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*Assyrian Monuments in
ShenZhen, China?*

Cultural - Educational - Social

NINEVEH

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Articles submitted for publication will be selected by the editorial staff on the basis of their relative merit to Assyrian literature, history, and current events.

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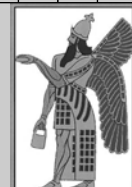
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From the Editor:

Dear Friends:

Once again the Christmas Season has arrived, a time when families gather to share the joy of the holidays and spirits are renewed with hope for the coming year. But for many Assyrians in the Middle East and elsewhere life is precarious and the future uncertain. We must help those in need and at the same time support our students, schools and authors, our best hope for preserving our Assyrian identity. Now is the moment to meet the challenge that history has presented to us. Much is expected in these times of those of us who live in comfort and security.

For 41 years the Assyrian Foundation of America has been dedicated to the educational and charitable needs of the Assyrian people. In 2005 we gave over \$50,000 for these purposes. Among other things, we sent money to help Assyrian refugees in Greece. A large sum was sent to help several families in Iraq whose young men were killed. We helped an Assyrian woman suffering from cancer in Iran who couldn't get medicines, another from the Republic of Georgia whose father needed medicine for his cancer treatment. At the same time we have given large amounts of money to support education, such as \$10,000 to help start the new Assyrian school in Los Angeles. And our scholarship program provided significant help to several very bright students pursuing advanced degrees in Assyrian studies. Our highly respected magazine, *Nineveh*, keeps readers everywhere informed of the history, language and culture of the Assyrians, which helps our people scattered throughout the world to stay in touch with each other.

All of this has been made possible by your gifts. Once again we appeal to you for aid in carrying out our mission of mercy and advancing education. Charity and compassion are the expressions of the true meaning of Christmas. Please help us continue our efforts to help our fellow Assyrians achieve a better life.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TO

**ASSYRIAN FOUNDATION
OF AMERICA
P.O. Box 2660
Berkeley, California 94702**

The Assyrian Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, tax exempt charitable organization.

EDUCATION:

Scholarships	\$20,200
Assyrian Heritage Fund, University of California, Berkeley	\$1,000
The new Assyrian School in Los Angeles	\$10,000
Purchase books by Assyrian authors	\$2,150
Subscription to J. Assyrian Acad. Studies	\$300
Total	<u>\$33,650</u>

WELFARE:

Help for families of Assyrian young men killed in Iraq	\$10,000
Assist Assyrian refugees in Greece	\$5,000
Cancer treatment for an Assyrian in the Republic of Georgia	\$2,000
Cancer treatment for a young woman in Iran	\$1,000
To help poor people in Kermanshah, Iran	\$1,000
Help a needy woman in California	\$500
Total	<u>\$19,500</u>

Total for both Education and Welfare for 2005: **\$53,150.**



Letters From Readers

Dear members of the Assyrian Foundation of America;

On behalf of the Julius N. Shabbas family, I'd like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the wonderful people who have sent condolences and flowers, as well as contributions to the Julius N. Shabbas Scholarship Fund, in his memory. His good works live on for generations to come.

Dad was very dedicated to the Assyrian people. He was proud to be affiliated with the Assyrian Foundation of America, and poured his heart and soul into making a difference for his Assyrian brothers and sisters.

His many years of service editing Nineveh magazine were a labor of love. The time and energy he devoted to this task was immeasurable.

Our mother, Violet, was also very dedicated to the Assyrian people. Her labors were many and carried out with much love. We miss them both very much.

Thank you for keeping their memories alive by continuing your support of the Assyrian Foundation of America, and the Julius N. Shabbas Scholarship Fund.

Sincerely,
Semiramis Shabbas

May Martyrs' Memory live forever

The years pass and give the way to centuries,
The children grow, the old lose their lives,
But all the people who call themselves Assyrians,
With heavy memories of Martyrs break their hearts.

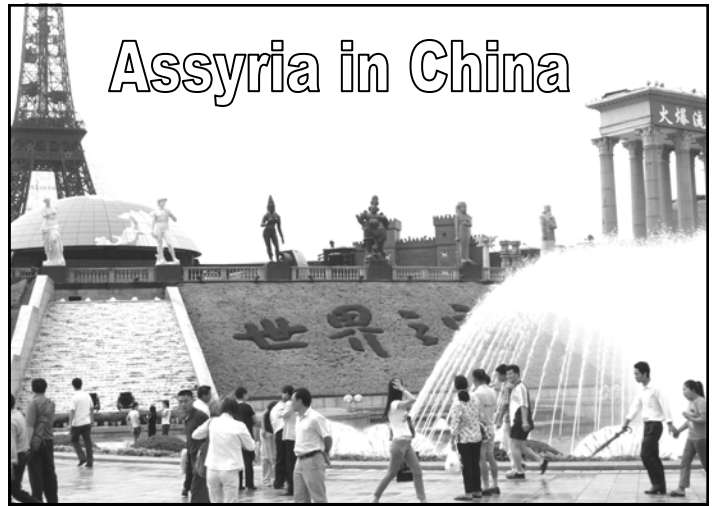
The tragic day - the day of real horror
That took the thousands of innocent young lives,
Makes us, Assyrians, to think of it forever,
And doesn't let tears dry in our eyes.

That dreadful day was full of victims' blood,
And no tears will be enough to drown
The pain that tears to pieces our hearts,
The sorrow with which we are surrounded.

Oh, my Assyrians, killed merciless, with cruelty,
Exhausted with the tortures of your foes,
I hope and pray you've found the Eternity
In native Motherland's sweet soil.

The memory of you will always live
In hearts to you devoted sisters, brothers,
And no one dares shatter your peace and quiet
Till we, Assyrians, exist on our Planet!

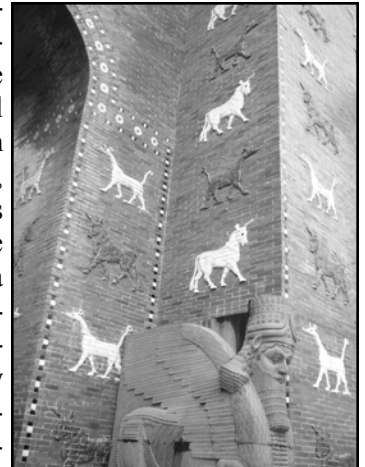
Aivazova Victoria M.D.



Nineveh Magazine staff were caught by surprise by a 20foot high statue of the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal at the heart of the industrial city of Shenzhen , China during a recent visit. The statue is one of six at the entrance of a theme park called 'Windows of the world' highlighting the great civilizations of the world. Upon closer inspection, the park contained more Assyrian attractions such as two colossal winged Genie (Winged Bull) as well as the famous gate of Ishtar (pictured on the cover).

What is most impressive is that the Ashurnasirpal statue is placed as the first of six in historical chronological order. When we photographed the statue, the Chinese security officers walked by and asked if we are from Iraq, Turkey, Syria or Iran. During our conversation with the security officers, we were impressed by the knowledge they possessed of the rich Mesopotamian heritage and culture.

Shenzhen, the one-time small fishing village, became a large economic center for china in a matter of a few years after it was given a 'special economic administration' status and became a haven for tech firms.



Assyrian Christians in Iran Encounter Discrimination

Abraham Beth Arsan

'Your Christian belief is a problem'

The Islamic Republic of Iran is constantly making the news lately. At this moment, the attention focuses on the resumption of their nuclear program. In addition, with that focus the world seems to have forgotten, that with the last held so called "democratic" elections there was a change in power. The ultra conservative candidate Ahmadijan won the election, and took over power from the moderate President Khatami. This change to a conservative government was almost inevitable, because most moderate politicians were banned from entering the elections, and so we can question the democratic intent of the elections.

The political change is still fresh, but the Assyrian shopkeepers already feel the consequences. The police force which keeps an eye on the clothing regulation are very active, and the position of the Assyrian minority wasn't good to begin with.

Parliamentarian

Together with the Armenians, Jews and Zoroastrians, the Assyrians form the ethnical the none Islamic minority in Iran. The only Assyrian parliamentarian in Iran, Yonathan Bet Kolia, has been voted for a second time to represent the Assyrians. He hopes, maybe against his better judgment, that the newly elected President will form a commission, with repre-

sentatives from all the minority groups, to insure a direct influence and voice into policy's concerning their futures. However, even under the reign of the moderate Khatami this was a political dream, which did not come true.

The position of Jonathan Bet Kolia is a difficult one; he is always balancing on the blade of a knife. On the one side he tries to be of use to his people, on the other side he always must be conscience of the notorious secret services, which have been given almost unlimited power in the name of Islam in the land of the Mullahs. Loyalty to the government is a must, if you want to be a Christian parliamentarian.

During a sports and cultural festival, organized by the Assyrians, Johnathan Bet Kolia called Iran a democratic state, which illustrates his precarious political position.

Member of the province parliament

According to Attiya Gamri, a member of the province parliament of Overijssel in the Netherlands, who returned a week ago from a visit to Iran, the position and situation of the Assyrian Christians and other minority's the country is far more precarious than Yonathan Bet Kolia is willing to admit. "Look, I went to Iran several times the last few years. When Khatami was in power, the position of the Christians wasn't

(Continued on page 23)

From Contributions to Diaspora: Assyrians in the History of Urmia, Iran

Arianne Ishaya, Ph.D.

Note: This article was presented in the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Conference 2001 in San Francisco in a panel titled “The Assyrians of Iran: From Contributions to Diaspora”. It was published in JAAS Vol. XVI, NO. 1, 2002.

Setting the Scene:

As a rural community around the turn of the 20th century, the Assyrians of Urmia were unique in their urban and westernized lifestyle not only in Iran, but in many countries of the Middle East. Urmia also distinguishes itself as one of the few historical sites that bear etymological resemblance to the compound word coinages in Assyrian Aramaic. It seems to be a compound word, which in modern Assyrian matches the combination of the words <ur> “place or city” and <mia> “water”. The name attests to the antiquity of present-day Assyrians in the region.

Two thirds of this community perished during WWI. This brief historical and ethnographic sketch is to familiarize the reader with the community on a closer, more personal level lest we should forget that each time a group perishes, all of us, as members of the human family, diminish in stature.

The Assyrians were industrious and the most educated subjects of the region at the turn of the 20th century, and their demise deprived the plain of Urmia of a very productive segment of its population. The American-educated Assyrians, such as Dr. Isaac Adams and Joseph Khnanishu, played the role of cultural operatives through their publications that introduced the English-reading public to the culture, literature, and socio-political institutions of their country, Persia.¹ This ethnic profile is based primarily on Assyrian sources in the form of personal diaries, travel journals, Assyrian periodicals, and family histories collected by the author. It is a history from the perspective of the Assyrians themselves.

Until 1918, at which time they were uprooted from the region,² the Assyrians lived in compact villages along the three rivers of Nazlu, Shahar, and Baranduz. These rivers flow eastward towards the lake of Urmia from their sources in the Zagros Mountains bordering Turkey. Of a total of 300 villages in the region, 60 had exclusively Assyrian population, and another 60 had a mixed Assyrian, Azari Turkish,³ and/or Armenian population.⁴ The total number of Assyrians in the region, at the turn of the century, was estimated between 30-35 thousand, most of who lived in villages.⁵ The Assyrian population of the town of Urmia itself was only 600 people, or about 100 families.⁶ They lived in the special Christian quarter of the town. It

is estimated that around 1900, 40% of the population of the region was Christian (Assyrian and Armenian).⁷ The uniqueness of the Urmian community was that it was highly urbanized and westernized. This was essentially attributed to the presence of various foreign missions in the region. Actually the foreign missions would have preferred to be located in Muslim communities in order to take the Christian message to them. The Persian government did not allow them to do so for this very reason. At the same time, the government was interested in courting the “English Mullahs”, as its officials used to call them, in order to obtain better trade or political concessions from the foreign governments. Moreover, the royal family in Iran was interested in familiarizing itself with the western ways of life through the missionaries. So the Assyrians of Urmia were a compromise solution to the satisfaction of all. Thus, their community in Urmia became the center of rival missionary activities in the country. Although foreign missions brought educational opportunities and a measure of intellectual enlightenment to the Assyrians, they were a mixed blessing. The privileged position of the Assyrians made them the subject of envy and resentment to their Muslim neighbors. The unified Church of the East became divided into various protestant, Russian Orthodox, and Catholic denominations. Moreover, the younger generation became alienated from their ethnic traditions and was trained in skills for which economic opportunities were scarce.

In 1906 there was a total of 201 schools with 5,084 Assyrian students in the region. Considering that Assyrians lived in only 120 villages, the number of schools indicates that there was more than one school in some villages. The following is a breakdown of schools administered by the different missionaries and the number of students accommodated by them:

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Students</u>
American Mission: 53	1721
Russian Mission: 74	1640
Catholic Mission: 54	1223
Others: 20	500 ⁸

At the beginning of WWI, the rate of literacy among the Assyrians of Urmia was estimated at 80%.⁹ This is a remarkably high rate of literacy for the time even by the standards of an urbanized center in the West, let alone a rural area in the Middle East. At the time, there were more Assyrian physicians in Urmia than all of Iran; Assyrian professionals under the supervision of the foreign mission-

aries staffed all missionary schools, newspapers and hospitals.¹⁰

The first mission school opened in 1836 under the direc-

tion of Rev. Justin Perkins. Prior to that, the native Assyrians did have a few schools of their own. The one in Urmia was in the village of Gogtapa where Mougdussi



(Continued from page 7)

(pilgrim) Hormizd had hired a learned Assyrian from Tyari to educate a number of children there.¹¹ The missionary Perkins was pleased to see the thirst of the Assyrians for education. He was impressed to find how fast the children learned to read, write, and memorize long verses from the Bible. The first “textbooks” were in the form

Type of Schools

- 1836: 1st School Director: Rev. J. Perkins
- 1843: Seir College for young men
- Fiske Seminary for young women
- 1880: Medical hospital in Urmia
- Sardari town college
- 1908: Non-denominational Assyrian independent school

of lessons written on cards. In the absence of notepads, children used their fingers to do their writing and arithmetic exercises in small sandboxes. The first Assyrian teacher was Rev. Abraham, the nephew of Hormizd, who was educated in the above-mentioned Gogtapa school.¹² After learning to read and write, the Assyrian children began to teach their parents to do so.

In 1843, the American Mission also opened a college in Seir, a seminary for women called Fiske Seminary. Later, in 1880 the Mission opened a hospital in Urmia. There was also a town college, called Sardari, which was for the rich and admitted Jews, Muslims and Christians alike. The Assyrian schools were open to non-Assyrians, who could attend with the permission of their parents. In spite of the fact that at the time the local Muslim population considered the Christians religiously unclean and would avoid close association with them, there is evidence that non-Assyrians did attend such schools as evidenced by the graduation reports. For example, the end of the year report of one school lists a total of 35 students among whom 10 were Muslims and 6 were Jewish.¹³ Moreover, there was an all-Muslim school in Urmia run by Assyrian teachers under the supervision of Dr. Shedd.

