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POLICY

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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❖ **பெயர்** ❖

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Visit our Website at:
www.assyrianfoundation.org



From the President:

Greetings and a warm welcome to our second issue of *Nineveh Magazine* in 2013. Here we are half way through the year, and many great events have already taken place; while witnessing the unveiling of the Joseph Strauss Legacy monument, our 3rd annual member's appreciation event and many more, we have few other great events taking place in the second part of this year.



It is my honor to write to my beloved AFA members, and readers of *Nineveh*, its magazine, all around the globe as it remains the greatest cultural magazine. It reaches out to many homes, hands and hearts. It is an honor to be part of this wonderful organization and serve on its board as the President of the Assyrian Foundation of America. I truly appreciate my predecessors by road mapping a different path to Assyrian Foundation's success; as I look back at our accomplishments, how much this organization has flourished and expanded to reach out and touch so many families by our needy/welfare committee. How much it has assisted to promote Assyrian culture, language and heritage through the education committee. The investment in real estate which took many years to achieve, but we did it. Let us not forget our consistent and successful social events & activities, those are due to our great team of volunteers as they worked very hard to put the venues together and provide us great social and cultural events. I do not think I can stop talking about those accomplishments, the leadership and the tenacity of those volunteers who have served the As-

syrian community in many areas; we should all be very proud of those accomplishments. Frank

Lloyd Wright once said; "I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen"

As I take on the role of the president, I know I have many challenges, I would strive to keep up with those high standards and expectations and take it to the next level with the support of the board and all the members, and, of course, our supporters near and far.

Nineveh magazine has been our voice, and a precious collection that is near and dear to many Assyrians. As you look at each category, or just peruse the list of articles, you just want to sit and read the entire magazine from one cover to the other at once, or you may come back to the issue several times to digest the articles more slowly and enjoy what has been delivered to you. I encourage everyone to please send us your favorite articles, suggestions, memories and happy events; the editorial team pre-screens and selects the articles to be included in *Nineveh*. Furthermore, the pages of *Nineveh Magazine* are a collection of inspired articles written by real, honest, down-to-earth folks who worked hard to live deliberately, and who are not afraid to admit who they are, "True Assyrians"; they have gone through many struggles, and remain proud of who they are.

I am very excited to have made it to this point, following in the legends' foot steps and seeing the years unfolding as the Assyrian Foundation of America will proudly celebrate its 50th anniversary next year, marking a milestone of great accomplishments in every avenue of its mission, vision and promise to our community.

I will leave you with one note: the Assyrian Foundation of America will continue its mission to fulfill our community's needs; this is a strong commitment and the momentum will continue to build on what was done by the past, present & future leaders of this great organization. God Bless our Assyrian nation, and thank you for all your support.

Best Regards; Sue Odah

What is so ‘Primitive’ about ‘Primitive Democracy’?

Comparing the Ancient Middle East and Classical Athens

Benjamin Isakhan



Conclusion:

The assertion that the classical Greeks were the sole democrats of the ancient world has achieved the status of received wisdom because it is premised on several overlapping and apparently mutually confirming factors. Firstly, we have a handful of surviving texts from Greece which discuss democracy. It must be remembered, however, that none of these texts explicitly detail the procedures and principles of Athenian democracy, that most of them are decidedly anti-democratic in tone, and that they are written by concerned elitists, who in fact propose alternative models of governance. We also tend to believe that the Greeks invented democracy because that is what they themselves believed. However, we must be cautious about such assertions, particularly given that they are underpinned by racial stereotypes about non-Greeks and by an understandable lack of knowledge, on the part of ancient Greeks, about the complex political history of the Orient.

Perhaps more disconcerting is the fact that we have also, and for too long, held faith in the ‘Athenian Revolution’ – because, at the time when democracy was being born anew in Europe and the United States in the late eighteenth century, Westerners had no knowledge of the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Laws of Hammurabi, or the Declaration of Cyrus. Indeed it is quite conceivable that our entire perspective on the origins of democracy has been shaped in part by Euro-centrism and in part by the fact that certain Greek sources were readily available in Europe at a time when the Middle Eastern ones were obscured as a result of the extinction of languages and under the hardened dirt of time. One is left to wonder how different the history and the discourse of democracy would be today if texts relating to the political landscape of ancient Middle Eastern

city-states and empires had arrived to modern Europe before those concerned with classical Athens.

The above comparison between the democracy of classical Athens and the regimes of the ancient Middle East serves as a corrective to the notion that only the Greeks invented and practiced democracy. In the interest of scrutinizing the traditional history of democracy, the examples of the ancient Middle East can be seen as something of a ‘secret’ history, one that has been mostly marginalized, if not completely excluded from standard accounts. This alternative history reveals that examples from the ancient Middle East rival classical Athens in terms of its lively and egalitarian assemblies, its legal framework premised on notions of justice, its complex voting mechanisms, its ideals of personal freedom and its nuanced definitions of citizenship and participation.

The point here is not to dismiss the achievements of ancient Athens, nor to ‘prove’ once and for all that the ancient Middle Easterners ‘invented’ democracy, or that they were more democratic in nature or in practice than the Athenians. Indeed such assertions would directly contradict the impetus of this volume, which is concerned with discussing alternative histories and stories and with asking probing questions about the complex origins of democracy. Instead, this chapter asserts that, by conducting genuine comparisons between the ancient Middle East and classical Athens, we might move beyond frameworks of ‘primitive democracy’, to view instead ancient Middle Eastern democracies as powerful precursors to the important legacy left behind by the Greeks. The intention is to stimulate discussion by moving beyond linear and restrictive histories, towards a more kaleidoscopic picture of democracy, its history and its relevance today.

Dr. Benjamin Isakhan, an Assyrian-Australian, is Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Citizenship and Globalization and the Convenor of the Australian Middle East Research Forum, Deakin University. Previously, Ben has been Research Fellow with the Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe University and Research Fellow and Lecturer for the Griffith Islamic Research Unit, part of the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, Australia. Ben has also been Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies and the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago (US) and at the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies at Newcastle University (UK).

Research interests

- Democracy in Iraq
- Middle East Studies
- Orientalism and the media
- The history of democracy
- Middle Eastern politics and history
- The cultural heritage of the Middle East

Current research projects

In 2011, Dr. Isakhan was awarded a highly prestigious Research Fellowship as part of the Australian Research Council's Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) Scheme. This project, starting in 2012, is entitled 'Measuring the Destruction of Heritage and Spikes of Violence in Iraq' and seeks to investigate the complex inter-relationship that exists between the destruction of cultural heritage and sharp upsurges in terror and violence.

Editorial Committee:

- Global Change, Peace and Security (international peer-reviewed journal)
- Journal of Democratic Theory (international peer-reviewed journal)

Awards Include:

- Isakhan, B. (2012). Vice-Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Research: Early Career Researcher. University wide award competition for best ECR contribution to research. Chief Investigator: Deakin University. \$5000
- Isakhan, B. (2011). Measuring the Destruction of Heritage and Spikes of Violence in Iraq. Australian Research Council. Discovery Early Career Researcher Award. Chief Investigator: Deakin University. \$375,000.
- Isakhan, B. (2011). Measuring Heritage Destruction and Spikes of Violence in Iraq. Deakin University Central Research Grant Scheme. Chief Investigator: Deakin University. \$22,000.
- Isakhan, B. (2009). La Trobe University Postdoctoral Research Proposal Award. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (for Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship submission).

Chief Investigator: La Trobe University. \$6000.

Qualifications

Bachelor of Arts in Applied Psychology (1997)
First Class Honours in Literature and Cultural Studies (1998)
PhD in Middle East Studies (2009)

Memberships

Middle East Studies Association (US)
The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq (US and Iraq)
The International Association of Contemporary Iraqi Studies (UK)
The Middle East Institute (US)
The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (UK)
Australasian Political Science Association (APSA)

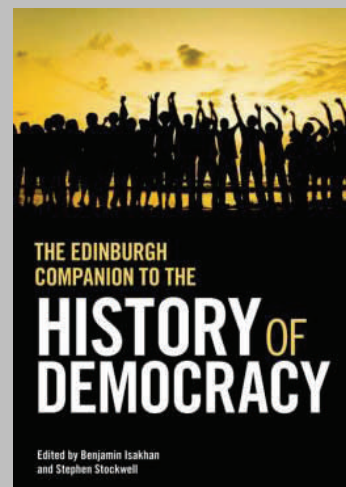
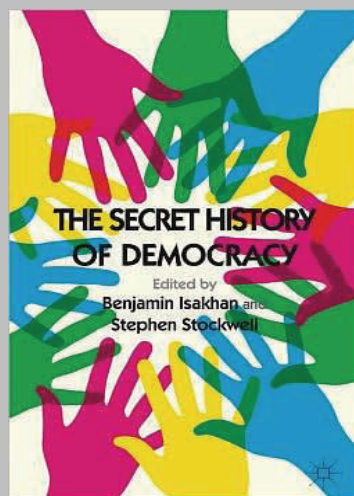
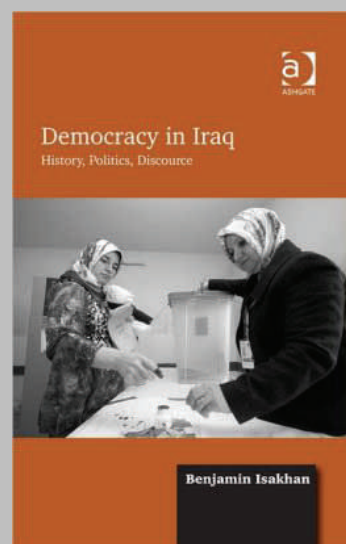
Publications

Books:

• Isakhan, B. (2012). Democracy in Iraq: History, Politics and Discourse. London: Ashgate.

Edited Books:

- Isakhan, B., & Stockwell, S. (Eds.). (2012). The Edinburgh Companion to the History of Democracy. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Isakhan, B., Mansouri, F., & Akbarzadeh, S., (Eds.). (2012). The Arab Revolutions in Context: Civil Society and Democracy in a Changing Middle East. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Isakhan, B., & Stockwell, S. (Eds.). (2012 [2011]). The Secret History of Democracy. London: Palgrave Macmillan.



Suicide of the two thousand virgins

By: Robert Ewan, London



Prelude

The story is set during the Byzantine-Sassanid wars of 602-628. It recounts an incident that is often repeated in Christian history, that is: when the will of the people is robbed by their conquerors, despair and havoc reigns, defeatism stares at the destitute. True believers, deprived of their will-power, will see nothing except the image of Jesus and hear nothing except the cries of the Crucified One on Golgotha abseil into their minds.

This incident was originally recorded by Youhanan Al Amide around sixth century and was compiled by Bishop Yacoub Ogini Manna.

The story

The Sassanid king Khosrau II ingratiated himself with arrogance and glory after defeating the Byzantines and conquering Edessa. This city was thought to be impregnable by the Byzantines, because of Jesus's promise to king Abgar V of Edessa to give him victories over all his enemies. Khosrau was startled at the spoils and the amount of prisoners he took from the Byzantines. In addition to the 292,000 prisoners there were 2000 exquisite Christian virgins.

