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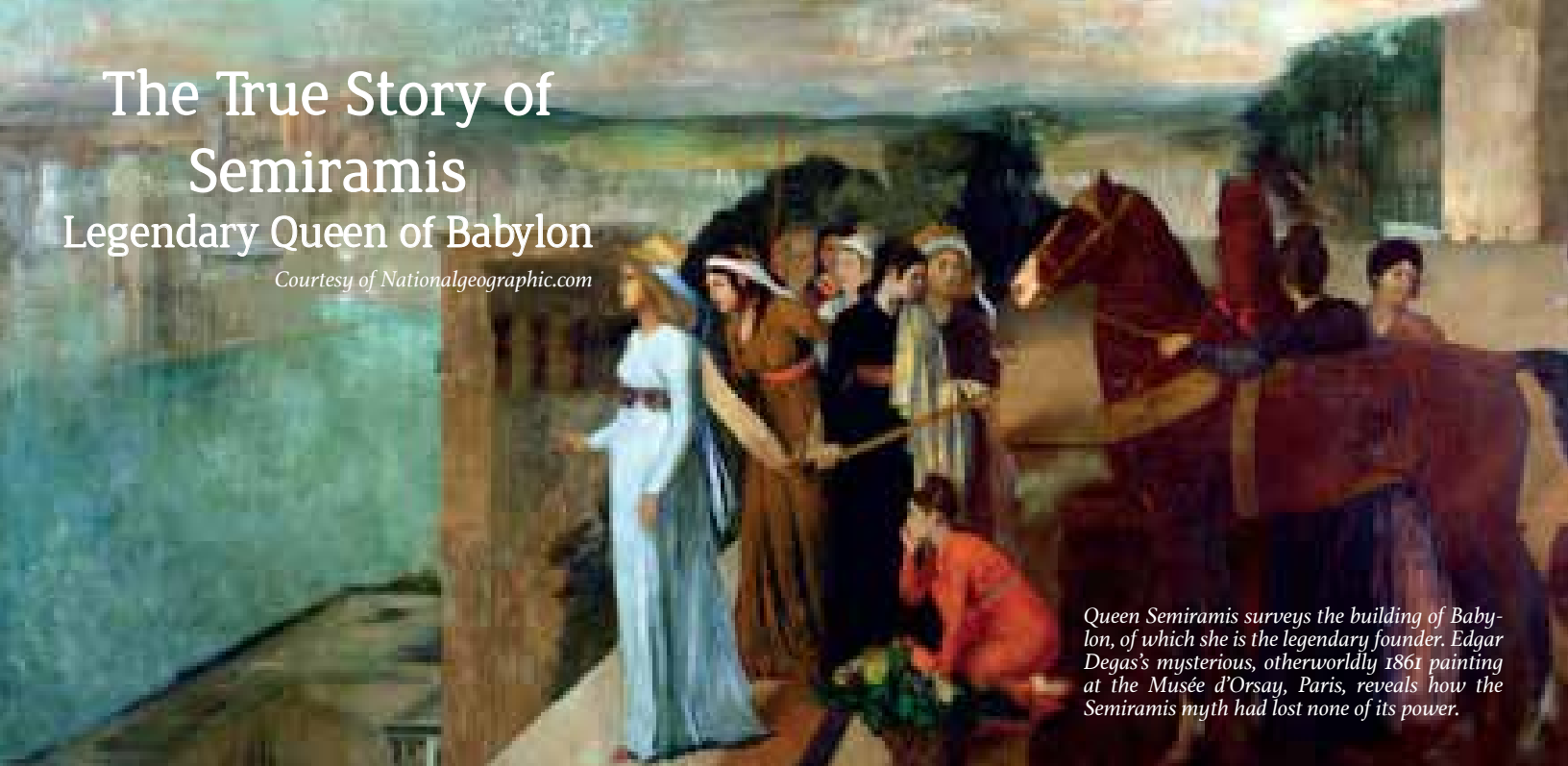




# The True Story of Semiramis

## Legendary Queen of Babylon

Courtesy of Nationalgeographic.com



Queen Semiramis surveys the building of Babylon, of which she is the legendary founder. Edgar Degas's mysterious, otherworldly 1861 painting at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, reveals how the Semiramis myth had lost none of its power.

The only woman ever to have ruled the mighty Assyrian Empire, Semiramis titillated writers and painters from the Roman period to the 19th century.

Female rulers in ancient Mesopotamia were rare. But those who did rule made their mark on history. In the Neo-Assyrian regime of the ninth century B.C., one woman commanded an entire empire stretching from Asia Minor to what is today western Iran. She was Sammu-ramat, thought to mean “high heaven.” Her five-year rule, while brief, appears to have inspired long-lasting respect among her subjects and the world. Centuries after her reign, Greek writers, and historians focused on Sammu-ramat and her achievements. They hellenized her name to Semiramis. From here, the Assyrian queen passed from the world of facts into the realm of legend. Some cast her as a beautiful femme fatale in a tragic love story. Classical authors attributed great accomplishments to Semiramis: commander of armies, and builder of the walls of Babylon and monuments throughout her empire.

Her allure did not diminish with time. She later inspired the Italian medieval poet Dante, who placed her in his Infer-

no where she is punished for her “sensual vices.” The French Enlightenment writer Voltaire wrote a tragedy about her, which was later made into Rossini’s 1823 opera, *Semiramide*.

### LIFE AND LEGENDS

823-811 B.C.

Grandson of Ashurnasirpal II, Shamshi-Adad V secures Assyria by defeating his rebellious older brother. He marries Sammu-ramat, who will bear his heir, Adad-nirari.

810-783 B.C.

The widowed Sammu-ramat becomes queen regent for the first five years of her son’s reign. Inscriptions credit her with advising Adad-nirari III while on a military campaign.

1st Century B.C.

In his work *Bibliothèque*, Greek author Diodorus Siculus writes an embellished biography of Sammu-ramat, using the Greek version of her name: Semiramis.

14th Century A.D.

Semiramis’s increased reputation for sexual promiscuity lands her in Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*, condemned to the second circle of hell for eternity.

1748

Continuing the fascination with Semiramis, Voltaire writes his tragedy *Sémiramis*, which the basis for Rossini’s 1823 opera *Semiramide*.

### REAL POWER

The true story of the flesh-and-blood Sammu-ramat remains elusive. The question lingers: What did she achieve

2,800 years ago that so fascinated the world and allowed romantic legends to sprout around her legacy?

Archaeologists have found four principal artifacts that offer at least some evidence to piece together her biography. In the ancient city of Nimrud (in modern-day Iraq), two statues dedicated to Nabu, the Babylonian god of knowledge and writing, mention her name. There are also two stelae, one from Kizkapanli, a town in present-day Turkey, and the other from Assur in Iraq, that mention her. Taken together, the four inscriptions establish at least the bare bones of her story: The queen definitely lived in the Assyrian Empire between the ninth and eighth centuries B.C., was married to King Shamshi-Adad V, who reigned from 823 to 811 B.C., and was the mother of King Adad-Nirari III.

With these key facts in place, historians have formed a clearer idea of her significance, and know that she entered Assyrian history at a critical moment for the empire. Her husband was the grandson of Assyria’s great ruler, Ashurnasirpal II, a flamboyant monarch who built a magnificent palace at Nimrud in the early ninth century B.C.

This event is commemorated by the Banquet Stela, which recorded thousands of guests and a celebration that lasted for 10 days. Ashurnasirpal II stabilized the empire, putting down revolts with a level of cruelty that he made no attempt to hide. One inscription tells of the vengeance meted to rebels at one particular city of his realm:

*I had a column built at the city gate and I flayed all the leaders who had rebelled and I covered the column with their skins. Some, I impaled upon the column on stakes and others I bound to stakes around it.*

The empire that Ashurnasirpal II’s grandson inherited may have been stable and wealthy, but it did not stay that way for long. King Shamshi-Adad V appears to have spent a great deal of resources in defeating his rebellious elder brother, who wanted to take the throne. By the time Shamshi-Adad died in 811 B.C., the empire was financially and politically weakened. His young son, Adad-nirari



A ninth-century B.C. stela found in the temple of Nabu in Nimrud in what is now Iraq depicts King Shamshi-Adad V.



Inspired by legends about the fierce Assyrian queen, 17th-century painter Louis de Caullery depicts Semiramis hunting a lion, a symbol of royalty, in front of the gates of Babylon. The painting is part of the collections at Musée Fabre, Montpellier, France.

III, was too young to rule. It would be left to Queen Sammu-ramat to restore stability to Assyria through her regency.

### FROM MEMORY TO MYTH

Although the four main sources do not spell out whether she claimed the regency, the inscriptions make it clear that Sammu-ramat exercised a degree of political power—unlike that of any other woman in the history of Mesopotamia. The stela from the city of Kizkapanli, for example, mentions that the queen accompanied her son when he crossed the Euphrates River to fight against the king of the Assyrian city of Arpad. Her presence was unusual for the time, and the fact that the stela bothers to mention her participation gives Sammu-Ramat’s actions a strong degree of honor and respect.

By the time, Adad-Nirari III came of age (he would reign until 783 B.C.), Sammu-Ramat had impressed her subjects with her strength and steadiness, as the stela at Assur shows. Its inscription places her almost on a par with male rulers and is dedicated to “Sammu-Ramat, Queen of Shamshi-Adad, King of the Universe, King of Assyria; Mother of Adad-Nirari, King of the Universe, King of Assyria.”

### THE LEGEND BEGINS

After Sammu-Ramat’s death, her name seems to have echoed down through the generations. In a society with a rich oral

tradition, a certain amount of embellishment crept into her story, which seemed to grow larger from one telling to the next. In the fifth century B.C., the great classical historian Herodotus perpetuated the memory of this queen using the Greek form of her name: Semiramis. It is by this name that she is best known today.

It was Diodorus Siculus, a Greek scholar writing in the Roman world of Julius Caesar and Augustus, who solidified much of Semiramis’s legend. His colossal, semi-historical work *Bibliothèque* surveys events from creation myths to his own day and age. In it he offers a detailed, if somewhat fantastic, narrative of the Assyrian queen. Some of Diodorus Siculus’s work is based on a previous, now lost text by Ctesias of Cnidus, a Greek doctor who had served the Persian court in the fourth century B.C.

According to Diodorus, Semiramis was born in Ashkelon (in present-day Israel), the fruit of a pairing between the Syrian goddess Derceto (a local version of the Phoenician goddess Astarte and the Babylonian Ishtar) and a young Syrian man. Ashamed of the relationship, the goddess abandoned the baby girl, who at first was cared for by doves. Later, the chief shepherd of the king of Assyria ended up adopting the child and giving her the name Semiramis.

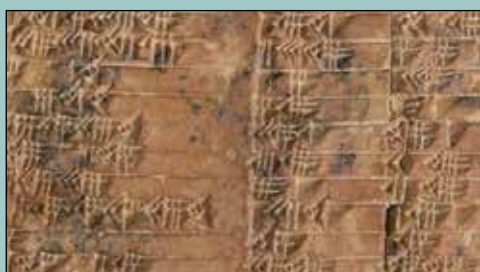




Writers credited Semiramis with founding Babylon, and building its walls (shown here, reconstructed, in the background). In reality, Babylon was founded long before Semiramis. Its major building works were carried out by Nebuchadnezzar II, two centuries after her death.



Tradition holds that Semiramis built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. If such gardens existed, they were most likely in Nineveh, whose lush landscaping features on this seventh-century B.C. panel at the British Museum, London.



**SOLVING AN ANCIENT TABLET'S MATHEMATICAL MYSTERY** New findings suggest Babylonian civilization was even more advanced than historians thought.

Semiramis grew into a young woman of extraordinary beauty. The royal governor of the province of Syria, named Onnes, was struck by her beauty when he met her while inspecting the royal flocks. Onnes obtained her adoptive father's consent to marry her. After the wedding, he took Semiramis with him to Nineveh. Later, Onnes was sent to besiege the city of Bactra in central Asia. Missing his wife, he asked that she come to join him there. Not only did Semiramis travel to this remote spot to be with her husband, she also came up with a winning strategy that made the besieged city surrender. When he learned of this amazing feat, the Assyrian king wanted to meet the heroine and had her brought before him. According to Diodorus Siculus, the king's name was Ninus (Nineveh was supposedly named after him). Ninus fell in love with Semiramis at first sight and ordered Onnes to trade his wife for one of Ninus's daughters. Onnes boldly refused but was subjected to so many threats by King Ninus that he finally committed suicide. The widowed Semiramis married Ninus and became the queen of Assyria.

Within a few years of the marriage, King Ninus died. At this point, Diodorus Siculus's version of the queen's life converges with her historical one: Semiramis took personal charge of the government, acting as regent to her son, who was still a child.

#### BUILDER AND COMMANDER

According to the Greek historians, the new queen's ambitious building projects earned admiration for her rule. Setting out to emulate the agenda of her late husband, she is said to have ordered a new city to be built on the banks of the Euphrates—Babylon. Diodorus Siculus even suggests that Semiramis erected not only the city but also its other features: the royal palace, the temple of Marduk, and the city walls. Other Greco-Roman authors, including Strabo, claimed that Semiramis had been behind the fabulous hanging gardens of Babylon, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The historical evidence in no way supports their claims.

Diodorus Siculus tells how, after the construction of Babylon, Semiramis launched several military campaigns to

quash uprisings in Persia to the east and in Libya in North Africa. Later, Semiramis organized the most notable and difficult campaign of all: an invasion of India. But despite her careful planning, the invasion was a disaster, and the queen was injured.

During her campaign in Africa, Semiramis had stopped in Egypt and consulted the oracle of the god Amun, which prophesied that her son Ninias would conspire against her and kill her. Following the failed conquest in India, the prophecy came true. According to Diodorus, Semiramis's son Ninias was plotting against her to seize the throne. But in this telling of her life, she wisely decided not to fight her son. Instead she peacefully ceded power to him. Other histories provide different endings. The first-century A.D. Roman author Gaius Julius Hyginus tells that the legendary queen killed herself by throwing herself onto a burning pyre. Third-century Roman historian Justin claimed that Semiramis was indeed killed by her son.

#### INGREDIENTS FOR A GOOD TALE

The legend of Semiramis presents clear parallels with other ancient myths from antiquity. Her divine origins echo that of heroes such as Hercules. Her abandonment as a baby is reminiscent of the story told of the infancy of King Sargon of Akkad, as well as the biblical Book of Exodus, in which Moses is abandoned as a baby and found by the daughter of the pharaoh. Semiramis's consultation of Amun and her attempt to invade India, were both exploits that Alexander the Great undertook, tales very familiar to Diodorus.

Queen Sammu-Ramat of history begat Queen Semiramis of legend, whose civic accomplishments are lauded on the same level as her beauty. What stands out is how both the woman and the myth were celebrated for things traditionally associated with male rulers: scoring military triumphs, building architectural wonders, and ruling with wisdom.



Archaeologist Musab Mohammed Jassim shows artifacts and archaeological pieces in a tunnel network running under the Mosque of Prophet Jonah, Nabi Yunus in Arabic, in eastern Mosul, Iraq March 9, 2017.

## ISIS' Destruction of Biblical Tomb of Jonah Uncovers Inscriptions on Assyrian King. 'Great Gods'

Courtesy of ChristianPost.com

***On top of a hill in eastern Mosul called Nebi Yunus sits the sacred shrine containing what's believed to be the tomb of the Prophet Jonah (as he was known in the Bible) or Yunus (in the Koran). Islamic State militants destroyed the Prophet's tomb in July 2014, after they captured Mosul along with large swathes of northern Iraq. After Iraqi government forces recaptured part of the city last month, a team of local archaeologists began documenting the damage done to the Nebi Yunus shrine. In the process, they stumbled on a stunning find: Buried deep underneath the shrine lay a previously undiscovered palace built before 600 B.C. for the Assyrian ruler King Sennacherib.***

Ancient 2,700-year-old inscriptions have been uncovered underneath the biblical Tomb of Jonah, which was destroyed by Islamic State terror group militants in 2014 in Iraq. The inscriptions mention "great gods" belonging to the Assyrian tradition.

The latest archaeological digs beneath the tomb have discovered inscriptions describing the rule of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon. "The palace of Esarhaddon, strong king, king of the world, king of Assyria, governor of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the kings of lower Egypt, upper Egypt and Kush [an ancient kingdom located south of Egypt in Nubia]," one of the deciphered engravings reads.

Esarhaddon is also said to have "reconstructed the temple of the god Aššur [the chief god of the Assyrians]," another inscription reads. It adds that Esarhaddon also rebuilt the ancient cities of Babylon and Esagil, and "renewed the statues of the great gods."

Iraqi archaeologists, who gained access to the tunnels dug by IS, have in the past also found winged bulls and lions belonging to Esarhaddon, who ruled the Neo-Assyrian empire in 7th century B.C.

IS originally destroyed the shrine, which is sacred to both Christians and Muslims, while searching for artifacts to loot. The radicals were pushed out of the city of Nineveh in the beginning of 2017, and have lost most of their captured territory in Iraq and Syria.

Archaeologist Layla Salih has said about the findings: "I can only imagine how much Daesh (IS) discovered down there before we got here." "We believe they took many of the artifacts, such as pottery and smaller pieces, away to sell. But what they left will be studied and will add a lot to our knowledge of the period."

