be Ashur and Eshu."

Shumon also has thought about how he would feel being drafted, the Kaimin wrote. "The question isn't so much whether I'd go or not," he said, "It's whether I could live with myself after killing someone with their blood in my veins."

The Pius family is not Arab but Assyrian, a minority in Iraq, Basil Pius said. His father was from Iran, and Pius was raised a Catholic.

Born in Baghdad in 1932, '33 or '34 (there is no record of his birthdate), Pius came to the United States in 1960 as a student at the University of Portland. Being a student, he said, was "just an excuse" for him to escape political troubles in Iraq.

During a 1958 revolution, Iraq's king — a relative of King Hussein of Jordan — was assassinated. Under the dictatorship that followed, "they told you what to do, there were curfew hours, and everything was censored and checked."

His family's business, selling Western publications, which had been prosperous before the revolution, became very unpopular, Pius said. "People began to dislike Western imperialism. Since then, things have never been the same."

Pius had a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Baghdad, and earned his master's degree in Portland. He wanted to return to his home country, but his father said people were being slaughtered and advised him to stay.

He got married, was a student-teacher at Oakland City College in California, then moved to Miles City after Miles Community College offered him a job.

For 25 years, he and Babs have lived in Miles City, where they love the "friendly, hospitable, caring people." Pius teaches English, literature and Mideast culture at the college.

Pius became a U.S. citizen after his marriage to Babs. He feels the United States is "the best country, where freedom is so accessible sometimes people forget that or abuse it."

His concerns over the war have made it difficult for him to concentrate on work, and his family in Iraq is always on his mind.

"Every time I'm sitting and eating here, I can't help thinking 'Do they have anything to eat?'"

During her last phone call, his sister told him they had vegetables, but that flour, sugar, tea and rice were scarce. "These are four staples they use every single day," said Pius.

Pius, who visited Baghdad in 1989, said the city looks like any big city, with high-rise buildings and an impressive highway system, "except then you have the old city of Baghdad, which is very typical Middle Eastern, with narrow alleys and apartment buildings."

In the religious areas of the city, most of the women wear veils, but downtown only about a quarter of the women wear the traditional Islamic garments, he said.

Under Saddam Hussein, freedom for women and education have improved, Pius said.

But, he emphasized, Saddam is still a dictator, and people are afraid to express any opposition.

During Pius' last trip to Iraq, he observed that "people are very tired of war. People had lost that zest for life. They were tired, they were afraid."

The soldiers are also tired after the eight-year war with Iran. He said there's a possibility that dissent among Saddam's soldiers "might boil up and spill over."

Other than that, he said, Arabs are a proud people, and Saddam will have to find a face-saving way to back out of Kuwait.



NAMES OF THE PUPILS WHO APPEARED IN THE PICTURE OF RAABI ESPANIA'S BEGINNERS' SCHOOL IN MAHARATHA LINES, HIN-AIDI, 1936 (SEE NINEVEH 3rd QUARTER 1990 CENTERFOLD).

Back Row (l to r):

- 1.
2. Nichola Lazar (Solomon)
3. Amma Toloo
4. Wardeh Yosip Sulaiman (Simon)
5. Flora John
6. Avigil Daryawosh
7. Nahapet Kerikor
8. Killich Toloo
9. Babajan Iskhaq
10. Shimoun Pilipous (Phillip)
11. Avikam *Shamasha* Shlimon (Jacob)
12. Shiba Benyamin
13. Sooro Orahim
14. Lucy Gibrael Bakus
15. Dalaley (?)

2nd Row (l to r):

1. (Half face only) ?
2. Yacoub *Shamasha* Shlimon (Jacob)
- 3.
4. Fraidoun Orahim
5. Avimalk Yonan Orahim
6. William Nona
7. John Youkhanna Yonan

3rd Row (l to r):

1. Avisha Gewargis Mirza
- 2.
3. Nonu Moshi (?)
- 4.
5. Yosip Gewargis
6. Eshaya Hormis Isaac
- 7.
8. Veresh (Tikkin's son) (?)
- 9.
10. Fyodor Orahim (?)
- 11.
12. William John
13. Mishael Lazar (Solomon)
14. Minashi (Mikhael) Khammo Pius
15. Avia (William) Ewan Shaul
16. Warda Pera
17. Saada (?)
- 18.
- 19.

4th Row (l to r):

1. Sampiyar Barkhu
2. Avisha Yonan Orahim
3. Skharia Zianu
- 4.
5. Ezaria Akhku Oda
- 6.
- 7.
8. Jameel Kareem
9. Zaia Esho Yalda (?)