He instructed his councilors to find two thousand beautiful virgins from his prisoners. They were to be brought in front of him to inspect them. He ordered them to be dressed in beautiful and garishly patterned garments, their necklaces, rings, fibulas were of chased gold, their hairs were sprinkled with gold, and their lips, eyebrows, eyelids dazzled with fleck of gold dust. They were to be sent as pleasure slaves to his barbarian and savage allies for help

ing him defeat the Byzantines. The king chose a unit of his elite guards under the command of two of his loyal officers to escort the girls. He gave strict orders to his soldiers to look after them during their journey and no harm to befall on them so that they arrived fresh and healthy. If his orders were disobeyed he would execute all of them.

The hopeless girls were distraught, their cries reached a deafening level as they bid farewell for the last time to their families and folks. Their eyes were aghast for they saw the anguish of their parents. Khosrau seated on a carved wooden throne was unmoved by the waves of cry and emotions that beat about him. It was as if the heavy surges of wrath, rising higher and higher like the waves of the boisterous ocean, brook about him, but did not touch him. When he burst out laughing at the torment of the parents, the gold ring encircling his beard bobbed up and down and his courtiers jiggled about.

As they left the city to start their long journey, disparate thoughts would emerge from the crevasses of their mind, they were aware that their souls would depart from Christianity and their bodies would be given to the brutal enemies to be violated. These thoughts imbued them with the desire to die rather than be given to the savages. Seeing the tears that would not stop, the older girls took the young girl's hands and gathered their tired souls into their arms, tenderly cradled them, took their exhaustion, their fear and their vulnerability and they started hymning:

*My gentle God
When our hearts beat heavy
And we fear what lies ahead
Uncloud our souls
So that we may see You
When we are beyond the depth*

Situation of Assyrians In Iraq 2013

Courtesy of AINA (www.aina.org)

Kurdish Mob Attacks Assyrian Village in North Iraq -- Attempts Land Grab

North Iraq (AINA) -- Armed Kurdish men, mostly belonging to the Zebari tribe, attacked the Assyrian village of Rabatki on Thursday at 18:00 local time in Northern Iraq. The motive behind the attack was to forcefully claim parts of the village.

When the villagers realized that the large truck filled with construction material and bricks approaching their village was an attempt by the Kurds to forcefully erect a house on their lands, they quickly formed a road block using their cars, effectively blocking the truck from entering the village. The move angered the Kurds, who then left only to come back less than one hour later, at 18:00 with seven cars full of Kurdish men armed with Kalashnikovs and other weapons.

A fight broke out between the male inhabitants of the village and the attackers and several rounds were shot in the air by the Kurds to try to scare the villagers. The village chief, Mr Zaya Barcam Khoshaba, was beaten in the face by one of the attackers with the side of the kalashnikov. The attack stopped only when police were called to the area.

The village of Rabatki lies in the district of Aqra in the Dohuk province. The village, which has never had any Kurdish inhabitants, has been fending off land grab attempts since the early 1990s. The Kurds living in the area belong to the powerful Zebari clan, with their most known clan member being Hoshyar Zebari, Iraq's current foreign minister and a prominent member of the Kurdish political elite.

The first court ruling concerning the ownership of the village and its lands came in 1992. The verdict stated that the village and its lands belong to its Assyrian in-

habitants. The Kurds would not accept the outcome of the civil process and continued to file complaints, which they continued to lose. The problem pressed on even after the fall of the regime of Saddam Hussein. In 2006 the American Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Dohuk investigated the ownership issue after Kurdish complains only to conclude what former court cases had found more than a decade earlier -- the Kurds did not have any valid ownership claims over the village and its lands.

Assyrians, who are the indigenous people of Northern Iraq, have been subjected to massive land grabs and discrimination by the Kurdish political establishment, headed by Masoud Barazani and his Kurdistan Democratic Party. Dozens of Assyrian villages in Northern Iraq are either partly or entirely occupied by Kurds.

Kurdish General and Police Officer Lead Attack on Assyrian Village

Northern Iraq (AINA) -- New information has surfaced on the recent attack by Kurds on the village of Rabatki, in the Dohuk province in Northern Iraq (AINA [6-13-2013](#)). According to observers in the area who have spoken to AINA on condition of anonymity because of fear of reprisals, the attack last Thursday was headed by a general in the Kurdish Peshmerga forces. General Aref Habib Al Zebari was identified by witnesses as leading the attack along with his brother Hares Habib Al Zebari, a police officer in the nearby city of Aqra. The Assyrians of the village of Rabatki maintain that most of the armed Kurds who attacked them were actually Peshmerga soldiers wearing civilian clothes.

The Peshmerga is the Kurdish Regional Government's (KRG) military force tasked with the security of the three provinces carved out for Kurds. The force is financed with money from the Iraqi national budget. As-

syrians are systematically discriminated against in the armed forces in Iraq. In the Nineveh plain, for example, Assyrians have almost no presence in the police force despite constituting the major ethnic group in several municipalities. Calls for more Assyrians in the local police force where many of them live have been opposed by the KRG since 2008.

No one has been arrested for the attack and the villagers don't expect any of the assailants to face any kind of consequences because of their background and because the victims are Assyrians. Exemplifying the marginalization Assyrians face in all aspects of life in Northern Iraq were the words of general Aref Habib Al Zebari during the attack on Rabatki: "We are the authority around here and we will take what we want."

Assyrian Businesses and Church Attacked in Baghdad July 2013

A series of attacks against Assyrian establishments in the last three days has shaken the Assyrian community of Iraq. Four Assyrian businesses and one church were attacked, resulting in two fatalities and more than 12 injuries.

Gunmen opened fire on St. Mary Assyrian Church at 2 AM on Tuesday morning, wounding two security guards. The gunmen were traveling in a civilian car, according to a source in the interior ministry, when they fired a barrage of bullets at the church, which is located in the Ameen Thania neighborhood in eastern Baghdad. The church guards were taken to Al Kindi hospital. According to Bishop Gewargis of the Assyrian Church of the East, who visited the guards at the hospital, one guard was released and the other remains in hospital in serious but stable condition.

Three Assyrian businesses were attacked in the Karada district. The Warda Store on Alkarada street was bombed, killing Ashur Yonan, an Assyrian, and a Muslim employee. Several others were wounded. The store was completely destroyed. A video posted on Facebook shows the aftermath of the explosion.

Simultaneous with the bombing of the Warda Store, another Assyrian Business, Mariana, in Alsinaa Souq, was attacked. There were no injuries.

In both attacks booby trapped cars were used.

Two days earlier an attack occurred on Assyrian and Yezidi owned alcohol shops in Bataween. Muslims had threatened the owners and ordered them to stop selling alcohol.

Assyrians have been the target of a low grade genocide since 2004.



Ashur Yonan

The first church was bombed on June 26, 2004. This marked the start of the campaign against Assyrians. Since then the population of Assyrians in Iraq has dropped precipitously from 1.4 million to 600,000 -- more than one half of Assyrians have fled Iraq to Syria, Jordan and Turkey. This Assyrian flight has been caused by the following:

- 5 priests were kidnapped and released after ransom was paid. 7 priests and 3 deacons were murdered, for a total of 15. 8 of these occurred in Baghdad, 7 in Mosul.
- 73 churches were attacked or bombed since June, 2004: 45 in Baghdad, 19 in Mosul, 7 in Kirkuk and 1 in Ramadi.
- At least 13 young women were abducted and raped, causing some of them to commit suicide.
- Female students were targeted in Basra and Mosul for not wearing veils; some had nitric acid squirted on their faces. Elders of a village in Mosul were warned not to send females to universities.
- Mahdi Army personnel circulated a letter warning all Christian women to veil themselves.
- Al-Qaeda moved into an Assyrian neighborhood and began collecting the jizya and demanding that females be sent to the mosque to be married off to Muslims.
- Assyrian businesses were targeted. 95% of liquor stores were attacked, defaced or bombed. 500 Assyrian shops in a Dora market were burned in one night
- Property was confiscated by Kurds in the north and Shiites in Baghdad.
- Kurdish authorities denied foreign reconstruction assistance for Assyrian communities and used public works projects to divert water and other vital resources from Assyrian to Kurdish communities. Kurdish forces blockaded Assyrian villages; children were kidnapped and forcibly transferred to Kurdish families.

Assyrian Human Rights Organization Wins American State Department Award

Courtesy of Aina

The Hammurabi Human Rights Organization (HHRO), an Assyrian organization based in Iraq, jointly won the 2012 Human Rights Defenders Award, issued by the U.S. State Department. The other recipient was Syrian human rights activist Hanadi Zahlout. HHRO is headed by Pascale Warda, former Minister of Immigration and Refugees in the Iraqi Interim Government.

Despite significant challenges facing Iraq, HHRO has fearlessly advocated on a range of human rights issues and has achieved remarkable results in fundamental human rights promotion for all Iraqi citizens.

The official announcement of the award follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
June 12, 2013

Winners of the 2012 Human Rights Awards

The U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce the winners of the 2012 Human Rights Awards. The winner of the Diplomacy for Human Rights Award is Ambassador John Tefft of U.S. Embassy Kyiv. Erin Webster-Main from Embassy Rangoon was selected for the Human Rights and Democracy Achievement Award. The joint winners of the Human Rights Defenders Award are Syrian human rights activist Hanadi Zahlout and the Iraqi NGO Hammurabi Human Rights Organization.

The Diplomacy for Human Rights Award recognizes a U.S. Chief of Mission who has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to defending human rights and advancing democratic principles in his or her host country. Ambassador Tefft has led collaborative, effective, and sustained efforts to strengthen and promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Ukraine. Under his direction, Embassy Kyiv has positively influenced a number of reforms, including to the criminal justice system.

The Human Rights and Democracy Achievement Award honors a U.S. Department of State employee who has implemented creative strategies to support human rights and democracy. This year's winner, Erin Webster-Main, has worked tirelessly on behalf of those affected by human



Pascale Warda

rights abuses in Burma to shape U.S. policy during Burma's on-going transition. Her active engagement with

all stakeholders, including the government, civil rights activists, and former political prisoners, has contributed greatly to improving the situation of human rights in Burma.