In time, the curriculum of the American Mission schools became westernized. In a 1906 issue *Kokhva*, the sole Assyrian non-denominational newspaper, published a report with regards to the graduation ceremony of the American Mission College and high school students. While the report praised the high quality of students’ presentations in foreign languages, it lamented the total ignorance of these students about their own history.¹⁴ In subsequent reports we read how parents sat patiently during the graduation ceremonies listening to the presentations of their sons and daughters in English and Farsi, not understanding a word of what was being said. As unlikely as it seems, between 1906-1914, the Assyrians performed Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* in the village of Gulpashan, and several plays by Moliere, translated by Qasha Mushi Babella, in the village of Golpatalikhan where the Catholic mission had built a large school. Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* and several plays by Gogol (Russian playwright) were staged in

the town of Urmia. Interestingly, men played the role of women in these plays.¹⁵

Kokhva spearheaded a move to establish a non-denominational school by the Assyrians themselves where the curriculum would be under the control of Assyrian educators. Mar Toma Audo’s grammar book and the arithmetic text by Rabi Peera Mirza were judged to be superior to translated books. Eventually, in the winter of 1908, an independent Assyrian school was established. From the three plays that this school staged in 1909, it is obvious that the educational goal was the emphasis on issues and subjects relevant to the local Assyrians. In other words, the goal was to stress the Assyrian values and their overall philosophy of life. For instance, the first play was a mock-debate between a Western and an Eastern philosopher each expounding the merits of his own perspective. The second was a play written by Rabi Yossip Eskhaq. It was about a family where the wife pushes her husband to go to Tiflis, work there, and send money home so that she can have a lifestyle comparable to that of her neighbor. In Tiflis, the husband falls prey to the vices of gambling and drinking and the family is plunged into deeper poverty. This play must have touched a raw nerve in the audience as it reflected the harsh realities of life. The third play depicted a group of young men whose village is looted by the Kurds. They get together and make a vow to unite and exonerate their families by facing the thieves and bringing the loot back home, which they do.¹⁶ Among the nationalist Assyrians was Rabi Benyamin Arsanis, a writer and a playwright, who wrote several plays that were staged at different times.

This independent school did not last very long and had to shut down a year later. The reasons were: first, the students were more interested in learning foreign languages; and, second, the parents preferred the denominational schools because they were subsidized and therefore cheaper. *Kokhva* attributed the failure of the independent school to the lack of unity and dedication on the part of Assyrians themselves. So it was back to dependency on mission schools. And all that the Assyrian nationalists could do now was to urge the American Mission schools to postpone foreign language education until higher school grades. After the failure of the independent school, a group of Assyrians formed a drama group. Among their activities was the staging of a play called *Sarah Tkhumneta* and *Shamiram* which was performed in several villages in 1914.¹⁷ Evidently, the title of the play suggests that the Assyrians were searching for their historical roots.

Contrary to the American Mission, the Catholic Lazarists and the Anglicans made the teaching of the classical Syriac and the vernacular mandatory in their schools. The result was the emergence of a group of Assyrian Syriac scholars such as Paul Bedjan, Aba Solomon d-Tkhuma, Havil Zia d-Mavana, Mir Aziz d-Khosrava, Shamasha Yossip d-Kelata, and others who contributed greatly to the

field of Syriac studies.¹⁸ Mar Toma Audo, the Metropolitan of the Catholic Mission in Urmia and Salamas since 1892, was a great scholar who in addition to various publications in classical Syriac, also authored and translated several books in modern Assyrian. The majority of these scholars were murdered during the 1915 massacre, or the 1918 flight.

As to the American Mission schools, they produced hundreds of doctors, teachers, preachers, nurses, and other kinds of professionals. There were almost as many men as there were women. The first women college graduates in Urmia were Sanam, Sarah, and Mourassa all of whom went on to become great educators.¹⁹ Many scholars and promising students were lost along with hundreds of priceless manuscripts and rare ecclesiastical documents in the ravages of WWI. Such losses were a great blow to the Assyrians and the Iranians because they are irreplaceable.

The American Mission acquired a printing press in 1840 at a time when printing presses did not exist in all of Persia. The first Assyrian printer was Yonan of Charbash. He was selected in 1847 along with a few other promising seminary students for this post. Another printer was Ismail. He was a self-taught man, a very resourceful person. As a carpenter he made all the furniture of the printing office together with all the cases and stands. He was a good pressman, foreman, and was responsible for the final proofreading. He was a type-founder, and in short, a jack-of-all-trades.²⁰ From 1840-1852 eighty works were off the press in both vernacular and classical Syriac, the first being the Bible. Following the example of the American Mission, the Catholic, Russian, and Anglican Missions also acquired printing presses for their own publications.²¹

The image of Urmian Assyrians as an isolated rural community is totally inaccurate. They were fully aware of world events, national political developments, and local news through newspapers and periodicals. From mid 19th century until the eve of WWI, four denominational newspapers were published on a, more or less, regular basis. In 1906 a non-denominational newspaper was added to the group. *Zahrira-d-Bahra* (Ray of Light) started publication

in 1849 by the American Mission. Later, the French Mission published *Qala-d-Shrara* (the Voice of Truth) began publication in 1897; the Russian Orthodox Mission published *Urmia Orthodoxeta*; and finally, the Anglican Mission followed suit by publishing the *Assyrian Missionary Quarterly*.²² The independent Assyrian periodical was *Kokhva* (The Star) founded by Qasha Baba Nwyia d-Wazirabad, a scholar and theologian who, after graduating from Urmia College, had spent nine years in U.S.A. and had obtained two separate degrees in theology and science. He coined the subtitle for *Kokhva* that reads:



“*Kokhva*, a small lone star in the horizon.” Although he passed away shortly after *Kokhva* began publication, the editorial staff maintained this publication as the voice of the nationalist Assyrians. It was published biweekly from 1906-1918, with interruptions during the war years. *Kokhva* had various columns to cover world news, national political developments, and local events. It also published articles related to medicine, literature, sciences, and so on. Examples of articles that appeared in *Kokhva* are biographies of Joan of Arc, Tolstoy, Napoleon Bonaparte, Thomas Edison; world events such as the Titanic catastrophe, the San Francisco Earthquake, new inventions, political developments in Turkey, Germany, and in the Balkans. There were special articles on the Assyrian language, history, and a debate on the name “Assyrian” versus “Suraya” in several issues. Thus *Kokhva* kept the Assyrians of Urmia abreast with the latest developments in the world.

In the plain of Salmas, north of Urmia, was located the town of Khosrava, another Assyrian center of population. Khosrava served as the headquarters of the Catholic Mission where it established several schools, seminaries, and a hospital there. The town had a mixed population of Assyrians and Armenians numbering 30,000. The Catholic seminary produced internationally renowned scholars such as Paul Bejan. He was a collector of ancient religious and literary manuscripts. Single-handedly, he edited, com-

ASSYRIAN PERIODICALS

NAME	PUBLISHER	YEAR
Zahrira-d-Bahra Ray of Light	American Mission	1849 1 st . Newspaper in Iran
Qala-d-Shrara Voice of Truth	French Mission	1897
Urmia Orthodoxeta	Russian Mission	? After 1898
Assyrian Missionary Quarterly	Anglican Mission	?
Kokhva (Star)	Qasha Nwyia-d-Wazirabad	1906

(Continued from page 9)

piled, wrote and published 36 volumes of literary material in both vernacular and classical Syriac. Khosrava was called “the little Rome of Persia.” By 1918 there was practically nothing left of the Catholic Mission in Persia. In one report we read: “In 1923 in some places the jungle had returned, full of reptiles, wolves, and savage animals. Churches, schools and houses were in ruin.”²³

Migrant Work:

The various mission establishments could not offer employment to the large number of Assyrian men who were receiving schooling in mission establishments. Literacy and the presence of foreigners exposed the Assyrians to the world beyond what they had known as oppressed peasants. On the other hand, there was the possibility of engaging in migrant work in Russia, Europe and even U.S.A. Russia had already separated Georgia from Persia in 1801. And, in 1828, it also conquered the northern part of Azerbaijan; thus, the Russian border came very close to the Urmia region. Hundreds of Assyrian men went to Tiflis and other border towns in Russia to work as migrant laborers or engage in trade. Tiflis was the center of Assyrian migrant laborers who numbered “in the thousands.” Assyrian contractors hired Assyrians laborers to work on various construction projects especially the railroad connecting Julfa to Alexandropol. Among the notable labor contractors were Jibrael Aslan, Mirza yohanan of Gouytapa, and Usta (title for a skilled craftsman) Alahverdi Badaloph. The latter is reported to have had 300 workers under his employment most of whom were Assyrian.²⁴

News came from U.S.A. that it was possible to earn between \$2:00-\$4:00 a day in America if one was a union member. Since they knew some English, the Assyrian men became encouraged to go overseas. *Kokhva* recorded that in 1907 alone 306 Assyrian men left for U.S.A.²⁵ Before long, the Assyrian villages had lost the majority of their able-bodied men. Women began to complain about what was to become of their daughters. Editorials appeared in *Kokhva* expounding the ills of migrant work. Had *Kokhva* known that several years later, the Assyrians abroad would become the only beacon of hope for the survivors of holocaust, and would provide the refugees safe passage to U.S.A., it would, perhaps, have been less critical of migration. In one issue, *Kokhva* reported that 90% of men were living abroad and urged women to take over men’s work to keep the community functional. It advised the men abroad to send sewing machines and fashion patterns so that women, organized in coops, could operate dressmaking shops. In 1908, *Kokhva* kept a record of deaths and weddings for a year. The totals were 55 weddings and 180 deaths. *Kokhva* warned that a ratio of three deaths to one wedding forecast a similar rate of drop in childbirth, which meant that in a generation the Assyrians would suffer a sizeable population loss.²⁶ The village of Taka-Ardishay was referred to as an “all-women” village. *Kok-*

hva reported that there were not enough men to even carry a coffin to the graveyard. Women had to carry the coffin in a “gardoona” which was an ox –driven low wagon with no sides. The women of Taka-Ardishay had also to haul their grapes to their homes and dry the raisins on the rooftops instead of the “varazan”, a plastered slanting platform built in the vineyard for making raisins. This was because there were no men to stay in the vineyards overnight to protect the varazans from thieves.

Migrant work plagued the Assyrian families in other ways, as well. In one issue, *Kokhva* praised a woman who had refused to resume matrimonial relations with her husband unless he was checked by a doctor and declared free from venereal diseases.²⁷ In another issue *Kokhva* printed a letter an Assyrian woman sent to her church complaining about men who return home with foreign wives when Assyrian maidens are becoming spinsters.

Why did the men leave their homes and families, and chose to work overseas? The following are some responses as elicited from the migrant laborers themselves:

When I came to the United States, U.S. had a big name in Urmia. You thought you would come here and see lots of money. But I could hardly find a job. Finally I found a job as a boss-boy in the same hotel where my cousin was working. Everybody had come to earn money and return to Iran. But when the war started, they figured they better bring their families over...²⁸

My eldest brother was 28 years old when he came to America in 1912. No Assyrians went with the intention of staying. They all went to earn money, gold, and return, buy farms and vineyards. But the war changed their plans. I do not think anyone had gone to stay there.²⁹

I left Iran in 1913. I was barely sixteen. We were a large youth group. There were four or five from my village of Shamsha Jiyan; and more were added to the group from other villages as we went along until there were 78...So many young men were leaving out of necessity. We were not able to make a living there. We did not have enough. We wanted a life of comfort and plentitude; but the Turks raided our villages. They killed and stole our cattle. We were targeted because our homes were better-finished, more respectable, people better dressed and fed. But continuous pillage reduced us to poverty and destitution. Wanted or not we had to emigrate in order to support our families. There were not enough jobs. Just like you see today in Poland and elsewhere there are no jobs. People are starving. They flee to other countries. So that was our condition. My father had left the country in 1903. He had left in a group too. They wouldn’t travel alone. My uncle had come to the U.S. earlier. He was a bricklayer. He had returned to the old country, and in 1913 when I was leaving for the U.S., he was coming for a second time.³⁰

Men went to U.S.A. to make quick money, purchase the farmlands and vineyards they had worked for generations as sharecroppers and become freeholders and owners. Some succeeded, but others never realized this dream because the menial jobs they did abroad did not enable them to save enough money to make their dreams come true; besides, many did not have the face to return home empty-handed either. So their absence from home became lasted longer. The men lived frugally; often sharing a room and using the bed alternately, so that they could save enough and send “barats” (money gifts) back home. The steady flow of “barats” to Urmia did help the locals to raise their standard of living. However, not all of the hard-earned money reached its destination. As there was no bank in Urmia, letters and currency were transferred by “chapars” or courier service. Often bandits intercepted the courier service and got away with the money. A more serious problem was the Kurdish marauders who descended upon the villages during the harvest season and not only plundered the crops, but also took away the livestock and robbed the people of their personal possessions, including the clothes they were wearing. The Persian government was too weak to protect its citizens. *Kokhva’s* reports provide a statistical base on the Assyrian villages, and shed some light on the extent and nature of this problem. A summary sample of the reports is reproduced below:

Kokhva, vol. 1, no.3 (1906): p. 21:

Kurds have stolen livestock from suburban villages; 12 homes in Kizlashiq looted; 5 in Badilbu. A man and a woman killed. Government forces repelled. The “kokha” (headman) of the village of Saatlui robbed.

Vol. 1, no. 4, p.30:

In Targavar Harriki Kurds stole 500 sheep and killed the son of Yaccu.

Vol. 1, no. 5, p. 37:

Baranduz River villages are destitute from constant Kurdish depredations.

Vol. 1, no. 13, p.102:

The watchmen the villagers of Gogtapa hired for protection, turned out to be thieves who robbed them.

Vol. 1, no. 15, p. 116:

Kurdish attacks on the increase. 5 Assyrians and Armenians were robbed in the village of Pakabaglui. The village of Hassar located above the mission college was looted. The inhabitants have taken refuge in the American mission college. Vol. 1, no. 16, p.125: A famous bandit named Ebad was killed while pillaging Dizataka.

Vol.1, no. 23, p. 183:

Degala attacked twice. Bandits repelled both times by

village guards. Kurds attacked the Baranduz villages. Fierce fighting. Six Kurds killed.

Vol. 2. no. 1 (1907): p. 8:

Unprecedented peace and order in Urmia. A contingent of local fighters is formed in Sangar to protect Targavar from Kurdish Marauders. Even local Muslims have joined to show support. Christians are thankful.