10. John Avakian
11. Surain Onick Sanasarian
12. Pnouel Lazar Essa
- 13.
14. Daniel Iskhaq
15. Eshay Orahim Baba
- 16.
17. Lewon Orahim (?)
18. Avia Arkhivam

5th Row (l to r):

- 1.
2. Jameela
3. Anna Gewargis
4. Lujiya Kakko Polous
5. Mariya Sami
6. Mariam John
7. Raabi Youkhanna Shimshoun
8. Raabi Espania Shimshoun
9. Sandra Chiari
10. Esther Shimshoun
11. Nina Nwyia Shabbas
12. Sooriya Shaul Baitu
13. Lilly Nwyia Shabbas
14. Najiba Kambar Orahim
- 15.
16. Gamliel Ezaria Pera

6th Row (l to r):

1. Blandina Ewan Shaul
2. Peeda Eshaya Pera
3. Marjanta Zaia Tooma
4. Glowdiya (Helen) Shaul Baitu
5. Heleen Shamasha Shlimon (Jacob)
6. Christina Khammo Pius
7. Azra Hanna Hammiky
8. George Youkhanna Yonan
9. Andrious Yosip Sulaiman (Simon)
- 10.
11. Wilson Khoshaba Iskhaq
- 12.
13. William Daniel (?)
14. Lois Gibrael Bakus
15. Iskhaq *Shamasha* Shlimon (Jacob)

7th Row (l to r):

1. Yonan Toloo
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5. Daniel Lazar Solomon
6. Fyodor John
- 7.
8. Eliya Nwyia Shabbas
9. Tooma Zaia Toma
10. Mishak Kambar
11. Shidrak Kambar
12. Aprim Khammo Pius
13. Wiska Khammo Pius (?) or William Daniel (?)

Lying down (l to r):

1. Youlyous (Julius) Nwyia Shabbas
2. Child: Shamiram William Shabbas
3. Youwil Eshu



Book for Sale — In Assyrian

History of Succession of the Mar Shimun Family Patriarchs

by Theodore d'Mar Shimun

To order write to:

Mar Shimun Memorial Foundation
P.O. Box 1275
Burlingame, CA 94011

Cost: \$15.00 per copy, includes shipping and handling.

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Book for Sale

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IN MEMORIAM

Anna "Armunta" David



Be dwakh'ya'toh w'ad'jaz'ya'toh,
Be pil'kha'noh w'be shar'shai'toh,
Ha'zar klee'ta kis dar'goush'ta,
B'koul kha'dou'ta l'khai'yo dwikh'ta;
You'ma b'you'ma b'zrak'ta d'shimsha d'la mak'laita,
Akh na'tour'ta al zar'ao bin'ta'rai'la,
D'la man'yakh'ta koul kha b'ur'kheh bid'ra'yeh'la . . .

"That is an Assyrian mother!" said Anwar David with emotion, eulogizing his late mother at her memorial luncheon held at Turlock's Assyrian American Civic Club, attended by some 400 mourners.

"We believe every mother is a mother . . . and every mother is sweet . . ." continued Anwar, ". . . but being perhaps prejudiced, I believe the Assyrian mother is sweeter! . . . I am very fortunate that at the last minute God remembered my mother in my home! . . ."

The eulogy was in memory of Anna "Armunta" David, 81, who passed on of cardiac arrest on February 14, 1991, and was interred, two days later, at Turlock Memorial Park in Turlock, Calif., following the funeral service at Mar Addai Church of the East.

Armunta was born in Mar Bishu in Turkey around 1910. As an orphan during the 1918 Assyrian Exodus, she was brought to Iraq by a paternal uncle named Adam Sulaiman. But she was raised and cared for by another uncle, Yosip "Khirru" Sulaiman, and his wife Khatoun, until her early teens, when she was married to Yalda David of Gangachin.

During her married life in Hinaidi, Habbaniya and Baghdad, Armunta bore 12 children, three of whom died in infancy. Despite some hard times, she managed to raise her nine children to adulthood, seeing them happily married and settled into lives of their own.

Surviving her are offsprings Maxwell David, Maria Eshu, Eileen Khamis and Marlin Shammu, all of Los Angeles; Anwar and Martin David of Modesto; Roovil David of Ceres; and Emmanuel David of Coral Springs, Florida, all eight of whom attended the funeral; and

Souriya Adams in far-away Sydney, Australia; and a total of 32 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

"Since the time of our forefathers our family was Catholic . . ." stated Anwar David. "My mother was baptized Anna, but was called "Armunta" because of her beauty . . . She was truly *armunta*!" (pomegranate). A petite soft-spoken woman, Armunta had blue eyes, golden hair and a clear complexion in her youth.