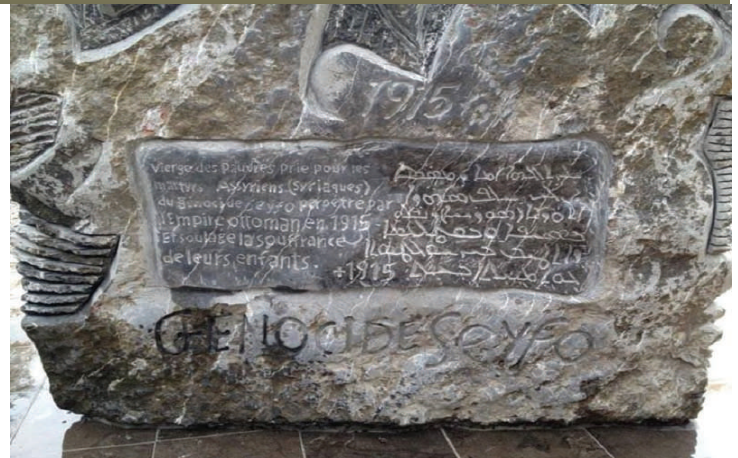
The Human Rights Defenders Award is given to individuals or non-governmental organizations that have shown exceptional valor and leadership in advocating for the protection of human rights and democracy in the face of government repression. Human rights activist Hanadi Zahlout organized peaceful protests in the beginning of the Syrian revolution and continues to work for a peaceful democratic transition in Syria. The second recipient of this award, Iraqi NGO Hammurabi Human Rights Organization, has fearlessly advocated for human rights and was critical in concrete achievements in the protection of female detainees, as well as taken on critical work on curriculum reform to promote religious freedom.

Assyrian Genocide Monument in Belgium August 2013

Courtesy of Aina

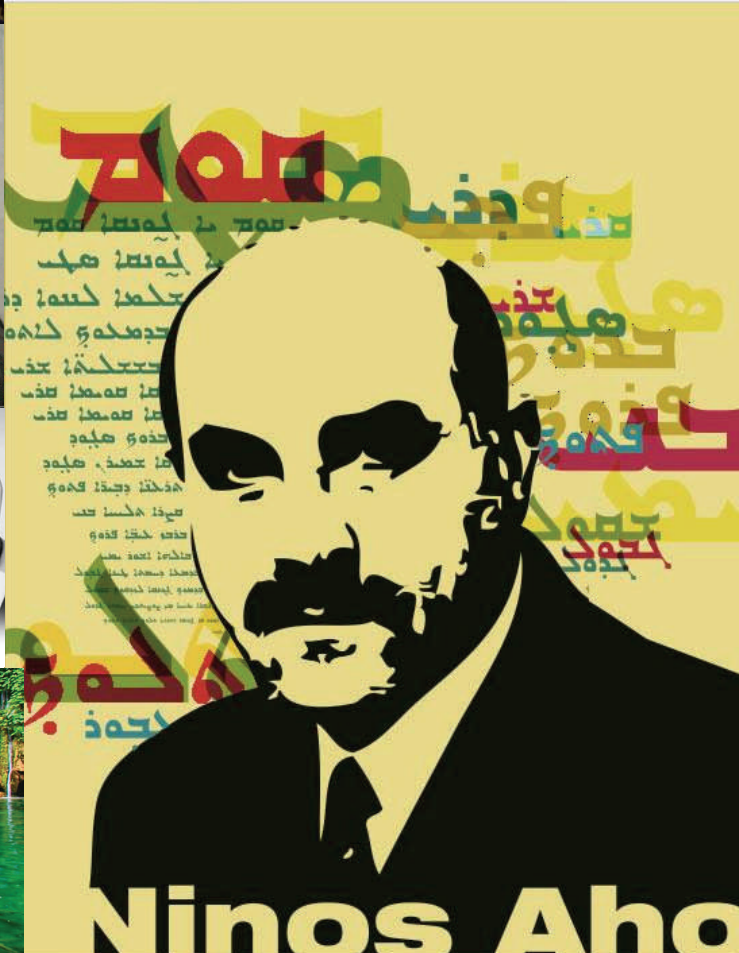
A monument to the victims of the Turkish Genocide of Assyrians in World War One was unveiled on August 4 in Belgium, on the site of the Sanctuary of Banneux, near Liege. The monument was carved from a 12 ton stone by renowned Assyrian artist Moushe Malke. The monument was a joint initiative of the Syriac Institute of Belgium and Assyrian Genocide Research Center.

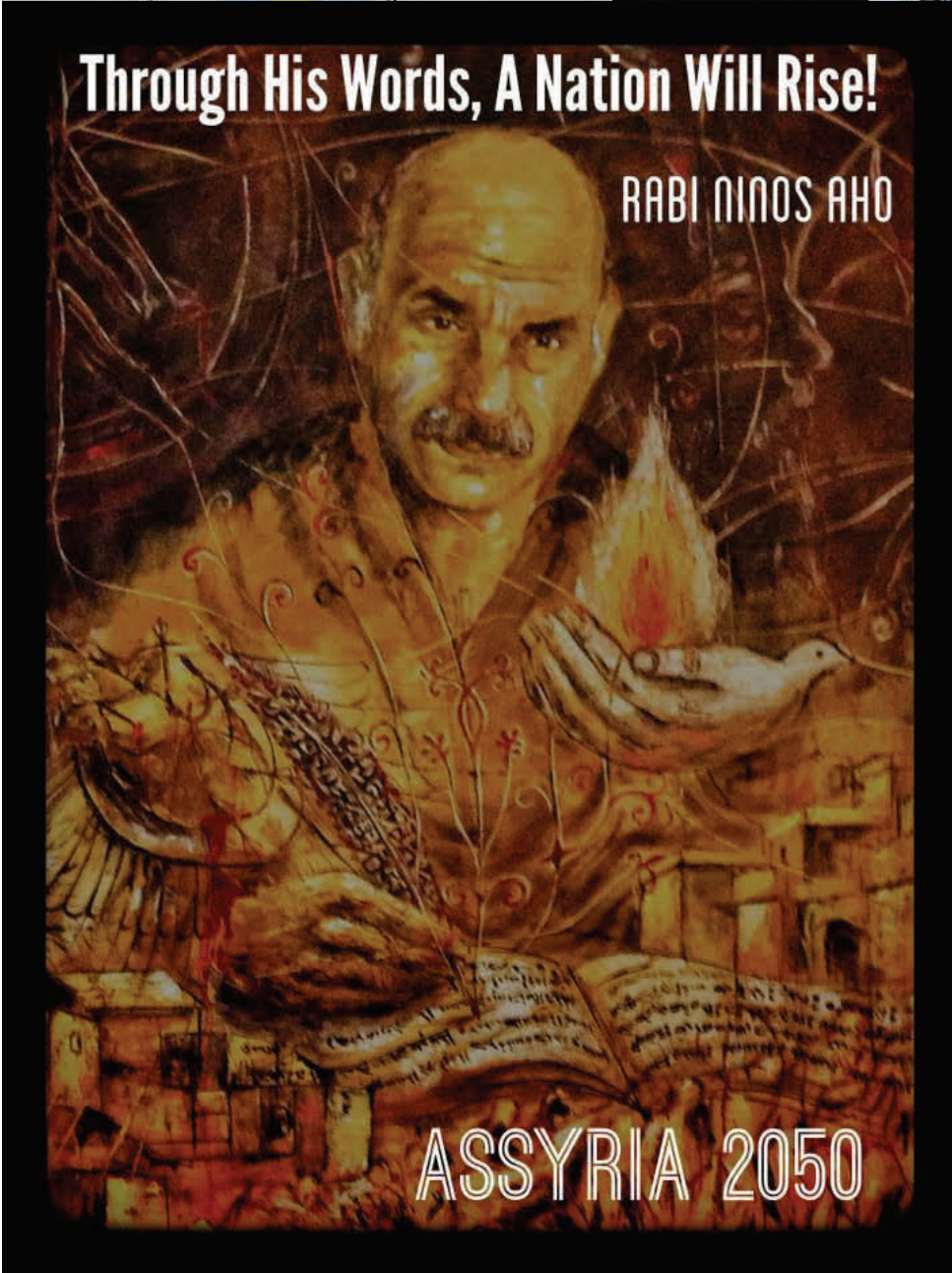
The Turkish genocide of Assyrians occurred between 1915 and 1918 and claimed the lives of 750,000 Assyrians (75% of the population), as well as 1.5 million Armenians and 500,000 Pontic Greeks.



In Memory of Malphono Ninos Aho

1945 - 2013





“Nancy Oshana Wehbe... Beauty, Strength and Assyrian Pride”

By Helen Talia, MBA, CPA, Chicago



“Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.” Arnold Schwarzenegger

From the moment I set foot in her home, I felt surrounded by a warm ambiance of friendliness and structure.

Nancy Oshana Wehbe was born in the Assyrian village of Tel Tamar of the Khabour region in Syria. Her relocation with her brother to the United States at the tender age of ten helped her push boundaries to become very independent. Similarly, her forward-thinking mentality and positive attitude is in large due her open-minded upbringing by both parents.

She earned a [Bachelor degree](#) in International Business and [Business Management](#), and later, inspired by bodybuilding and nutrition, became a Certified Personal Trainer by the American Council on Exercise (“ACE”).

Actions have more strength than words... “Years ago,” states Nancy, “I was judged very harshly at the onset of my involvement with bodybuilding, commonly a male-dominated sport,” and in particular, by her patriarchal-lead society. “But instead of giving up, I fully embraced the sport and manifested the negative into positive.”

Like her many other life choices, her ammunition for entering into and winning competitions is emerged into prayers seeking guidance from God. If a plan is ascertained, she is shown the way. Once she sets her mind on a

goal, nothing can distract this 5'6" Glenview resident, wife and mother of four boys, making her toughest hurdle balancing family life with a career that requires diligent workout and appropriate diet, for which she trains an hour to an hour and a half daily, five-days per week by breaking down body parts.

Happily married since 2005, the 38 year-old goddess

turned body-builder has since turned every road block into a stepping stone by overcoming the frivolous impediment of cultural barriers and gender prejudices and has gained a widespread respect and support for a hardcore competitive sport that requires fitness and modeling, both, in and out of her taboo Assyrian community.



“Everywhere I go I am asked about my diet.” While training for a competition, her meal plan consists of oatmeal, six eggs (one whole and five white only) for breakfast; fish, chicken turkey breast, steak, brown rice, sweet potato and steamed vegetables, eating six meals throughout the day, with three hour intervals in-between meals. During off season, however, as a Middle-Eastern woman, she thoroughly

enjoys spending time in her state-of-the-art kitchen, cooking her mother’s recipes and Lebanese cuisine for her husband and #1 fan, using only canola and olive “spray” oils.

In an image-conscious society, Wehbe embodies the importance of honing a signature style and remaining true to it. Her last show placed her in the top ten at the national level. Still, she claims that she has areas to develop, such



as triceps and rounder shoulders, which will require rigorous training. This year, as she stands on the brink of yet another competition, she insists that she must gain more muscle mass by consuming a [high protein diet](#) and training throughout the summer, making her new goal to reach the top five tier. Through it all, though, Nancy is not competing with other women, but instead is further developing herself in a sport that requires a lot of discipline. After all, she skillfully plans to become pregnant at least once more with a girl.