Salih and her colleagues believe the palace is tied to three generations of Assyrian kings. Built for King Sennacherib, who ruled from 705-681 B.C., it was renovated and expanded first by his son, Esarhaddon (681-669 B.C.) and later by his grandson, Ashurbanipal (669-627 B.C.). The palace was partially destroyed in 612 B.C., when a coalition of Medes, Babylonians and others sacked Nineveh and put an end to the Assyrian capital's dominance. Though the Ottoman gov-

ernor of Mosul had partially excavated the Nebi Yunus shrine back in the mid-19th century, and the Iraqi department of antiquities revived the excavations in the 1950s, neither team uncovered the ancient palace.

Despite the destruction the shrine suffered at the hands of ISIS militants, the archaeologists say many priceless artifacts in the palace appear to remain intact, including a marble cuneiform inscription of King Esarhaddon believed to date to 672 B.C. Cuneiform, one of the earliest types of writing, was widely used in ancient Mesopotamian civilizations. In another part of the ISIS-dug tunnels, the archaeologists found intricate Assyrian stone sculptures of an ancient deities, a demi-goddess figure sprinkling the "water of life" to protect the humans in her care.

"There's a huge amount of history down there, not just ornamental stones," Salih added. "It is an opportunity to finally map the treasure-house of the world's first great empire, from the period of its greatest success."

Jonah is the biblical prophet who, as the Bible describes, was swallowed by a large fish, possibly a whale. "In Christian tradition, the story of Jonah is an important one," scholars Joel S. Baden, a professor at Yale Divinity School, and Candida Moss, a professor at University of Birmingham, have noted. "Jonah's descent into the depths in the belly of the great fish and subsequent triumphant prophetic mission to Nineveh is seen as a reference to and prototype of the death and resurrection of Jesus."



# Assyrians in Iraq are ‘On the Brink of Extinction’

Courtesy of [www.aina.org](http://www.aina.org)

Stephen Rasche says the next six weeks will be critical for saving some of the world’s oldest Christian communities from extinction. Rasche is coordinating a task force trying to return tens of thousands of Christian families to the ancient Iraqi towns from which they were driven by ISIS three years ago.

U.S. and Iraqi forces drove ISIS out of the region last fall, but the string of historic Christian towns in the northern tip of Iraq that have now been liberated stand in varying states of destruction. The towns now face a “critical need over these next 60 days at the latest -- really at the end of September -- to get in enough work and enough of a core group of the population back so that it can demonstrate a viability for the recovery of the town,” said Rasche, who works for the Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil and is now chief coordinator of a newly formed Nineveh Reconstruction Committee, a coalition of the major Christian denominations in the region.

Rasche and others involved in the reconstruction say time is of the essence for rescuing a community that was among the first converted to Christianity by the Apostles in the decades after the death of Jesus Christ. “Christianity in Iraq is on the brink of extinction. They have gone from 1.5 million people to somewhere south of 200,000,” said Andrew Walther, the U.S.-based vice president of communications for the Knights of Columbus, which recently announced a \$2 million infusion to rebuild the town of Karemles. “With the new school year coming and these towns having now been liberated (from ISIS), people’s attitude is ‘well, we are either going to return home now or we are going to leave forever.’”

The effort is based on rebuilding one town at a time, providing design assistance, building

supplies and other support to help residents repair their war-damaged homes enough to return from their exile in Kurdistan. And it is remarkably cheap. For many residents, a few thousand dollars will be enough to restore their home to livability and allow them to return -- though ultimately government support will be needed for infrastructure like water and power systems and to guarantee long-term security for the communities.

The recipients of the aid are overwhelmingly but not exclusively Christian. The aid project is also serving a smattering of other persecuted religious minorities, including Yazidis

who are now in Erbil, who left their homes, I would say life is not great for them,” said Aaron Ashoff, the group’s regional director for Europe and the Middle East. “What is the future for Christians who would return to the historic Christian communities in Nineveh, we don’t know. But if they want to return to these communities, we are going to help them.”

But these efforts are racing against time. The Iraqi school year begins in October, and Rasche says families currently living as refugees in Kurdistan are unlikely to return to the area once the school year has begun, uprooting their children again.

And after three years away, if the families do not return this year, they may simply give up hope of ever returning to Iraq, said Joop Koopman, spokesman for Aid to the Church in Need, a worldwide Catholic organization that is another major donor to the reconstruction effort. “If a significant number of Christians don’t return soon, it may dash the hopes of any renaissance for the Nineveh plains,” Koopman said.

Most of the Christian refugees have been living in Erbil, where the local Catholic diocese has provided millions of dollars of rental and food assistance.

The church’s charity has been a lifeline for the Christian community, but it also been a barrier to government support. “It essentially ended up that the Christians, having been supported in some fashion by global Christians, were judged to be in a category where they didn’t need any more help from the U.N. and the State Department,” Rasche said this week in an interview from Teleskov. “We sat in meetings where people told us if we laid off on the amount of aid that we were providing so that their standards dropped ... then the U.N. would be happy to step in.”

The evangelical relief group Samaritan’s Purse is focusing its effort in the town of Qaraqosh, where it hopes to help rebuild about 600 homes. “The life of Christians who fled

Walther and others who have advocated on behalf of the Iraqi Christians say the Obama administration was reluctant to address their plight. “The archdiocese of Erbil has received no direct government funding from the U.S. or U.N.,” Walther said. He blamed the Obama administration’s “mindset” that “people get aid on basis of immediate need only, and the rationale is that you don’t want to discriminate against any individual.” While that principle makes some sense, Walther said, it does not take into account the prospect that an entire community might be extinguished.

Julian Dobbs, an Anglican bishop who heads a relief group called Barnabas Aid, said he has already seen a dramatic shift in tone from the Trump administration, indicating that persecuted Christians will see much more support. “Under the previous administration, I was told personally by the State Department ... that they had absolutely no determination to assist Christian minorities in Northwestern Iraq,” Dobbs said. By contrast, the Trump administration has repeatedly referred to Iraqi Christians as victims of genocide who are entitled to special protec-

tion. “ISIS is clearly responsible for genocide against Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims in areas it controls or has controlled,” Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Tuesday. “The protection of these groups -- and others subject to violent extremism -- is a human rights priority for the Trump administration.”

The U.S. House also passed a bill in June that would require the State Department to address the needs of Iraqi and Syrian religious minorities targeted by ISIS, and to allow federal relief dollars to flow through church-based charities. “We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keeper,” said the bill’s lead sponsor, Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., in an interview. “These people -- a large number have been slaughtered, the women have been raped, the men beaten, their churches destroyed... and we have not helped them.”

His Democratic co-sponsor, Rep. Anna Eschoo of California, said there is a bedrock American principle of separating church and state, which makes it hard for the U.S. government to provide aid targeted to a specific faith group. “But freedom of religion is also a great

American value and a great export of ours,” she said, “and they were specifically targeted because they are Christians and Yazidis.”

State Department spokesperson Pooja Jhunjhunwala said that while U.S. humanitarian aid is based “solely on need, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation,” the department has provided more than a billion dollars in aid to Iraqis, which includes aid to members of minority communities. In addition, “separate from U.S. humanitarian and stabilization assistance, since 2008, the Department and USAID have provided more than \$100 million in assistance specifically for Iraq’s religious and ethnic minority communities,” Jhunjhunwala said. “We have also led international initiatives to highlight the plight of these minority groups.”

Walther of the Knights of Columbus said helping the Iraqi Christians and other religious minorities is not just a humanitarian mandate -- “it is also important in order to ensure that ISIS’ program of genocide and religious cleansing is not successful, even after they are defeated militarily.”

## Persecuted Assyrians in Iraq Are Being Forgotten

Courtesy of Washington Examiner

Although religious liberty in the United States is challenged almost daily, its authority remains real and true (at least for now). But elsewhere there is little religious freedom. In fact, Christianity is the most persecuted religion worldwide and Christians living in Iraq, where Christianity all began, are suffering most as the Islamic State seeks to obliterate them.

In March 2017, the State Department determined ISIS has committed genocide against Christians in Syria and Iraq, but the U.S. still has done little to actually intervene. Before the U.S. invaded in 2003, about 1.4 million Christians lived in Iraq. After being killed or driven out, there are now only about 250,000. While refuge elsewhere entirely might be the safest course of action, many want to stay to preserve their culture and faith that dates back centuries. Most Christian and Yazidi villages in northern Iraq have been liberated, however, the undeniable destruction and loss of life makes rebuilding a challenge. Plus, there is still political tension between the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government. These groups still need help, in terms of funding and protection, to rebuild. Former Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., who served 34 consecutive years in Congress, just

returned from his fifth trip to Iraq. Now a distinguished fellow and co-founder of the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative, which seeks to preserve religious liberty on a global scale, Wolf had a grave warning to American politicians who are hesitating to offer solutions to the dire situation in Iraq. “If something bold is not done by the United States and the international community, I believe we will see the end of Christianity in the cradle of Christendom and a loss of religious and ethnic diversity throughout the region,” said Wolf, in a press release. “This could result in further destabilization across the Middle East such as the Iranian effort to establish a land bridge to Iraq, Syria and to the Mediterranean and present a threat to U.S. national security interests.”

Although President Trump tweeted about the genocide back in January, he has taken little other action, in terms of policy, to aid the situation. In fact, in June, he faced major blowback from the Christian community as several efforts to deport about 200 Christian Iraqis increased. A judge intervened, halting the deportations. However, the Trump administration again last week acknowledged ISIS’ attempt to completely wipe out Christians in Iraq. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson

said ISIS is “clearly responsible for genocide” against Christians and Yazidis in Iraq and Shiite Muslims in Syria and elsewhere. Wolf suggests several tangible ways to help Christians in the Middle East. One of those is implementing HR 390, the Iraq and Syria Genocide Accountability Act, which passed in the House in June and still needs to pass in the Senate before making progress forward. According to GovTrack, it’s got about a 40 percent chance of passing. The bill authorizes the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to “support entities assisting minority groups in Iraq or Syria and entities that are conducting criminal investigations into perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Iraq and Syria.” Wolf also says the U.S. should intervene in a more pointed way, viewing this as a fresh priority, keeping in mind what ISIS is capable of, by “[utilizing] contractors who are able to leave the secured compound” and pressuring the Kurdistan Regional Government “to implement constitutional reforms.”

While the political situation in Iraq remains complex and dangerous, the United States should try to help these persecuted Christians if at all possible.



*Iraqi Assyrians attend a Holy Mother Mary mass at the church of Mart Shmoni in Erbil, the capital of the autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq, on May 31, 2017.*





## Assyrian, Athens and Italy: UGA student brings together coffee and community for art project

University of Georgia graduate Maria Nissan is utilizing her graduate thesis project to bring together the two cities that she loves Athens, Georgia, and her current home of Florence, Italy.

Nissan, a Master of Fine Arts student, is creating an immersive sensorial installation project. The project will be made from coffee and tea filters that she is collecting from both cities. In its final state the project will be an entire room of filters that have been sewn together to look like a tent.

“I originally started this project because I wanted to bring back a part of Athens with me to Italy,” Nissan said.

Nissan Attended UGA where she earned a degree in art education and lived in Athens for six years. Living in Athens left a lasting memory on her that she says can’t compete with any other place that she visits.

“I was a flight attendant and have travelled to nine countries during 2017. No matter what place I am in I have never felt a stronger community than Athens,” Nissan said. “The locals here have a rich history with the town’s character. You will never meet a person who says they hate Athens.”

The Athens community helped Nissan to gain more confidence and understanding in her work as an artist. Nissan also said

that living in Athens provided her with a break from the cultural discrimination that she has face all her life as someone of Assyrian-Iraqi background.

“When I first started my academic career here as an artist I had no confidence in my art and didn’t understand it. But the people here, my professors, and the community saw something I didn’t,” Nissan said. “Athens just said yes, we accept you, as is.”

Attending UGA helped Nissan to meet some life changing professors that mentored her and helped her transition from a student making art into an artist and they continue to help her through the difficulties of being an artist.

“We spent countless hours discussing the philosophies of life as an artist. They didn’t play pretend with me, they prepared me for the difficulties that would come with being an artist and believing in yourself continuously,” Nissan said.

“Whenever I would find myself depressed in Italy and with my art, I would reread their recommendation letters written for me for grad school. Sometimes you meet a person that changes everything. I met three.”

Associate professor of art, Chris Hocking, remembers Nissan and says that the two still keep in touch even though Nissan is currently all the way in Italy. He describes Nissan as ambitious talented and a hard worker. Hocking says that the project sounds great but that he doesn’t know much about it or how it looks.

“I think it’s supposed to be an installation size work which means it’s going to be a very large kind of room sized piece but it trying to tie everybody in through smell and touch sight proximity to the piece so it’s going to serve as a nice metaphor,” Hacking said. “The most interesting part is how it evolves and how she’s developing as a person and as an artist.”

Whether he knows it or not Hocking played a huge role in Nissan’s project because the idea to use filters came from a conversation that she had with him at

Walker’s Coffee Shop and Pub in Athens.

“My previous installation was expensive and I needed to use cheaper materials. He looked at my tea bag and suggested filters,” Nissan said. “That idea planted the seed and it evolved. I had no idea the project would turn into my master’s thesis.”

The main focus of Nissan’s project is to merge one part of her personality with another hence why she is using coffee and tea filters from both Athens and Florence.

“Athens and Italy have been major landmarks in my identity and I wanted to merge these two parts of me together,” Nissan said.

Another aspect of the project is incorporating the community. Nissan has collected filters from 14 different local Athens restaurants for her project. Currently more than 1,000 people have unknowingly helped Nissan with her project.

“Each tea urn requires 80 people to drink from it. Each coffee pot requires 20 people, a total of 6,000 people that have helped this art piece in the communities. My goal is 10,000 collaborators,” Nissan said.

Brittany Warnock, general manager at the Iron Factory in Athens and a close friend of Nissan’s, helped her to collect filters while Nissan was still in Athens.

“It was really cool to see her brining kind of bringing her heart into Italy a little bit by using these little bits of Athens and kind of putting them all together,” Warnock said.

She is excited to see the final piece and has nothing but kind words to say about the artist.

“If you’ve ever met Maria she has a very big personality and her art is like that too its very big and it’s very in your face kind of and so I’m sure her professors over there in Italy are thrilled to have her because I’m sure she adds something that they’ve never seen before and I’m proud that she comes from Georgia,” Warnock said.

A challenge that Nissan has face with her project is getting the word out. Social media has helped but she still needs help to reach her goal of having 10,000 collaborators involved.

Archaeologist Musab Mohammed Jassim shows artifacts and archaeological pieces in a tunnel network running under the Mosque of Prophet Jonah, Nabi Yunus in Arabic, in eastern Mosul, Iraq March 9, 2017.

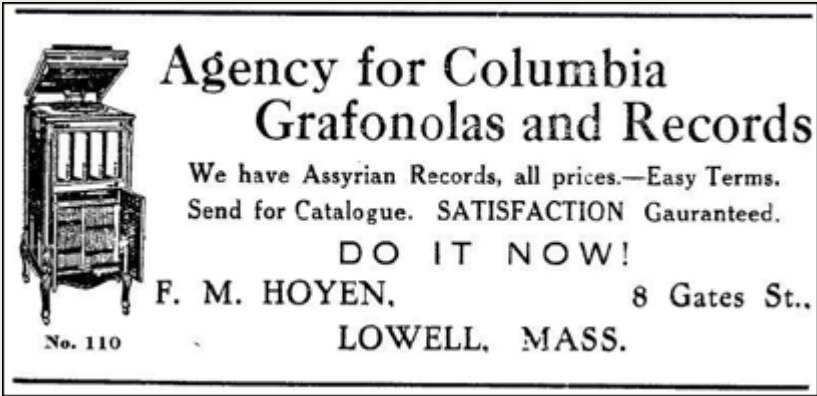
“I am asking all local restaurants who would be willing to participate to please contact me,” Nissan said. “This project is constantly evolving and I am sure my next trip to Athens will contribute to its growth.”





# The story of finding the oldest Assyrian music record

by Moneer Cherie of Sydney, Australia  
www.Qeenatha.com



It all began while searching for materials related to modern Assyrian music from a book. At that time an old advertisement was found on a page in an Assyrian magazine entitled “New Assyria” published in the USA. The ad read: “We have Assyrian records. Send for catalogue.” The magazine was dated 1917 and the ad was found by Mr. Abboud Zeitoune of Germany, author of two discography music books.

Until then, we never knew of the existence of Assyrian records dating back to 1917. Even with the help of the internet, our search for more information went nowhere. However after more than a year, a person in America listed a few records on an auction-site. The auction page was titled “Assyrian Records - Rare recordings”. I was intrigued, so I contacted the seller and asked him about his records. He said that he only bought them because they had nice graphics on the label, meaning: the Assyrian winged bull with the Assyrian star. There were three records; he bought them from a flea market while travelling in Massachusetts.

That made me interested in the records as I had never seen them before, and I thought these must be the missing old Assyrian records we have been searching for from the advertisement. I had to buy them! So I made him an offer and he accepted and soon they arrived in a

parcel to Australia. He had already told me that two of the three were not in a good shape, but I didn’t care. Even if they came in pieces, we would finally confirm the existence of such early and rare Assyrian records! But when they arrived, they were in good playable condition, and I managed to digitize all three of them, preserving the original records for future reference.

Now I own three records dating back to 1917 making them the oldest known modern Assyrian records, and they are numbered as No2, No3, and No4. So we know that No1 is missing, and we don’t know if there are more numbers out there? This discovery pushed back the date of the oldest known Assyrian record from 1929 by Murassa Urshan to 1917, and the search continues.