Vol. 2, no. 3, p.33:

12 Assyrian villagers killed in the border fight in Targavar between Kurds backed by Ottomans.

Vol. 2, no. 4, p. 44:

Ottomans occupy Targavar. Kokhva is pleasantly surprised to report that the villagers of Seir petitioned the Ottoman leader there for justice against the Kurds who had stolen their herds. Half of the herd was returned to them by his orders. Kokhva is hopeful that finally Ottomans might be able to keep the Kurds in check.

Vol. 2, no. 11, p.128:

Robberies and looting start again. Kurdish bandits plundered both Assyrian and Turkish villages in Nazlu area. Killed an Assyrian woman.

Vol. 2, no. 12, p. 139:

Kokhva advises villagers to arm themselves with guns and post night watchmen to protect themselves from bandit attacks.

Vol 2, no. 13, p.151:

Ottomans are supporting the Kurds in border skirmishes. Savoujbulagh threatened.

Vol 2, no. 15, p. 177:

Baranduz looted. A Christian girl abducted.

Vol 2, no. 23, p. 270:

Ottomans amassing artillery in border area. Kurds are allied with them. Lower Baranduz villagers have deserted their homes, and have fled. Persian governor has set post guards and urges villagers to return.

Vol. 3, no. 9 (1908), p. 104:

Gotoorlui (near Gogtapa) attacked. Inhabitants fled and scattered.

Vol. 3, no. 10, p. 115:

Taka Ardishay pillaged.

Vol 3. no. 19 (1909), p. 235:

Anzal (northern district) under Ottoman (Turkish) control.

Vol 3, no. 22, (1908), p. 258:

Ottoman (Turkish) army present in Urmia and environs.

Vol. 4, no. 3 (1910), p. 31:

Kurds in occupation of Seir and Mar Sarguis. Live off the villagers.

Vol. 4, no. 5, p. 56:

Kurds are targeting Baloolan. Have plundered several villages.

Vol. 4, no. 16, p. 187:

One girl abducted. A woman converted to Islam.

Vol. 4, no. 17, p. 198, 210:

Two more girls abducted. Urmia landlords are attracting pro-Ottoman Kurds to settle the abandoned villages in Upper Nazlu, and Shahar Rivers. Local Turkish and Assyrian peasants worried.

Vol. 4, no. 19, p. 222:

Kurds and local Turkish bandits target Assyrian villages in Shahar and Baranduz River. Threat of pillage and killings in Hassar and Garajalu.

Vol. 4, no. 21, p. 249:

Pillage number one problem in all of Urmia.

Vol. 5, no. 2 (1910), p. 19:

14 Assyrian men in Khosrabad robbed; the house of one pillaged, wife killed.

Vol. 5, no. 4, p. 41-42:

Kurds burn down local Turkish villages. Skirmish in karasanlui between Assyrians and Kurdish marauders. 50 head of cattle taken away. Dr. Packard's friendship with a Kurdish Sheikh pays off. The Sheikh promises the safety of the village of Seir from Kurdish marauders, and lifts the tribute he extracted from them. (p. 103).

Vol. 5, no. 9, p.104:

Ottomans, backed by the Kurds, have occupied Kahriz, Golunji, and Jamalabad (northern villages). As new landlords, they have been extracting heavy tribute from the villagers for three years.

Reports of pillage diminish at the end of the year 1911. The Russian military presence and a more vigorous defense of the borders provided rural areas with a measure of safety. The inhabitants of some villages who had been displaced in previous years returned back. Among them were some Targavar villagers who were scattered as refugees since the 1907 Turkish attacks. Of the 94 families from Baloolan 20 resettled their former homes,³¹ not knowing that worse was awaiting them shortly after.

1912-1914 The Era of Prosperity:

After Russia established its mission station in Urmia in 1898, Armenians and Assyrians began to purchase the fields around it, and to build luxury homes. Urban development in this area continued and gained momentum in the years 1912-1914. Well-to-do Assyrians began to purchase land and build new homes for their own occupation or as rental property to Russian families, consular or military personnel. Delgosha (heart-refreshing.) became the new Christian quarter in Urmia. Red brick, imported marble and stone slabs adorned these homes. Almost all contractors, architects, bricklayers, carpenters, and joiners that were employed in the building of these homes were Assyrian. Among the notable architects were Usta Elia d-Gulpashan, Usta Avraham Ushana d-Charbash, and Usta Yohanan d-Wazirava. Along with urban development, Assyrians were also investing heavily in farmland, vineyards, and orchards. It looks like there was a concerted effort to buy the villages and farmlands where Assyrians had toiled as landless peasants and establish a free holding community instead. *Kokhva* reported real estate purchases on a regular basis. A quick survey indicates that the heaviest investments were in all-Assyrian villages. Among the villages that became wholly or partly Assyrian owned were Gulpashan, Degala, Gogtapa, Wazirabad, Shamshajian, Ada, Diza, Kurtapa, and Chamakie. In other villages, small peasants purchased their own farmlands, orchards, and were beginning to expand beyond their own property. City folks also developed a taste for having an orchard or a vineyard in suburban villages where they could spend the summer season. So there were numerous small or medium-sized holdings of this nature. Real estate prices soared during the prewar era, but this did not stop the Assyrians from investing in real estate. In hindsight, it is painful to read about the families who invested their wherewithal in farmland and homes they were going to lose soon after. If it were not for the WWI uprooting, a sizeable part of Urmia region would become liberated from the oppressive control of absentee feudal overlords and would be owned by free holding farmers.

American style advertising appeared on the pages of *Kokhva* beginning in 1912. Consumerism was taking hold among the population. Assyrians were opening stores or stalls in the caravanserai or Middle Eastern style shopping malls. There were advertisements from merchants selling home fixtures such as cabinets, doors, mirrors, and home furnishings imported from U.S.A., Russia, or Europe (primarily Germany). Others opened stores to sell watches, bicycle parts, ladies and men's wear, cloth, and other imported goods. Optometrists, dentists, and doctors advertised the address of their clinics and medical supplies. Some of the advertisements were in English which indicates the prevalence of this language among the population. There was also advertising for European fashions, and instructions on how and where to wear them. One Assyrian opened a hotel for those coming from villages to town to have a place to stay. Another one invested in an

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1913



DON'T NEGLECT YOUR WATCH

A WATCH is a delicate piece of machinery. It calls for less attention than most machinery, but must be cleaned and oiled occasionally to keep perfect time.

With proper care a Waltham Watch will keep perfect time for a lifetime. It will pay you well to let us clean your watch every 12 or 18 months.

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"icemaker." There is a significant difference in the investment pattern of Assyrians and Armenians. Possessing greater capital, Armenians were involved in overseas trade

...



7395 'Semi-Princesse' Gown, 24 to 44 bust.



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and were investing in land with mining reserves, flour-mills and building modern style bazaars (shopping malls).

As early as 1907 the Assyrian, Yossipkhan the photographer, was showing silent movies or "moving pictures" in a private home. Tickets were priced differently according to seating.³² The resourceful people of the Chamakie village had all their homes connected through a non-electrical type of telephone, which was made with waxed thick cotton thread, a tin can open at both ends, one end of which was covered with a thin sheet of leather. In the center was a tiny hole, which hooked the wax thread to the tin "receiver". Kokhva claimed that when the thread was manually vibrated, the people at the next house heard a buzzing sound announcing a telephone call, and conversations could be carried on clearly.³³

The news of prosperity in Urmia reached other Assyrian communities in the Middle East. Kokhva printed a letter that Rabi Binyamin Arsanis, the head of the village "motvas," (associations) had received. It was from a man writing on behalf of his Assyrian community in Damascus, Syria. It said, in part: "5000 Assyrians live in Damascus. After hearing about the legendary Urmia, we would like to relocate. We ask permission and your help in immigrating to Urmia."³⁴

(Continued from page 13)

Due to economic recession in U.S.A. in 1914, *Kokhva* urged Assyrians not to send their sons abroad so that they would not become a burden on their relatives there. Now the movement was back home. There were dramatic stories of men returning home after a long period of absence and even their wives and sisters could not recognize them. Again in hindsight it is with apprehension that one reads about men in groups returning back to Urmia from U.S.A., Europe, and Russia not knowing the horrors they would experience shortly after. The obituary columns of that time become welcome news. Lucky were those who died and did not witness the perdition of their families, neighbors, and the nation.

1915: The Year of Bondage:

Assyrians call 1915 “the year of bondage” because it was in the winter of 1915, following the Russian army retreat from Urmia, that Turkish forces together with their Kurdish allies and local Azari Turkish supporters or opportunists descended upon the Assyrian and Armenian villages. The Turkish and Kurdish forces occupied Urmia for 5 months or 18 weeks from January 2, 1915 until May 24, 1915. A detailed history of the holocaust that followed has been recorded in various sources and will not be repeated in this paper.³⁵ Only less known facts will be recorded here. The Christian villages annihilated during the 16-week occupation were:

- 18 villages in the Branduz district
- 16 villages in the Shahar Chai or Urmia district.
- 14 villages in the Nazlu district.
- 3 villages in Targavar.³⁶

In 1917 after a Russian contingent had returned to Urmia and the Turks had retreated, the American Mission under the direction of Dr. Shedd sent agents to the Urmian plain to enumerate the surviving Christians and classify them for purposes of food rations. These estimates are regarded as the most accurate.

The total Assyrians of the Urmia region were 3,915 families comprising 15,669 persons. Of these 3,132 were able-bodied, 1350 were orphans, and 1321 were elderly men and women. The Assyrian mountaineers were 2,850 families comprising 14,154 persons. Of these 1,991 were able-bodied, 2,333 were orphans, and 1498 were elderly men and women. The Assyrians of Sulduz were 108 families comprising 598 persons. Of these 112 were able-bodied, 76 were orphans, and 60 were elderly men and women. The Assyrians of Baranduz were 67 families comprising 337 persons. Of these 84 were able-bodied, 60 were orphans, and 35 were elderly men and women.³⁷

These statistics reveal that of the 30-35,000 pre-war population of the plain of Urmia, 50% was lost even before the final exodus. Of the lost some had taken refuge in Russia, and the rest were either killed or in hiding. Another noticeable fact is that the death toll among the mountaineers was much higher. Of the original estimated

pre-war population of 160,000 only 50,000 had made it to the plain of Urmia as refugees. And in 1917 only 14,154 persons were alive.

The first holocaust was to be followed by a second one in the summer of 1918 when the civilian population was left unprotected again. This time the entire Christian population, including the Armenians fled south to join the British forces in Sain Kala, from where they were taken to Baquba refugee camps.

On the eve of WWI, all the mission stations in Urmia had packed and left except for the American and the French. The French mission was attacked and burnt down, and all the refugees as well as the clergy were massacred. The American missionaries risked their lives taking care of 15,000 traumatized and starving refugees who had taken shelter in their headquarters.³⁸ The Assyrians who survived the holocaust attest to the fact that “*without the presence of the American Mission not one Assyrian would have been spared during WWI.*”³⁹

After a period of hiding, *Kokhva* began publication in March of 1917. The lead article says:

*“The little kokhva (star) bows down to the ground before the American and French missionaries who selflessly endangered their own lives and purchased this nation at a price beyond monetary calculations.”*⁴⁰

In spite of the unspeakable atrocities, there were pockets of Christian and Muslim neighbors who protected one another during those dark days. Although at the time the Assyrians were themselves living on rations, in one report we read that a group of women collected some food and clothing and carried it to the Kurdish refugees in town. They had made small bags of raisins especially for the children.⁴¹

Assyrians, Russians, and the British:

During the WWI years, the Assyrians were exposed to two different foreign powers as their “allies” and “protectors”: The Russian and the British. But the Assyrian experience is very different concerning these two protecting forces. The Russians are portrayed in Assyrian war annals, personal diaries, and memories as human, friendly, and compassionate. The British, on the other hand, are described as aloof, haughty, and exploitative.

The Assyrian experience with the Russian forces took place during the first flight in the winter of 1915, when 10,000 Assyrians from the villages near the Russian border followed the Russian retreating forces. Here is one of the eyewitness accounts (female respondent):

When the warning came that the Turks and the Kurds would attack, my uncle who had come from Russia and had brought a “droga” (a four-wheel cart) with him, loaded the furniture of three households on it. (This is how many we were). He put us (the children, there were 9 of us) on top. We started off towards the Russian border. On the way, the wheels got stuck in the mud...My uncle

begged the Russian cavalrymen who were passing by, to snatch the children before we were massacred by the enemy in pursuit. Those Russian soldiers were kind. Each picked one of us, and put us in front of them on the horse and covered us with their mantle. They fed us their rations leaving for themselves only so much as not to starve. At night, they kept us warm. Thus, they took us across the border into Russia. There we waited until our uncles and mothers arrived.⁴²

Another respondent: (male)

*We fled from Iran to Russia. We fled behind the retreating Russian troops. I was four, and my sister was two. My mother took me on her back with my sister in her arms. But after walking for a couple of blocks my mother returned and left my sister with my grandmother, because she could not carry us both. My grandmother had a house full of furnishings, an orchard, and a vineyard. She would not part with them. She thought no one would harm an old woman. But she was mistaken. All those who remained behind were killed. I remember vividly, as we were going, my mother fell face down on the snow while I was on her back. A Russian Kazak dismounted and put me on his horse. He helped my mother to her feet. He carried me on his horse for the rest of the time. On the way, my mother found a 10-months old baby left on the snow. She picked him up and brought him along for the child she had left behind. Now he is a physician in Chicago.*⁴³

The Assyrians came into contact with the British after the 1918 flight from Urmia. The following are a few eyewitness accounts:

*In her family history Miriam Youhanan describes an episode that is worth noting. Her immediate family who included her husband and their three small children were among the refugees that fled from Urmia to Hamadan in the summer of 1918. Her husband Dr. David Youhanan, a well-known physician educated in U.S.A., fell ill in Bijar before reaching Hamadan. So they were unable to continue their trek. The British had a strong garrison in Bijar. When he requested medication from the British physicians, they refused on the ground that their medical supplies were for the use of the British army. As his illness got worse, his wife repeatedly pleaded for medication, or transportation elsewhere. But the British physicians and officers refused to provide them with either medication or transportation knowing full well that he would die if not helped.*⁴⁴

Other refugees report that when they reached Hamadan, they were half-starved and emaciated from the horrible days they had passed fleeing for their life with the enemy in pursuit. Yet as soon as they arrived in Hamadan, the British lost no time using them as labor force. The men and youth were enlisted for military duty and women were consigned to break rocks and sew sacks for the British

road construction project, which was to connect Hamadan to Baghdad. In his own words a male respondent mentioned:

*We walked the distance to Hamadan under very difficult circumstances. I have stayed without food for more than three days. When we reached Hamadan, I was walking in the bazaar; the British apprehended me and said that I had to enlist in the army. I was 16 then. They took us to a village. It was very cold and we were without food or clothing. There were about 2-3 thousand of us aged 16-25. After a few weeks I deserted and ran away. The British there were not able to get provisions. They were giving us a kind of bread that looked like manure. It was inedible.*⁴⁵