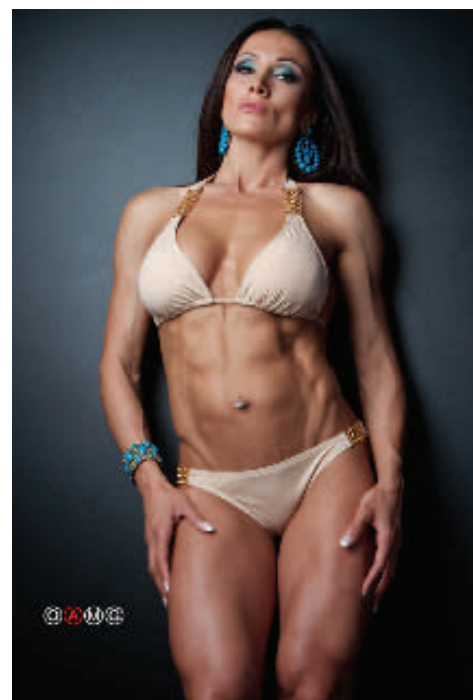
Healthy eating habit, the counterpart to building physical strength, is on her agenda. Nancy's other notable passion lies in helping women become more health conscious, and thus can train a body that is out of shape in as little as three months... all depending on how bad someone wants it. Realistically, it's like a switch that goes on inside the head. But if she can wake something up in another woman, even if it's to eat healthier, she feels that she will have accomplished a lot. "Starving diets," she adds, "just won't work; they slow down metabolism."

Awards and Competitions

- 2012 NPC Junior Nationals Figure division D placed 10th
- 2012 NPC Illinois State Masters overall winner
- 2012 NPC Illinois State Masters 35-39 winner

- 2012 NPC Figure open placed 5th
- 2009 NPC Midwest Ironman placed 4th
- 2009 NPC Natural open class placed 1st
- 2003 INBJ Great Lakes Bodybuilding placed 2nd
- 2003 NPC Junior Nationals placed 16th
- 2002 NPC Junior Nationals placed 7th
- 2002 NPC Regional Midwest placed 1st
- 2002 NPC Regional Midwest overall winner
- 2001 NGA Natural Powerhouse placed 1st
- 2000 IFF Miss Bikini National overall winner

This article is dedicated to the immortal soul of the 23-year old Physiotherapy student who met rape on a New Delhi bus and embraced her death on December 16, 2012.



Gishru: Birthright Assyria Trip 2013

By Natalie Babella, San Jose

A distant land that I dreamed of, a history that I only read in books, heard in stories, and saw in pictures inspired me to make this journey. It would become a truly momentous journey that would ultimately change my life. In 2012, the stars aligned and I finally had the opportunity to turn my dreams of visiting my homeland, Assyria, into a reality.

The excitement I felt while making the long voyage from

seemed like nothing more than a dream, it was truly an unforgettable experience of a lifetime.

This trip was first organized by a few young Assyrians who believed that traveling to the homeland would help strengthen their bond with the Assyrians in Assyria and lead to a brighter future for all Assyrians. Today, Gishru has created an annual Birthright Assyria trip with the

goals of preserving the Assyrian history and culture, strengthening the bond between Assyrians in the Diaspora and Assyrians in the homeland, and instilling hope for a stronger and more progressive Assyria, for this generation and for future generations to come.

The itinerary of the trip entails visits to Assyrian schools in north Iraq, some of which teach their entire curriculum in the Assyrian language. There are expeditions to historical Assyrian sites like the aqueduct of Sennacherib and Khenis, ancient monasteries like Mar Matay, day



northern California to northern Iraq surprisingly put my mind at ease. It was in fact this excitement that helped me embrace every moment of the trip. One moment that I will forever hold close to my heart was the day I spent celebrating the Assyrian New Year, *Akitu*, with thousands of Assyrians parading through the streets of Nuhadra. I shared this amazing occasion with friends who joined me on this journey from around the world, including the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe, and Iraq. And although at times this journey



cares, pharmacies and other businesses owned and operated by Assyrians, as well as visits to ancestral Assyrian villages, cities and regions including Barwar, Zakho, Arbil, and the Nineveh Plain.

Walking through the valleys of Assyria where pure water flows and climbing the mountains to reach the monastery of Rabban Hurmiz are just two reasons why we cherish the homeland so immeasurably. A vast history lies beneath the land, and more so in the memories and stories that have been passed down from generation to generation. This trip transformed the vision I had of what it meant to be an Assyrian into a reality, a reality that was better than any dream I have ever had. If walls could talk, they would tell the amazing story of thousands of years of a great civilization as well as the horrific stories of continued persecution and genocides of the indigenous Assyrians.

I sit here writing this narrative in order to encourage all my brothers and sisters to join me on this journey in the spring of 2014. From my experience to yours, there lies a history that can only be strengthened with the bond, the bridge that only we, the future of this nation, can build. There are many ways to support this journey including personal participation, sponsorship, and other donations.



Gishru is always looking for ways to improve this journey and we welcome and encourage your feedback.

Until we meet in Atra...

Gishru, Birthright Assyria 2014

www.Gishru.com / info@gishru.com

“Gishru” means “Bridge” in Assyrian. It is our duty to bridge the ideas, resources, and beliefs of Assyrians worldwide, for the common goal of preserving the culture, tradition and heritage of one of the oldest civilizations in the world.



Assyrian Foundation of America's Annual Members Appreciation Event 2013



On April 28, 2013 the AFA had its Third Annual Member's Appreciation Event with Keynote Speaker Dr. Sargon Donabed (Dr. Donabed is Assistant Professor of History at Roger Williams University where he teaches Middle Eastern history and religious studies), at Best Western Hotel in South San Francisco. This annual event is part of our cultural projects, presented free of charge to our community in the Bay Area.

*Assyrian Foundation of America
At the Golden Gate Bridge
Plaque Unveiling*



On May 23, 2013 the Golden Gate Bridge Joseph Strauss Circle donor name plaque was unveiled. The plaque bared the beautiful name of Assyria in both English and Assyrian. The AFA was present and proud to witness this historic moment.

Struggling Assyrians in Syria's Sectarian War

Assyrians in Syria are under intense pressure to flee the country as fighters from both sides target them because of their religious beliefs, Christianity. Many are unwilling to side with Assad, but also feel increasingly threatened by jihadists which have bolstered the ranks of the Free Syrian Army.

The development isn't new, as Assyrians have been persecuted for some time amid the violence, but the intensity is becoming more pronounced as jihadists target Christians and their churches and shrines.

If Israel is the cradle of Christianity, Syria is its nursery. In the city of Damascus, followers of Jesus were for the first time referred to as Christians. Christians have a long presence in the state, which today hosts various Catholics including Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, and other smaller sects.

Christians did not generally join the uprising against Assad, having enjoyed a measure of tolerance under his regime. This reluctance to war has made them suspect to rebels. However, Christians have suffered widely under the depredations and indiscriminate killings of Assad's regime. In response, Christians formed a brigade in the Free Syrian Army.

Despite this, they're still seen as targets, primarily by jihadists who want Syria to become an Islamist state. For the jihadists, mostly affiliated with al Qaeda, Christians are a barrier to creating that state.

At the start of the conflict, Christians made up 10 percent of Syria's population. Today, that percentage is simply unknown. What is known is that a disproportionate number of Christians seem to have fled their homes, many into neighboring Turkey. However, they're not exactly streaming into the refugee camps established for them. In fact, in a camp set up by the Turkish government, with a segregated section just for Christians, nobody resides.

Christians won't enter the camp for fear of Islamic reprisals. Instead, Assyrians are trying to live in the poor sections of Turkish cities, often in apartments and slums, afraid to go to the camps and afraid to return to Syria.

Most Muslims have no hostility towards the Christians, who in Syria have long enjoyed a good reputation as devout people who were easy to

live beside. However, Christians are too afraid to take their chances with strangers, and thus their quiet reclusion, even in safety.

Across the border in Syria, stories continue to develop of Churches destroyed not by indiscriminate bombing and shelling by Assad's forces, but by jihadist rebels. Rebels are burning churches, icons, and on several occasions have martyred Christians there.

The growing awareness of jihadist extremism amid the rebels has likely stalled U.S. and other western support for the rebels as they fight what seems to be a slow, losing campaign against the Assad regime. Meanwhile, Assad has turned the tide against the rebels, making gains with Russian, Iranian, and mercenary support.



Saint Elie Church, seen here on Aug. 1, was damaged during the clashes between Syrian regime forces and rebel fighters in the city of Qusayr, in Syria's central Homs province.

DONATIONS

Your donations are not only crucial but vital for generating continual support to helping the many Assyrians in need suffering worldwide, support and promote education for Assyrians and preserve the Assyrian history. The Assyrian Foundation of America is dedicated to helping Assyrians and every cent you send goes directly for the cause that you designate. Please continue with your help our people living in diaspora need you more today than ever before.

CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS

Double or even triple your support with Corporate Matching Gifts. Check with your company's Human Resources office to see if they offer a matching gift program. For donations made to the AFA, please contact us at info@assyrianfoundation.org with any questions. The AFA extends its deepest appreciation to the following organizations that have made contributions through their matching gifts program.

*Fidelity Charitable, \$500.00 (*via Beneta Baitoo*)

GENERAL DONATIONS

Your donations are vital for generating continual support to help Assyrians in need and support education for Assyrians. AFA expresses its sincere appreciation to the donors who have made generous donations and would like to remind you that every cent you send to AFA goes di-

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Your donations are vital for generating continual support to help Assyrians in need and support education for Assyrians. AFA expresses its sincere appreciation to the donors who have made generous donations and would like to remind you that every cent you send to AFA goes di-

Youil Barko, \$30.00	John & Beatrice Joseph,	Wilson & Jean Karamian,
Rowena D'Mar Shimun,	\$120.00	\$100.00 <i>(In Memory of</i>
\$25.00	Victoria & Robert	<i>Victor Hamzaeff)</i>
David & Alice Henderson,	Kaprelian, \$300.00 <i>(In</i>	Alfred Rasho, \$75.00
\$25.00 <i>(In Memory of Victor</i>	<i>memory of beloved mother;</i>	Ashur Avedeen
<i>Hamzaeff)</i>	<i>Pana Oraham Khouri on</i>	Thomaszadeh, \$100.00
Robert & Ingeborg Issac,	<i>the 10th Anniversary of her</i>	Jouzafin Younan, \$10.00
\$50.00	<i>passing)</i>	

Wilson & Jean Karamian,
\$100.00 (*In Memory of
Victor Hamzaeff*)
Alfred Rasho, \$75.00
Ashur Avedeen
Thomaszadeh, \$100.00
Jouzafin Younan, \$10.00

NINEVEH MAGAZINE

Nineveh Magazine is the global voice of not only the Assyrian Foundation of America but Assyrians worldwide. The magazine is distributed to thousands of readers around the world, including major universities (i.e., Harvard, UC Berkeley, UCLA, etc). Nineveh Magazine extends its deepest appreciation to all the individual contributors who helped fund publication of Nineveh. Without your support Nineveh could not continue to spread your voice. Please consider sponsoring the publication of the next issue Nineveh Magazine. For more information visit our website at www.assyrianfoundation.org or email us at editor@assyrianfoundation.org