The records are 78-rpm Shellac, each record contains two songs. They are sung by an Assyrian couple, originally from Iran but who resided in New Britain, Connecticut, named Joseph and Anna Younan (husband and wife). Joseph was born about 1893 in Persia, his records were released in the USA. The music is probably Azeri from an opera called “Arshin Mal Alan”, released in 1913. The lyrics are in the modern Assyrian dialect and we are not sure if they are translation of the Azeri opera or original lyrics. A photo of the couple was found in a book entitled “Assyrians of New Britain- Images of America”, published in the USA.

We are always on the lookout for rare and unknown Assyrian records. So far, I have managed to accumulate a great and considerable collection, but the search still



goes on, and I am sure there are more waiting to be discovered.

Assyrian music has played an important role in preserving part of our language, heritage and culture. Music has become the most widespread medium within our nation. Although not many of our people, then or now, are able to read and write in Assyrian, almost all of us listen to our music - songs that tell stories and



epics from our history, we learn about our ancient glories, recent history and the never ending tragedies of our nation.

A hundred years have passed. Will our music or even our language survive another hundred years? I think if there is no political change or stability in the Middle East, then the future looks grim, but let us hold out hope.





# Rami Mona started his company at age 21.

## He’s now designing jerseys for the nation’s top athletes and celebrities

Courtesy of Detroitnews.com



Rami Mona, founder of Renzo Cardoni luxury athletic wear, talks about his Detroit-based brand, which has become a favorite to pro athletes, celebrities and hip hop artists.

Detroit — Rami Mona moves down a long white table covered in his creations. He shows off a pair of wine and gold Cleveland Cavalier shorts and a denim jersey with “Lakers” and “Bryant” airbrushed in yellow. He pauses at a tie-dyed hoodie for NFL wide receiver Jarvis Landry. “I’m putting the Dolphins logo right here,” says Mona, his tattooed fingers passing over the orange and blue dye, “and his last name on the back and No. 14. One of the games coming up, if you watch, you’ll see him warm up in this for sure.”

The tie-dye is a bit out of the ordinary for the young luxury sportswear designer, who typically deconstructs licensed athletic apparel and adds his own flair using leather, denim, camouflage and, his favorite material, snakeskin. “That’s what I love about these athletes; they let me do what I want to do,” he says. “I send them different mockups, and they give me the OK.”

The Sterling Heights resident, who just turned 26, has designed custom sportswear for such superstars as Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton, Denver Broncos

linebacker Von Miller and New York Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. Detroit rappers Big Sean and Dej Loaf have repped his Cardoni collection, as has Justin Bieber, Lil Wayne, Wale and Khloe Kardashian. At last season’s Super Bowl, the Atlanta Falcons defensive line sported his hoodies. He’s perhaps the most sought-after, high-end sportswear designer in Detroit. Yet Mona started from nothing in his mother’s basement. Skipping college, he sold his shoe collection for money to start Renzo Cardoni at age 21. (Renzo is a nickname; Cardoni nods to Detroit’s Cardoni Street, where a late friend lived.) “I didn’t have connections. I didn’t have resources from college,” says Mona, wearing gold-rimmed glasses and a black Detroit “D” cap. “I took something from nothing, and I built it.”

Mona moved production from Shelby Township to the second floor of an Eastern Market mixed-use space a few months ago. He now has 10 seamstresses, two cutters and several interns working on his “team.” A sports fanatic, Mona frequently drops sports analogies to describe his company that produces 50 pieces a week. “This is a team. If one per-

son is injured, we keep going. We can’t just slack,” says Mona, intimating he’s the key player. “Like, I’m LeBron. If LeBron doesn’t play, we’re not going to win the championship.”

TV personality Khloe Kardashian wears a Renzo Cardoni Cleveland Cavaliers jersey. (Photo: Renzo Cardoni)

### Merging his interests

While attending Fitzgerald High School in Warren, Mona hung out with rising Detroit rappers. He wanted to be part of the industry, but he didn’t rap. His interests were sports and fashion. So he merged the two and marketed his product to musicians.

As a test, Mona took the first jersey his mom bought him in sixth grade and embellished it with snakeskin fabric. At the time, sportswear designer Don C came out with hats featuring snakeskin and sports logos. “I was like, ‘This is it. When he’s doing that with hats, I know can do this with jerseys,’” Mona says. His first item was a Michael Jordan jersey. Mona turned the No. 23 into python snakeskin and the mesh body into leather. This was around 2012. As Mona puts it, “leather was hot.” He popped on the fashion radar soon after. The first big-name artist to support him was rapper Fabolous. “He took me in like a little brother. He respected what I was doing and where I was coming from,” Mona says. “Being 21, not a lot of people have the vision of just trying to start their own brand.” Flash-forward to today, and Mona names Beckham Jr. as his No. 1 fan. Before games, fans can often spot the Giant warming up in a Cardoni hoodie. “He was my client, but we grew to be like brothers,” Mona says.

Yet his “biggest moment,” he says, was when Stephen Curry’s wife, Ayesha, wore a Cardoni snakeskin-lettered Warriors jersey. Grinning, Mona launches into the story: Curry’s brother, Seth Curry, contacted him to buy a Golden State Warriors jersey. Thrilled, Mona sent it as a gift. Seth wore the jersey to a few games before giving it to Ayesha, who wore it like a dress the night her husband won the NBA Championship. “You know how you get married and you frame a picture with you

and your husband that will stay with you forever?” Mona says. “This picture with her, her husband, their two kids and the trophy — with my jersey on — that will go down in history.”

That, and the time TV personality Khloe Kardashian wore his yellow Tristan Thompson jersey to a Cavs game. Kardashian, who’s dating Thompson, bought the No. 13 jersey from a Cleveland store owned by Mona’s friend. “Later that night, we were watching the game. I guess her boyfriend scores a point, and she gets up, and you see the jersey. At that moment, it was just crazy, because it was like two iconic females in, like, less than a week wearing my jerseys,” Mona says. “... Right there, I knew that’s another lane I’m going to work into — making female sportswear and kids sportswear. Not just men’s.”

Customized pieces can reach nearly \$1,400 for a jersey and \$400-plus for shorts. More affordable merch, including \$175 Cardoni hoodies and \$95 tees, also is sold online. Growing up with a mother working two jobs, he understands the prices aren’t cheap. “I’m not trying to charge people this much because I want to,” he says. “It’s because I have to. We put all this time and effort into a piece; you have to make sure it’s worth what it is.”



Thursday morning, Bree Russell bent over a machine, sewing a red Toronto Raptors jacket. “We spend more time taking things apart than putting them together,” says Russell, explaining that she removes the waistband, trim and logos from licensed apparel. “Then we add in our own touches: zippers, the snakeskin.”

The 33-year-old Westland resident started as a seamstress two years ago, after she found the job on Craigslist. “It’s been a really interesting experience to watch this company take off,” says Russell, acknowledging the demand from athletes and celebrities. “It’s always fun when you open Instagram and you’re like, ‘I made that! And that person is wearing that!’”

### The next collection

Mona always wanted to be an entrepreneur, but his mother served as his motivation to work hard. “One of my goals was to make her quit her job, like, ‘You don’t have to work no more. I got you, mom.’ And that’s what I did,” he says. Now Elham Mona only works part-time as an assistant store manager to avoid boredom.

But there were days she left the house at 7 a.m. and didn’t return from work until 11:30 p.m. “They didn’t even see me,” she says of



TV personality Khloe Kardashian wears a Renzo Cardoni Cleveland Cavaliers jersey. (Photo: Renzo Cardoni)

her three boys, now 23, 24 and 26. Thanks to her eldest son, she also moved into a new house. “He supports me now,” says Elham Mona, 57. “I’m so proud of him.” When he’s not traveling to such places as Los Angeles and Oregon — where he partnered with Nike to give 200 high school football players hoodies this summer — Mona spends most days in the lab trying to create “the next hottest thing.”

**“I’m already working on stuff for 2020,” he says.**

Coming up, he’s releasing an orange and black Jordan jersey for Halloween. He’s also designing trunks and a robe that boxer Manny Pacquiao plans to wear this fall. Detroit rapper Gary Thomas, known as GT, recently wore a Chicago Bulls camouflage hoodie while performing at Summer Jamz 20 at Joe Louis Arena. Thomas, 25, says he’s supported the brand from the beginning and loves its vintage flair. “I get a lot of compliments from older people,” he says.

Of the hundreds of pieces Mona designed, he can’t pick a favorite. “Every time I make a new jersey, I get inspired,” he says. “I still get that feeling I get when I made my first one. As far as I came, I still feel like this is just the beginning for me.”

Mona could move to New York or Los Angeles, where there’s materials he can’t buy in the Motor City, but he’s a Detroit hustler. And he wants to stay to help create a “fashion district,” which doesn’t exist — yet. “It would be dope to see that one day Detroit has a Detroit Fashion Week,” he says. “Hopefully ... I can be an influencer and motivate people to build Detroit as one, maybe we can have that one day.”



# The Unknown Motherland

Reconnecting with a culture  
that's lost its home

By Emmanuel Jacob

Near the Old Teacher's College and Women's Sports Centre, facing the front of the Charles Perkins Building, stands a gargantuan statue of Gilgamesh — the king of Uruk who terrorised his people, battled demons, and sought immortality. Donated by famed Assyrian sculptor Lewis Batros in 2000, it is one of the very few Near Eastern monuments on campus. A quick peek inside the Nicholson Museum reveals more, with some of its Assyrian artefacts dating back almost 4,000 years.

History lesson: the Assyrians are indigenous Christians who claim descent from Assyria, one of the oldest civilisations in the world. Their ancestral homelands are located at the point where the frontiers of Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey intersect. Today, they're one of the largest nationalities in the world without a state of their own. Since the fall of the Assyrian Empire in 612 BC, Assyrians haven't had a place to call home — something my parents know all too well. They grew up as part of the indigenous Assyrian Christian community in Iraq, and sometimes, they're still prone to yearning for the quintessential elements of their childhood. Throughout my childhood, my father would recount his memories of growing up in Kirkuk — of a schooling that was “regimented and stern,” his love for football, and most importantly, how the diverse faiths of Iraq lived in harmony amongst each other. “It's all different now,” my dad says when I ask him about what's changed over the years. “Christians, Jews, and Muslims no longer live in peace.” My parents fled Iraq in 1976 amid the rise of Saddam Hussein and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, leaving with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The act was so out of character for my typically cautious parents that it took me years to acknowledge just how brave they must have been.

From a young age, my parents forced me to read, write, and speak a 2,000-year-old language which many consider dead. Dinner tables were often informed by conservative Assyrian values — we never mentioned issues like homosexuality and atheism, but my parents had no problem expressing their disdain for Saddam Hussein. They often talked about the cruelty of his totalitarian system, his antagonizing sectarian policies,

and his vitriolic thirst for power. I'd sometimes spy them later on passively watching the BBC, absorbing scenes of gore and destruction from their native land.

And despite this, my dad often tells me he has one wish: to go back to Iraq one day. It's almost inconceivable to me, an outlandish idea. “It's not safe,” I tell him for conversation's sake. It's not that he wants to live in Iraq — instead, that he's nostalgic for a life that existed before despair set in. My parents travelled around the globe before settling in Australia, but today — enervated, tired, and unable to continue due to constantly travelling in hopes of finding a new home — their mind is plagued with images of the wreckage of the country they once called home. No longer does my father envision Christians, Muslims and Jews living in harmony, but rather, the corpses and ashes that lie side-to-side on the grounds of Mosul. The children crying, begging for help. The churches, mosques, and synagogues destroyed. Their own people, fleeing the motherland in hopes of finding a better life.

Despite being raised in a family of Iraqi Assyrians, I've never been able to visit Iraq, even though I've always had dreams of flying out to motherland and discovering my Assyrian roots. And although I've never seen significant Assyrian relics in images of Iraq, they're still a constitutive part of my history and personal identity. I grew up learning about The Epic of Gilgamesh – the oldest work in literature. I researched the legacy of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and its influence on civilization; from creating the first library in the world to developing an effective courier system.

For me, the statue of Gilgamesh is a visible reminder that my people flourished for years: Iraq was once home to a myriad of empires that would form civilization as we know it. Now, tragically, the country is mostly forgotten; lying in ruins after years of war and sectarian violence. Despite keeping dustbins and ibises for company, Gilgamesh remains a constant, potent symbol; a reminder of my heritage, my culture, and most importantly, the struggle my parents went through to find a new home.



Art: Matthew Fisher

## Turkey's Genocide of the Assyrians Was an Islamist Crime

A century after the start of a bloody persecution, will a genocide come to be recognized for what it was?

By Mardean Isaac

By Mardean Isaac | January 8, 2018 9:30 PM  
Just over a century ago this week, Turkish and Kurdish forces invaded land that the Assyrian people had inhabited since antiquity and began exterminating them. The slaughter that ensued lasted from 1915-1923, leaving 300,000 Assyrians dead and innumerable women abducted.

Joseph Yacoub's Year of the Sword: the Assyrian Christian Genocide, published in French in 2014 and translated into English in 2016, is the most accessible historical account of the events that composed the genocide, as well as a comprehensive case for those events as genocide. Yacoub, emeritus professor of political science at the Catholic University of Lyon, provides a distillation of sources in the languages used by both the perpetrators of and witnesses to the genocide. Year of the Sword is necessary for the breadth and depth of scholarship that informs that distillation, as well as the careful marshaling of it into analysis.

The Assyrian genocide formed one distinct yet indivisible chapter of a program of eradication that also encompassed the coeval Armenian and Greek genocides. The purpose was to put an end to the presence of all three Christian peoples in the territory that became the Republic of Turkey. The politics of the genocide were not the outgrowth of a robust nationalist ideology or tradition. (Turkish nationalism has always struggled to reconcile the need for an atavistic sense of racial origins, usually placed somewhere within Central Asia, and the need to subjugate and cohere territories in Asia Minor.) The Republic of Turkey was instead founded upon the application of violent jihad to the territorial boundaries of the emerging Turkish state. The Islamization of Turkey was inseparable from the establishment of its national sovereignty.

Yacoub discusses political developments in the decades prior to the genocide: the draconian centralization of power in the flailing Ottoman caliphate under Sultan Hamid II (1876-1909), and the nationalism of the Young Turks who supplanted him and ushered in an era of genocide. This background is not treated as an inductive source of understanding, but rather a context. Yacoub's major focus is on detailing the act of killing.

The methods of the Assyrian genocide were mass murder, pillage, and the rape and abduction of girls. Christian Pfander, the German-American Pastor of Urmia (in today's northwest Iran), wrote that “in the villages, the Kurds killed everyone they could get hold of.” Assyrians were “hacked to death with axes and thrown into the river,” or left “half-executed ... exposed to the sun,” wrote Hyacinth Simon, a French missionary and author, since, as “one Kurd said: Our soil is too pure to act as a tomb for Christian dogs.”

Clergymen were subject to spectacular forms of torture: “The skin was flayed from another priest's head before his throat was cut.” One

priest was “tied to a pile of dry cow dung and burnt alive,” another “stabbed to death as [he] knelt in prayer.”

In cities like Diyarbakir, sexual slavery meant being “passed from one Turk to another.” In more remote terrain—the killing fields of Urmia and adjacent Hakkari—gunmen would “even sometimes rape young women who were dying.” The American Medical Department in Urmia observed that “not a woman or girl above 12 (and some younger) ... escaped violation.” Ascertaining the number of abducted Assyrian women has proved more elusive than establishing the death toll. Since “all the girls, women and children stolen by Turks were treated by them as Mahometans,” mass abductions served the symbiotic purposes of depleting the Assyrian population and its capacity for replenishment and reproduction and expanding the size of the conquering Muslim groups.

Yacoub's attention to evidence of central planning and orchestration—the most pivotal of the legal pillars of genocide recognition—is one of Year of the Sword's strongest legacies. Yacoub specifies a widely observed repetition of process to the killings. Key elements included the removal of men “to an unknown destination” and the reading aloud of an edict from the Ottoman state prior to executions and (“as sworn on the Koran”) an injunction to remain silent about “acts committed by the executioners” and “the fate of those executed.” That “all observers and witnesses confirm that the conduct of the Turkish authorities was motivated by a premeditated, defined and criminal objective,” argues Yacoub, confirms that “the driving force was not in the mountains but in the capital.”

Discussion of potential responses to the genocide accompanied the spreading of news. Yacoub is excellent in mapping the network of institutions and actors involved in deciding the fate of the surviving Assyrians.

Soon after their emergence as a national political entity in the modern sense, Assyrians sought to overcome the circumscribing hostility of their neighbors through outreach to the West. They were met with the reality that whatever sense of geographically expansive Christendom still existed in Europe was rapidly dwindling, and would disappear forever with World War I. One of the most telling individual lines in Year of the Sword speaks of Assyrian authors writing in their native Assyrian Aramaic: “Every author, without exception, expresses a sense of shock that Germany and Austria, two Christian countries, could have found themselves on the same side as Turkey during the war.”

A hope for Christian solidarity from the West—which in the 19th century formed the basis of external Assyrian political and institutional engagement—shaded into a prayer-like approach to the international community. From the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 to the present day, Assyrians have been entrapped within systems of appeal and recourse to western powers, fu-

elled by a deep and tragic belief that the moral legitimacy of the Assyrian cause will finally be rewarded. Calls for a “safe haven” and “international protection” dominated Assyrian activist and advocacy efforts following the 2014 Islamic State invasion of the Nineveh Plain in Iraq, the last nexus of substantial Assyrian demographic concentration in the Middle East. It is deeply significant that Raphael Lemkin explicitly linked his novel category of genocide (among whose victims he listed “Christian Assyrians”) with the notion of international protection. The nationstate had created a brand of group massacre particular to its form, whose redress had to come through the moral power and legislated interventions of international institutions.