The Role of Germany in the Assyrian Holocaust:

The generation of Assyrians born after WWI was heavily oriented in literature that emphasized the “British Betrayal of the Assyrians.” While there is ample documentation to validate that perspective, the role of Germany in instigating the holocaust was obscured until Gabriele Yonan came up with her groundbreaking research. She revealed the German documents attesting to the fact that Jihad, the “Holy War,” was actually made in Germany. In other words, it was under German instigation that Turkey made the Jihad an excuse to wipe out thousands of Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks in Turkey, and to attack a neutral country like Persia.⁴⁶

If the role of Germany was lost to the post-war generation of the Assyrians, it was not to the Assyrians of the WWI generation. Although there is no explicit reference in the Assyrian sources to the role of Germany in instigating the Jihad, there is clear documentation of German support of it. Even before the occupation of the region by the Turks, *Kokhva* noted that the Kurds, backed by the Turks, were no longer raiding the border villages to plunder, but to massacre and that Germany, as the Turkish ally, was permitting the holocaust. In the Assyrian sources Emperor Wilhelm of Germany was portrayed as a “madman,” a devilish figure, who, with the philosophy of “might is right,” was ruthlessly permitting his army to massacre civilians in France as well. There were reports that Germans were shipping truckloads of dead soldiers (including their own) to special factory sites where the cadavers were processed into different types of lubricants. That the Germans had sent their generals and officers to train the Turkish army was interpreted as an outright colonization act. Surveying foreign newspapers, *Kokhva* reported “*Now the real Turkish ruler is not the Sultan, but Germany which like the British did in India, aims at controlling the government by controlling the army.*”⁴⁷

In her book “The Assyrian Holocaust”, Gabriele Yonan makes the interesting remark that the Holocaust that the Assyrians, Armenians, and the Greeks experienced is different from the Jewish holocaust. The difference is that the Assyrians and for that matter the Christians *had a choice*. Had they agreed to convert to Islam, they would have been

(Continued from page 15)

spared. Obviously, based on the following comment by Rev. Justin Perkins, who first met the Assyrians of Urmia in 1836, the Assyrians were ready to pay the dearest price for their Christianity:

*American Christians know nothing, in comparison with the Nestorians, of suffering for the name of the Lord Jesus. They are habitually called by their superiors the Muhammedans, unclean infidels and dogs, and are treated in accordance with those epithets. Often, their properties, and sometimes children, are wantonly stripped from them on account of their attachment to Christianity, while their renouncement of it would place them at once beyond the reach of such indignities and sufferings.*⁴⁸

In a 1913, in a war report on Tkhuma, *Kokhva* writes:

*Of the nine who were killed, three died a martyr's death. One was asked to deny Christ and accept Muhammed "I am fasting and cannot deny my Lord." He said. A second was killed for scorning the suggestion. A woman was shot for professing Jesus Christ.*⁴⁹

Similar scenes are recorded in various other accounts.⁵⁰ Undoubtedly some Assyrians did renounce their religion to spare their life and that of their family, but those who did not, and yet survived the genocide, are the ones that to this day have maintained their religion, their name, and their cultural heritage.

Consequences of the WWI Genocide on the Assyrians:

During WWI the Assyrians, Armenians, and the Greeks in Ottoman territory were all victims of state-sponsored horrendous acts of barbarism on the part of Turks and Kurds. But the case of Assyrians is of special concern because the genocide has had irrevocable and far-reaching effects on the present situation and the future fate of this ethnic group. Let us examine some of the consequence of the genocide on the Assyrians:

- Close to two-thirds of the Assyrian nation perished during WWI uprooting. Among those especially targeted were the intellectual and political elite of the nation.
- Unlike the Armenian and the Greek refugees who were assisted by their nationals when they were in refugee camps, and could rejoin fellow-citizens in Armenia and Greece,⁵¹ the Assyrians were uprooted with no chance of repatriation (except for the Assyrians remaining of Iran). Despite vigorous pleas on the part of the Assyrian representatives, the Entente Powers or the United Nations did

not grant the Assyrians even a settlement with some local autonomy.

- The traditional political organization of the Assyrians, which until WWI had maintained the institutional continuity of the nation, was so completely shattered that an effective alternative organization has not been achieved given the geographically dispersed condition of the communities in Diaspora. The reason is the above-mentioned blows snowballed into a chain of adverse effects.

- The pillage and confiscation of all the economic assets during the holocaust, threw the nation into total bankruptcy. Since then no national recovery in the form of the establishment of a national fund has been possible. The Assyrians are still building their financial base one family at a time.

Thus, while the Armenians and the Greeks have maintained or attained statehood and are slowly recovering from the worst effects of the genocide, (although there can be no recovery from human loss, especially on a personal level), the Assyrians remain destabilized. Through a heroic effort and sheer determination, the destitute Assyrian refugees of WWI who found shelter in various countries throughout Europe and the Americas, have everywhere established socially and economically viable families. Today, through collaboration with the Armenians and Greeks, they are renewing their efforts to set the historical record straight regarding their plight and their rights as a nation. Let us hope that the Armenians and the Greeks will give equal recognition to the Assyrian cause in this collaborative effort.



¹ See Rev. Isaac Adams, *Persia by a Persian* (1900); , Joseph Knanishu *About Persia and its People* (1899; reprint, Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias Press LLC, 2001).

² Some returned to a few of the former villages after the war.

³ Azari Turks are indigenous Iranians who have mixed with Afshar Turks and adopted the Azari dialect. They are Shi'ite Muslims. Afshar Turks have moved there from the interior regions of Iran.

⁴ A. Ishaya (trans.), B. Nikitine, "Family Life among the Assyro-Chaldeans of the Plain of Urmiah," *JAAS*, 7, no. 2 (1993): 53.

⁵ Curzon gives a higher estimate of 44,000. What is the reference for Curzon?

⁶ Rev. Justin Perkins, *A Residence of Eight Years among Nestorian Christians* (New York: Allen, Morrill & Wardwell, publisher, 1843), 9-10; V. Minorsky. *Urmiya: Encyclopedia of Islam* (1934), 1032-38.

⁷ "Urmia," *The Columbia On Line Encyclopedia*.

⁸ *Kokhva* vol. I, no. 2 pp. 85-86. (What is the date for Kokhwa vol.1?)

⁹ C. Issawi, *The Economic History of Iran: 1900-1914*, vol. 1 (1971), 24. (Do you have the name of the publisher and the city?)

¹⁰ H. Murre-van den Berg, "The Missionaries' Assistants," *JAAS* 10, no. 2 (1996): 10.

¹¹ *Missionaries of the A.B.C.F.M, Nestorian Biography* (Boston: Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, 1857. Reprint, Chicago: Ninveh Press, 1933), 185.

¹² Perkins, 250-251.

¹³ *Kokhva*, vol. 2 no.1, p.31.

¹⁴ *Kokhva*, vol. 1 no. 1, p. 6. (Is 1906 the first year of Kokhwa?)

¹⁵ *Kokhva*, vol. 2 no. 3, p.19; 1909 vol.3 no. 18, p.152; 1913 vol.7 no. 21, p.247; 1914 vol.8 no. 15 p.174. (vol 2 is 1907, vol 3 is 1909? What happened in 1908? Is the number of volumes quoted correct?)

¹⁶ *Kokhva*, 1909 vol. 3, no. 13, p. 211.

¹⁷ *Kokhva*, 1914 vol. 9, no. 1 p.2.

¹⁸ Rev. S. David, *The Assyro-Chaldean History* (1923), 141. (Place of publication and name of the publisher? Most probably Chicago)

¹⁹ Y. Baaba. *Nineveh*, vol. 20 no. 4, p. 8. (the title of the article and the year?)

²⁰ *Nestorian Biography*, 56.

²¹ Yoab Benjamin, "Assyrian Journalism: A 140-Year Experience," *JAAS* 7, no.2 (1993): 5.

²² Rabi K. Shleemoun, *Nineveh* 20, no. 3 (date?): 50-54.

²³ E. Vincenzizne, *La Chiesa in Iran (The Church in Iran)*, *JAAS* 12, no. 2 (1998): 97-99.

²⁴ *Kokhva*, vol. 1 no.2 (1906): 16.

²⁵ *Kokhva* 1908. vol. 2, no. 14, p.180. (Previously volume 2 was recorded as published in 1907, please clarify)

²⁶ *Kokhva* 1908. vol. 2. no. 14, p.157.

²⁷ *Kokhva*, vol. 3, no. 9 (1908): 10.

²⁸ A. Ishaya. Respondent no. 53, Nov. 14, 1981. (Is this from your dissertation? If it is, then your reference 42 should be here. I will make the changes if answer is yes)

²⁹ A. Ishaya. Respondent no. 15, Dec. 16, 1981.

³⁰ A. Ishaya, Respondent no.29, Feb. 8, 1982.

³¹ *Kokhva* vol. 8, no. 23 (1914): 270.

³² *Kokhva*, vol. 2, no. 12 (1907): 144.

³³ *Kokhva*, no. 17 (1917): 130. (Any volume number?)

³⁴ *Kokhva*, vol. 8, no. 23 (1914): 266-268.

³⁵ See D. Wigram. *Our Smallest Ally*. 1920; G. Yonan. *Ein Vergessener Holocaust (A Forgotten Holocaust)* (any date and publisher name for Yonan's book?); Mary L. Shedd, *The Measure of A Man: The Life of William Ambrose Shedd Missionary to Persia*. (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1922); <http://Assyria.nineveh.com> . 1900-1999 A.D. *Assyrian History Archives*.

³⁶ J. Alichoran, " Assyro-Chaldeans in the 20th Century: From Genocide to Diaspora," *JAAS* 8, no. 2 (1994): 50.

³⁷ *Kokhva* 10, no. 31(1917): 5.

³⁸ The Kurds had orders not (to?) attack the American Mission because of the great service the American doctors had rendered their leaders.

³⁹ Rev. S. David, 146.

⁴⁰ *Kokhva* 1917. no. 1. P. 4 (is volume 10?)

⁴¹ *Kokhva* 10, no. 18 (1917): 138.

⁴² A. Ishaya, "Class & Ethnicity in Central California Valley," (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, U.C.L.A., 1985),158.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁴⁴ Miriam Youhanan, *An Assyrian Odyssey*, ed. Y. A. Baaba (Alamo, California: Youel A. Baaba Library, 1998), 104-113.

⁴⁵ A. Ishaya, *Class & Ethnicity*, 156.

⁴⁶ Jihad, or the "holy war" gave the Muslims, whether they were military or civilians, a free hand to massacre Christian men, women and children

⁴⁷ *Kokhva*, 9. no. 7, 167.

⁴⁸ J. Perkins. *Residence of Eight Years in Persia*, (page number?)

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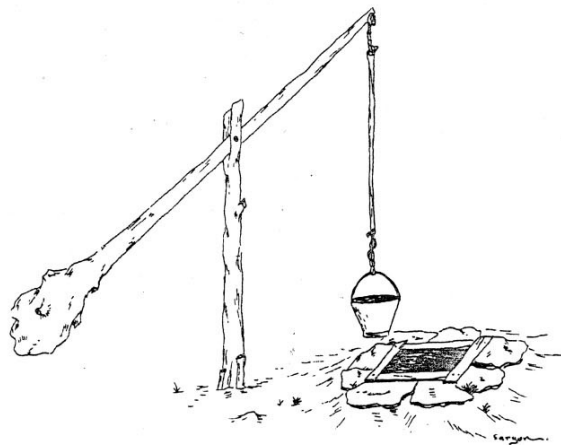


Fig. III: Water well.

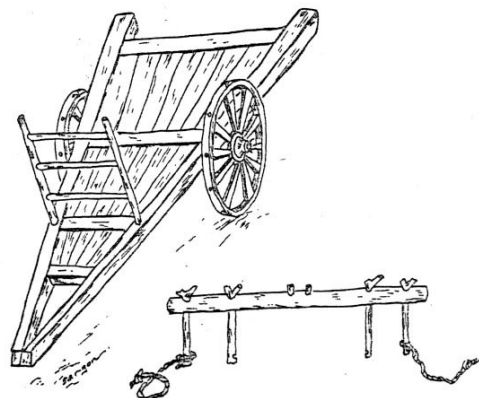


Fig. IV: "Gardoon."

Essays by Solomon (Sawa) Solomon

Old Tales from a Timari Village

Following are tales from an old Timari Village before the Great War. They were related to me on numerous occasions by my parents as I was growing up. They are uniquely Assyrian, they seem to have a supernatural aspect to them. Many of them illustrate the deep religious convictions of our people.

Here are a few:

On May 14, 1903, the Patriarch Mar Benyamin Shimon arrived at the Timari Village of Hawshesur on a visit. He was accompanied by Malik Youkhana of Timar and Malik Sapor of Sara. The next morning, he conducted mass at the church of Mar Toma after which he ordained two deacons. That afternoon he left. In that year the crop of peaches, for which the village was famous, was the biggest in memory. Baskets of peaches had to be given to neighboring villages, and large amounts were sun-dried. This event was attributed to the visit of the Patriarch.

In the village there were two Ziarats, trees that had grown over the tombs of holy men. It is reported that a Kurd had come to the village to kill Rayes Malham. But, while riding under Ziarat Estanga, he was struck in the head by a branch and thrown off of his horse. The Kurd took this to be a sign from heaven and turned back never to return.

Another story tells of a dragon in the vicinity of Hawshesur. Two angels are reported to have descended from heaven to do battle with the big lizard. They defeated him and put a chain on him and took him away. One link in the chain broke off and fell to the ground. According to the story, no matter how long the villagers kept the link in fire, it would not get hot.

It is said that, every night, our people could see lanterns moving in the dark between the two churches of Mar Toma and Mar Sliwa. The word in town was that the lanterns were carried by saints.

That a certain man from the village by the name of Bowtoo became angry one time and he cursed the church of Mar Toma. Not long after that he was struck in the field by lightning which was drawn to him by his silver cigarette case which was in his shirt pocket.

That one time a group of Nomads (Kochars) visited the village. One of the men asked a girl to give him a hair from her head. She cleverly gave him a hair from a black goat throw-rug and after some time they left. Suddenly the goat rug started moving toward the direction they went. It was known that the nomads dabbled in sorcery.

Finally, this story comes from the neighboring Kurdish village of Zerinak. That while chief Islam Beg was a child, he saw his mother stirring *Martookha* in the skillet with her bare finger. He asked her if her finger was burning. She answered: "no.", and put her finger on his fore-

head. This left a permanent burn mark on his forehead. It is said that she was a holy woman.

The village of Hawshesur was destroyed during the Great War and was finally abandoned in 1918 by our people.