Ninous Ashour, \$20.00	Lazare Kianoun, \$25.00	Marodeen Thomaszadeh, \$100.00 (<i>In memory of Grandmother, Rabi Bato Petros, passed on 12/7/12 in Tehran, Iran</i>)
Robert Baba, \$60.00	Dr. Peter Kiryakos, \$50.00	Wisconsin Historical Society, \$20.00
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Nahrin Belooz, \$20.00	Sargon Y Mikael, \$25.00	John & Sargina Yohanan, \$25.00
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EDUCATION

Your gift is crucial in providing support for Assyrian Foundation to achieve its goal to provide significant scholarships to bright young Assyrian students who are working toward advanced degrees in Assyriology and related Assyrian studies. AFA gratefully acknowledges your generosity and foresight to the importance of building a strong Assyrian academic foundation that will keep the flame of Assyrian history and identity burning bright for

Evelyn Bitbadal, \$75.00
Bernadette Daniel, \$100.00
(In Memory of Victor Hamzaeff)
Rowena D'Mar Shimun, \$25.00
Victor & Chris Hamzaeff, \$300.00 *(In Memory of Samuel Jacobs)*

Robert Karoukian, \$1,000.00
Albert Khoshaba, \$50.00
Dr. Peter Kiryakos, \$300.00
Nora Lacey, \$2,000.00
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Ramson & Helen Piro, \$25.00

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Sargon & Nanajan Yelda and Family, \$100.00 *(In Memory of Victor Hamzaeff)*
Elias Hanna Realty \$100.00

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Sargon & Nanajan Yelda, \$100.00

NEEDY

Your extraordinary generosity is the primary source of Assyrian Foundation's financial assistance to needy Assyrian families throughout the world. AFA is honored to recognize your generosity and is extremely grateful for all your donations that enable AFA to continue with its dedication to help Assyrians.

Lucy Abraham, \$25.00
Anonymous, \$500.00
Florence Betgeorge, \$50.00
Evelyn Bitbadal, \$75.00
Sargon & Maryam Bourang,
\$1,000.00 (*For Needy
Assyrian in Turkey*)
Pera & Margo Daniels,
\$75.00
Daniel & Roelfina Deke-
laita, \$200.00 (*In memory
of Victor Hamzaeff*)
Rowena D'Mar Shimun,
\$25.00

Paul Elias, \$50.00
Narmella Elissa, \$25.00
Solomon Eshu, \$25.00
*Fidelity Charitable,
\$500.00 via Beneta Baitoo
Victoria Hermes, \$20.00
Sammy Huwe, \$75.00
Lazare Kianoun, \$25.00
Flora, Ben Ashour, Lisa
May, Julie, Hana and Kai
Ashouri Kingsbury,
\$500.00 (*In Memory of
Victor Hamzaeff*)
Dr. Peter Kiryakos, \$400.00
Nora Lacey, \$2,000.00

Lida Lawando, \$30.00
Ramson & Helen Piro,
\$50.00
Suzie Sayad, \$100.00
Dr. Ghazi & Edna Shaba,
\$25.00
Dr. William & Kathleen
Suleiman, \$100.00
Anna Tamrazi, \$200.00
George Yana, \$50.00
Victoria Yohana, \$25.00
John & Sargina Yohanan,
\$100.00
Almas Youkhana, \$150.00
Younia Zaya, \$46.20
Clare Zia, \$16.00
Roya, \$50.00

Please note that we have made every effort to ensure that our lists of supports are up-to-date. It is possible that a name may have been misspelled or omitted. If so, please accept our sincere apology and kindly notify us by emailing us at editor@assyrianfoundation.org, so that

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Thank You

NEW BOOKS

One Thousand Assyrian Names

By Raman Bit-Shamoon



As most Assyrians live in Diaspora, it is becoming more imperative to protect our identity by using Assyrian names. This book was created and made available to fulfill the need that most Assyrian parents are

facing today. These names can be used for people, businesses or any other purpose that requires an Assyrian identity. The original edition of 2000 copies of this book was sold out, and we are now making this second edition available to you. We believe that every Assyrian family should have a copy of this book. My sincere thanks to all who demanded the reprint of this book and congratulations to the newly born Assyrian children that will keep the torch of our nation and our name alive. This book is in the Assyrian Language. All Rights Reserved by Raman Bit-Shamoon 2012.

The book can be purchased online via this link at

www.lulu.com

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/raman-bit-shamoon/one-thousand-assyrian-names/paperback/product-20442394.html>

One Thousand Assyrian Names

Compiled by
Raman Bit-Shamoon

Second Edition

2012

United States of America



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Dragons & Violins

By David A. Armstrong

Dragons & Violins is a narrative nonfiction account of the tumultuous early life of George Edgar, who was born in Persia (now Iran) at a time when Turks & Kurds were determinedly carrying out unimaginable violence against Assyrian, Armenian and Pontic Greek Christians. Born Sargis Georges Yadgar, George Edgar's Assyrian family escaped to southern Russia, where they were caught up in the chaos of World War I and the Russian revolution and civil war. They eventually escaped to Constantinople, and finally made their way to Ellis Island and the United States on July 4th, 1921.

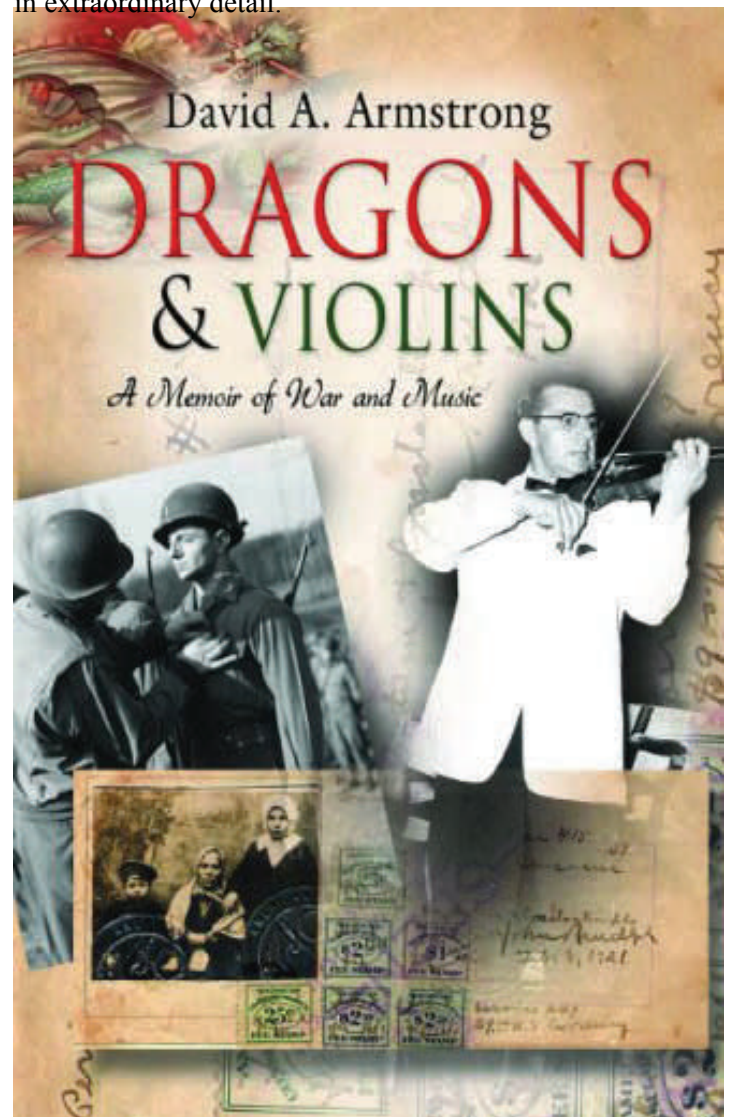
As a poor immigrant kid surviving the Great Depression in New York, he encountered figures as renowned as violinist Fritz Kreisler, Yankee great Joe Dimaggio, and gangster Dutch Schultz. He married the beautiful "Miss Assyria" of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, and was barred from participating as a gymnast in the 1936 Olympics because he wasn't a native-born American. But as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in World War II, he helped build dozens of assault bridges in combat at the front lines of the Allies' push from the beaches of Normandy to the outskirts of Berlin.

A man who struggled throughout his life to gain the respect of his father, George Edgar, like many immigrant men of his generation, drove himself to succeed at whatever he set his heart on. His singular life unfolded against the backdrop of some of the most consequential events of the first half of the twentieth century. But despite all obstacles, nothing deterred him from his one true dream... to be a violinist.

About the Author

Dragons & Violins has been ten years in the making and I'm grateful to many people for their vital help to me in bringing this story to the page. George Edgar, my Assyrian grandfather, kindly sat for more than thirty hours of

videotaped interviews and recounted his early life for me in extraordinary detail.



I also interviewed many surviving members of our family, and I'm particularly indebted to my mother, Georgeanne (Edgar) Melvin, cousins Robert "'Bobby'" Marshall, Florence (John) Johnson, Clara John, David Alan John, Natasha (Edgar) Pavia, Albert Sargis, Jeanne Noghli Youkhana, Pierre Noghli, Atoorina Noghli, Nancy "Pera" Shaw and longtime family friends Elliot Ohannes and Don Ohannes.

David is a director and veteran cinematographer in the motion picture industry and currently lives in Los Angeles, California. He is also the grandson of George Edgar and is currently adapting *Dragons & Violins* into a screenplay and motion picture.

The Line in the Sand

By Nuri Kino



Susan George, courageous American TV journalist goes to Iraq, investigating a rumour of an enormous oil find. She finds herself in the midst of an ethno-religious cleansing of Christian Iraqis. She is kidnapped and held as hostage by a terrorist gang led by a ruthless, former Saddam henchman. This sets off a furious and deadly hunt for her rescue...

The Line in the Sand is a story based on the true experiences of many Christian Iraqis for whom kidnappings and beheadings have become daily happenings. The once sophisticated and multi-ethnic, historic city of Mosul with the beautiful river Tigris running through it, has become "Murder City".

This is a novel about the yearning for freedom.

Freedom to live a life without persecution, in harmony with one's neighbors irrespective of their ethnicity or religion. The authors relate, with eloquent and detailed descriptions, how it was to live as a Christian Assyrian boy in Northern Iraq several decades ago when one hardly gave a thought that one's best friend had a background different from one's own. Now, violent antagonisms dominate the land and most non-Muslims live in constant fear for their lives. But on the square in Midyat in south-eastern Turkey where the non-Muslim population has fled, a stone pillar still stands on the main square:

"A monument, a square pillar atop a pedestal, stood in the middle of the crossroad where they had parked, Susan walked over to look at it. Dani followed her. Carved in the stone inside a rectangle were three images. Dani explained. 'These represent the three peoples that lives or lived here. The mosque represents the Kurds and Turks, in other words, the Muslims, the church represents the Christians and the peacock at the base of the church represents the Yezidis.'"