A lack of resources and state legitimacy following the genocide contributes to the ongoing failure (with some exceptions) by Assyrians to obtain recognition of it, a reward for its successful perpetration. The U.S. State Department, EU Parliament, and other bodies did, however, designate the more recent crimes of ISIS as genocide. In this case, the designation focused on the intention of the perpetrators and was not defined by the suffering of the victims, which consisted of an enumeration of religious groups, including Christians. No specific measures seeking to empower Assyrians followed the designation.

Genocide aims to erase the past in order to open a future free of its burdens. In Hakkari, the perpetrators were almost entirely successful in this aim. After thousands of years of continuous settlement by Assyrians, Hakkari exists today predominantly in a state of wilderness. Scattered ruins of churches—some 250 Assyrian churches and monasteries were destroyed—are quiet monuments to a genocide intimately remembered by its sons and daughters in Europe, yet largely unknown to the descendants of its perpetrators. Local Kurds often profess a lack of knowledge or curiosity as to why a Christian grandmother is listed on their ID cards. A local tradition of confusing crosses etched onto the stone of Assyrian churches with instructions to dig for treasure incites the exhumation of graves for personal enrichment, in a parody of excavation aimed at the recovery of the past.

Turkey refuses to acknowledge any genocide on its own soil. President Recep Erdoğan, who recently described the persecution of Muslims in Myanmar as genocide, said in 2009 that “it is impossible for Muslims to commit genocide.” Kurdish nationalist leaders continue to persecute Assyrians while occasionally invoking the events of the genocide as a way to underscore the need for an independent Kurdish state, dominated by the particular leadership making the invocation. Yacoub makes it clear that Kurds responded “enthusiastically under the planned and concerted direction of the Turkish authorities” to the call of “holy war proclaimed in Kurdistan” a century ago. Yet in a part of the world where martyrs are stacked like currency for claims made on the present, it is no surprise that the legacy of the Assyrian genocide, like ownership of the land that hosted it, is still up for grabs.





## Origins of our Great Assyrian New Year

*by Elizabeth S. Mickaily-Huber, Ph.D.*

The Assyrian New Year is known by many names: Kha b’Nisan, Resha d’Sheeta, or Akitu (as it was called by our ancient forefathers). Indeed, this holiday was meant to usher away winter and to celebrate the arrival of Spring, the revival of life and agricultural fertility so important to our ancestors, clearly a precursor to our beloved Christian holiday of Easter. Much of what is known about this holiday is revealed to us through cuneiform inscriptions on clay tablets found by archaeologists. Assyrians all over the world, in the diaspora, as well as in Iraq and Syria celebrate with parties, parades, picnics, delicious food, traditional costumes and general goodwill. There is also a unique tradition where Assyrian girls gather flowers and herbs, creating colorful bouquets called Diqna d’Nisan (meaning “Beard of Spring”) that are then hung from the roof tops of homes to welcome the New Year. Truly, it is a celebration that brings all Assyrians together, regardless of religious denomination, binding us together as a community and as a people descended from the Cradle of Civilization.

This holiday has its roots in ancient Mesopotamian religion whose calendar began on the first day of “Nisan” corresponding to our modern calendar on the 1st of April. In the Julian calendar, the vernal equinox moved gradually away from March 21. However, the Gregorian calendar reform restored the vernal equinox to its original date, but since the festival was now tied to the date, rather than to the astronomical event of its origins, Kha b’ Nisan remains fixed at March 21 in the Julian reckoning, corresponding to April 1 in the Gregorian calendar.

Traditionally, Akitu was a festival that lasted for twelve days, beginning on the first new moon after the Spring equinox. It was meant to celebrate the rebirth of the deity Marduk who created the world out of chaos in the famed Epic of Gilgamesh. As with many of the ancient gods of Mesopotamia, Marduk was both king and deity, having human attributes in addition to divine powers. Without a doubt, Akitu is one of the oldest recorded religious festivals in the world.

The Persian observance of Nowruz that celebrates the vernal equinox on March 21 likely originates from Akitu. In 556 B.C., Nabonidus, son of the Assyrian priestess Adad-Guppi of Harran, became King of Babylon. He reigned the city-state of Babylon until the invasion of Cyrus the Great of Persia in 539 B.C., year of the Fall of Babylon. It is said that Nowruz has been celebrated in Persia (modern day Iran) since that time. As a matter of fact, according to multiple sources, Persia’s rulers adopted the Babylonian calendar shortly after Babylon was conquered. The likelihood is therefore high that Nowruz is a direct descendant of the Mesopotamian celebration of Akitu.

So this year, as you celebrate Assyrian New Year on April 1 with your friends and family, spare a thought to your ancient ancestors who maintained our traditions for over 6 millennia through thick and through thin, remember your fellow Assyrians in the homeland who have suffered significantly over the past years, recognize your rich cultural heritage and language, and never forget that you did not choose to be Assyrian, you just got very very lucky!

**Happy Akitu 6768!**



## Assyrian New Year Parade

6767/2017 Chicago, USA



## Assyrian Foundation of America 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Appreciation Event Special Presentation by Joseph N. Hermiz



**Sunday, May 6, 2018 - from 3 pm 6 pm**  
**At the Best Western Hotel**  
**380 South Airport Blvd., South San Francisco, California**

RSVP required: [info@assyrianfoundation.org](mailto:info@assyrianfoundation.org)



# Turlock's Sargis joins Barcelona Academy

Courtesy of [www.TurlockmJournal.com](http://www.TurlockmJournal.com)



Turlock soccer standout Hayden Sargis wants to play professionally for FC Barcelona's first team in Spain. It would be the first and only time that a Turlock native had accomplished such a feat, but for now he is one step closer to achieving his ultimate goal after getting an opportunity to be part of the only Barcelona Academy in the United States.

The final decision was made this past weekend by Sargis and his family after the 15-year-old decided to pursue his life goal of becoming a pro soccer player for his favorite club.

*"My ultimate goal is to play for FC Barcelona's first team and this puts me one step closer," said Sargis.*

*"What has kept me motivated is my desire to keep playing, I watch all the pros, Messi, and I want to be like them one day."*

Argentinian-born pro Lionel Messi is widely considered the best player in the world and has played for Barcelona since 2004 when he was 17-years-old.

The Barcelona Academy is based out of Casa Grande, Arizona and has all the necessities for a young and developing athlete, including an on-campus school by Arizona State University.

Sargis will live on campus while attending school there as well, and focus on developing his soccer skills.

The opportunity happened very suddenly. Sargis was part of a summer camp program put on by Stanislaus State soccer coach Dana Taylor. At the camp, scouts saw the Turlock teen play.

*"The coaches saw what they needed to see and liked it and made requests and offers from there and the rest is history," said Hayden's father Antonio.*

Sargis will be leaving for Arizona on Saturday, beginning his journey to, hopefully, the pros.

*"I want to play for Barcelona in Spain. I will miss my family, but when I see Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, they left their families at 13 and it was probably hard for them," said Sargis. "But you need to sacrifice to get somewhere sometimes."*

Sargis, who played for the Sacramento Republic Academy for the past two seasons, will take on his old team with his new squad on Sept. 24 in Sacramento.

His first league game is Sept. 2.

*"My next step is to go through this year, to envision myself playing, but my next step for playing is getting invited to play in Spain. I will be playing back line and a little in the midfield," Sargis added. "My dad has helped me a lot, taking me everywhere, but it's a whole family effort and I like to thank Sacramento as well."*

*"We raised a great kid, from his school which is mostly my wife helping him to get these scholarships for the academy," Antonio added. "It's a family support all the way, we are all extremely proud of him. He is getting closer and is a determined kid. When he is out there it's on, that is his love and passion, mark my words he will achieve it, he will be at the highest level one day."*

# Shirvet Loby

(Green Bean Stew)

Created by: **Monika Vardeh & Flora Chalabi**

Servings: 5-7  
 Prep Time: 10 min  
 Cook Time: 1 hour  
 Total Time: 1 hour 10 min

- INGREDIENTS:**
- 1 lb chuck roast or steak
  - 1 lb frozen or fresh green beans
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1 Tb paprika
  - 1/2 cup tomato paste
  - 5- 6 cups of boiling water
  - fresh parsley for garnish

- INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Use a medium to large pot over medium heat for browning the meat.
  2. Cube the meat into 1-inch pieces and begin sautéing with a few Tb of canola oil for about 10-15 min (turn meat only 2-3 times, point here is to develop a nice crust on the outside)
  3. Add salt, paprika and tomato paste and cook for about 5 min, allowing the raw tomato paste flavor to cook out.
  4. Add 1/2 to 3/4 cups of boiling water, while constantly stirring and incorporating the paste into the water and meat.
  5. Let pot simmer for about 10 min before adding the remainder water (4-5 cups of boiling water)
  6. Lastly, add the green beans, put a lid over and allow to simmer over low heat for 1 hour.
  7. Add chopped, fresh parsley for garnish and flavor.
- Traditionally, you would prepare Assyrian white rice that you would serve with this Green bean stew. Enjoy!!!
- Recipe taken from:** <http://assyrianrecipes.com>
- "About Assyrian Recipes: We are 4 brothers who love to eat. When the wooden spoon wasn't used to chase us around the house, it helped make a great meal!"*





## Andrew Adam *Chiropractic College Graduation*

Andrew Jonathan Adam was born to Gilbert and Margaret Badal Adam in 1987. After high school, Andrew matriculated in CSU at the San Jose campus and completed his university studies, graduating in 2010 with a Bachelor's Degree. Subsequently, he worked for one year at Google, meanwhile he enrolled in additional science classes in Organic Chemistry and Physics while working full time. The following year, he applied to and was accepted at the Palmer College of Chiropractic Medicine. Andrew graduated in 2016 from Palmer with a degree of Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine (D.C.). Since his graduation, he has been involved in the field of Chiropractics. Andrew's inspiration in chiropractic even before matriculating in college was to pursue a non-invasive and holistic approach to treating patients.



## Welcome...

### Amarissa Violet Shabbas

We are happy to announce the newest addition to the Shabbas family. Amarissa Violet Shabbas was born on January 16th, 2018 in Concord, CA.

Her parents, Atur and Livia Shabbas, are very excited to share this news with everyone.



## SANDRA BONIAN

*By Eden Naby*

Marking the passage of the lives of Assyrians allows an avenue for detailing communal social and economic history. These details flesh out the political history of persecution that has led to the dispersion of this last Aramaic speaking community from the Middle East. Sandra Nader Bonian represents the pattern that begins with displacement by genocide, attempts to return to the home base, political persecution, and refuge in the West. It helps to answer the question, "Why do we leave the Middle East?"

My cousin (her grandmother Laya Dooman was my great-grandfather Benyamin Dooman's sister), was born when the extended family had fled Urmiah in 1918 to escape the Kurds and Turks (both local Azeris and the Ottoman invaders). By 1920 they had settled in Tabriz, where Sandra, the third surviving child of Elisha Nader and his wife Sophia, was born. The family returned to Urmiah when the Pahlavi government in Tehran deemed itself safe from irredentist Assyrian claims for Urmiah as a homeland. By the 1930s Tehran had forced the American missionaries who had saved many Christian refugees between 1914 and 1918 to depart Urmiah altogether.

Iran would not allow the return of those Urmiah Assyrians who had fled to the British-run refugee camps in Mesopotamia like Baquba. They ended up working as best they could in the petroleum industry or in businesses where their literacy in English allowed them to build a modicum of normal life.

On the eve of WWI, many Urmiah Assyrians owned property in villages and houses in Urmiah. Those who could return reclaimed those agricultural lands, and in some cases, successfully fought the legal battles through Iranian courts to gain control of property of dead relatives and those who had emigrated. Urmiah survivors gradually became economically successful enough to educate their children in professions, often in Tehran and Tabriz. Sandra's family owned vineyards Wazirawa, grain fields in Dizza, and an almond orchard in Digala. Their house on Urmiah's main thoroughfare, Pahlavi Avenue, had built-in benches on either side of the gate to the compound. I remember seeing Sophia and her mother-in-law, Esther, sitting on those benches.

Sandra completed high school in Urmiah and gained a two-year pedagogical degree in Tabriz. Back in Urmiah, she became an elementary school principal, thanks to help from well-placed Muslim friends. Teaching was a profession for which many Assyrians, especially women, were well-suited due to their higher rate of education than local Muslim women during the early part of this century. A beauty of note, Sandra had many suitors, including young and wealthy Muslims, among them the owner of the village of Gavilan, where one of the oldest Assyrian churches is located.

Elisha found a suitable young Assyrian, Yosep Bonian (Benyamin), who had been orphaned with the death of his Assyrian father on the flight to Hamadan in 1918. His mother Lucy, an Armenian refugee, from the Van area, was the sole known survivor of her entire family. After 1915, Urmiah provided refuge for survivors from southeast Turkey, both Armenian and Assyrian. As a young child fleeing Urmiah with his mother and father, Joseph had lost toes to frostbite in the mountains.

Sandra and Yosep settled in Urmiah but moved to Tehran where Yosep Bonian gave piano lessons and Sandra taught. Due to the collapse of the irredentist Azerbaijan Demokrat (1945-46) in which many Assyrians and Armenians participated, a number of Assyrian families fled to Baghdad. Yosep fled in 1951 and by 1957, all the Bonian family was living in Iraq. Sandra and her children visited Urmiah during the summers.

Ever industrious, instead of attempting to teach in a completely different language setting, Sandra apprenticed as a seamstress and soon established her own design and sewing business. Her new skills, much sought after at a time when factory made-clothing did not exist, came in handy when she and her husband moved to the United States where her elder daughter, Stella, lived with her own family.

The history of Assyrians with Iranian citizenship who took refuge in Iraq meant that, as Iran-Iraq relations deteriorated during the 1970s, often with an overt Kurdish component, the Baathist party forced these Assyrians out of Iraq. Some were simply put on trucks with 24 hour notice and dropped off across the border, anywhere. Others, like Sandra and her family, had the luxury of flying from Baghdad to Tehran. Thus in 1970 the Bonian family found themselves in Iran again.

Documents, language barriers and the hundreds of details of moving from one country to another stood in the way of the education of the three college-aged children (Stella, Stephen, Svetlana). But thanks to other Assyrians and knowledgeable relatives such as the Gracy Atanouspour, principal of Shushan Assyrian School in Tehran, and wife of Homer Nader, the children's maternal uncle, paths were smoothed. Gradually one by one, the children left Iran, Stella (Seiders) to Tulsa, Oklahoma, Stephen (who has trained at al-Hikma University, is now a Jesuit father) to various posts around the world, including Beirut, Jerusalem and US cities, and Svetlana (O'Gorman) to London. Sandra and her husband left Tehran in 1979, a few months after Iran became Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic State.

Sandra has four grandchildren, all half-Assyrian, and three great grandchildren. The lands and house in Urmiah were sold to non-Assyrians in 1976. Like many of us, our personal roots have survived, but we need to work harder for our cultural branches to thrive.



*Sarah and Sandra stand to the left with their brother Homer and their cousin Charles Sayad just behind them*



*the Bonians in Baghdad 1968*



Robert B. Adam 1955 – 2017

By Gilbert Adam

I would like to pay tribute and to celebrate the life of my beloved brother Robert Adam, a long time resident of Scottsdale, Arizona, having resided there for well over 20 years. Prior to that, among other places, he lives in San Mateo for about 11 years, followed by more than 4 years in the Los Angeles area.

Robert was born in Kirkuk, Iraq on July 31, 1955, the second son to Baba and Florence Adam. Robert is survived by his mother Florence, his wife Kim, his brothers Gilbert and Raman, his nephews Christopher, Dr. Andrew, and niece Catherine. Robert is also survives by his uncle Ferdinand and aunties Alice, Gladys, as well as many cousins and relatives. As for our dad, he passed away in 1997.

Robert Adam was a beloved son and brother, devoted husband and cherished uncle who passed away on Saturday, September 23, 2017. He was preceded in death by his dad, his uncles Phrydon, Alfred, and Pnoel, as well as aunts Germaine and Agnes.

It seems surreal that Robert passed away when he was so full of life just before his illness. You just never know what curve ball life throws at you.

Robert immigrated with his family to the United States, arriving in Ohio on November 1, 1970, where the whole family spent some time with Uncle Alfred and his family. Subsequently, he arrived in California and established residence in the Bay Area.

Among his many talents and pastime pursuits, Robert loved playing golf and dancing. Also, he was an avid sportsman, including being a fearless high-jump diver, an ardent water and jet-skier, enjoying boating, and deep sea fishing, catching fish more than twice his size, an automotive accomplished do-it-yourselfer, and motorcyclist. His family and friends will forever miss his infectious smile and quick sense of humor and intelligence. He was nicknamed the Mayor of Scottsdale due to his popularity and long time residency there.