Timar on the Eve of the 1915 Holocaust

As was the custom in the small Timari village of Hawshesur (population: nineteen households), early June was the time to go to *Zooma*. In their case, *Zooma* was the small lake of Kashish Gol, situated two hours walking distance north of the village. They would erect their spacious tents (*mishikna*) between Mount Gari Barana and the lake. It was here that in early July, it was learned that the son of King Yousip of Lamsa, the nephew of Emperor Franz Joseph of Austro-Hungary, was assassinated. It did not mean much. However, at the end of July, they learned that general hostilities had begun among the great powers of Europe. This fact caused uneasiness among the Timaris. They broke camp at the *Zooma* and headed toward the village. My mother's grandmother took one last look at the lake and said: "*Susu, this is the last time we are going to see Kashish Gol.*". She was right. Khanna was to die two years later. The dark clouds of war had arrived and while Assyrians went about their daily chores, everybody was expecting the inevitable. That came in late October, 1914, when it was learned that Turkey had entered the war on the side of Germany. That fact had ominous meanings for them.

In November 1914, Enver Pasha, the Turkish minister of war, attacked the Russians near Kars with a large army. Here the Tzar's army moved to meet the Ottomans. On December 29th, a five-day battle was fought near Sari Kamish, where the Russian general Vorontsov defeated Enver. The Turks retreated after suffering huge losses. Of that force, a small detachment of six officers and 100 men under Attam Beg arrived at Hawshesur. Everybody was terrified; they thought that they would be killed. However, Attam Beg proved to be a good man. He asked Reyes Melham to quarter his men among the houses and to feed them the same food that the family they were staying with had cooked. In the morning, Attam Beg bid Reyes Melham goodbye and left. The village breathed a sigh of relief for a while.

Soon to follow was that Islam Beg, the chief of the neighboring village of Zerinak, sent his own brother, Saadoon Beg, secretly under the cover of darkness, and told Reyes Melham that the Turks had planned to massacre all Christians of the Van area in the middle of April. Saadoon warned Melham not to seek refuge in Zerinak for Islam beg will not be able to protect him, rather to attempt to escape to the Armenian sector of Van, where Aram Pa-

sha was expected to mount a defense of sorts against the Turks.

True to the warnings, on April 17th, the villagers saw the smoke rising about many nearby villages. There was sound of canon too. So, they took some belongings and raced toward Toan, which was on the way to Van. They spent two nights in a small canyon nearby. After that, they climbed a mountain and arrived at the Armenian monastery of Varak. There, they saw the dead bodies of nuns and priests. Soon, there were several thousand Christians at the sight. Down below, they could see smoke and fire rising from Armenian and Assyrian villages.

Ten days later, the Turkish army started shelling the place. Cattle had to be abandoned and the people climbed further up the mountain. Two days later, they descended on Toan again, where they cleaned up and rested. A Kurd from Arikhan told them that Hawshesur was destroyed and that Rayes Melham, who had hid with his son, Bram, in Arikhan, to stay with the pregnant wife of Bram, was discovered killed. So, the people climbed up the mountain again and moved toward Van. Soon, they arrived at the Van suburbs of Shushanis and entered the Armenian lines into safety. However, their rifles were confiscated. Once in Van, they went to the house of the American doctor Asher, where Badal worked. Badal slaughtered a bull to provide fresh meat for the refugees. Cousin Rizgo arrived the next day, carrying a bag of flour, followed by others.

The Armenians fought the Turks in Van under the able leadership of Aram Pasha until the Russian army, under general Yudenich, raised the siege of Van on May 19th. For the people of Timar this was to be the end of the beginning. More bad news was to follow over the course of the next few years. More people were to die, but that is another tale to be told in another time.

Timar during The Great War: 1915-1918

I had written earlier about the beginning of the Holocaust in Timar in 1915, and how our people took refuge in the Armenian Sector of Van, and how the Russian army raised the siege in May 1915. Following that, the Timaris raided many Kurdish villages in search of food; then, they went back to Hawshesur, where Rayes Melham was given a Christian burial. Soon after that, the Russians retreated to their border and our people had to follow. In Armenia, they settled in Kolasar. They were issued supplies; each person received six Rubles a month. The Timaris spent the balance of the year there. They were able to return to Hawshesur the following year, after the Russian army secured the area.

1916 brought a semblance of peace in the Van area, and

even the Kurds started trickling back. A Kurd by the name of Hassan gave us two houses and four cows. Rizco and Badal went out looking and came back with twenty heads of sheep. Later, Badal and Abbo went out again and came back this time with 300 sheep and a few cows.

In the spring of 1917, the situation in Timar became precarious again. Our people decided to move back to Armenia. There, they stayed in the Assyrian village of Kalasar until the coming of the Bolshevic revolution. In late 1917, the Timaris returned to the Van area to escape deteriorating situation in the Russian Empire.

In early 1918, the Turkish army conducted a great offensive in the east. Here, the Christian Armenians and Assyrians tried to escape to Russian Armenia; however, at Begric river their path became blocked by Turkish troops. They returned to Van and then headed east toward the Persian border through Sara. They crossed the border at Qutil pass, being chased all the way by the troops of the fifth Turkish division under Mustapha Izet Beg and the twelfth division, under Ali Refaat Beg, and joined the great Assyrian tribes in Salamas. Here,

many Timaris joined the ranks of General David d'Mar Shimon. Three months later, our people moved south to the area of the city of Urmi, and stayed in the nearby village of Sharish. Later, in early August 1918, the entire Assyrian nation had to abandon Urmia and move south toward the British army base in Hamadan.

Arriving in Hamadan, all the weapons were turned over to the British. Later, They moved west, toward Mesopotamia.

After passing through Kermanshah and Qasre Sheerin, the Timaris crossed into Mesopotamia in Khanaqqin, where they spent the night. Gabriel sold a horse and purchased some dates.

Then, all the village moved to Baquba, except my father and his father. They drove the cattle and the horses to Baquba.

In Baquba, the Timaris were settled in camp #24. Here, Rev. Wigram obtained the position of assistant headman to my uncle, Deacon Gabriel (later, father Gabriel of Gailani Camp in Baghdad). Also, here, the famed educator, Raabi Yaco Bet Yaco opened a school to teach the Timari children. It is worth noting that Mar Elia, the former bishop of Van, assumed the spiritual leadership of the Timaris in Baquba. He appointed several new village chiefs. Meanwhile, Marawgil had become the Malik of the Timaris after his father, Malik Youkhanna, had died earlier near Kermanshah.

Baquba was the end of a chapter in modern Assyrian history; the great war ended for the Assyrians in Baquba. What followed was a new chapter in Assyrian history...a story to be told at another time.



From Mosul to Fairfield

Multimedia installations based on traditional Assyrian dance concepts and practice

From Mosul to Fairfield was conceptualized in late 2003, at a crucial period for the Assyrian Diaspora, a time when hope and fear were at battle in their hearts. The coalition forces had occupied Iraq and the country's political future was uncertain. Around the globe, the Assyrian people whose origins in the Middle East date back to ancient times, were waiting for their day to come, the day that their land right issues in Iraq can be reopened and addressed. Their hearts full of hope, they were fearful of betrayal and denial, as it had happened to them in the past.

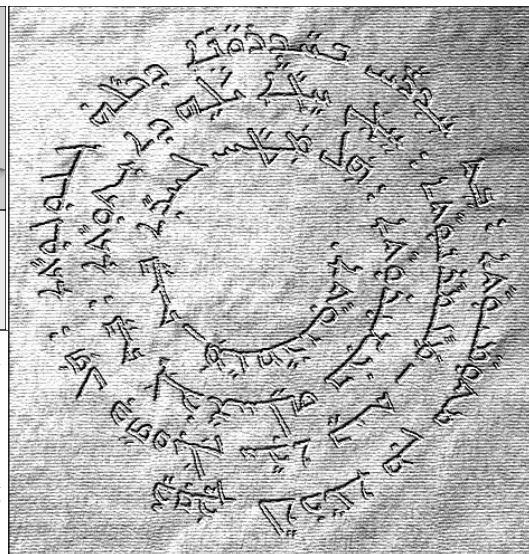
The exhibition is an illustration of history with art and art presented in historic setting. Here the deep-dyed colors in the hand-woven Assyrian tribal garments are brought together with the twenty-first century's latest technology to signify the strength and survival of a small nation that traces its roots to the ancient Mesopotamian civilization.

From Mosul to Fairfield brought younger Assyrians and the elders together to share and care as they exchanged old and new traditions. Use of *Khigga* as a physical, metaphoric and symbolic element provided a potential space for the artists and participants to exchange cultural expressions, allowing transformation of traditional art into conceptual and contemporary forms.

Khigga is the traditional circular dance performed by every Assyrian. Visually it resembles a human spiral wall and symbolically it represents strength and unity. One can say that this form of Assyrian cultural expression is practiced from cradle to grave. *Khigga* has many forms, meanings and variations according to geographical, regional and tribal locations. It is one of, if not the only Assyrian art form, the roots of which can be traced to antiquity.

The Assyrians haven't had a homeland for many centuries, yet they have preserved their ethnic identity –perhaps because in dances like *Khigga*, the homeland can exist beneath the feet of the dancer, if nowhere else. In another Assyrian circular dance, *Zaroura*, dancers are linked tightly in a line. With each repetition of the dance sequence, they travel only a distance of the width of one foot. With each beat, they touch or step on the ground beneath them, affirming again and again that where they stand, in the body and in the present moment, is home.

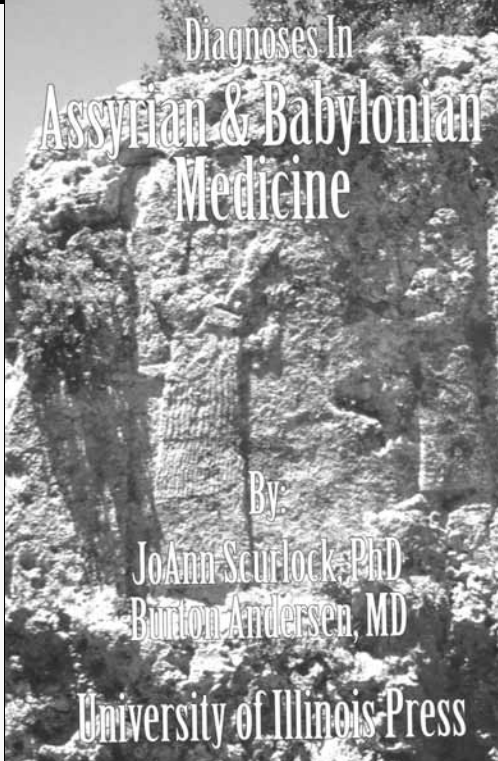
From Mosul to Fairfield was presented at the Fairfield City Museum and Gallery, from 2-30 October, 2005. Ms. Samiramis Ziyeh was the artistic director of the project.



In a spiral we dance as the earth moves beneath our feet until we are home

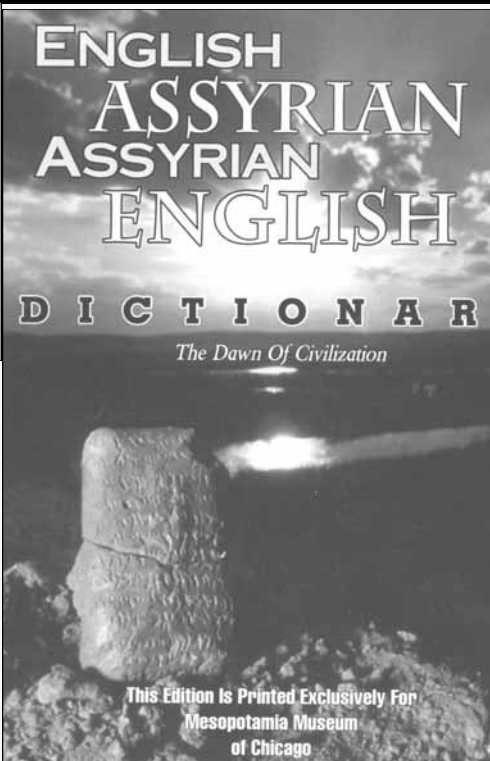


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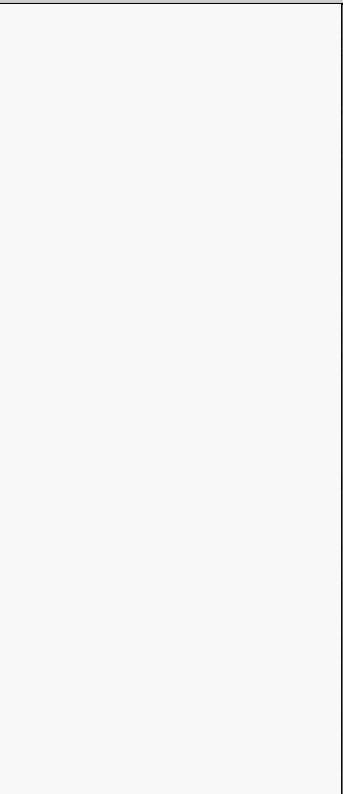


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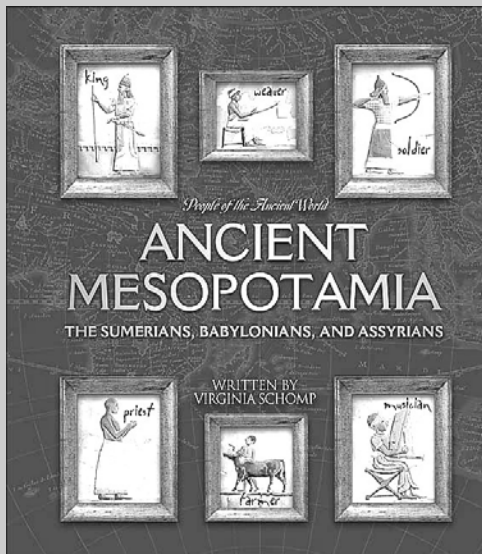
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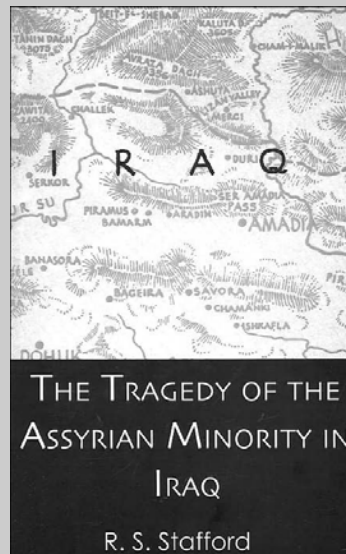
David G. Malick
 ATOUR Publication

In an area known as Mesopotamia, three ancient civilizations thrived. The Sumerians formed the first cities and developed the first system of written language. The Babylonians created rules of law, the most famous of which is the Code of Hammurabi. The Assyrians showed their military strength through conquest and established the first cavalry units, or soldiers fighting on horseback. This book explores the cultures of ancient Mesopotamia through their social structure. It takes a look at the people and details the duties of a king, the activities of a peasant farmer, and much more. It also describes some of the discoveries and writings that have led to our present-day understanding of this fascinating civilization.