Susan George a TV journalist known to millions of viewer is in Midyat on her way to Iraq. Her Assyrian birth name is Shoshane Gewargis. She plans to use her ethnic roots and language skills to uncover a scoop that will make her as famous as Christiane Amanpour. She underestimates the risks and involves both herself and her security men in mortal danger. The results are catastrophic.

The Line in the Sand is a dramatic and violent political thriller that affects and disturbs. The novel is also a historically revealing document about the fight for oil contracts as well as the individual Iraqi's struggle to survive. It is compelling and current, grounded on actual occurrences in Iraq. A number of characters in the book are based on acquaintances and even close friends of the authors. A number of them have already been killed at the hands of terrorists since the Swedish publication of the novel.

About the Author

Journalist, author and film maker Nuri Kino, Winner of European Parliament Prize for Journalism 2010, is one of the few Swedish reporters specializing in international investigative journalism. Taking personal risks, he's unearthed buried secrets in Syria, Poland, Georgia, Ethiopia, Greece and Jordan. He works for media in The Netherlands, USA, Turkey and Denmark. His stories have been published in virtually all the Swedish national media.

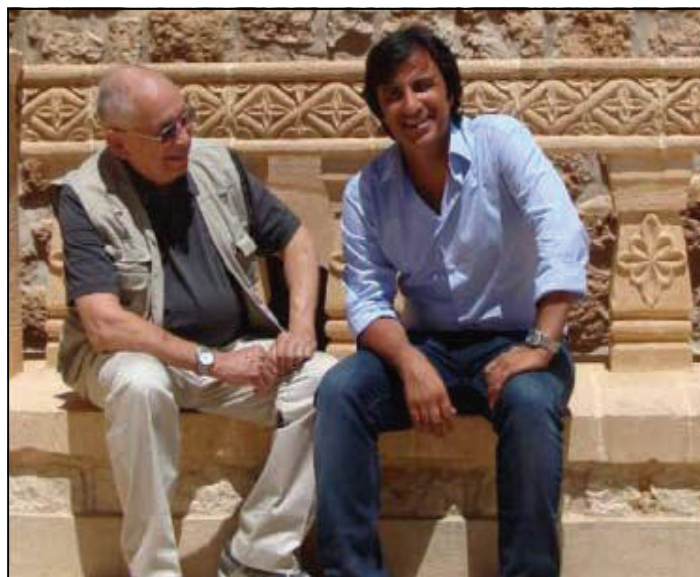
A diligent debater and speaker, Kino has participated in Russian and Canadian seminars and lectured at several

universities, for example The University of Paderborn in Germany. He has served as a moderator for the EU Parliament and addressed the Swedish Parliament.

His revelations of terrorism, espionage, intelligence agency misdeeds, corruption and the consequences of war have either been published or followed-up by Time Magazine, The New York Times, BBC, al-Jazeera, The Dan Rather Report and El Pais.

Kino's documentaries and books have been highly successful. His report "By God – Six Days in Amman" helped to elevate the Iraqi refugee situation as a high political priority. Thanks to this, a number of countries, for example The Netherlands and the U.S.A., have made large charitable contributions to diverse refugee organizations. He also writes for highly reputed organizations like the Minority Rights Group.

His TV series "Assyriska – a national team without a



Nuri Kino is a renowned investigative journalist and the winner of the European Parliament's Journalist Prize 2010. Among several other awards he has also won the Golden Palm in Beverly Hills 2006. Nuri has followed the developments in Iraq like no other Scandinavian journalist. He has reported in radio, TV, newspapers, and magazines.

David Kushner worked as a journalist and PR man in New York where he and a colleague translated "Four Screenplays of Ingmar Bergman". Ten years ago he met Nuri Kino and they decided to write a screenplay based on the true stories taking place in today's Iraq. It ended up as a novel: "The Line in the Sand."

country" won The Golden Palm Award at the Beverly Hills Film Festival. He's been awarded a number of other prizes, was a six-time finalist for the prestigious Swedish investigative award, "The Golden Spade," and has won that award on three separate occasions.

His latest publications (books):

The Swedish Godfather

The Line in the Sand

The novel was first published in Sweden in October 2010, original title: "Gränsen är dragen". The first edition was sold out and a trade paperback is under production. All rights except the Swedish are free. A complete unedited American version of the text is available.



THE 2006 BEVERLY HILLS FILM FESTIVAL
Nuri Kino with The Golden Palm Award for
Assyriska: A National Team Without A Nation
9 April 2006

Adventures In LaLa Land!

The memories of a film music fan trying to make it big!

By Pierre Shlimon

Ok, I will admit from the start I never made it big in film music or films or anything. I didn't even get close. I didn't even get remotely close. But looking back after many years it was a magical time and I did lots of things I never thought I would so I thought it might be worth writing about.

The Beginning

I was born in 1976 in the UK. I lived a very normal childhood and I liked movies of course (and computer games!). The first time I think I really noticed film music was maybe Jan Hammer in the late 80s when I was about 12 maybe doing *Miami Vice*. I didn't really watch *Miami Vice* as I think I was too young but I loved hearing the music when it was on for a show or the news or anything. One time in Spain on holiday it was on TV and I dragged my brother I think to the bar by the pool and we just stood there while Jan Hammer was doing his thing. I thought (and still think) he was the coolest. Then when we were in Universal Studios LA doing the tour (maybe I was 13 now) they had a *Miami Vice* stunt show and they showed a clip with Jan playing his guitar keyboard thing to a VHS scoring and talking about it. I thought he had the coolest job in the World! I would tell my parents and brothers excitedly when his music was playing during the stunt show and they would be polite but they didn't really care much which is understandable!

I liked many kinds of music growing up, Debussy, The Rippingtons, Spyrogyra and of course film music like John Williams *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* tape (which I still have!)

Engineering

After school I decided to go to University to study engineering as I liked studying sciences and engineering and stuff (I still do).

Summer 1997/1998

My first foray into movies came in 1997 summer when I had to do a internship in something technical

for my degree. I didn't want to work at a bridge building company at that point in my life so for some reason I thought of movie special effects. I got out the Yellow pages (a UK thing maybe, sorry) and phoned around. The first guy I spoke to mentioned James Bond! Could it be this easy. A bit later and I had an internship working at Leavesden Studios on *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*. I won't go into that here but it passed uneventfully and I was spectacularly bad at being a special effects guy (apologies to the people who hired me!)

After another year studying, I had another summer free and thought if this internship thing is so easy to get why not try Hans Zimmer! The Golden Prize! (Of course I loved *Rain Man*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, etc.) back in those days I would look at movie posters and look down at who did the music and would go depending on who did it! I was very alone in my hobby of doing this (to put it mildly, I think) although many people like my brothers and others also liked Hans Zimmer's music and stuff, they just wouldn't scan posters!

So, summer was coming up. I was sitting at home in my Dad's study. I think we had dialup maybe by that time (internet) but somehow I found Media Ventures. I never wanted to be a composer, I definitely didn't want that pressure, I was thinking of hanging out in Santa Monica, staying at the Youth Hostel, cycling to work and maybe driving tapes around or making tea or coffee or something. I think I spoke to someone maybe called Mark.

"Hi; do you ever offer internships, etc?"

"Yes, we do"

"How could I go about doing one to just do general work, etc." "I live in the UK but can come on BU-NAC work exchange for the summer and will have a temporary visa"

"Just come over, should be no problem"

Wow!

That was pretty much it and my dream was coming true surprisingly easily!

Touchdown

So I flew to LA and stayed 1 night in the *Backpackers Paradise* motel in Inglewood and had my Bunac briefing. A couple of days later, in a bar in Santa Monica, I phoned Mark from a payphone. They had to cancel as they were just really busy with movies so they said they cancelled the entire program. I wasn't too bothered and thought I could now try and do something else, surely there must be a composer around to meet or work for. So I got a beeper!

And I hit the 192 directory (in the Santa Monica Borders on 3rd street)! Everyone seemed to be in LA, James Newton Howard, Mark Isham, James Horner etc. I learned of Gorfaine/Schwartz!

General Living

Besides trying to do film stuff we also did a lot of other stuff. I stayed at the YHA in Santa Monica just parallel to third street and also at a hostel in Venice and sometimes at *Backpackers Paradise* even in Venice. I got a rental car. I met a guy from Chicago in the hostel and he sold me his car for 50 dollars. It was a Volvo and didn't go in reverse so when you parallel park you had to be on a hill or you would need to push! My brother came for a visit and we went out and drove around listening to the Rock score and the Jackie Brown soundtrack all the time!

I tried to get some work and worked for a while at *Her Majesty's café*. They were nice guys who snubbed *Starbucks* (Charbucks they called it). They also gave me a key so in the evening when I was hungry sometimes I'd go and eat muffins they didn't sell and were most likely to be thrown out (sorry). I tried to get a job waiting at the *Broadway Deli*.

There was a girl also interviewing sitting outside with a *Lion King* rucksack. I'm not one to talk to girls but somehow we talked and turns out she was Hans Zimmer's ex-assistant. She was really nice to me and even invited me to her house a few times in Santa Monica and we played music (I had my MC-303 with me).

Get to the Music already!

I think my first experiences before or during the time I was working that summer were just meeting people. Somehow I think maybe I spoke to Basil Poledouris'



agent (the late Basil Poledouris RIP) and one day they invited me to his studio in Venice. We just sat around with him and his engineer, Tim Boyle I think, and his wife. They were really nice and didn't mind me smoking either. He wasn't working on a movie at that time and his studio wasn't really that technical with loads or samplers or anything.

I think he liked sailing a lot and weather was always sunny in LA (at least when I was there). We had lunch and I told him about Hans and we had strudel I think for desert and Basil Poledouris was making a joke like "*Ve Vill hav zee Strudel mit Hans!*" They were really nice and cool and I said thanks and they wished me luck and I left.

Although I am not a real big Basil Poldouris fan I loved the music to *Lonesome Dove* (and loved the show too). To think that sitting in my TV room in Surrey watching this TV series with Danny Glover that years later I would be sitting smoking cigarettes with the guy who did the music is kind of surreal but it was a real nice experience and a nice memory.

And I kept going to *Kinkos* and buying time on PC's and sending out CV's! (24 hours Kinko's probably back then!)

My first job/my two jobs

One day I got offered something from Sony Pictures who needed an intern to help computerise their music library at the Thalberg annex in the Music executive department in Culver City.

They said it wasn't anything really musical and wasn't paid but I was happy to do it (extremely happy!) My boss was a big man called Burt Berman. I think I met him once for a minute or a few. He seemed like a nice guy and was happy to have me. I generally reported to his secretaries who were down to earth level-headed people who provide a balance to the crazy A-listers they work for (no disrespect to the A-listers). I generally just turned up and sat there doing the work. The place was really nice, even the mail room was really nice. We had lots of free coffee and cokes and little kitchens. The library contained lots of CD's of film scores and other stuff which would be available to people working on films who needed to look for something. I would just catalogue the CD's in a computer program on a Compaq desktop PC.