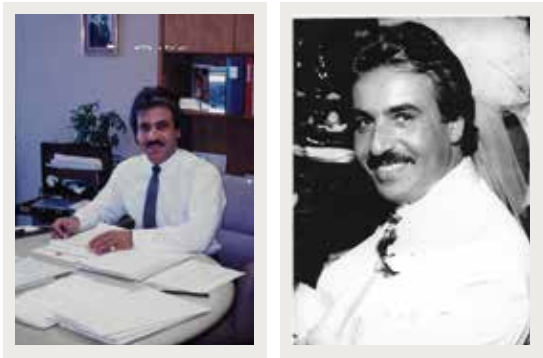
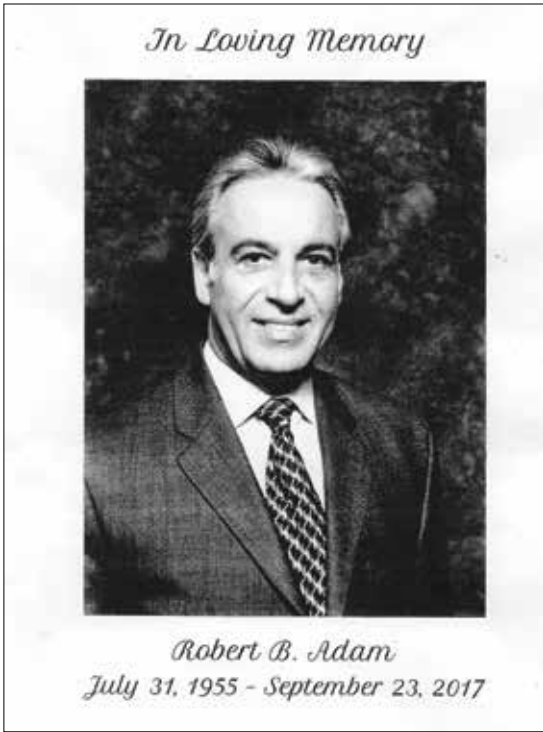
During his professional career, Robert received many accolades. Among his commendations was being names as Director of the Year for all Hyatt Hotels Worldwide. Prior to that, for more than six years, he worked as the Banquet Manager at the Hyatt Burlingame. The next 3 years, he held the Catering Manager position at the Hyatt Regency Los Angeles. Some of his other positions were Director of Catering and Conference Services for a period of fifteen years at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort. He was also promoted to the position of Director of Catering at the Prestigious Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa. Additionally, he held the position of Director of Events and Catering plus Conference Services at another upscale location, a 5-star Hilton Hotel called the Boulders, a Waldorf Astoria Resort. He was recognized by Hilton Hotels and Resorts as top producer. The last position he held was that of Director of Meetings and Events at the beautiful Bacara Resort and Spa in Santa Barbara, California. By this time, his continued affliction coupled with misdirected medical treatment caused his health to deteriorate. His illness' trajectory left him hoping against hope, resulting in his untimely passing. He had been battling his ailment courageously for almost two years. Yet, eventually, he succumbed to his illness. He was laid to rest in the Bay Area.

Robert had an outgoing personality. Because of his exuberant and extroverted demeanor, he socialized with famous personalities including Robin Williams and Jay Leno, and rubbed elbows with Mohammad Ali, The Raiders Howie Long, the martial artist movie star Chuck Norris and met Presidents Obama, Bush, Clinton and Reagan.

Robert's business acumen skills included specialties in budgeting, marketing, organizational skills, management and staff training. His professional qualifications included catering and conference services, with many years of management experience and an exceptionally strong track record of successfully directing, catering, and conference services at high-end four-star/ four-diamond hotels and resorts. During corporate meetings, he was values as an out-of-the-box strategic thinking, implementing innovative marketing strategies and as an execution-minded visionary adept at building client loyalty and generating repeat business. Robert increased his departments' profits exponentially.

We are all mortals. The only thing that we can carry is our legacy. The memory of Robert's love for his mom, wife, brothers, relatives and friends will endure. All else is fleeting. Only our legacy is not transient. Robert was beloved by all who were fortunate enough to have known him. He worked hard, up to 16 hours a day, sometimes 6 or 7 days a week, at times answering more than 200 emails a day, in addition to carrying our his heavy responsibilities.

Robert did have a heart of gold and still had so much potential to offer. The following poem titled "God saw" seems to be quite fitting in this context:



Robert did have a heart of gold and still had so much potential to offer. The following poem titled "God saw" seems to be quite fitting in this context:

*"God saw your getting tired  
And a cure was not to be,  
So he put his arms around you  
And whispered, "Come to me"  
With tearful eyes we watched you,  
We saw you pass away,  
Although we love you dearly,  
We could not make you stay,  
A golden heart stopped beating,  
Hard working hands at rest,  
God broke our hearts to prove to us,  
He only takes the best."*

Minashe (Michael) Yonan 1934 - 2018

Passed away January 18th, 2018

He was born on May 15th, 1934 in Urmia, Iran to Soreya and Samuel Yonan. He was the youngest child of four children; one brother, Aprim and two sisters, Julia and Maria.

He spent his teenage years living in Iraq with his brother and his family and attended private school to study English and Assyrian at Habbaniya air base.

In his early 20's, he learned to make leather goods and opened a shoe shop in Iraq to help support his family. He also studied electronics and earned



a technical certification from the US. Soon after, he was hired by the American Embassy in Iraq as a Clerk and worked there with his brother for several years. He was highly valued and rewarded for his outstanding service while working there.

At the age of 28, he moved to England and shortly after to the US where he met his wife, Grazia Patricia Johnson Yonan. They married on May 15, 1965, and raised their family in Fremont, CA.

Michael is survived by his three children; Jeffrey, Jennifer Bean and Jonathan Yonan and three grandchildren; Stephanie Marie Bean, Breann Patricia Yonan and Avarie Charli Ann Yonan.

Basso Badal 1933 - 2018

By Solomon S Solomon

Basso passed away in Scottsdale, Arizona on January 27, 2018 at home following an illness of six months. She was laid to rest at "Phoenix Memorial Park". Following funeral and burial services presided by Bishop Mar Aprim and four priests at Saint Peter Assyrian Church of the East, everyone returned to the church to have a memorial luncheon offered by her family.

Basso was born in Dohuk, Iraq in 1933 to Sliwo Solomon and Susember Younathan Solomon. Shortly thereafter, the family moved to Baghdad. In 1952, Basso was married to Yousip Eyou Badal in Shaiba and they lived in Basra until 1975, when the family moved to Baghdad. There, the couple had four children (after having two in Basra). In 1976, the family immigrated to the U.S.A., settling in Chicago for the next 21 years. In 1997, the couple and their children moved to Arizona with the exception of their son Tony who moved to California with his wife.

Basso is survived by her husband Yousip of Scottsdale and six children. Tony and his wife Virginia of California, Rony and his wife Caroline of Scottsdale, Johny, Jaklin Rains, Nuha Safer and Edmon, all in Scottsdale, as well as eleven grandchildren. Basso is also survived by a siste, Khaton Odisho in the U.S. along with and three brothers: Joseph, David, and Solomon.

May her soul rest in peace in heaven.

Solomon (Sawa) Solomon







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The Assyrian Observer  
Editor Andrious Mama Jotyar  
108 Alderney Road  
Slade Green, Kent DA8 2JD  
United Kingdom

29 January 2018

Dr. Ninwe Maraha  
Editor, Nineveh Magazine.

Dear Madam:

Thank you for sending to me two copies of Nineveh Magazine that I find of great interest. In future please sent me only one copy. Assyrian Observer, Assyrian Charity and myself are one person. AMJ as shown above.

My check is enclosed for \$400 Ex Assyrian Charity & Relief Fund of U.K., as follows:  
\$350 Assyrian Foundation of America donation for needy.  
\$50 for 1 copy Nineveh Magazine 2018 Subscription for AMJ  
address as shown above.

By separate post I am also sending to you two separate issues of the Assyrian Observer for your perusal.  
Please also let members of your Nineveh Board see them and many thanks too.

Dear Rabi Ninwe:

I will be grateful if you could print the following note in the next issue of the esteemed Nineveh Magazine:

I felt so sentimentally, reading the short but highly great dedication towards an Assyrian Nationalistic son, the late Nadam Yonadam, who was so sadly killed-in-action in the beloved country of his forefathers Iraq, while with the coalition American forces People of all nationalities should remember and should so respect Iraq more than other man-made countries – because God Almighty created mankind in the Garden of Eden in Iraq.

I also felt so saddened reading the short eulogy of the late Arpine Onick as we were both students at the same school at the former RAF Station Habbaniya. The correct name of the school was: "The Assyrian/ Armenian Union School". - This came about when the Baquba Refugee Camps were disbanded in 1923, the Assyrians, Armenians and Assyrian Levy Soldiers had separate schools, three in all at Hanaidi Baghdad. When we moved to Habbaniya the three schools having majority of Assyrian & Armenian united to this day.

Our best regards to you as well as the executive committee members especially those whom I know: Dr Ninwe Maraha, Dr. Robert Karoukian and the present President Jackline Yelda.

Yours Sincerely,  
Andrious Mama Jotyar, MBE address as shown above.  
May God Almighty Bless you and protect you all too. - AMJ  
Note: This letter will also appear in the next issue of Assyrian Observer.

The following companies offer gift matching programs to employees.  
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January 19, 2018

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On behalf of the RCUCF Board of Directors and Redwood Credit Union, along with our partners The Press Democrat and Senator Mike McGuire, our heartfelt thank you for helping the victims of the North Bay fires.

Best Regards,  
Brett Martinez  
President & CEO  
Redwood Credit Union  
Cynthia Negri  
President  
Redwood Credit Union Community Fund, Inc.

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# Turkey's Systematic Persecution of Religious Minorities

Courtesy of AINA.org



The St. Gabriel Assyrian Monastery, founded in 397 A.D., in Midyat, Turkey. Despite the world-wide recognition of the status of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as the spiritual leader of all Orthodox Christians, the government of Turkey will give no legal standing and status to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the historical Holy Center of Orthodox Christianity at the Phanar, in Istanbul. The lack of legal standing and status in essence nullifies property and other fundamental civil rights in Turkey for the Ecumenical Patriarchate which precludes its full exercise of religious freedom. The Ecumenical Patriarchate cannot own in its name the churches to serve the faithful or the cemeteries to provide for their repose. Since it lacks a legal standing, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is powerless to pursue legal remedies to assert property rights or even seek to repair deteriorating property without government approval.

Instead and in lieu of legal standing, Turkey has established a system of minority (community) foundations for Orthodox Christians and other non-Muslim religious minorities to hold properties supervised and controlled by the Turkish government's General Directorate of Foundations. The Directorate regulates all the activities of religious community foundations which include approximately 75 Greek Orthodox, 42 Armenian and 19 Jewish foundations. The 1935 Law on Religious Foundations, and a subsequent 1936 Decree, required all foundations, Muslim or non-Muslim, to declare their properties by registering the same with the General Directorate of Foundations.

Through its controls, the government of Turkey has nationalized and/or declared certain Greek Orthodox and other religious minority foundations as non-functioning with no right of appeal. This resulted in the systematic seizure of thousands of properties of Christian and other non-Muslim religious minorities in the years that followed, including thousands of income producing and valuable properties of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In 1936 the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its churches and institutions, owned approximately 8,000 properties. In 1998, 2,000 remained and today fewer than 500 properties are owned by minority foundations loyal to the Ecumeni-

cal Patriarchate, most of which are churches, cemeteries, or other properties which produce no income.

With Turkey seeking accession to the European Union, it sought to improve the property restrictions on non-Muslim religious minority foundations. In this regard, the 1935 Law on Religious Foundations was amended during the years of 2002 to 2008 to allow religious minority foundations, with restrictions, to acquire properties and apply for the return of confiscated properties. Within this historical context, Turkey's then Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan (now President), also announced by Decree, not parliamentary law, on August 27, 2011, that 162 recognized minority foundations may apply to regain religious properties declared and registered in 1936 and confiscated from them by the state or they could seek compensation. The Decree provided that applications to regain properties generally had to be made within 12 months--by August 27, 2012-- and regulations for implementation were adopted October 1, 2011.

Of the 162 recognized minority foundations, more than 70 Greek Orthodox foundations claimed and timely submitted applications for more than 1200 properties in issue. Of these applications, more than 300 were accepted, and some 900 were rejected. Of the applications that were accepted, few resulted in the actual transfer of title and few were income producing properties. Although disputed by Turkey, religious minorities reported that administration by the General Directorate of Foundations was slow and arbitrary as even accepted applications were not always processed. The August 27, 2012 submission deadline also did not allow sufficient time to submit the required volume of paper work for most of the property applications. This was further complicated by the fact that local Turkish Government offices did not timely respond to requests for title documents which prevented processing within the deadline.

In addition, the Decree is limited. Properties not declared by religious minority foundations under the 1936 law are not covered. Also, certain religious institutions, including Catholic churches, do not have foundations or a legal status and are not covered. Most

important, it does not address the properties of seized religious minority foundations that the government took over because of its claim of lack of foundation management or charitable purposes. Further, under the Decree, the determination of compensation, when in issue, is not made by an independent body but rather by the government.

Accordingly, despite Turkey's claims that the value of properties returned to all non-Muslim religious minorities exceeds one billion dollars, the application procedures in reality proved to be more form over substance. In the end, it was not just the number of properties returned to foundations loyal to the Ecumenical Patriarchate or other religious minority foundations that mattered, but the quality of properties returned. If properties are not income producing, they cannot be properly maintained. In this regard and of most importance, the Turkish government continued to delay or allow the election of religious minority foundation board members to manage the properties. Without functioning religious minority foundations, the return of property is meaningless because the properties, under existing Turkish law, cannot be managed effectively. Turkish law also restricts the eligibility of Orthodox Christians who wish to serve as religious minority foundation board members to manage the foundations. Clergy are not allowed to serve. With the significant decline in population of Orthodox Christians eligible to be elected board members, the religious minority foundations will not be able to sustain returned properties. With the lack of legal standing and status, the government then has the ability to declare the property abandoned and seize the same without compensation.

While Turkey points to the fact that its Sunni Muslim majority religion also lacks a legal personality, the Sunni Muslims are treated in a more favorable manner. For all practical purposes Sunni Muslims have a "legal status" exercised through The Diyanet or Directorate ( Presidency ) of Religious Affairs of the government which is all Sunni Muslim, and in effect controls the exercise of religious freedom in Turkey. The Diyanet administers mosques which must be all Sunni and oversees all its religious training schools. It obtains billions of dollars from the government to function. Imans and other religious em-

ployees are paid by the government. Without any such financial support combined with the lack of a legal status, non-Muslim religious minorities, including the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Turkey's Alevi Muslim minority, have difficulty in exercising religious freedom without sufficient foundation properties to produce income. The General Directorate of Foundations in its administration has limited the financial viability of religious minority community foundations.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has been an alternative avenue to pursue Christian and other non-Muslim religious minority property rights in Turkey. For example, after extensive litigation, the Ecumenical Patriarchate obtained a ECHR Judgment in 2008 for the return of the Prinkipos (Buyukada) Orphanage Building. The Judgment produced in November 2010 a deed title for the property in the name of Rum Patrikhanesi, Patriarchate of the Roman Greeks, the official name for the Ecumenical Patriarchate used by the government of Turkey. The deed title as issued and accepted by the Turkish courts in the name of Rum Patrikhanesi in effect created a de facto legal status. It established a legal argument to further the cause of obtaining official recognition of a legal personality for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and all religious minorities.

Also, in March 2011, Turkey implemented a ECHR Judgment of March 2009 which returned property rights to the Greek Orthodox minority foundation, Kimisis Theodokou Greek Orthodox Church, on the island of Tenedos (Bozcaada).

Further, a significant ECHR case was settled in 2013 whereby the General Directorate of Foundations returned the historic former Ayia Foka Greek Elementary School building in Istanbul to the foundation despite the fact that it was utilized as the offices of the government's European Union Ministry.

However, the government of Turkey has refused to recognize these developments as confirming legal status and has failed to register additional properties in the name of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The lack of legal status persists. This is in stark contrast to Turkey's international and national human rights obligations.

Turkey is a member of the United Nations, Council of Europe, NATO, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and in 2005 began formal accession negotiations to join the European Union. Moreover, by virtue of its membership in all these organizations, Turkey has taken on binding obligations to protect the rights of religious minorities.

As a participating state in OSCE, Turkey has obligations under Article VII of the Helsinki Accords to guarantee and protect the rights of national minorities. The Concluding Document of the 1989 Vienna Meeting of the organization requires participating states to protect the rights of religious communities. As a member of the Council of Europe, Turkey has ratified the European Convention on Hu-

man Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Article 9 of the Convention requires Turkey as a member state to protect freedom of religion, including the right to manifest religion in worship, teaching, practice, and observance, subject only to limitations as necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of the public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

In the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, Turkey guaranteed freedom of religion to its non-Muslim religious minorities. Articles 40 and 42 granted non-Muslim religious minorities autonomy and legal status.

***"All facilities and authorisation will be granted to the pious foundations, and to the religious and charitable institutions of the said minorities at present existing in Turkey, and the Turkish Government will not refuse, for the formation of new religious and charitable institutions, any necessary facilities which are guaranteed to other private institutions of that nature." (Article 42, para. 3).***

With the lack of legal standing on property rights for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other non-Muslim religious minorities, these rights have not been respected by Turkey. History has also shown that the Ecumenical Patriarchate itself has been further deprived of other significant properties by virtue of its religious identity.

During the time of the Treaty of Lausanne negotiations, the Turkish delegation demanded that the Ecumenical Patriarchate be removed from Turkey as it symbolized the last remnants of an international Christian and Greek religious presence in Turkey. Further, at that time, a bill was introduced in the government of Turkey to establish a so-called Turkish National Orthodox Church to counter the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This attempt to create a Turkish National Orthodox Church with government support was led by a since excommunicated village priest known as "Papa Eftim," who in 1922 proclaimed a "Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate" with no authority, recognition or congregation.

The status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to be recognized and remain in Turkey was finally settled by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 and reaffirmed by a League of Nations Settlement in 1930. However, this unrecognized priest, with Turkish government support, had seized in the interim Ecumenical Patriarchate churches and properties in the Galata region of Istanbul that his family descendants continue to hold to date. The Ecumenical Patriarchate has repeatedly called upon the government of Turkey to return the churches and properties unlawfully seized but to no avail.