The Tragedy of the Assyrian Minority in Iraq (The Kegan Paul Arabia Library Series)

This is a fascinating account of a little known ethnic minority in Iraq. Although the Assyrians, like many minorities in Iraq, lived across many modern national boundaries, they were an unusually well-off group. After the end of the British mandate in Iraq in 1932, however, it was revealed that Moslems were persecuting them. The survivors of the Assyrian people and the remnants of a once great Christian Church lived in the mountains by and large in the north part of Iraq, sometimes straddling the Turkish border.



(Continued from page 5)

ideal.” Nevertheless, they were pleased he was president. You could say, that the support shown by Khattami for the Assyrians, could be called good for an Iranian. Thanks to him, the Assyrian Olympics, held between the 28ste of July and the 6ste of august, could be organized. Where men and women could watch the sporting events side by side, and Christian girls could play basketball in shorts. For Dutch people this is very normal, but in Iran this could be classified as a revolution. During the events, Khattami send a telegram to congratulate the organization of the gathering. These were the positive elements of the Khattami reign. But these days are over, an other president took over, and the people already feel the changes.

Miss Gamri, Dutch politician, further puts the reign of Khattami into perspective, and illustrates this with examples, in which she shows the Christian parliamentarian his mistake in his believe of a democratic country.

“Even in recent years, a Christan was a nonbeliever, for whom it is, not allowed to be the superior of a Muslim on the work floor.

That is the reason why there are so few Assyrians at work for the government. Jobs in education and health care are taboo for Christians. There aren’t any Christian Assyrians working in the police force or army, there are no none Muslim judges or pilots,” Tells the state member Miss Gamri.

“The consequence of this Islamic politics is that highly educated Assyrians are without a job, or they are forced to work below their level of competence,” Is the opinion of Miss Gamri.

Discrimination

The Assyrian economist Ishtar from the Iranian city Urmia claims that there are no other choice for her and other highly educated in the Islamic Republic of Iran between “Leaving the country, or to be satisfied with a job which doesn’t suite or educational level” . “Often we are rejected by employers for obscure reasons, in some cases it’s even spoke out loud “Your Christian faith is a problem.””, says the 33 year old economist.

Besides the religious discrimination on the work floor, which leads to a lot of unemployment in the group of Assyrian Chris-

tians, there are other forms of discrimination which make life for the Christians in Iran virtually impossible. Christians who are involved in a car crash with a Muslim, pay more for the damage compensation than Muslim. The farmers of the city Urmia, where a lot of Christians have been living for centuries, are noticing the religious discrimination, their produce is not being



bought by the Islamic traders. “We can sell our produce against a far lower price, but we don’t want to. I rather see them rotting, then sell them too cheap,” a angry Assyrian farmer from Urmia states.

The highest leader of the Assyrian church, patriarch Mar Dincha, has been telling former president Khattamie of the religious discrimination against his fellow believers on several occasions in the past. Khattami promised better times. He made it possible for Assyrians to easily gain excess to universities. “But earning a university degree just to become unemployed, isn’t a option for me,” says economist Ishtar.

With the new conservative President in place, a lot of Christians seem to loss their hope, because the police force which keeps an eye on the clothing regulations are more active: “Since the new president took over power, the police is visiting our stores to warn us to take the clothing regulation very seriously,” says Christian shopkeeper Lina from Teheran. She has got very little hope for better times, “Unless the Americans cross the border with Iraq to establish a different regime here,” the Christian sales woman thinks, who changed her name to Lima for security reasons.

Despite of the lack of hope, Lina stills lives in Teheran, but thousands of fellow believers left Iran, and mostly went to the U.S, Canada and Australia.

At this moment a Jewish organization in Teheran is taking care of the paperwork. Thanks to this organization, Christians are able to get an Austrian visa for three thousand dollar. From Vienna the Christian Assyrians travel to the U.S with an American Green-Card, where they will be building a new future for them self, leaving Lina and the rest of the group somewhat lonely behind.



AUA's Needed Change at a Moment of National Urgency

Abdulmesih BarAbraham, Germany

Assyrians who still harbor some hope for positive developments in the future of their cause turned their attention to London the second weekend of Tammuz. This was in order to receive some signals of change from an important congress of the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) and ascertain how AUA might adapt itself to the rapidly changing political circumstances.

It must be said at the outset, that one organizational hurdle was cleared, albeit late and overdue, when the reins of the AUA were turned over to a younger General Secretary. Congratulations are in order to Dr. Emanuel Kamar.

Dr. Kamar as a native of Iraq brings to his new position a keen understanding of the political realities of that country. His past association with the Iraqi political opposition, and the fact that he was one of the handful selected as "frontmen" by the U.S. State Department (in March 2003) suggests the possibility that AUA might finally be determined to take on an important role for pushing our National Question in Iraq.

This is positive and consistent, because since its establishment in 1968 – with roots going back to See'ta Sepreta (Assyrian Youth Cultural Society of Tehran)-Huyada (Unity) has been seen as the engine behind the formation and expression of modern Assyrian nationalism among our eastern Assyrian communities. Over the years, it has been the fulcrum of Assyrian patriotic thinking in the Diaspora with special emphasis to North America. It attracted the affiliation of the Assyrian American National Federation and, to a limited extent, the Assyrian cause was made visible for the U.S. Administration in Washington, and for some of the United Nations agencies. Because of its worldwide activities it attracted the attention of some Middle Eastern governments, even becoming the target for their Intelligence in the 1970s.

During the same decade of the 1970s, while the Assyrian Democratic Organization (ADO) was spreading its basis in Europe, ADO activists naturally placed great hopes in the AUA as an international advocacy organization. In fact, although never formally affiliated with the AUA, ADO over the years has been one of its most active partners. Indeed, Malphono Ninos Aho, an early ADO activist, was in attendance at the recent London conference, and his persuasive appeal to the delegates might have helped facilitating the succession in the leadership. An example of the enduring cooperation between ADO and AUA began in the end of 1980s, when ADO was invited as an ethnic group to become a member of the UNPO, which was then in formation. ADO immediately called AUA to share this important representation.

One of AUA's important roles has been to maintain national links between the Western Diaspora and our

communities in Iran, Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Afterwards this approach has been adopted by other organizations as well, though less successful. Such a role was essential as long as the Iron Curtain was separating Europe. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the spread of Internet and progressing globalization, this role became less critical. But aside from this, the AUA pushed a broad Assyrian political agenda, from seeking formal recognition of the Assyrian Genocide to securing an Assyrian homeland. In fact, the first official recognition of the Assyrian Genocide was recorded in 2002 by the Regional Government of New South Wales, and credit for this achievement goes to the Australian branch of the AUA.

But in reality, with the rise of various new Assyrian political parties over the 15 years, AUA's role as an umbrella organization has become less vital, hence its influence has ebbed. This erosion has been accelerated by an internal power struggle over the future direction of the organization, i.e. whether to remain simply a national umbrella, or whether to become a pure political party. While the first objective was never fulfilled, the latter contradicted with its mission to attract other Assyrian political groups to gather under or around its umbrella.

The changes in Iraq as a result of the first Gulf War swept the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM) to the surface. In short order, ADM received the immediate support of the major Assyrian international organizations, such as ADO and AUA. Over time, as ADM was gaining status as a representative of the Assyrians in the no-fly zone of Northern Iraq, so did AUA's umbrella role purportedly encompassing Iraq recede. Realistically AUA lacked any kind of presence in a part of Mesopotamia where the Assyrian Question was at play. AUA's marginalization became even more obvious following the fall of the Saddam Regime and the evolution of the ChaldoAssyrian position during Iraq's transition period. It was now little more than an observer. The changes at the recent AUA congress occur in a key moment, as Iraq works to create its new legislative and administrative institutions. The ChaldoAssyrians face severe external and internal challenges threatening to reduce them to a historic footnote. The time is short, as the draft constitution will be completed by August 15, with a ratifying election scheduled for Mid-October.

Unfortunately, ChaldoAssyrians have already missed the boat on several key funding milestones, ranging from the former U.N. oil-for-food program monies to the vast sums (mostly U.S.) which have been poured into the effort to rebuild Iraq and prepare it for democracy. Similarly, we risk being squeezed out of any fair share of the oil wealth of the Mesopotamian plain. Adding to the



dilemma is the fact that ChaldoAssyrians are divided into varied political factions, each camp lacking a critical mass and resources to influence the course of events. Indeed, this division has opened the way for outsiders to manipulate some of these factions as collaborators.

In more normal times such development would be a sign of pluralism and vitality. But these days are anything but normal, hence over-diversification is causing weakness. It is unfortunate, that most of the ChaldoAssyrian organizations will not have the luxury of sufficient time to go through the learning curve of political maturity. Those with some level of maturity and political experience, like the ADM with a record of modest achievements, have received support and funding for years, yet have been unable to develop a political agenda which can attract our people in Iraq on a broad basis, across major regions where they are settled.

The contrast to the Kurds is dramatic and telling: For years, Kurdish factions fought and killed one another, yet in the end they joined to form a formidable united front, thereby maximizing their political reach in Iraq's first popular elections. ChaldoAssyrian political parties were incompetent in forming a unified front and to ensure a proper representation prior to the first election in the country. The January 2005 elections represented a major disaster for our people and this underlines the urgency of forming a united ChaldoAssyrian front in order to assure fair representation in the upcoming election. We can ill afford incompetence or lack of discipline in a fast-evolving political arena. A credible home-grown (of the caliber of the late Francis Shabo assassinated in 1993) is the best insurance to protect our people from militant Islamism, and generally for steering our people in the right direction. It is not an exaggeration to say we are facing a national urgency. Every ChaldoAssyrian political organi-

zation must grasp this truth, and ignoring it means risking further disasters. After the elections, it was fashionable to attribute our electoral catastrophe to certain external factors, particularly the threats by Islamist extremists, Kurdish dirty tricks in the Nineveh Plain, and a woefully anemic turnout at the polls by ChaldoAssyrians in the Diaspora. They partially diverted our attention from what we should have under our control. What is urgently needed is a look inward to help us understand what produced this fiasco. We have often blamed our forefathers for failing to seize historic opportunities, but now the ball is in our court.

In general ChaldoAssyrians worldwide are tired of political declarations detached from reality on the ground in Mesopotamia. It is worthwhile in this connection to go over certain AUA statements about Iraq, to see how the organization addresses some discrepancies, and how it intends to proceed to accomplish its stated agenda.

A Historical Homeland (ASSYRIA)

While this is a bold approach, it is also clear that most of our locally active organizations in Iraq - ADM included - hesitate to use the term Assyria. While propagating an abstract *Bet-Nahrain* as homeland, they confuse it often with "Kurdistan" and hence accept displacement and Kurdification through appropriation of land as a fact.

Unity under ASSYRIAN name

Particularly since the U.S Census of the Year 2000, the name issue has emerged as an Achilles Heel. Solving the questions appears as difficult as untying the Gordian Knot. The dilemma is rooted in large measures in the historical labeling of our people (under Ottoman Millet System) according to their religious denomination. For years, nationalist-minded Assyrians lamented the failure of our church leaders to unite doctrinally, despite a com-

(Continued on page 26)

(Continued from page 25)

mon origin and faith today. Today, we debate over semantics and single national nomenclature, while in the process we lost the focus on the key motivation of such a unity. The debate is pursued with abandon and in public, alienating or marginalizing various segments of our people. A pragmatic approach enunciated at the 2003 conference under the slogan "Our Unity and Our National Rights in Iraq" (see the Chaldean Syriac Assyrian General Conference, Baghdad, October 22-24, 2003) resulted in our recognition under the ChaldoAssyrian label by the TAL. Unfortunately, this approach has been questioned not only by some clerics of the Chaldean Church, but similarly undermined by extremists from the Church of the East.

Granting of an Assyrian Administrative Region

This subject has aroused considerable dispute, and it has become clear that Assyrian organizations have lost some credibility in their dealings with the U.S. Administration because of the different positions postured by the exile organizations in contrast to those of the homeland groups. This issue was also highlighted in a recent debate in the British House of Common.

Right to Return to [occupied] Homes and Villages in Iraq

This is a matter closely linked to the definition of "the Homeland". In one way or another most of our organizations in Iraq have been taking an opportunistic approach on this. No one seems interested confronting the Iraqi Kurds openly about it.

Few Conclusions

Taking the recent London declaration at face value would suggest that the AUA delegates and the new executive board are prepared for greater hands-on involvement in several regions of the homeland. If so, it will require greater cooperation than we have seen before with the home-grown groups.

I remain convinced that the most urgent task is to become active in the Iraq situation, since we are obviously running out of time. In view of the timetable, it may already be too late for the AUA to have any impact on the course of events.

To that end, I view the following as minimum essential steps:

1) The establishment of a unified front (aka National Front) and the creation of a credible leadership by the active political organizations in Iraq.

ADO was instrumental for preparing Baghdad Conference of 2003 which created an executive board. But the objectives of the conference were quickly undermined, in some instances with malicious intent. Early on Chaldean Church leaders complained about the lack of political leadership and coordination. Had this warnings not been ignored, we might have averted the electoral debacle of last January. While we recognize some ChaldoAssyrians in Baghdad and elsewhere failed to cast a ballot out of fear, we must also accept the general apathy engendered in

**National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter**

2005 TRAILBLAZER FINALIST

Owner of Jonas & Associates, Inc., an environmental consulting firm, Romena Jonas is a naturalized American, born in Urmia, Iran. She came to the United States when she was fifteen years old and later graduated with a bachelor's degree in geology from Temple University. Prior to graduation, she published a book on Pennsylvania Earthquakes. She worked as an Environmental Consultant for SMC Martin Corporation in Pennsylvania before moving to Walnut Creek, where she worked for CDM Corporation and later for Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. In 1987, she established Jonas & Associates Inc. Jonas & Associates has a proven track record in performance of numerous environmental, engineering, construction and information technology studies and investigations for both private and public sector clients. The company has conducted strategic management of multi-disciplinary teams including environmental scientists, engineers, computer programmers, and legal professionals.



Romena Jonas
Jonas & Associates, Inc.

— Romena is also an active member of the Assyrian Foundation of America, and has served on the board; most recently, as treasurer.

many due to the low expectations about their leadership.

2) At the earliest possibility, AUA and ADO should jointly assist in organizing a second "Baghdad Conference". Although ADO and AUA should remember their role as that of intermediary. The two organizations still enjoy enough credibility among the various groups in Iraq to convince the staying of such a meeting.