It was just a smallish room with my room next door I think and it had no employees as such. There was also a grand piano in the entrance room between the entrance and my office. A couple of times I would play for myself in the evening and once I think even the secretaries heard me and thought it was nice (probably they were just being nice).

That was the closest I got to Hollywood success! I was still driving my 50 dollar car and once or twice the attendant in the underground garage offered to take it off me when I left! Something I probably would have done if I hadn't got into an accident and had it written off.

My other job was in Burbank with a TV guy Geoff Levin. I used to get up in Venice, drive to Sony, work, then in the late afternoon/evening drive up to Burbank (normally via the beautiful Mulholland Drive) and up past Universal Studios on the right. I loved how it felt quiet and rural up there and I was seeing parts of LA I never thought I'd see as my main intention was to live in Santa Monica and cycle to



13th Street and Media Ventures only. I even drove to Las Vegas twice; once with a friend and once with my brother where we sat around and enjoyed smoking indoors (well, me anyway) and the cool architecture and the desert on the way and the Hoover Dam.

Mr. Levin was a friend of Mark Isham I believe or an associate and Mr. Isham's secretary I think contacted me (I think by pager while I was playing the Out Run arcade in the Backpackers Paradise in Inglewood).

He needed someone to input notes in MIDI for him for a musical project for Sun Microsystems (I think like a Hawaii pep rally thing for employees). It was like a musical with the words changed to Sun Microsystems themed ones and I faithfully inputted notes listening over and over to Desree's "You Gotta be" (a tune I really like luckily). It was a lot of fun working at night and Mr.

Levin and Mr. Chinese the real composers would also be in there until 1am or even 2am maybe in their own studios in adjacent rooms when the secretary had gone home.

I only went into Burbank itself once to cash my cheque (they even paid me at the end which was awesome!) when I finished the work and was soon to return home.

You can't really ask for a more LA experience than that!!



Daughter of Semiramis

By Elizabeth Mickaily-Huber, PhD

*Daughter of Semiramis
Hold your back up straight
Let not the woes of the world
Break down your will with hate*

*Like the Tigris and Euphrates
Did flow for thousands of years
Tho' the blood of many of your people
Did flow like endless tears*

*Daughter of Semiramis
Hold your shoulders even
When strain would wear you down
Recall the gods your forbears believed in*

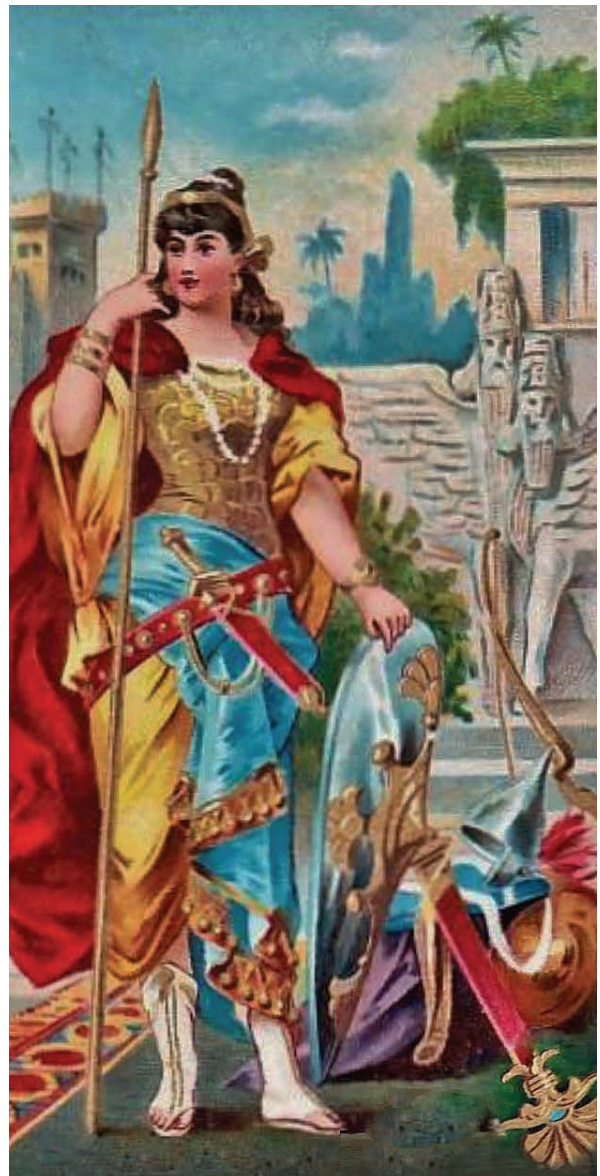
*Like the Winged Bull had power
And strength beyond compare
Fight the battles of this earth
As no one else would dare*

*Daughter of Semiramis
Hold your body with grace
Let no ill cause you pain
Let no one break your pace*

*As your forefathers did fight
With courage and with vigor
You must show your power
Through education and through rigor*

*Daughter of Semiramis
Hold your head up high
Let no force hold you back
For you are your own ally*

*Like your beauteous namesake Queen
Be all that you can be
Show the glory of your past and future
And have faith in God almighty*



CONGRATULATIONS !

An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest

On May 19, 2013 the 144th commencement at UC Berkeley -Department of Engineering took place and the Odah family's celebration began!

Sabrina Odah participated in this ceremony, marking her graduation from UC Berkeley, Department of Engineering, "Master's of Science – Civil & Environmental Engineering". It signified the formal ending of one very important chapter of her life and the beginning of another.

The Dean congratulated Sabrina on her accomplishment. Her professors, family and many friends who joined her success were cheering while she received her Degree. It was a priceless moment & feeling witnessing the event. Sabrina walked towards the podium with a genuine smile and a humble personality, and her most enjoyable moment was moving the tassel



to the left, that was the indication of those graduates' step as they join a vital community of leaders, builders, astronauts, CEOs, researchers, filmmakers, even Academy Award winners, that is all Berkeley Engineering.

Sabrina, you have always been and will continue to inspire and motivate many people, May the Lord bless you and guide you to a bright future. We are all so proud of your accomplishment and your journey is yet to continue with many more chapters, blossom life and a successful career. May your highest aspiration be achieved.



In Memoriam



Victor Hamzaeff
1952 - 2013

It is with great sadness we must announce that Victor Hamzaeff passed away, peacefully at home, May 30th at the age of 61. Vic loved life. Those who made his acquaintance soon realized they had encountered a very intelligent and intuitive man with great charisma and humor. Victor was born May 2, 1952 in Baghdad, Iraq, to Alexi and Hannah Hamzaeff. He was of Russian and Assyrian descent. After the devastating death of his adored father, Victor found himself traveling with his widowed mother and older brother, Alex, to live in Lebanon for one year, awaiting papers to allow them into the United States. Their arrival in New York was on July 4, 1964 and at the young age of 12, Victor absolutely believed the fireworks were to celebrate his arrival. They were sponsored by their Uncle in California.

From New York they traveled by bus to San Francisco to an upstairs apartment on Mission Street. Being a tough neighborhood, he soon found he had to learn to defend himself. During his teen years he worked selling newspapers, upholstering furniture and was employed in his Uncles Auto Body Shop, to help supplement the family income. It was during this time he befriended a neighbor, Dale Todd, who was raising 3 boys of his own. Dale became a surrogate father for Victor, stood steadfast by him and even moved to Sonoma after retiring, to be near Victor.

Victor excelled in school sports especially soccer, football. He also loved jogging the Marina. He became an outstanding boxer for the San Francisco Police Athletic club, winning the San Francisco Golden Gloves Award in the Welter Weight division two years in a row. After graduating from the John O'Connell Trade School, he was excited about beginning his first official job as a Sheet Metal Worker when tragically, a diving accident in Tiburon, left him a quadriplegic. He was 19 years old. This accident immediately changed Victor from a teen, totally immersed in the physical world to a person who would eventually spend the rest of his life developing his mind and spirit.

He spent an entire year at Santa Clara Valley Spine Center receiving extensive rehabilitation. From there, he went to his family's first single-level home, in chilly, foggy Westlake. The dismal weather and Victor's depression from the accident set the tone for his best move when a cousin visited and offered Victor the opportunity to move, with him, to his grandmothers' home on Austin Street in sunny Sonoma. Victor literally left the next day, found someone in Sonoma to assist him and could often be found basking in the sun, without a shirt, on sunny days in January.

His mother soon followed and in 1979 they found his present ½ acre paradise on Orange Avenue. Victor got his first taste of the real estate process in the purchase of this home, loved it and began diligently studying, earning his real estate license in 1983. He was soon hired & inspired by Henry Mayo, a broker for Sonoma Properties. Being able to make a living on his own, he encouraged his mother to retire, ending her years of commuting by bus to San Francisco, working as a seamstress at Layne Bryant. His mothers' passing in 1993 was devastating but he endured, with the support of numerous friends, neighbors, cousins and aides who made sure he was not alone. Later, that same year, he was provided with a van, specialized for quadriplegic drivers, enabling him to drive for work and pleasure. Once he had the van, he was on the road almost every day, even traveling as far as Los Angeles with his friend, Carlos. It was a freedom he hadn't had for 21 years.

Victor went on to obtain a Broker's License in 1996, at the urging of his many friends and especially his close business associate, Michael Beale of Beale Properties. He became the broker for All Sonoma Brokerage, which was later renamed Sonoma Real Estate Co., Inc.

He met his future wife, Chris, from Modesto, at a wedding in Bodega Bay. He courted her for 2 years, before, Victor

liked to say, she proposed. Ultimately she became a real estate agent and his business partner. They loved vacations in Hawaii, had as many parties as possible and loved life together until brain cancer exhausted him.

Much of this freedom would not be possible without the assistance of his aide, Carlos Zelaya who stood by Victor for 24 years and more recently, Roy Sevilla. They were more like brothers, sharing music, traveling to Reno together and planning “Men Only” BBQ’s.

Though his time as a boxer was in the past, Victor remained a fighter. His response to what life threw his way showed great courage and inner strength. Vic’s amazing smile and daily passion for living made others often forget that he had such a significant disability.

Even in his unique position, Vic always remained a person who gave, first and foremost. He was an incredibly optimistic person who was never afraid to show his deep appreciation for life. He was a realist, but also an idealist, who cared about justice; he always remained informed and engaged in matters of the world. And he brought a lot of good into this world by how deeply he cared about things.

Vic was a singular and unforgettable man who inspired many, many people. He was also a very funny guy who could quickly bring out the humor in others with his own sharp wit. Through friendship and love, he became the central hub for others, connecting a diversity of people who might never have known each other.

Victor was loved dearly and will be missed greatly by his family and many friends. He is survived by his wife of 14 years, brother, Alex Hamzaeff (Irene), niece, Nichole, step-daughters Stephanie Duncan and Christine Gervase and numerous caring cousins.



Ninos Aho

1945 - 2013

EARLY YEARS

April 24, 1945:

Ninos Aho is born to Georges Aho and Saydé Chamoun in the village of Girkeh-Shamo, Syria. The strategic place of his birth, located in the contemporary Arab world due to the division of Mesopotamia during the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916, set the foundation for Ninos’ future involvement in the Assyrian cause.