Further complicating religious freedom, property and fundamental rights for Christian and other non-Muslim religious minorities is the recent political unrest in Turkey. In July 2016, an attempted coup against the government of Turkey took place by an alleged faction of the military which Turkey blamed on Fethullah Gulen, a Muslim cleric and his followers. The government called on Turkish citizens to flood the streets and thwarted the coup. Thereafter, Turkey called for the extradition of Fethullah Gulen who now resides and is based in the State of Pennsylvania. A massive government crackdown occurred, that resulted in an estimated 9000 police fired, 6000 military arrested, 3000 judges suspended, 21,000 teachers suspended, and 1500 university deans ordered to resign. Turkey ordered a 3-month state of emergency followed by the government shutdown of 45 newspapers, 16 television channels, and 15 magazines.

As the above significant events unfolded in Turkey, false and derogatory articles were reported in Turkey and Greece seeking to tie His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Fethullah Gulen and the failed coup. The intent was to disparage the Ecumenical Patriarchate and further inflame an anti-Christian climate in Turkey. Although the Ecumenical Patriarchate is committed to the resolution of all issues of religious freedom and property rights peacefully and within the existing government in Turkey, the false reporting threatens the progress to seek additional property rights and religious freedom for Orthodox Christians and other religious minorities.

In April 2017, Turkey's Constitutional Referendum vote approved calls for 2019 elections that will replace Turkey's parliamentary system with an all-powerful presidency and abolish the office of prime minister. The result will likely be to cement the absolute control of President Erdogan and his political ruling party. With absolute control coupled with Sunni Muslim dominance, Alevi Muslims, Christian, and other religious minorities fear further restrictions on religious freedom.

Turkey should embrace the historical roots of Christian heritage and other faiths in its lands. It should look upon His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and all religious minority leaders, and their institutions, for their accomplishments and their desire to live in peace with equal property and fundamental rights. Turkey seeks to join the European Union and has binding obligations to ensure religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other religious minorities that must be enforced. However, the recent political movement in Turkey toward Sunni Muslim uniformity in the government, education, and institutions throughout the country is cause for concern. The need continues for world-wide diplomatic efforts from other countries to exert political pressure on Turkey to require the government to comply with its binding human rights and religious freedom obligations. Legal standing and status for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other religious minorities that will provide meaningful property rights is the first step.



# Local cleats artist gets big break with Bears: ‘This can be an empire for him’

Courtesy of Chicago Tribune

There’s an obvious intensity in Marvin Baroota’s stare. He’s leaning over a work bench, his neck extended and an airbrush in his right hand. At the moment, he’s meticulously spraying clouds onto a pair of Under Armour cleats for Bears cornerback Cre’Von LeBlanc. Baroota apologizes as he squeezes in lunch, occasionally taking bites of a grilled cheese while he works. He also apologizes for his fatigue, having slept, he says, no more than two hours the previous night. Beside him are his two favorite forms of sustenance — a can of Red Bull, empty, and an almost cashed bag of sunflower seeds. As any artist will attest, 90 minutes can quickly turn into five hours when you become immersed in the details. “It’s crazy sometimes,” Baroota says, “how the time passes.” This month, Baroota has been engrossed in the biggest stage of his new career venture. Earlier this year, he landed a contract with the Bears to be their go-to artist for the NFL’s Week 13 “My Cause, My Cleats” campaign, a weekend that allows players to promote charitable causes on their shoes. On Sunday at Soldier Field, Baroota’s work will be on display when the Bears host the 49ers. In all, the 24-year-old Des Plaines resident hand-painted cleats for 23 Bears to wear

this weekend, taking creative license to best match each player’s charitable cause with his personality. It was a major undertaking for a budding cleats artist. And yes, Baroota laughs when he acknowledges that a year and a half ago he had no idea that “cleats artist” could be a career path. “I honestly had no clue this was actually a thing,” he says. Now Baroota is the founder, owner, CEO and — OK, yes — the lone employee of SoLe-gitCustoms. A graduate of Maine East High School, Baroota lives in a duplex with his parents and two of his siblings. His current studio is upstairs, a small bedroom his older sister used to occupy. It has been converted into Baroota’s dream chamber. With the tight workspace and long hours recently, Baroota has had to push to keep his creativity stimulated. “I feel like I own my own sweatshop,” he says. “For myself.” But his rise in this still rather small niche can be summarized with the two words he asked himself when he first started. Why not? Social skills

In many ways, this traces back to Baroota’s boredom with his old job and Danny Trevathan’s Halloween obsession. Looking for a change from the graphic design work he

was doing, specializing in website and logo design, Baroota discovered the world of custom-designed cleats. He began dabbling with designs. And ultimately, he tried what any ambitious millennial would. He cast a wide net on social media, reaching out to NFL players through Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. Trevathan was among those he first targeted. “What’s the worst that’s going to happen?” Baroota says. “That these guys are going to tell me no?” When Trevathan replied on Snapchat, Baroota knew he had his opening. “I could feel he was passionate about his designs and his work,” Trevathan says. “So why not give him the opportunity? Usually I might just look the other way. But he was persistent. I was new to Chicago. And I needed somebody to help me get one pair of cleats to pop.” Thus, the first pair of cleats Baroota ever doctored up were the Halloween-themed navy-and-orange Nikes that Trevathan wore for the Bears’ Oct. 31 win over the Vikings in 2016. Initially, Trevathan was surprised to learn that Baroota knew all about his lifelong interest in Halloween. “He did his film study, I guess.” The Bears linebacker was impressed by the bats and the jack-o-lantern painted along the



side of his cleats as well as the “trick or treat” message mixed in. Trevathan also loved the words scrawled across the Velcro straps — “Lion King,” an homage to his favorite animal and the “Lion-backer” moniker he was given in Denver. “Lions are hunters,” Trevathan said. “The kings of the jungle. They don’t take nothing from nobody. They lick their wounds and they get back to work. That’s how that name came about. It was cool to have that represented on the shoes.” Trevathan tweeted a short video of the cleats a few hours before kickoff that night. Teammates gave the shoes a look and started talking. And, well, that’s how word spreads.

Baroota also got lucky connecting with Cardinals Pro Bowl defensive back Tyrann Mathieu. His initial message sat in Mathieu’s Twitter mentions for months. But as Mathieu aimed to inject his 2017 season with added flair, he eventually replied. “There are a lot of people who reach out and hit you up wanting to do some kind of business,” Mathieu says. “They have these ideas. People want to be your stylist, your financial adviser, your lawyer. I usually don’t respond. But this was different. I felt like I wanted to try something new with my cleats. And I gave Marvin a shot.” Why not? The first pair of decorated cleats Mathieu wore — in the Cardinals’ August exhibition game against the Bears — were shiny red with an image of a cardinal split across both shoe tops. Baroota also sent Mathieu a pair of brown cleats with an Arizona desert theme and some gray shoes with a honey badger emblazoned on. “Rarely do I give him ideas,” Mathieu says. “I usually just send him some cleats and let him

do his thing. I don’t try to put restrictions on him. I don’t want to put anything in his head. I want the artist to be the artist. And he definitely comes through.” Baroota has since done a dozen other pairs for Mathieu, none more flashy than a pair of Louboutin-inspired cleats the Cardinals safety wore before his Nov. 9 game against the Seahawks. White cleats, bright red soles and more than 150 tiny spikes screwed into the leather. “Those I couldn’t wear during a game,” Mathieu says. “I’m pretty sure they’d have thrown me out. But man, it was a good look.”

Creative license It’s hard to pin down exactly when this customized cleats phenomenon became a thing. Baroota gives a nod to Brandon Marshall, who drew attention and a \$10,500 fine for wearing lime green cleats during a Monday night game for the Bears in 2013. Marshall was raising awareness for mental health issues. Bears cornerback Prince Amukamara first noticed Giants teammates Odell Beckham Jr. and Victor Cruz dabbling in personalized cleats during his last season in New York in 2015. “They always had something new,” Amukamara said. “I still remember these cleats Odell wore with Rudolph and these little jingle bells. And when he was in that feud with Josh Norman, Josh was known as Batman. So Odell came back with Joker on his cleats. I enjoyed that creativity.” Amukamara is excited to wear one pair of his Baroota-designed cleats Sunday. They’re Wonder Woman-themed as a tribute to Charlotte Rogers, the 14-month-old daughter of Bears assistant athletic trainer Will Rogers, who dressed as Wonder Woman for Halloween amid her battle with leukemia. “Hopeful-

ly,” Amukamara said, “this will help spread awareness for leukemia and childhood cancer.” Baroota charges between \$250 and \$400 per job for his artistry (shoes sometimes included) and says one job can take anywhere from three to 10 hours, based on the intricacies. “Last year, I was pushing this on the players,” Baroota says. “Now guys are sending me cleats and wanting me to do my thing.” As a lifelong Bears fan, Baroota has also been pinching himself as he realizes a dream of working with the organization. As for the fad? Trevathan said this is the natural next frontier for players who strive to complement their play with the right combination of style and swagger. This is just a new avenue.

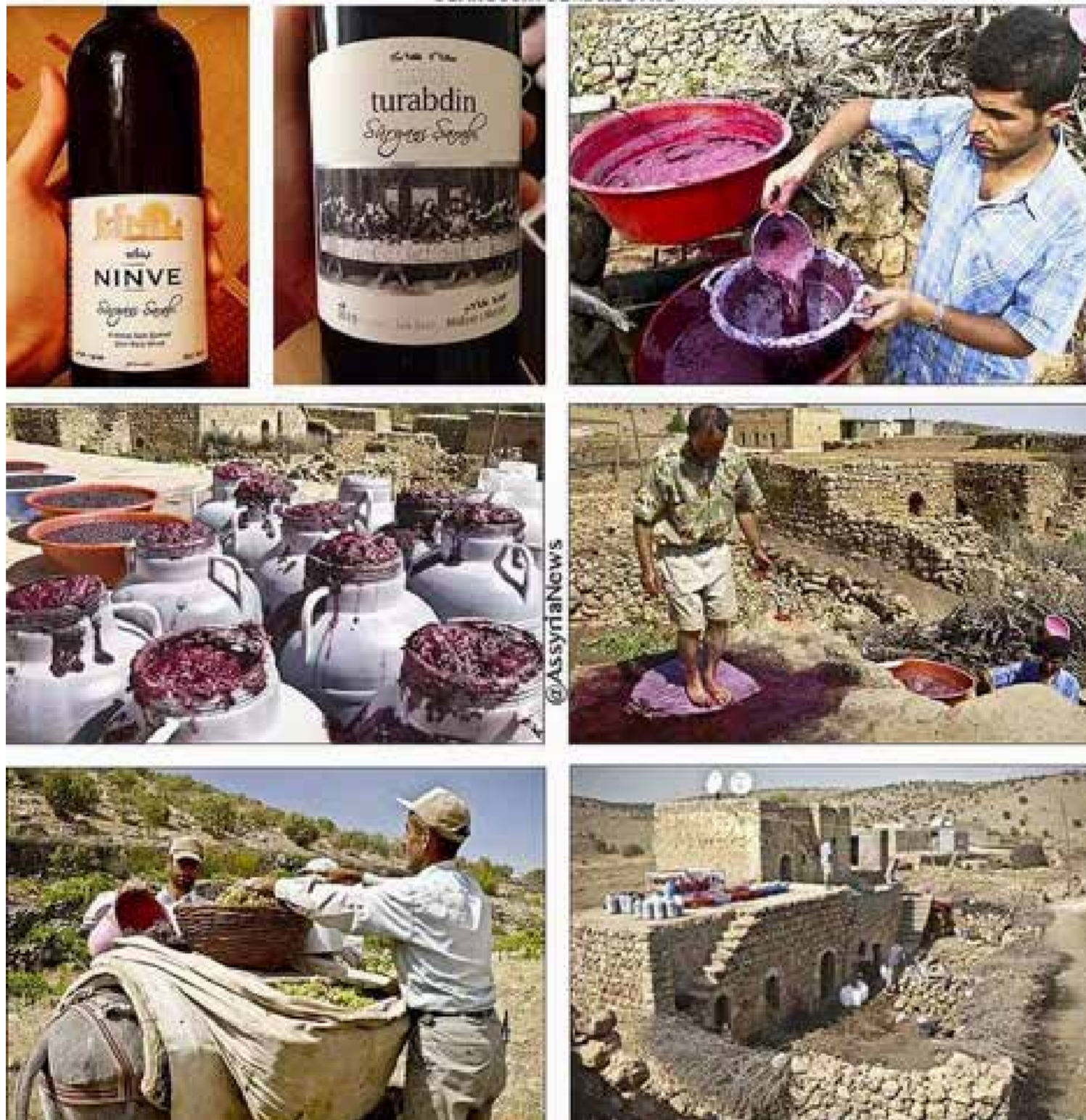
Mathieu added, “Everybody wants to be different. Especially on the football field. And we have so many uniform codes and restrictions, guys can’t always dress how they want to dress and feel how they want to feel. I think the cleats part of this has given guys an outlet to express themselves.” Mathieu laughs at the origins of his relationship with Baroota. This all began with a stranger 1,700 miles away sending unprompted solicitation on social media. Now that random stranger has a growing clientele of NFL players. “I’m not surprised,” Mathieu says. “Especially in this day and age. All you really need is a little bit of faith and confidence. And just shoot your shot. Marvin took his shot. And things are starting to go well.” Trevathan jokes that whenever he meets up with Baroota, Baroota’s fingers are caked in paint. “That lets me know he’s working.” “This can be an empire for him,” the linebacker adds. “It’s skyrocketing.”





# OLD WINE MAKING PROCESS BY THE ASSYRIANS IN TURABDIN

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## ܐܬܬܐ ܕܝܠܕܐ ܕܝܠܕܐ ASSYRIAN BABY NAMES



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BABELBABYLONIABAHRAHROBARBARABARDAYSANBARDIN  
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# Mass Exodus: The Forced Displacement of Iraq’s Indigenous Christian Assyrians, How and Why State Actors and the International Human Rights Regime Failed in Their Responsibility to Protect This Vulnerable Minority Community

Joseph Haweil BA(Hons)Melb\*\*

Mass Exodus: The Forced Displacement of The onslaught of the so-called Islamic State in the Middle East has brought a renewed international focus on the status and condition of ethnic and religious minorities in the region. In the case of Iraq, Christians, including the country’s indigenous Assyrians have historically been the largest non-Muslim minority group. While the barbarity and provocativeness of the Islamic State and similar groups has been the catalyst for the noted international attention, the modern plight of Iraq’s Christian minorities actually has its inception in the United States-led intervention in Iraq and the toppling of Saddam Hussein’s Baathist regime in 2003. Since that time minorities have suffered from ‘killings, kidnappings, torture, harassment, forced conversions and the destruction of homes and property’ on a disproportionate and targeted scale. So severe has been the impact of these human rights abuses and so large the scale of subsequent mass displacement that leading international journals of record such as The New York Times have boldly asked, ‘Is This the End of Christianity in the Middle East?’ Indeed, commentators warned as early as 2008 that ‘Iraq’s indigenous Assyrians are facing cleansing from Iraq if the U.S. Government continues to ignore the crisis and does not take action immediately.’ It is this theme of ‘taking action’, that is, intervention on behalf of this vulnerable minority community which this paper will examine closely in assessing how and why state actors and the international human rights regime more broadly, failed in their ‘responsibility to protect’. Lord Jonathan Sacks, former chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom has argued that “the ethnic cleansing of Christians throughout the Middle East is one of the crimes against humanity of our time.’ This significant assessment underscores the importance of a scholarly examination of this subject. Although this topic is contemporary and remains both a lived-reality on-the-ground for the communities concerned and the subject of attention governmentally, meaning can be drawn from analysis and reporting published to date. Therefore, this research paper will draw in particular on reports, publications and statements from state actors and key parties in human rights global governance.

## A Historical Chain of Persecution and Mass Displacement

The rapid decline of an Assyrian presence in Iraq is most appropriately considered in the historical context of wider Christian persecution and mass displacement in the Middle East. Todd Johnson of the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary asserts that in 1910 Christians represented 13.6% of the Middle East’s population. He goes on to argue that by the 2025, Christians are expected to represent just 3% of the Middle East largely as a result of emigration. More specifically, Iraq’s Christian community has witnessed the most rapid and staggering decline. The 1987 Iraqi census, the nation’s last official national count enumerated 1.4 million Christians in Iraq. In 2011, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq noted that since 2003, between 250,000-500,000 Christians, about half the Christian population had left the country. A more recent report published in 2016 by Open Doors, the University of East London and others following the rise of the Islamic State estimated just 200,000-250,000 Christians left in Iraq noting that of 250,000 registered Iraqi refugees in Syria between 2004 and 2010, 44% were Christian, a significantly disproportionate sum. While these figures affirm the plight facing Christians in the region, they fall within a wider pattern where, according to the International Society for Human Rights, 80% of all acts of religious discrimination in the world are directed at Christians. Adding to the latter analysis, a 2012 Pew Research Center study found that Christians experienced harassment and discrimination in 135 countries because of their faith. The Assyrians have a long history of persecution in the Middle East and in Iraq both before and after the Republic’s formation in 1932. This chain of persecution includes the genocide against the Assyrians in the early twentieth century, the quest of Saddam Hussein to assimilate Christians to an Arabic Iraqi nation between 1974 and 1989, and at the hands of Islamist militants in the wake of the Iraq War of 2003.’ Since over-running large swathes of Iraqi territory in 2014, including Mosul and the Nineveh Plains, the historic homeland of Iraq’s Assyrians, the Islamic State has become the latest facilitator of forced displacement. The century-long historical pattern of severe human rights abuses has therefore been the primary driver of the Assyrians’ ensuing mass displacement from Iraq. As this paper will examine, despite the well-documented and widely reported numerical decline post-2003, state actors and the international human rights regime have

been dormant in their response, not having undertaken to tangibly stem the flow of Assyrians from Iraq.