3) It is a priority of the highest order that ChaldoAssyrian rights must be embedded in the upcoming constitution. This should encompass proper representation, equitable access to resources, and related issues. To this end, it is essential that we synchronize our efforts with the ChaldoAssyrian members of the constitutional committee. We must all be on the same page.

4) Of equally high order, a consensus must be reached on defining the 'Administrative Area of Nineveh'

5) Last, but certainly not least, steps must be taken to regain the confidence of the U.S Administration.

Save Assyria!

All things fall and are built again,
And those that build them again are gay
W. B. Yeats, "Lapis Lazuli"

To See, Or Not To See:

Our people have been divided too long. In recent demonstrations in northern Iraq, Assyrians held banners demanding to be recognized as ONE people in the new Iraqi constitution. "*Chaldean + Syriac + Assyrian = One!*" This was the slogan of these courageous demonstrators—and this must be our goal as well. Do we need to wait for severe crises like famines or wars to bring our people together? The divisions among our people have existed *too long*. The deterioration of our language and culture has been allowed to continue unabated *too long!* We must call for unification among all Assyrians *NOW!* We must begin now to restore the unity and overcome the divisions that have been destroying our culture for hundreds of years of separation. As an Assyrian youth who is concerned about the consequences of such divisions, I have taken the initiative to begin the pre-production of a documentary film about the Assyrian culture and its struggle for identity. Below is a discussion of three main divisions that have contributed to hindering our unity and are crucial to the documentary's subject matter.

The First Division:

Recently, I've been forming a student union between Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Syriacs at Wayne State University. The group was initially revealed through "facebook.com" under the title *Assyrian Social Club*. The "facebook.com" website is student accessible only and allows alternate forms of internet communication with friends at a college or university, as well as friends attending higher education internationally.

There was an explosion of email replies; many who joined the group were in dismay. The front web page states: "Now is the time to unite Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Syriacs, for we all share the same Assyrian ancestry." Above this statement, I explained historical reasoning for this conclusion. The few Syriacs who joined the group didn't have a problem believing their Assyrian heritage. Presumably this is because, unlike the term Chaldean, Syriac does not refer to an ancient ethnicity. Most Chaldeans reacted to the subject matter calmly. Others, however, did not. One correspondent wrote, "listen bro read up on ur history, b/c (because) Assyrians and chaldeans have fought many wars with each other so you cant be both. I may be a chaldo going to wayne state but I am not ignorant." Wow!



"You can't reason a man out of a position he has not reasoned himself into," said Oscar Wilde. How many people live life without questioning their existence, accepting things as they are told—be it religion or ethnicity? The young man who retaliated negatively in his email is a perfect example. He was absolutely convinced that he was right even after referring him to historical evidence proving that modern Chaldeans are NOT related to ancient Chaldeans.

The subject of identity is very emotional, especially when you have been told your whole life that you are one thing, be it Chaldean, and that reality becomes false. The Greek tragedy *Oedipus Rex*, for example, is about an ambitious orphan named Oedipus who kills the king of Thebes, marries the queen and has several children with her only to find out that he killed his father, married his mother, and his children are also his siblings! Upon discovering the truth, Oedipus gouged his eyeballs out and exiled himself, which, for the ancient Greeks, was considered worse than execution. How about that for an identity crisis?

The most common story repeated among Assyrians today is that Ashur and Chaldû were brothers that separated. There is no possibility that ancient Chaldeans were related to ancient Assyrians, who were indigenous

(Continued from page 27)

people of northern Mesopotamia. History confirms that Chaldeans migrated into Mesopotamia no earlier than the 10th century BC (Cotterell p. 94)! Although the “brother” fairy tale does have some validity when relating it to the Church of the East split in 1553 AD, when Assyrian parishioners undertook the title “Chaldean” in their communion with the Roman Catholic Church (Fisher p. 102).

Fred Aprim in his article *Reflections on Yousif Hermiz Jammo's Book "The Remains of Nineveh or the History of Telkaif* assures:

“Assyrians need not to worry because history is behind them. Education is the only means through which we can overcome our shortcomings. It is very unlikely that an educated nation would fall in a deceitful trap, because an educated nation is a conscious nation and an informed nation is rarely misguided.”

Our youth must realize that they are ethnically Assyrian—sharing the same language, the same culture, and the same religion. Only then will they realize how the terms Syriac and Chaldean cause division. Moreover, those who use these terms to weaken us will be prevented and we will be united. Though Aprim explains that education is needed to engage identity awareness, implementation of this knowledge is the responsibility of every educated Assyrian.

The Second Division:

In the Assyrian homeland of Iraq, our language and culture had to withstand the effects of Arabization; with Diaspora, our language and culture have to withstand the effects of Westernization:

“What do you know about the present situation of your people in Iraq?” was a question I asked a group of Chaldo-Assyrian teenagers in Birmingham, MI, USA.

“How the f*** you want me to know about Iraq?” answered Steve (17) from Utica, MI, “I’m over here workin’ my a** off and goin’ to school.”

Veronica (18) from Sterling Heights, MI bettered him with her lethargic reply, “There’s a lot of trouble there and that’s it.”

Then another, who refused to disclose his identity, said, “How about I tell you a joke instead?”

“Ok. Sure,” I said, “as long as you can relate it to the subject.”

“Why don’t Chaldeans box?” (pause as I shrugged my shoulders), “Cause as soon they get to the corner, they open up a liquor store!”

This seems to be the general attitude of the Assyrian American youth—apathy. Somehow they have gotten the impression that attaining wealth is more important than the knowledge and preservation of their culture. The problem is that they don’t feel obligated to know the “troubles” of our people in Iraq. Perhaps this resulted because they are disconnected from their homeland. They aren’t experiencing the sufferings. So why should they care?

There is no surprise that our youth are unaware of the Assyrian Genocide, in which 750,000 of our people were massacred less than a century ago when the same young people can’t explain the current conditions. The consequences of such apathy are monumental, eventually leading to the deterioration of our language and culture. Dr. Arianne Ishaya, in a study about Assyrian-American ethnic identity, notes:

“By 1950’s the rate of assimilation (of Assyrians) was so high, that the American born and raised generation could not converse in, much less read and write the Assyrian language...It must be noted that the continuity of Assyrians as a distinct minority in the United States has been due to the constant inflow of new immigrants into the country. Assyrian Americans have not set in place SUBSTANTIAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS or otherwise an economic infrastructure to maintain Assyrian ethnic continuity.”

Establishing Assyrian schools would be a very simple solution. In Michigan (USA), we see Armenians have a school and their mission statement reads: “The A.G.B.U. Alex & Marie Manoogian School will successfully educate all students in a safe, dignified and supportive setting, partnering with the community to preserve the Armenian language and culture.” But the problem with Assyrians imitating this again lies in our disarray. If you ask an Armenian “What language do you speak?” or “What culture are you?” he or she would answer “Armenian.” Ask the same questions to religious sects of Assyrians like Syriacs or Chaldeans, most likely they will say that their culture and language is “Syriac” or “Chaldean.” The subtle differences in our culture, due to geographical distance, denominational affiliation and constant persecution, have not allowed one Assyrian nationality to persevere.

The Third Division:

Assyrians in other countries are also suffering from persecution and discrimination no different from those injustices in our homeland. Zinda Magazine re-

cently featured an article about Assyrians in Jordan which stated, "A Chaldean, who is a father of 8 children and arrived in Jordan last year, said, 'The American embassy has severely rejected my application for joining two of my children there. My savings are almost over and I do not know what I shall do then or how I would support my family'."

Another more extreme example of suffering (regarding human rights violations) can be found in a recent AINA (Assyrian International News Agency) guest editorial; Lidia Kiorkis describes the Assyrian morale in Greece: "Many of the refugees I met were astonished at my interest in knowing their living situation. They feel neglected and forgotten, and their frustrations are easily understood given their current circumstances."

The Assyrians suffering in Diaspora have been diverted from engaging in their cultural and religious practices to surviving and caring for their families. Cultural traditions attain meanings only when practiced in groups; the lack of this sense of belongingness among our people constitutes a large threat to our heritage, especially considering that many Assyrians are continuing to emigrate from their ancestral homelands.

The Solution

Film is the most powerful teaching tool having the power to change the minds and hearts of the masses, but it is often misused. That is why it is so important that people who are devoted to restoring our national unity do this film project in the proper manner. With an intensely dramatic script and a committed crew, this documentary will expose all aspects of the TRUE Assyrian identity historically, politically, and religiously.

Our communities internationally must get involved. Visits to areas with large concentrations of Assyrians, besides the U.S and Canada, would be beneficial—these areas include such nations as Sweden, Syria, Iran, Jordan, Greece, England, France, and even Iraq. The audience needs to hear from those who have experienced harsh ethnic and religious persecution. However, this project is not limited to the Assyrian community or its viewpoints. Interviewing those who oppose our Nation would emotionally and intellectually stimulate our audience and allow this documentary to successfully fulfill our production goals:

1. To bring international awareness about the Assyrian culture, both past and present.
 2. To awaken our Nation about the detrimental effects of separation in the Assyrian culture.
- To gain the emotional, financial, and political support of those who have the ability to help Assyrians, especially in our ancestral homelands.

In order to unite Assyrians, we must instill Assyrian

Nationalism in our youth. We must teach them about their ancient and modern history; we must reveal to them the need to preserve our language and culture; we must obligate them to voice their opinions and include them in our decisions. Because after this generation of Assyrians, everything the elders worked so diligently to accomplish will be lost. Our Assyrian heritage is our most valuable treasure, a lineage almost 7000 years old. We deserve this treasure, therefore, we must protect it!

Andre Anton
Producer,
Lamassu Productions
dre@wayne.edu

The documentary is currently in need of funding. We are hoping to get sponsorship from Assyrian community leaders, but we will also need initial help from you the reader. If you would like to make a donation, please visit our website at www.assyriandoc.com and click the "Make A Donation" button or mail a check payable to LAMASSU PRODUCTIONS at this address:

Lamassu Productions
P.O. Box 44254
Detroit, MI,
USA, 48244



Author of the article, Andre Anton (Center), was the recipient of the 1st place award at the Youth Excellence contest at the 2005 Assyrian American National Convention in Boston, Mass.

In Memoriam:

By Mikhael K. Pius

Dr. Nerol (Nardin) Owdisho, 74, a well-known and respected man among the Assyrian community, passed away at Doctors' Hospital in Modesto, California, March 27, 2005, following complications from surgery. His funeral service, attended by some 800 people, was celebrated by Rev. Edward Essabeh at Saint John's Presbyterian Church in Turlock and his remains were interred at Turlock Memorial Park.



The deceased was eulogized by several people among them Bob Arsanos, Janet Atanous, Dr. Vladimar Benjamin, and Gewargis Aghassi at a memorial lunch held at Civic Club of Turlock, and most Assyrian TV programs of the area paid tribute to his good nature, his works and deeds both as a physician and as a caring Assyrian.

Eldest of five siblings, Nerol was born May 12, 1931 in Qarajalu, Urmia, Iran to William and Shalem Owdisho. Following his elementary schooling he graduated in 1950 from high school in Urmia. He then attended the University of Teheran and graduated in 1958 with a degree in medicine. After serving his country, as an officer in the Royal Iranian Army, he started practicing medicine which included a position as a physician in the Ministry of Health in Shiraz, Iran. In October 1964 he was married to Nancy, daughter of Yona and Yosip Minasof. The couple was blessed with three children.

The couple with their family came to America in 1984 and settled in Turlock. After passing all the necessary examinations, he obtained his US and California medical licenses and opened his own medical practice in 1994. He served as a physician a total of 25 years in Iran and ten years in Turlock.

He was a kind, meek, and generous person and a caring physician who made everyone feel special. He was the honorary medical doctor of the first Assyrian Health Fair held at the Assyrian Evangelical Church in Turlock and the supporter of the first Assyrian American community blood drive. He served his community well.

Dr. Nerol Owdisho is survived by his wife Nancy and three children, Emil, Emily, and Edwin, all of Turlock; three younger siblings, Sargon, Nanajan, Nellie Alkhas, and Lilly Ashuri, all live in Iran.

May he be rewarded with eternal peace in His Kingdom.

Anwar Yalda David, 67, a devoted family man and patriotic Assyrian, passed away at Memorial Hospital in Modesto on November 17, 2004, of a debilitating illness lasting three years.

His funeral was celebrated at Mar Gewargis Assyrian Church of the East in Modesto attended by several priests and a large number of people. Following his internment at Turlock Memorial Park a lunch was offered in his memory at the Civic Club, where more than a dozen family members and friends eulogized him.



Anwar was a prominent member of Civic Club for many years, having served as its Media Director and Assyrian Secretary as well as member of the Board of Directors more than once. He also served as AANF's Vice-President and was involved in Assyrian political matters.

A well-known member of the Turlock-Ceres-Modesto community, he was a community-minded person who helped new Assyrian immigrants and assisted them in finding work, mostly through his employment's position. And as a devoted member of the Assyrian Church of the East, he was always ready to donate and help where and when needed.

Fourth of nine children, Anwar Yalda David was born in Habbanya, Iraq, on November 29, 1937, to Yalda David and Armounta Khnanisho. From a very early age he had a strong sense of responsibility; to help others and particularly his father in supporting his large family. So after a few years of schooling, he sought out teachers and improved his knowledge of English through correspondence courses and he learned typing at the age of 13. He went to Basra, hundreds of miles away from home, and worked there, sending most of his wages home. But after a bout of malaria that sent him back home, he heard of a job opening at the American Embassy in Baghdad. Although only 16, his eagerness and winning personality assured him of a junior clerk's position. He was ambitious and worked diligently and was eventually promoted to a supervisor's position. He also strove to gain the respect and admiration of his family, friends and his *Gangachin* people.

Anwar met Gladys, daughter of Khatun "Buzi" Qambar and Esha Yosip of Baghdad at a local Cinema; they were married on December 15, 1956. In 1959 the couple was blessed with a son, Romel, and two years later a daughter, Rita.

Although the Embassy's local staff was often questioned and harassed by the government security following the Iraqi Revolution of July 1958, Anwar continued working at the American Embassy for several years. But in October 1963, he decided to leave Iraq and with help from

U.S. State Department and Assyrian friends in the States, he immigrated with his family to Modesto California.

His first job was as an office clerk. But he later obtained employment with the Gallo Winery, where he eventually became the billing and shipping supervisor. In 1970 Anwar and Gladys had another daughter, Anita.

Anwar was afflicted with diabetes for many years. His declining health caused him to take an early retirement. An affectionate person, he spent the rest of his vital years loving and spoiling his grandchildren. He also loved to play backgammon with anyone who would dare to challenge him.

His last three years were restricted to his bed and frequent hospital visits. His loving wife Gladys remained vigilant by his side to the end until he closed his eyes forever, leaving his family a legacy of love and accomplishments.