Armunta and her husband, along with other family members, came to the U.S. 20 years ago to join their son Anwar. Six years later, her husband passed on and was buried in No. Hollywood, Calif. Armunta's wish was that she be interred beside her husband, but the plot reserved for her fell to the lot of a young grandson who died accidentally a few years ago!

Armunta's fourth child, Anwar, is a visible member of the Assyrian community of Stanislaus County. He has been a member of the Civic Club since 1963, having served one term each as its vice-president and treasurer, and was also a one-year executive vice-president of the Assyrian American National Federation, besides his involvement in other church and community affairs.

Submitted by Mikhael K. Pius.

Rowena d'Mar Shimun



Rowena d'Mar Shimun was born on October 8, 1911, in the village of Quchanis, Turkey. She was one of twelve children born to Rab Khaila David d'Mar Shimun and Esther DeMatran. She ranked number four in ordinal position after Theodore, the late Mar Eshai Shimun Catholicos Patriarch (of the Assyrian Church of the East), and a sister Sulti who passed away at age 13.

As a child Rowena witnessed the political upheavals of World War I. Abandoning Quchanis, the d'Mar Shimun family moved to Urmia, later Salamas, Iran, to Baquba and finally Mosul, Iraq.

In 1923, at the age of 12, Rowena was sent to England where she attended a private school named St. Mary's, at St. Leonard's-By-The-Sea, in the county of Sussex, which was administered by nuns of the Church of England. Upon graduation, Rowena later attended Jerusalem's Girls College and graduated in 1934. She accepted a teaching position in this school.

In 1933, the British authorities moved the entire d'Mar Shimun family to the Island of Cyprus. Rowena joined her family later and taught at the American Academy School. At the start of World War II, she moved to Port Said, Egypt, where she accepted another teaching post until the end of the war. Returning once more to Cyprus, Rowena taught at the Victoria's Girls School for Cypriot Turks and later returned to her former position as instructor at the American Academy School.

In 1953, when the British authorities allowed the d'Mar Shimun family to leave Cyprus, Rowena and two cousins were the first to leave for England. Later, her

three other sisters emigrated to London where Rowena took it upon herself to secure employment for the girls.

Rowena, in an effort to assist the others first, declined an excellent opportunity herself as her first priority was to her sisters and cousins.

In 1960, the d'Mar Shimun family emigrated to America. The family was allowed to enter the United States as a direct act passed by Congress, which was sponsored by the late Senator Knowland of California and Senator Taft of Ohio.

In California, the family initially settled in San Francisco, and later, Daly City, where Rowena worked for the Bank of California. She spent her spare time and weekends as a Sunday school teacher and assisted in all Church functions in San Francisco.

In 1975, when the family moved to Turlock, Rowena was semi-retired and worked for Stanislaus County Libraries, Turlock.

On January 28, 1991, Rowena d'Mar Shimun passed away. To her family and friends she leaves a legacy of memories of a kind, gentle, loving woman with steadfast faith, and unending generosity.

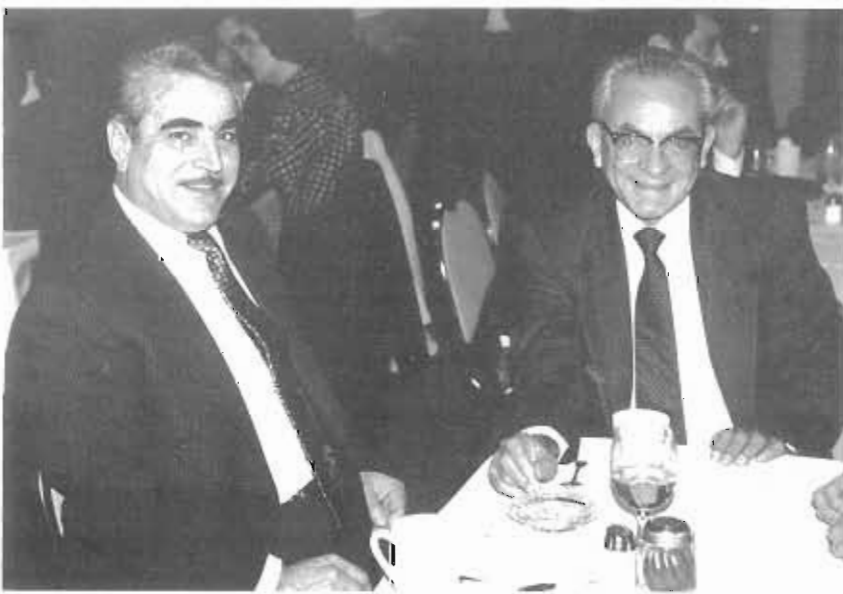
Note: Submitted by the d'Mar Shimun family by request of the Editor.