## The Moral Culpability of the Republic of Iraq

Assyrians have historically had a ‘contentious relationship with sites of power’. As early as the British Mandate of Iraq the Assyrians had actively pursued repatriation to their homelands in the Hakkari Mountains in Turkey, sought self-determination and resisted accommodation in a new Iraqi state without autonomy. This lengthy antagonism coupled with the distinctiveness of Assyrians as a non-Muslim, non-Arab/Kurdish indigenous group has made Assyrians a primary target of Arab nationalist and Islamist movements. This historical reality provides context to contemporary Iraq where, as Benjamin Isakhan notes, ‘Assyrians have been routinely caught in the crossfire since 2003 and are the subjects of sustained oppression and active persecution.’ Iraq’s role as the primary state actor in this scenario, particularly following its new-found democratisation from 2003, should naturally have been to protect its most vulnerable communities. Instead, according to the United States Commission on Religious Freedom (USCIRF), ‘the lack of effective government action to protect these communities from abuses has established Iraq among one of the most dangerous places on earth for religious minorities.’ This strong censure of Iraq’s response to human rights abuses against Assyrians from USCIRF, a U.S. federal commission was not isolated however. Iraq was first placed on USCIRF’s ‘Watch List’ in 2007 and has subsequently been recommended by the body to the U.S. Department of State for designation as a “Country of Particular Concern”, the highest possible designation, each year from 2008-2016. Commenting on the 2017 report, the USCIRF’s James J. Zogby noted that ‘the decimation of Iraq’s Christian community—all took place on our watch’ and ‘we have ownership for this mess.’ Although the latter points to a recognition that the 2003 U.S. intervention helped create the conditions for the human rights abuses and mass displacement in question, the government of Iraq is unequivocally condemned in many reports. The 2010 report notes for instance that ‘perpetrators of such attacks are rarely identified, investigated, or punished, creating a climate of impunity.’ The 2013 report is more direct and critical in its tone affirming that

‘the government of Iraq continues to tolerate systematic, ongoing, and egregious freedom violations, including violent, religiously-motivated attacks.’ Beyond purely rhetorical gestures about the protection of minorities in the country, Iraqi governments since 2003 have not implemented measures that would curtail the mass exodus of Assyrians. Responding to the ongoing violence against minorities, an Iraqi bishop noted that ‘now Christians ... will never trust any democracy in Iraq ... Both the Iraqi national and the Kurdish governments disappoint ... both have shown now that it was all just empty promises.’ This theme of despair and abandonment emanates from the Iraqi government’s support of sectarian divisions, its inability to control the national security environment, the facilitation of religious influence on national legislation and the absence of state structures for a pluralistic society. For Assyrians, added to these factors has been the lack of protection for key Christian sites like churches, the de facto imprimatur given to militias for ethnic cleansing of Christian neighbourhoods and that there has been little encouragement or incentive for those who have fled to return. Addressing state reactions to religious minorities W. Cole Durham Jr., aptly defines these various reactions including the failure to address societal intolerance. Durham affirms that even if a state may have passed laws against discrimination and religious intolerance, where enforcement is passive, ‘those engaged in persecution or harassment have de facto immunity.’ Therefore, Iraq’s failures as to the situation of the Assyrians are manifold. Namely, ignoring the need to protect vulnerable national components in a precarious security climate; perpetuating a religio-sectarian state; absolving itself of responsibility for the provision of targeted humanitarian support; providing no incentive to abate mass displacement and exodus; and of course most importantly, the complete absence of accountability for perpetrators of violence and human rights violations.

## The Moral Culpability of State Actors and the International Human Rights Regime

Prevailing theories of international relations hold that states ‘are primarily responsible for promoting and protecting human rights within their territorial jurisdiction.’ While the role of the United Nations (UN) and the wider international human rights regime is indirect and concerned with supervising state behaviour under international human rights standards, the UN also functions to ‘encourage, prod, push, and sometimes embarrass states to take active steps to protect and promote human rights.’ This paper has argued that Iraq, the state in which major human rights violations have been perpetrated, has been wholly negligent in its obligations under international law to protect its ethno-religious minorities. In the absence

of such protection, the voice of the international human rights regime, including that of influential state actors such as the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union has been vital to the plight of Assyrians not going unaddressed. Writing on the legitimate authority of international human rights bodies, Steven Wheatley argues that the role of international human rights bodies is understood as ‘ensuring that States parties comply with their international obligations’ and ‘delimiting the circumstances in which it is appropriate for external actors to take an interest in the treatment of human persons within the State.’

Through its establish human rights bodies, the UN has since 2003 reported on the human rights violations and mass displacement of Christians in Iraq. This has included through the reporting of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Human Rights Council. At the 28th session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2015 for example, the UNHCR reported on the ‘human rights situation in Iraq in light of abuses committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq.’ The report concluded that some instances of violence perpetrated against civilians because of their affiliation to an ethnic or religious group ‘may constitute genocide.’ Earlier in July 2014 following the Islamic State taking large parts of Mosul and the Nineveh Plains, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had condemned ‘systematic persecution of minority populations in Iraq.’ In an unprecedented move, the UN Security Council met in March 2015 for a full-day debate on the persecution of ethnic and religious minorities in the Middle East. Referring to the Islamic State by its Arabic acronym the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Hussein declared that ‘Da’esh is an abomination.’ Hussein went on to argue that ‘if we attend to minority rights only after slaughter has begun, then we have already failed.’ This theme continued with Hussein noting that ‘States overlooked abuses of marginalised communities’ and highlighted these abuses ‘only after the outbreak of violence, despite preceding years of exclusion.’ This assessment provided in the context of human rights abuses against Iraq’s minorities at the Security Council can be considered a self-admission of failure on the part of the international human rights regime in its responsibility to protect vulnerable minority communities. Indeed, that this meeting at the pinnacle of the UN system came a full 12 years after some of the most horrific persecution of Assyrians and other ethno-religious minorities in Iraq is itself an indictment on the international human rights regime and its deficient response.

The responses of influential state actors such as the U.S. and the European Union have also been important components in the overall approach of the international human rights regime. On

15 March 2016, the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution calling the atrocities perpetrated by the Islamic State against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria ‘war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.’ The final vote was 393-0. Concerned with the lack of response from the then-Obama Administration to the plight of minorities like the Assyrians the U.S Congress had itself imposed a deadline, 17 March 2016, for the Obama Administration to determine whether the actions of the Islamic State constituted genocide. On the very last available date imposed by the deadline, former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry declared the Islamic State’s actions to be genocide after it ‘tried to slaughter whole communities, enslaved captive women and girls for sex, and sought to erase thousands of years of cultural heritage by destroying churches, monasteries and ancient monuments.’ Earlier, in February 2016, the European Parliament had also passed a resolution unanimously recognising the Islamic State’s actions to be genocide.

The designations from the UN, the U.S. government and EU hold significant symbolic weight. They have however had a negligible impact. It is noteworthy that these pronouncements have neither established nor mandated specific new measures to address the plight of the Assyrians. Furthermore, since their promulgation, they did not result in a change of U.S. policy or for the part of the UN, in new targeted remediation measures. Despite bodies such as USCIRF and the UN Human Rights Council having documented and reported on the persecution and mass displacement of Assyrians for up to a decade before the advent of the Islamic State, the official determinations highlighted above came only in the wider context of the Islamic State. More precisely, they have been couched in the heinous attacks on the non-Muslim Yazidis of Iraq, who were not subject to the wider persecution suffered by Assyrians and others from 2003 until the rise of the Islamic State. If the ongoing exodus of Assyrians and other minorities from Iraq is a barometer of the impact of international human rights regime declarations, the statistical data provided in this paper affirms a clear failure on the part of global actors. Insofar as the situation on-the-ground is concerned, fewer Assyrians are left in Iraq after the world’s symbolic condemnation than they were before it was offered. James Waller has accurately assessed the impact of such declarations and concluded that ‘regardless of whatever language we use to invoke the phrase “never again”, our collective response to the protection of civilian populations under duress from violence or genocidal conflict has been far less than adequate.’ For Iraq’s Assyrians at least, a “far less than adequate” response is in many ways an understatement.

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A Clash of Civilisations? Explaining the Inaction

The persecution and mass displacement of Assyrians in Iraq has occurred within an environment where radical Islamic groups have been working towards the ethnic cleansing of the country. This has been ‘with the aim of making the country purely Islamic.’ As we have shown, global actors and the international human rights regime have demonstrated a marked hesitancy in addressing this reality until the brutality of the Islamic State became the focus of international attention. Significant nuance and complexity surrounds the reasons why it took so long for western powers to proffer public condemnation and why such reluctance to manifest this condemnation in action has been demonstrated. Writing on the ‘Middle East Christian as Agent’ and the limited nature of scholarship in this field, Paul S. Rowe attributes ‘wariness toward religion as an explanatory variable’ noting a ‘fear of the divisiveness of studying the unique experiences of such communities.’ Addressing why the dimensions of these human rights abuses are often overlooked, John L. Allen argues that individuals ‘may be hesitant to challenge Muslims about the oppression of Christians in Islamic societies for fear of stoking a “clash of civilisations.”’ The Christian faith of the Assyrian people may also lend to their persecution being intentionally overlooked due to ‘the outdated stereotype of Christianity as the oppressor rather than the oppressed.’ Islamist groups like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State often employ grandiose nihilistic rhetoric arguing that the ‘Christian West’ and the ‘Islamic world’ are in a great hegemonic battle. It is a desire to avoid playing into this apocalyptic rhetoric that has led western state actors and the international human rights community to address the persecution of Iraq’s Christians with

such delay and restraint. Analysing neo-liberal and humanitarian interventionism, some scholars have noted that the issue of credibility and suspicion of ulterior motives warrant careful consideration given ‘how the domestic population is likely to perceive the motives and interests of intervening powers.’ Other scholars move beyond connecting the inaction to only a desire to avoid religious sensitivities. Hannibal Travis for instance attributes the rejection of solidarity with Middle East Christians to geo-political and economic interests arguing that ‘the United States, Britain, and France have largely ignored the persecutions of the Christians of Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, and Sudan, while rushing to save the oil-rich Muslim states of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as well as besieged minority Kurds, Bosnians, and Kosovars.’ While economic and geo-political factors are entirely relevant, this paper holds that ‘the West’ has not intervened to protect Iraq’s Christians to avoid perceptions on two fronts; on the one hand, to avoid the charge from Islamists and/or Arab leaders that western powers are ‘crusaders’ concerned only with protecting their co-religionists in the Middle East and on the other hand from western commentators suggesting that major powers are imperialistic and immune to the suffering of non-Christians. The outcome of this thinking has therefore been that Iraq’s Christians have been stuck between ‘a rock and a hard place.’ In this regard then, state actors and the international human rights regime have proven to be unaTble or unwilling to put aside the discussed perceptions from both Islamic and western societies and fashion a nuanced intervention. As a result therefore, both have failed in their responsibility to protect.

The actions of the United States and coalition partners following the intervention in Iraq cou-

pled with the proliferation of sectarianism at the highest levels of the Iraqi government created a vacuum in which militant groups, the most vicious incarnation being the Islamic State, took hold of large parts of the country’s territory. In the context of a state struggling to govern itself and subject to the deterioration of law and order, Islamist groups, first al-Qaeda and then the Islamic State launched an unprecedented assault on one of Iraq’s most vulnerable groups, the Christian Assyrians. This paper has argued that state actors and the international community demonstrably failed in their duty under the precepts of international human rights law to protect the Assyrians. As a contemporary topic and still unfolding situation, the prevailing causal factors and subsequent outcome will continue to be determined by analysts and scholars in the many years ahead. In the interim, this paper has assessed the post-2003 plight of the Assyrians in Iraq and offered three contentions; firstly that the Iraqi state absolved itself of its responsibility to act making only symbolic gestures; secondly, that the response of the international community, while strong, came only after the inception of the Islamic State and without the attachment of effective remediation measures; and lastly, that the fear of playing to a ‘clash of civilisations’ narrative within the Islamic world led state actors and the international human rights regime to a feeble and ultimately ineffectual response. In light of these realities, the Assyrians of Iraq, a centuries-old people ‘rooted in the history and culture of the Middle East’ were left to annihilation. That this reality was affirmed as ‘genocide’ by the UN, U.S. and EU only after more than 10 years of crimes against humanity being inflicted on the Assyrians leaves the state actors and human rights regime unequivocally culpable.

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# Shlama Foundation Sends a Special Thank You to AFA

On January 23, 2018, in the context of #OperationSmileNineveh, the Shlama Foundation completed the construction of a second house in the Nineveh Plains. This work took four months longer than planned due to blockades and restrictions at checkpoints manned by the Iraqi Army, Hashd Shabi, and Peshmerga Forces. The Shlama Foundation sent out a special thank you for the financial contribution of the Assyrian Foundation of America to this project.

Specifically, this house was being built to help an Assyrian family return to their village after three and a half years of displacement resulting from the Islamic State's destruction of their home. Sadly, the family's grandmother who was suffering from a tumor passed away just one week after moving into their new home. Nevertheless, Shlama Foundation wrote, "We will forever be thankful to the Assyrian Foundation of America for letting her see her family return to their home before she passed away. "Sadly, the story of this family is but one of thousands who have suffered in the homeland. However, thanks to the contributions of AFA members, more and more Assyrians will be able to return home.



THANK YOU AFA!

كسبلا ٢٥٨٢

**The Assyrian Observer**

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United Kingdom  
Tel: 01322-33 5479

Editor  
**Andrious Mama Jotyar**

Dr. Ninveh Maraha  
Editor Nineveh Magazine.

29 January 2018

Dear Madam: Thank you for sending to me two copies of Nineveh Magazine that I find of great interest. In future please sent me only one copy. Assyrian Observer, Assyrian Charity and myself are one person, AMJ as shown above:  
My check is enclosed for \$400=00 Ex Assyrian Charity & Relief Fund of U/K, as follows: \$350=00 AF of America donation for needy. \$050=00 1 copy Nineveh Magazine 2018 Subs. for AMJ address as shown above and oblige.

By separate post I am also sending to you two separate issues of the Assyrian Observer for your perusal. Please also let members of your Nineveh Board see them and many thanks too.

Dear Rabi Ninveh: I will be grateful if you could print the following note in the next issue of the esteemed Nineveh Magazine:

I felt so sentimentally, reading the short but highly great the dedication towards an Assyrian nation listic son, the late Madam Yonadam, who was so sadly killed-in-action in the beloved country of his forefathers Iraq, while with the coalition American forces. People of all nationalities should remember and should so respect Iraq more than any other man-made countries - because God Almighty created mankind in the Garden of Eden in Iraq.

I also felt so saddened reading the short eulogy of the late Arpine Onick as we were both students at the same school at the former RAF Station Habbaniya. The correct name of the school was: "The Assyrian/Armenian Union School!" - This came about when the Baguba Refugee Camps were disbanded in 1922, the Assyrians, Armenians and Assyrian Levy soldiers had separate schools three in all at Hanaidi Baghdad. When we moved to Habbaniya the three schools having majority of Assyrian & Armenian united to this day.

Our best regards to you as well as the executive committee members especially those whom I know: Dr. Ninve Maraha, Dr. Robert Karoukian and the former and the present President Jackline Yelda.

Yours Sincerely, Andrious Mama Jotyar, MBE address as above.  
May God Almighty Bless you and protect you all too.

*Note: This letter will also appear in the next issue of Assy. Obs.*

*AMama*

**ENCLOSURE**



همه‌کدام در سمنان ایستادند که 50 پیچ حجبی  
 50 پیچ مکتب در سمنان ایستادند  
 چند کبک می‌کند



شاعر

Poet

بعضی که خوشبختانه در آسمان پرواز می‌کنند  
 و بسیاری که در زمین گرفتارند و در تنگنا  
 بعضی که در مکتب می‌آموزند و بعضی که  
 در خدمت مردم کار می‌کنند و بعضی که

Some with fortunes giddy fly in the air  
 with many distressed they do not share  
 some walk on foot, even bare  
 to serve people because they care

همه‌کدام در سمنان ایستادند که 50 پیچ حجبی  
 و بسیاری که در زمین گرفتارند و در تنگنا  
 بعضی که در مکتب می‌آموزند و بعضی که  
 در خدمت مردم کار می‌کنند و بعضی که  
 در خدمت مردم کار می‌کنند و بعضی که  
 در خدمت مردم کار می‌کنند و بعضی که

In all stories told of the bravest of knights  
 Who survived many struggles and fights  
 Who defied perils and dangers of nights  
 Bringing to their people hope and light  
 In fantasy and reality,  
 a poet leads all that might

بعضی که خوشبختانه در آسمان پرواز می‌کنند  
 و بسیاری که در زمین گرفتارند و در تنگنا  
 بعضی که در مکتب می‌آموزند و بعضی که  
 در خدمت مردم کار می‌کنند و بعضی که

بعضی که خوشبختانه در آسمان پرواز می‌کنند  
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 در خدمت مردم کار می‌کنند و بعضی که



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

تجدد نمیهک چیه نمیهک 1975 6725

ہجرت و قیامت میں ایمان

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَكْبَرُ وَيَذْهَبُ ، دَبَّاهُ حَيْثُ قَدْ هَبُ

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَدِينَةُ الْيَهُودِيَّةُ

فَعَلَا فِي مَكَّةَ بِذِي الْحِجَّةِ،

## ملک و دیوبند ذمہ دار۔

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا هَذِهِ السُّبُلَ

## ٥٢٢ دَجَّةٌ دَجَّاتٌ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يُفَضِّلُ دِمَاجَهُ هُوَذَا مِثْلُ كَيْسٍ.

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صَبَدًا، مَكَهَ فَتَدًا، دِيمَبْ خَد كَسَفْ دِهَدَدِي

چِمَّتْ دِخْتَهَس مَن مَحَّتْ دُنَبَ اِي دِ دَقَّهِي

أَبْ خَيْتْ فَسَدَتْ خَبْرِي كَذِبْ

بَدَّ سَجَّةً ۖ دَافَعَهُ فُضِّلَ بِهِ دَمْعًا

جيد ديمتو ش حذجه ش كس جذه ه ديمتو

[illegible]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

جسٹس جلال محمد، جسٹس دیپ جی دھیمے، جسٹس ایچ جے کھنہ

يَا خَبِيرٌ،

بُذِكْ دِي جَهَق، جِه يَكِدِه

يَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ

مَنْ يَخْذُلْ دِيْلَ ذَهَابَ؛ جَسَّ مُجَذَّبٌ دَمْعَتِي

يَا نَهْدِي.