Anwar will be remembered fondly and missed terribly. He was a loving husband and father. He is survived in Modesto by his wife of 48 years, and son Romel, daughters Rita Yonan (Turlock), and Anita Backman (Santa Barbara); four brothers, four sisters, six grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews.

May his soul enjoy eternal peace in heaven.

**By: Benjamin E. Yelda
Fredrick Bijou Rehana**

Fredrick, 55, passed away after a long illness, in Chicago, on May 14th, 2005. His funeral services were celebrated by Archdeacon Aprim DeBaz, assisted by Rev. Shlemon Heseqial, at Mar Gewaqrqis Assyrian Church of the East. He was



laid to rest at Montrose Cemetery in Chicago. A memorial lunch was served at Mar Gewargis Church hall. He was eulogized by Dr. Mark Bernstein and Mr. Dick Sargon.

The late Fredrick, son of the late John Bijou Rehana and Beremjim Rehana, was born on August 13th, 1950, in Habbaniya, Iraq.

He graduated from the Mustanasriya University in Baghdad, Iraq.

While in Iraq, he lived with his family in Daura city and in 1970 he went to England. He and his family came to the United States in 1981. He was employed by Hilton Hotel as Director of Food and Catering for about three years. In 1984 he moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, where he worked again in Hilton Hotel in same capacity.

While in New Orleans, he married Annette in 1990 and they lived together for a short period after which they were divorced.

Fredrick was a very polite person, respectful to every-

one. He enjoyed watching all sports games, especially Basketball, Football, and Soccer.

Fredrick is survived by his mother, Berimjim, two brothers, Francis and George and two sisters, Susan and Joann, and many other relatives.

May the Lord reward him in His Kingdom.

**Deacon Younan Oraham
Younan**

March 1919—August 2005



Deacon Younan was born in Bacouba, Iraq, in March 1919. His father, Oraham Younan, and his mother, Shalim Rev. Esho, were married in Bacouba and had two sons: Younan and David, and two daughters, Mariam and Panna. Younan, the eldest,

was ordained deacon by Bishop Youkhana Oraham, in 1969 and David became a Brigadier General in the Syrian Army, in charge of Palmyra until his retirement. He passed away in Hassaka, Syria, in 2004.

Deacon Younan studied in Beirut, Lebanon, and was fluent in Syriac, Aramaic, Arabic, English and French.

He served as deacon in Raban Pethio Church in Tel Riman Tahtanni, Syria, and was chairman when the Ecclesiastical Patriarcha School was opened in Tel-Riman in 1947. He taught English and Arabic with his grandfather, Rev. Yohana Esho.

Students were chosen by Rev. Esho to study for the priesthood to meet the expanding needs of the Assyrian Church of the East through the world—in India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and the USA.

Mar Eshai Shimon sent money regularly for the management of the school. Archdeacons and Bishops were ordained and sent to different countries to meet the needs of the church. Deacon Younan was a poet in the Aramaic language and was a member of Mar Mansoor Charitable Society.

He married Elishwa in 1945, had three children: Shlimon, Ashour and Sargon, and two daughters: Khanna and Shalim.

Deacon Younan passed away on August 27, 2005, after a long illness in Tel Riman, where the funeral service was held in Rabban Pethio Church.

He is survived by his wife, children and many grandchildren.

May he rest in peace.

In Memoriam:

Tamara Eyvazova Karoukian,

was born on February 1st, 1926, in Maryupol, in the former Soviet Republic of Ukraine, to Avshalim Eyvazov of Qarajalu and Mariam Isakhan of Spurgan.

She lost her mother when she was nine.

In 1938, when her father, along with many other Assyrians, was sent to Siberia, she went to Iran with her step-mother, Vera, and brother, Efrem. In Iran they settled in Hamadan where she lived with her uncle, Yonatan, and his wife, Nanajan.

Although she had completed sixth grade in Ukraine, since she did not know Persian, she had to start over and was one of the first Assyrians from the former Soviet Union to complete sixth grade in Iran.

In 1948 she married Arshak Karoukian of Sangar. Their four children, Edward, Mariam, Margaret and Robert were born in Hamadan.

In 1963 the family moved to Urmi and in 1975 to San Francisco.

She had a great love for knowledge and learning and, as soon as the family settled in San Francisco, she went to school to learn English; she wanted to be able to not only speak, but to read and write correctly. In addition to English, she could read and write in Russian, Persian and, of course, Assyrian. She loved to listen to the news programs and keep up with the events not only locally, but around the world; and, to discuss all kinds of issues, especially concerning Assyrians.

She always emphasized the importance of education and knowledge to her children, and, later, grandchildren. But, this passion and encouragement was not limited to her own family. She enjoyed speaking with young men and women about their plans for school and encouraging them to achieve the highest levels of education. The Assyrian Foundation's scholarship program was her favorite and the first on her list of programs to support.

Tamara was a loving wife and mother, and her greatest joy was to have her family near her, happy and healthy. Her home was always open to family and friends, both in Iran and in San Francisco, where many stayed, as members of the family, for extended periods.

Her strong faith never faltered and she passed away peacefully at home with her family around her, on September 13th, 2005.



Yildiz Makko

...A shining Assyrian Star

Today I said farewell to a unique Assyrian lady. For me truly an Assyrian shining star. A painful goodbye to an Assyrian activist.... a young mother and certainly an Assyrian role model in many ways.

Yildiz beth Pincaro-Makko, wife of Sim'an Atman, mother of Sargon, Ashurbain-pal, Ninib and Aylin. The loss of Yildiz was not only a loss for her children and Sim'an but also a great loss for the Assyrian Associations in Europe.

Yildiz Makko was born in the village of Anh'el (Beth Nah'le - "house of melodies") in Tur °Abdin in north Assyria. At a very young age she left her homeland with her parents for the city of Augsburg in south Germany. There she grew up among the Assyrian youth and in the Assyrian Association of Beth Nahrin. (Hudro Othuroyo d'Beth Nahrin – Augsburg). She was the daughter of Myaqro Israel Makko, the backbone of the Assyrian national movement in Central Europe. She grew up in a culturally and politically active family, cherishing her people's cultural heritage.

As a teenager she participated at the Assyrian Summer Camps (Mashritho Othuroyto) in the early eighties. From the very beginning she presented herself as a very active and passionate Assyrian. She gathered the Assyrian ladies of the association, established the famous Assyrian Folk-dance group of Augsburg (the first in Europe!). I personally learned from her, during the summer camps, what it means to be part of a nation, a nation and not just a church community. She explained to me, then a young girl, what we should do to keep this nation alive.

Even after she married Sim'an Atman, she continued with the same passion. Her commitment to the Assyrian struggle throughout her life-time is demonstrated by her famous saying: "We women have to take care of this nation!" She was an excellent organizer of difficult tasks, and for realizing different projects. The administration of the Assyrian Association of Gutersloh was under her supervision.

Over the years she built a huge network for the Assyrian associations in Germany and in particular the association of Gutersloh. (Hudro Othuroyo d'Gutersloh). She approached many German politicians and local officials. A few days before she passed away, she managed to have a meeting with the Prime Minister of Germany, Mr. Gerhard



Schröder, on the Assyrian Genocide recognition, our human rights in the Middle East and the integration of the Assyrians in Germany.

Her hospitality was overwhelming. Many Assyrians from Iran, Russia, Syria, Turkey and the European Union have been her guests. She did not only cook meals when these guests were at her home, she participated in political discussions till late hours.

I was 18 years old when I met Yildiz for the first time. And I can't remember another woman who spoke to me about politics and the human rights of our people in the homeland. In those days, we were settling in Europe and hardly thought of human and political rights in our homeland. The Assyrians of Tur °Abdin were not used to hearing such things from a young lady. She was a moral support for women like me and encouraged us to participate in the political struggle of our people.

In many ways Yildiz showed me how to work and never to give up. She was a fighter and a believer. The Assyrian nation lost an activist, a shining star in the Assyrian struggle.

She will wait for us in heaven among the brave, the pioneers and giants who woke up this sleeping nation. Her struggle will continue through us, her memory will live on through this struggle.

*Attiya Gamri Beth Arsan
Assyrian Dutch Politician*



**Nineveh magazine your contributions, comments,
questions and articles.**

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- *Nineveh*: Subscriptions and donations to Nineveh Magazine.
- *Education*: For financial assistance of Assyrian students and other educational and cultural projects.
- *Needy*: For financial assistance of Assyrians in need.
- *JNS*: Julius N. Shabbas Scholarship Fund.
- *Donation*: Not specified.

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Mr. John Yohanan; Nineveh: \$30

Mr. Charles Yonan; Nineveh: \$40

Mr. Ron Younan; Donation: \$100

Mr. Aprim Yousip; Nineveh: \$30

Mr. Shlimoon Youkhana; Nineveh: \$20

Mr. Youkhana Zia; Nineveh: \$30; Needy: \$10

سَعَا مَعَنَا

حَبِيبُ نَسْتِ كَلِمَةٍ

مَعَنَا وَوَهَّجِبْ هَذَا مَا كَحَبِ
لَجِبْ حِرَّةً وَنَ كَدَ مَعَنَا وَغَلْنَا

هَ هَ حَبِيبًا وَكَحَبِ جَلْنَا
لَجِبْ مَعَنَا حَبِيبًا مَعَنَا وَكَلْنَا

كُحِبُّنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا حَبِيبًا
كُحِبُّنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

كَلْنَا كَدَ مَعَنَا وَكَلْنَا كَحَبِ
هَذَا مَعَنَا حَبِيبًا وَلَا وَكَلْنَا

هَ هَ كَحَبِيبًا كَدَ هَ مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
مَعَنَا كَحَبِيبًا كَحَبِيبًا

كَلْنَا وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا
وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا

مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

كُحِبُّنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
هَذَا وَوَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

هَذَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
هَذَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

كُحِبُّنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
كُحِبُّنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

كَلْنَا هَ هَ مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
كَلْنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا
وَكَلْنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا مَعَنَا

כַּמֵּן מְחַבְּבֵי דְדֹשְׁתָּי? אִיךְ לַבְּטָח תִּירֶה לְגֻמְהֶן, חָפֵץ יִיד דְּעַדְּיָבָהֶן, יִכְתִּיב
 דַּמְיִחְבְּבֵי? אִיךְ לַבְּטָח יִיד קַטְבָּהֶן, תְּעַשְׂתִּיב דְּהֵשֶׁת דִּמְסָהֶן? אִיךְ לַבְּטָח יִיד אִשֵּׁי
 בָּהֶן, דְּזַנְיָי דְּרִיעָיָי תִּבְּכַד דְּסַעֲרָי לִשְׂמֵהֶן? אִשֵּׁי דְּלִמְלִכְדָּ מְהֻלָּהֶן, מְדָר
 אֲדֻהֵי דְּגִלְתָּי: חֲזַנְתָּ דְּחֻזָּתָי, וּבְדִכְשׁ בְּגֻמְהֶן, יִכְתִּיב תְּאֵד תִּבְּכַד. מַלְּטָה מְדָר דְּסַעֲרָתָי
 קֵם בְּמֵשֶׁת עַבְדָּהֶן, לִכְמֵשֶׁת שַׁדָּי: עַבְדָּהֶן, שׁוֹנֵי יִיסָר דְּרִיעָיָי דְּרִיעָהֶן מְסַבְּכָי.
 תְּכַדְגֻמְהֶן, אִשֵּׁי קֵסָב בְּמֵשֶׁת אִיךְ בְּזָקֵי דְּדֻדְדָּי דְּלַמְדָּב מְאֻהֶן "תְּזַבֵּי
 מְדָרְמֵהֶן": גְּחֵשׁ אֶלְכֵי אִכְמֵשׁ דְּזַמְיִיגְלֵשׁ לִבְדֵשׁ אִיךְ בְּרִיעָיָי דְּסַמְכָי מְאֻהֶן. ...
 תִּוְדְּכָתֵב לֵישׁ מְבַשְׂרָי תְּכַתִּיב: מֵיזְכָּרְדָּי מִישׁ: קַל אִשֵּׁי דְּלִוְד מְאֻהֶן עַבְדָּי דִּכְתִּיב: מַלְּטָה
 שׁוֹנֵי בְּכֵשׁ מְדָרְמֵהֶן קֵם בְּיָי דְּחֵשֶׁת מֵשֶׁת מְחַבְּבֵי.

ביתר הספרי
 תבד: דיילי תיטיב
 קל, אשורי

כ

מילתא מיש סודו, קם יתנ דנמח, דמשה מ יתדנ:
 תיב מיש למדנ, מן חל מנ מית אן מן עמדנ:
 נמשה מיש תלמוד יתפנה, דנמח, מיש מנ עדינ:
 תילתנ ודתי דשדתי, כדתי, תיעמי תדנ.

ג

סודו, מיש ידנה, תלתנ דודתי, תדנ דמלתי:
 תב ויהיב מילתי דמח, קם נדנ, דנב:
 מתיב מתיב יתנ מוס הידנ, כדמח, דמלתי:
 כתיב מוס דנמח, כב יתדנ, מן מן חלתי מלתי.

ד

תלת מיש סודו, קם תנת דנמח, תיל דמלתי:
 תמיל קמיל מן כתיב דנמח, דמח מן מתיב:
 תמיל תב תלתנ ליתדנ, דנמח, מוס מנדתי:
 מוס קמ דנמח, תמיל מתיב, כתיב דכתיב תתיב.

ה

סודו, מיש למתיב מנב יתדנ, דמח תמלתי, דנמח:
 תילת למח, ודתי דמילתי מן מתיב מתיב, דנמח:
 מתיב ל מלמח, דנמח, תמיל מתיב דנמח:
 מן דמתיב מתיב מתיב מתיב, דנמח, תמיל דנמח.

جسٹیکس

اقتصادی دور میں
کی ترقی

آج جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جیسا کہ ہم نے دیکھا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ...

جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ...

جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ... جسٹیکس ہمیں دکھاتا ہے کہ ...

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The League of Nations, the organization of nations, was established in 1920. It was the first time that nations had come together to discuss their problems and to find a way to solve them. The League of Nations was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1932, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness.

31 years after its establishment in 1920, the League of Nations was still in existence. It was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1932, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness. The League of Nations was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1932, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness.

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In 1915, the League of Nations was still in existence. It was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1916, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness. The League of Nations was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1917, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness.

25 years after its establishment in 1920, the League of Nations was still in existence. It was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1921, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness. The League of Nations was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1921, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness.

In 1923, the League of Nations was still in existence. It was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1923, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness. The League of Nations was a great success, but it was not strong enough to prevent the outbreak of World War II. In 1923, the League of Nations was still in existence, but it was already showing signs of weakness.



سلسله

مجله تخصصی پژوهش‌های باستان‌شناختی

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