من حلك مستحب ده ففهمه!

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- 3- ایک ہی زمرہ بندی

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دِيْقَد.

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Mnashi Amireh
NEU STR 24
6208 SWA Langenseifen
W. Germany

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يَعْلَمُ دَفْسَمُ 25 ذِي

کج دہد ۲۲

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فصل دوم

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2021 2022

تاریخ ۱۳۰۲



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صاحب محترم صاحب

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کتابخانه مجلس شورای ملی

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ஆக?

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જાન્યવાર

ذیلتی بہ اس، مہجنتی

١٤٨٥ھ: میں نے سب ١٤٨٥ھ میں، ١٥٠٠ھ تک کے حالات لکھ دیے۔ میں نے ان کے ساتھ ساتھ ان کے حالات بھی لکھے۔
 ١٤٨٦ھ: میں نے ان کے حالات لکھے۔ میں نے ان کے حالات بھی لکھے۔
 ١٤٨٧ھ: میں نے ان کے حالات لکھے۔ میں نے ان کے حالات بھی لکھے۔
 ١٤٨٨ھ: میں نے ان کے حالات لکھے۔ میں نے ان کے حالات بھی لکھے۔

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[illegible]

مذہب و ملت کے لیے دعا گو:

[illegible]

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፡ፊርማ አክሱም

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 5. **የሥራ ስራ ስራ ስራ**
 6. **የሥራ ስራ ስራ ስራ**
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په دغه دفت سوله واده کړې ده؛ سږ هم دغه دفت ته د لاس ته راوړلو دنده ده. دغه دفت
 دغه دفت ته د لاس ته راوړلو دنده ده. دغه دفت ته د لاس ته راوړلو دنده ده.

የፊት ምክር ቤት

سج تحریک 1954 (6704)

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[illegible][illegible]

2 ذ ذ

کتاب جامعہ عربیہ

[illegible]

۱. بَنِي سَبْ دَجَب مَدَوْتَن ۲. دَدَدَن
 ۳. مَسَعَن دَسَوْتَن ۴. اِلَهَلَب ۵. اَلَك ۶. دَدَدَن
 ۷. مَدَوْتَن ۸. دَجَوْتَن ۹. اَه ۱۰. اَلَك ۱۱. دَجَوْتَن
 ۱۲. دَدَدَن ۱۳. دَدَدَن ۱۴. مَدَوْتَن ۱۵. مَدَوْتَن ۱۶. دَجَوْتَن
 ۱۷. دَجَوْتَن ۱۸. دَجَوْتَن ۱۹. دَجَوْتَن ۲۰. دَجَوْتَن
 ۲۱. دَجَوْتَن ۲۲. دَجَوْتَن ۲۳. دَجَوْتَن ۲۴. دَجَوْتَن

لَا تَحْكُمُ بِحِسَابِ

تک ہوئے جسے ذوق

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

مسألة ٢٤٢

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۱۰ دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 س۱۰ دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 س۱۰ دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 س۱۰ دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰
 س۱۰ دایه لایه بھت [ج۱۰]، ج۱۰

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'الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ'، بِمَجْهَدٍ [كَبِيرٍ]
 دَعَاكَ لَعَنَكَ جَاءَكَ حَسَنٌ مِنْ دَعَاكَ
 دَعَاكَ، حَسَنٌ مِنْ دَعَاكَ دَعَاكَ حَسَنٌ
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දිවයිනේ දේශපාලනික, සමාජ, සංස්කෘතික, සහ
 ආර්ථික වැදගත්කම, සහතිකයක් ලෙස.

تہذیب و تمدن

[illegible]

وَيْلٌ دِيْمَتُكُمَا

[illegible][illegible]

— كِتَابُ مَلِكٍ لِدَوَّاتٍ كَلَامٌ : خَلْفَهُ ذِي —

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

سُبْحًا يَاقُوتَا بِ دَهْجَتَا اِهْمَاَتَا اَقْدَا اِهْمَا
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Ի՞նչ ժողովրդի խոսք

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Raabi Koorish Y. Shlemon
Educator — Author