عَبَّ خَيْتَه فَهَسَّاهُ

عَبْدُ دِيْمِيَّةٍ حَقِيْقَةٍ

## دُفْعُ خَيْرِ حَيْتِهِ

يَمْسُكُ ذِي الْكُرْسِيِّ ذِي الْجَبِّ مَن يَكْتُمُ

## اسماء موصیٰ و مجتہد

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## دگر ذمفك ۛ ځښډۛ.

## تِلْكَ اَشْجَارُهُمْ فِيهَا

## یہ تجزیہ دمب کفایت

**تِلْ لَفِذِهِ يَلِي ۚ مَكْلَبٌ مِّنْ عَمَلٍ**

کہ اُنہیں دیکھنے کے لیے مجھے لے کر آیا

بہ دفعۃً دیکھتے کہ سبک دفعیہ کب،

٥٢٠ ٥٢١ ٥٢٢ ٥٢٣ ٥٢٤ ٥٢٥ ٥٢٦ ٥٢٧ ٥٢٨ ٥٢٩ ٥٣٠ ٥٣١ ٥٣٢ ٥٣٣ ٥٣٤ ٥٣٥ ٥٣٦ ٥٣٧ ٥٣٨ ٥٣٩ ٥٤٠ ٥٤١ ٥٤٢ ٥٤٣ ٥٤٤ ٥٤٥ ٥٤٦ ٥٤٧ ٥٤٨ ٥٤٩ ٥٥٠ ٥٥١ ٥٥٢ ٥٥٣ ٥٥٤ ٥٥٥ ٥٥٦ ٥٥٧ ٥٥٨ ٥٥٩ ٥٦٠ ٥٦١ ٥٦٢ ٥٦٣ ٥٦٤ ٥٦٥ ٥٦٦ ٥٦٧ ٥٦٨ ٥٦٩ ٥٧٠ ٥٧١ ٥٧٢ ٥٧٣ ٥٧٤ ٥٧٥ ٥٧٦ ٥٧٧ ٥٧٨ ٥٧٩ ٥٨٠ ٥٨١ ٥٨٢ ٥٨٣ ٥٨٤ ٥٨٥ ٥٨٦ ٥٨٧ ٥٨٨ ٥٨٩ ٥٩٠ ٥٩١ ٥٩٢ ٥٩٣ ٥٩٤ ٥٩٥ ٥٩٦ ٥٩٧ ٥٩٨ ٥٩٩ ٦٠٠ ٦٠١ ٦٠٢ ٦٠٣ ٦٠٤ ٦٠٥ ٦٠٦ ٦٠٧ ٦٠٨ ٦٠٩ ٦١٠ ٦١١ ٦١٢ ٦١٣ ٦١٤ ٦١٥ ٦١٦ ٦١٧ ٦١٨ ٦١٩ ٦٢٠ ٦٢١ ٦٢٢ ٦٢٣ ٦٢٤ ٦٢٥ ٦٢٦ ٦٢٧ ٦٢٨ ٦٢٩ ٦٣٠ ٦٣١ ٦٣٢ ٦٣٣ ٦٣٤ ٦٣٥ ٦٣٦ ٦٣٧ ٦٣٨ ٦٣٩ ٦٤٠ ٦٤١ ٦٤٢ ٦٤٣ ٦٤٤ ٦٤٥ ٦٤٦ ٦٤٧ ٦٤٨ ٦٤٩ ٦٥٠ ٦٥١ ٦٥٢ ٦٥٣ ٦٥٤ ٦٥٥ ٦٥٦ ٦٥٧ ٦٥٨ ٦٥٩ ٦٦٠ ٦٦١ ٦٦٢ ٦٦٣ ٦٦٤ ٦٦٥ ٦٦٦ ٦٦٧ ٦٦٨ ٦٦٩ ٦٧٠ ٦٧١ ٦٧٢ ٦٧٣ ٦٧٤ ٦٧٥ ٦٧٦ ٦٧٧ ٦٧٨ ٦٧٩ ٦٨٠ ٦٨١ ٦٨٢ ٦٨٣ ٦٨٤ ٦٨٥ ٦٨٦ ٦٨٧ ٦٨٨ ٦٨٩ ٦٩٠ ٦٩١ ٦٩٢ ٦٩٣ ٦٩٤ ٦٩٥ ٦٩٦ ٦٩٧ ٦٩٨ ٦٩٩ ٧٠٠ ٧٠١ ٧٠٢ ٧٠٣ ٧٠٤ ٧٠٥ ٧٠٦ ٧٠٧ ٧٠٨ ٧٠٩ ٧١٠ ٧١١ ٧١٢ ٧١٣ ٧١٤ ٧١٥ ٧١٦ ٧١٧ ٧١٨ ٧١٩ ٧٢٠ ٧٢١ ٧٢٢ ٧٢٣ ٧٢٤ ٧٢٥ ٧٢٦ ٧٢٧ ٧٢٨ ٧٢٩ ٧٣٠ ٧٣١ ٧٣٢ ٧٣٣ ٧٣٤ ٧٣٥ ٧٣٦ ٧٣٧ ٧٣٨ ٧٣٩ ٧٤٠ ٧٤١ ٧٤٢ ٧٤٣ ٧٤٤ ٧٤٥ ٧٤٦ ٧٤٧ ٧٤٨ ٧٤٩ ٧٥٠ ٧٥١ ٧٥٢ ٧٥٣ ٧٥٤ ٧٥٥ ٧٥٦ ٧٥٧ ٧٥٨ ٧٥٩ ٧٦٠ ٧٦١ ٧٦٢ ٧٦٣ ٧٦٤ ٧٦٥ ٧٦٦ ٧٦٧ ٧٦٨ ٧٦٩ ٧٧٠ ٧٧١ ٧٧٢ ٧٧٣ ٧٧٤ ٧٧٥ ٧٧٦ ٧٧٧ ٧٧٨ ٧٧٩ ٧٨٠ ٧٨١ ٧٨٢ ٧٨٣ ٧٨٤ ٧٨٥ ٧٨٦ ٧٨٧ ٧٨٨ ٧٨٩ ٧٩٠ ٧٩١ ٧٩٢ ٧٩٣ ٧٩٤ ٧٩٥ ٧٩٦ ٧٩٧ ٧٩٨ ٧٩٩ ٨٠٠ ٨٠١ ٨٠٢ ٨٠٣ ٨٠٤ ٨٠٥ ٨٠٦ ٨٠٧ ٨٠٨ ٨٠٩ ٨١٠ ٨١١ ٨١٢ ٨١٣ ٨١٤ ٨١٥ ٨١٦ ٨١٧ ٨١٨ ٨١٩ ٨٢٠ ٨٢١ ٨٢٢ ٨٢٣ ٨٢٤ ٨٢٥ ٨٢٦ ٨٢٧ ٨٢٨ ٨٢٩ ٨٣٠ ٨٣١ ٨٣٢ ٨٣٣ ٨٣٤ ٨٣٥ ٨٣٦ ٨٣٧ ٨٣٨ ٨٣٩ ٨٤٠ ٨٤١ ٨٤٢ ٨٤٣ ٨٤٤ ٨٤٥ ٨٤٦ ٨٤٧ ٨٤٨ ٨٤٩ ٨٥٠ ٨٥١ ٨٥٢ ٨٥٣ ٨٥٤ ٨٥٥ ٨٥٦ ٨٥٧ ٨٥٨ ٨٥٩ ٨٦٠ ٨٦١ ٨٦٢ ٨٦٣ ٨٦٤ ٨٦٥ ٨٦٦ ٨٦٧ ٨٦٨ ٨٦٩ ٨٧٠ ٨٧١ ٨٧٢ ٨٧٣ ٨٧٤ ٨٧٥ ٨٧٦ ٨٧٧ ٨٧٨ ٨٧٩ ٨٨٠ ٨٨١ ٨٨٢ ٨٨٣ ٨٨٤ ٨٨٥ ٨٨٦ ٨٨٧ ٨٨٨ ٨٨٩ ٨٩٠ ٨٩١ ٨٩٢ ٨٩٣ ٨٩٤ ٨٩٥ ٨٩٦ ٨٩٧ ٨٩٨ ٨٩٩ ٩٠٠ ٩٠١ ٩٠٢ ٩٠٣ ٩٠٤ ٩٠٥ ٩٠٦ ٩٠٧ ٩٠٨ ٩٠٩ ٩١٠ ٩١١ ٩١٢ ٩١٣ ٩١٤ ٩١٥ ٩١٦ ٩١٧ ٩١٨ ٩١٩ ٩٢٠ ٩٢١ ٩٢٢ ٩٢٣ ٩٢٤ ٩٢٥ ٩٢٦ ٩٢٧ ٩٢٨ ٩٢٩ ٩٣٠ ٩٣١ ٩٣٢ ٩٣٣ ٩٣٤ ٩٣٥ ٩٣٦ ٩٣٧ ٩٣٨ ٩٣٩ ٩٤٠ ٩٤١ ٩٤٢ ٩٤٣ ٩٤٤ ٩٤٥ ٩٤٦ ٩٤٧ ٩٤٨ ٩٤٩ ٩٥٠ ٩٥١ ٩٥٢ ٩٥٣ ٩٥٤ ٩٥٥ ٩٥٦ ٩٥٧ ٩٥٨ ٩٥٩ ٩٦٠ ٩٦١ ٩٦٢ ٩٦٣ ٩٦٤ ٩٦٥ ٩٦٦ ٩٦٧ ٩٦٨ ٩٦٩ ٩٧٠ ٩٧١ ٩٧٢ ٩٧٣ ٩٧٤ ٩٧٥ ٩٧٦ ٩٧٧ ٩٧٨ ٩٧٩ ٩٨٠ ٩٨١ ٩٨٢ ٩٨٣ ٩٨٤ ٩٨٥ ٩٨٦ ٩٨٧ ٩٨٨ ٩٨٩ ٩٩٠ ٩٩١ ٩٩٢ ٩٩٣ ٩٩٤ ٩٩٥ ٩٩٦ ٩٩٧ ٩٩٨ ٩٩٩ ١٠٠٠ ١٠٠١ ١٠٠٢ ١٠٠٣ ١٠٠٤ ١٠٠٥ ١٠٠٦ ١٠٠٧ ١٠٠٨ ١٠٠٩ ١٠١٠ ١٠١١ ١٠١٢ ١٠١٣ ١٠١٤ ١٠١٥ ١٠١٦ ١٠١٧ ١٠١٨ ١٠١٩ ١٠٢٠ ١٠٢١ ١٠٢٢ ١٠٢٣ ١٠٢٤ ١٠٢٥ ١٠٢٦ ١٠٢٧ ١٠٢٨ ١٠٢٩ ١٠٣٠ ١٠٣١ ١٠٣٢ ١٠٣٣ ١٠٣٤ ١٠٣٥ ١٠٣٦ ١٠٣٧ ١٠٣٨ ١٠٣٩ ١٠٤٠ ١٠٤١ ١٠٤٢ ١٠٤٣ ١٠٤٤ ١٠٤٥ ١٠٤٦ ١٠٤٧ ١٠٤٨ ١٠٤٩ ١٠٥٠ ١٠٥١ ١٠٥٢ ١٠٥٣ ١٠٥٤ ١٠٥٥ ١٠٥٦ ١٠٥٧ ١٠٥٨ ١٠٥٩ ١٠٦٠ ١٠٦١ ١٠٦٢ ١٠٦٣ ١٠٦٤ ١٠٦٥ ١٠٦٦ ١٠٦٧ ١٠٦٨ ١٠٦٩ ١٠٧٠ ١٠٧١ ١٠٧٢ ١٠٧٣ ١٠٧٤ ١٠٧٥ ١٠٧٦ ١٠٧٧ ١٠٧٨ ١٠٧٩ ١٠٨٠ ١٠

## زَكَاةً

۱۰۵ ذی قعدة ۱۲۸۵

گے، چکمدے



[illegible]

تِلْكَ اَيُّهَا الْمَرْءُ الَّذِي يَصْنَعُ كَيْدًا قَهْمًا فِي حَقِّ خَدِّهِ وَفِي  
عَيْنَيْهِ هَمَلًا يَكْفُرُ بِتِلْكَ الْكَيْدِ دَلِيلًا.



سیدہ عائشہؓ دیکھ کر ڈھبٹ کر اُڑی اُڑی ہو کر وہاں پہنچیں۔ وہاں پر ایک شخص نے انہیں روک کر کہا کہ یہاں سے جاؤ، یہاں سے جاؤ۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ ہمیں یہاں سے جانا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ یہاں سے جانا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ یہاں سے جانا ہے۔



[illegible]

ذٰلِكَ مَلِكُهُ فَهَذِهِ، اُنْعَمَ . جَلِي، هَبْكَ يَهْدِي، اِذْ هَذِهِ،  
نَهْدِي يَكْفِي، مَلِكُهُ يَكْفِي، وَهَذِهِ، اَنْتَ هَمَّكَ ذٰلِكَ.

سَبَّحْتَ دُكَّاسَ دُكَّابِ مَكَلَمَ تَسْتَبِّحُ مَكَّاهُ مَدِينَةُ مَكَّةَ هَجْدَةُ

مَكَّةَ قَبْلَ مَكَّةَ بِمَكَّةَ :

دُمَيْتْ اَدِيْدِيْ (مِ هِيْ اَبَدِيْ دِيْمَا اَدِيْ)، هِي دِيْدِيْ  
 (اَدِيْ دِيْمَا اَبَدِيْ دِيْمَا اَدِيْ)، اَدِيْ دِيْ، اَبَدِيْ  
 دِيْ، اَبَدِيْ. دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ،  
 دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ، دِيْ.



**مَدَدٌ: "كَلِمَةٌ مُخَلِّفٌ" كَيْتُ لُؤْلُؤُ**

جَمْعُكُمْ فِي ذِكْرِ

تَبَدُّلُ دُكَّانِ مَكَلَمِی فَهَذِهِ دِهْ لَقَبِ

[illegible]







مَنْ كَانَ فِي مِثْلِهِ فَمَثَلُهُ

إِلْقِ يَتِيْمًا فِي مَدَنٍ مُّتَبَعَةٍ ۖ إِنَّكَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ كَدِيدٌ

يُحْمَدُ فَرْجًا لَحْدَ مَذْبُوحٍ خَدَّ فُلْبَةٍ دِخْمُذْبَةٍ

[illegible]

**بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ**

حَبَقْتُ بِهِ، كَمَرَهُ فِي مِزَانِ الْحَقِّ وَأَمَّا دَعْوَاهُ فَدَعْوَةُ الْإِسْلَامِ، خَلَمَهُ مَسْجِدُ

لِيَدْنَهُمْ ذِقًا مِّنْ حَبَقَّةٍ يُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ حَبَقَّةٍ

**٢٠ خستىڭ كۈنى شەنبە ۱۵ دېمىر ۱۸۷۲ جەدۋىل ۱۰**

**۲جٲ ۲سڻ اوت ڪنٿ ۾س ۲ه ۲، ۱لومت ۲لٽن ۾س**

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ، لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ، لِمَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَئِمَّا ظَنَّ النَّاسُ أَنَّهُمُ اتَّخَذُوا ذَلِيلًا لَهُمْ لَمْ يَلْحَظْ أَنَّهُ لَدَيْهِمْ فَسَخَطَ لَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يَمْلِكُ لَمْ يَمْدِدْهُ أَهْلُكُمْ لِيُجِزَّهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَخْرُجَهُمْ مِنْهَا ۚ وَلَئِنْ يَدْعُوا عَلَىٰ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ لَّهُمْ آلِهَةٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَكْفُلْ اللَّهُ خُرُوجَهُمْ مِنْهُ وَلَوْلَا دُونَ اللَّهِ لَفِ السُّعُودُ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ لَالِهَتِهِمْ

## مسئلہ ۲:

ذَلِكُمْ يَتَمَطَّى مِنْهُ خَافَقَةٌ مِثْلُ نَاقَةٍ ۖ ۝۵۱

**جَد: مَمَّه جِه مَمَّه**

جَدَّاهُ دَمَلَتْ دَمْلًا هَذَا هَلْ هَلْ دَمَلَتْ دَمْلًا... 50

**جَد: مَمَّ جِي مَمَّ**

مَلَأْنَا خُبْرًا مَعَهَا حَمِيًّا وَمِنْهُ حَمِيٌّ.....49

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