1958:

Ninos moves from Girkeh-Shamo to the city of Qamishly, Syria to continue his studies.

1961:

At the age of seventeen, Ninos joins the Assyrian Democratic Organization (Mtakasto Othurrayto Demoqrotayto/ADO), an underground assembly that aims to promote the Assyrian cause. The ADO, the first organization of its kind, is forced to work underground due to the existing political atmosphere in the Middle East and the push for Assyrians to assimilate and call themselves Arabs.

1965:

Ninos completes his Baccalaureate and receives a scholarship from the Syrian government affording him the luxury of attending Damascus University, majoring in Math, Physics and Chemistry. However, because his ongoing role in Assyrian activism is directly affected by the politics in the region, he is unable to complete his degree.

1969:

Ninos returns to Qamishly to teach math & science courses at the local high school. *Malfono* means teacher in Western Assyrian. Subsequently, in his career, Ninos continues to be called Malfono as a sign of respect for his nationalistic work. The term Malfono is used interchangeably with *Rabi*, which means teacher in the Eastern Assyrian dialect.

PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

Malfono Ninos believes with true conviction that Assyrianism is a way of life that should encompass an Assyrian’s complete existence. In order to awaken and unite the people of a displaced nation, a protagonist to whom Assyrianism is a way of life must be created. Prompted by the state of the Assyrian nation in diaspora, Malfono Ninos feels there is a need for a “New Assyrian”. This generates the conception of “Atouraya Khata”.

Furthermore, in order to secure our rights in Occupied Assyria (regions of modern-day Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran), Malfono believes there is a dire need for Assyrians to have a strong political movement comprised of various political parties, organizations and foundations to promote the Assyrian cause.

POLITICS & ACTIVISM

Malfono Ninos’ political activism has taken him around the world. The following are examples of a select number of instances:

In 1970, along with fellow Assyrian revolutionaries Malfono Jean Kardously, George Bet-Shlimon and the late Gowriyé Alyo, Malfono Ninos is chosen to represent the ADO at the Assyrian Universal Alliance's Third World Congress in Cologne, Germany.

Malfono Ninos has the honor of working with the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) in 1974, and contributing to the creation of bylaws meant to be utilized by Assyrians worldwide.

Malfono Ninos and the late Nadan Younadam travel to Russia in 1986 to retrieve Freydon Atoraya's manifesto titled, "Urmia Manifesto of the United Free Assyria". With the help of Dr. Elia Vartanov, they are able to recover and translate the manifesto.

In 2003, Rabi Yosip Bet Yosip and Malfono Ninos represent Occupied Assyria at the World Congress of Poets (a UNESCO affiliation) in Taipei, Taiwan. Several years later they return to the Congress, this time held in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where they raise our flag in the name of Occupied Assyria alongside the flags of 22 other nations, a very proud moment for all Assyrians.

In Australia in 2003, Malfono and Rabi Yosip Bet Yosip continue to edify people on the origins, history and future of the Assyrians.

In 2005, Malfono Ninos meets Malfono Sabri Atman, the founder and director of Seyfo Center – Assyrian Genocide Research Center. Malfono Ninos becomes heavily involved in the organization's work, as his belief is that the tragic genocides inflicted upon our people can be our unifying factor. In 2008, he is named Seyfo Center's Honorary Global Ambassador.

Malfono Ninos participates in the European Union symposium on Assyrian Rights and the Democratization of Turkey in Brussels, Belgium in 2010.

Malfono fervently supports Assyrian lobbyists who have petitioned Washington against the political marginalization of the Assyrian people and is an integral player in the struggle for the Assyrians to regain ownership of the Nineveh Plains.

In pursuit of his Assyrian vision, Malfono has been exposed numerous times to the prevailing political turmoil of the the Middle East, being both kidnapped and hijacked on different occasions.

CAREER

Utilizing his innate talent, Malfono Ninos uses poetry as an outlet to deliver his nationalistic passion and ideology. He inspires fellow Assyrians through his declarations of belief. Due to the moving messages contained in his poetry, many of Malfono Ninos' works have been set to music, both traditional folkloric melodies and original compositions.

Prior to 1968, singing in the Suryoyo dialect was forbidden in the Western Assyrian community; it was considered a sacred language to be used only in church liturgy (in contrast to the Eastern Assyrians, who already had traditional song). At the time, Western Assyrians sang in Arabic, Kurdish and Turkish at gatherings and celebrations. The ADO believed that our nation would not be able to sustain itself without folkloric traditions. Consequently, they set out to renew the Assyrian song in the Western culture of the nation.

As a result of the ADO functioning as an underground nationalistic movement, they had to utilize the church choir to bring these songs to the community. Overcoming initial skepticism regarding this idea, Malfono Ninos was at the forefront of organizing the church choir and teaching them these songs, which they began to perform at various parties and functions. This innovative idea was well received; in later years, when these choir members immigrated to other countries, they organized new choral groups, perpetuating the idea of the Assyrian song. Consequently, the current industry of Assyrian music today is a direct result of the young nationalistic revolution headed by the ADO in the 1960's.

FAMILY

1971:

Malfono Ninos immigrates to the United States and assimilates into the large Assyrian community in Chicago, IL and the American way of life.

1975:

Malfono Ninos marries Ogareet Bakkal (daughter of AbdulNoor Bakkal and Widad Atmaja) in Kamishly, Syria. They soon settle into life in Chicago and begin to build their family.

1984:

The Aho family relocates to Sturbridge, MA.

1987:

Malfono Ninos and Ogareet's family continues to grow with the birth of their fourth child. Malfono and Ogareet bestow unique Assyrian names upon their children; Romrama (*higher than the highest*), Zalgai (*rays of the sun*), Delmon (*paradise*) and Enleil (*a chief Assyrian deity*).

1991:

Believing that Assyrian heritage, traditions and civilization are all based in Assyria (regions of modern-day Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran), Malfono Ninos and Ogareet move their family to Aleppo, Syria in order for Malfono to authentically promote his belief in the Assyrian cause. Even though the family's return to the homeland is a sacrifice for them on many levels, their love for their nation outweighs their struggles.

2001:

Sam and Zoja welcomed, into their home, many Assyrians that migrated to the United States. Their home was always filled with much love, warmth, Assyrian music and great food. Sam Jacobs and his wife Zoja always tried to help fellow Assyrians that were in need of support or assistance. Sam was a wonderful husband, father, and grandfather and great-grandfather. He was also a great friend to those who were fortunate to have met him.

Sam passed away on February 8, 2013 at St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco, California, surrounded by his family. Sam passed away leaving behind the love of his life, Zoja, four children, five grandchildren, one great-grandchild, two son-in-laws and many friends and family members. His loving and energetic spirit will live with them forever. May you rest in peace Sam, for you have done your share of serving God, your nation and humanity. You will be missed my friend of many years.

soccer. She was a joyful and active girl. She was an exceptional student and had planned to attend Stanford University when she grew up. Lily had so much pride in herself and tried hard in all that she did. Lily was very grown up and wise for her age, and was an eager and able helper at school and at home. She was a faithful friend and nurturing sister. She had an infectious laugh, a smile and big hug for all. One of the ways she was unique was her many personal relationships with adults (many have told me this). The size of her heart was immeasurable. She was never afraid to stand up for what was right and support those that needed a voice. She was just starting her pathway into becoming a beautiful young woman, with an uncommon amount of both grace and humility. She will be sorely missed by everyone who knew her but especially her two younger sisters and parents.



Lily Gail Jacob

**December 14, 2001 -
July 11, 2013**

Lily Gail Jacob died Thursday, July 11, 2013. She was 11 years old. Lily unexpectedly passed in less than one day after the entire family was suffering food poisoning while vacationing in

Costa Rica. Lily is survived by her parents Sargon Jacob and Juliana Touney Jacob, sisters Summer and Ashley Jacob, maternal grandmother Winifred Touney, fraternal grandparents Martin and Gail Jacob, and 11 uncles, 8 aunts and 30 cousins. She was born in Sacramento, CA on December 14, 2001.

At the time of her death she was living in La Selva Beach, CA and attended Valencia and Rio del Mar schools. Lily was a very bright and happy girl who loved spending time with her family, music, playing the piano, baking, knitting, singing, swimming, reading, and

Lily was the best daughter anyone could have dreamed of having and we are thankful to God to have been blessed by her presence for 11 years. We will never understand this, but take solace in her lack of suffering. She was short changed in time, but the time she had was full. We will miss her always. A visitation will be held for Lily on Friday, July 19th, 2013 at Benito & Azzaro Pacific Gardens Chapel, 1050 Cayuga St. in Santa Cruz from 6-8 pm. The Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, July 20th at Resurrection Church, 7600 Soquel Dr. in Aptos beginning at 10 am. A Reception will be held after the funeral, at 12:30 pm, at Seascape Resort, 1 Seascape Resort Dr. in Aptos. Donations can be made to The Lily Gail Jacob Education Fund C/O Assyrian Foundation of America, PO Box 2660 Berkeley, CA 94702 or visit their website, www.assyrianfoundation.org



Assyrian Martyrs Day Commemoration

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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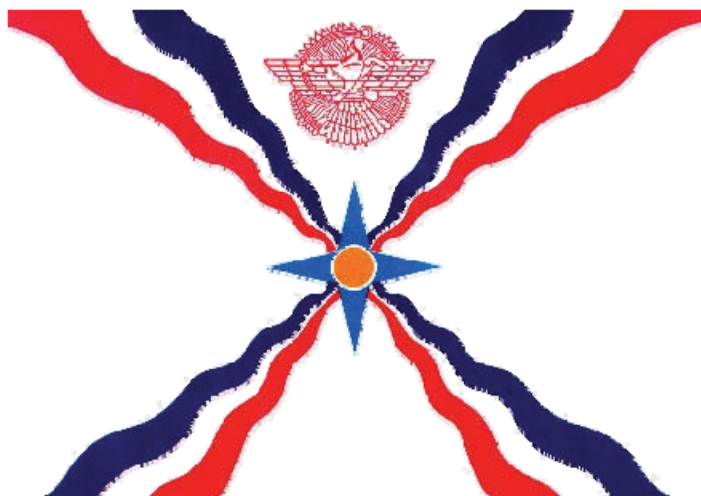
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سید کا ، گرجا کا 37 ، حقیقت کا 1 - 2

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١٢٥٥ هـ قذبح دجیح به شمس خدای آفریدند بد
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<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/cad/>

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Martha Roth 1996ء میں کیے گئے

THE ASSYRIAN DICTIONARY OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO (CAD)

Editor-in-Charge:
 Martha T. Roth



مَدْعَى
(Appeal)

قَسَمِي بِسَبَقِي دَجَائِيهِ دَلَّاهُ قَيْ دَلَّاهُ:

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1964 ١٩٨٤



ՀԱՅԿ

Միջին ճիւղի 1882 թվական

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Միջին ճիւղի 1882 թվական

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