Introducing the Assyrian Studies Association

It is with great pride that we inform you of the big stride that the AFA has taken in the educational and cultural arena by supporting the establishment of the Assyrian Studies Association (ASA), an organization devoted to the study, preservation, promotion, and propagation of our culture and history, both within our community as well as outside, especially in the world of academia.

Until recently, Assyrians have been mostly absent from the academic world involved in the study of our own history, heritage, culture, etc. As a result, we have had very little input with respect to these conversations, nor has there been much consideration until now of our unique point of view.

Fortunately, during the past two decades, we have seen a growing number of young Assyrian women and men pursuing graduate work leading to academic careers in Assyrian studies including history, archaeology, cultural heritage, religion, language, literary studies, social sciences, arts and architecture, international law, ethnic/minority rights and more. Thus, the AFA, through its director of education and cultural program, Dr. Robert Karoukian, saw the opportunity to pursue his long-time vision of establishing an academic organization devoted to Assyrian Studies, the study of all things Assyrian. With the backing of the AFA, he worked with and encouraged a number of our Assyrian scholars who established the Assyrian Studies Association, an international academic organization that will work both within our community and in the academic world, in general, to fill a void that has resulted in the exclusion of our voice in academic (but, not limited to academic) matters concerning ourselves!

The Assyrian Studies Association (ASA) includes a dynamic team on the board of directors: Dr. Helen Malko, Professor Sargon Donabed, Professor Hannibal Travis, Dr. Anobel Odisho, and Mark Tommaa. On the board of advisors, there is another group of Assyrian patriots such as Dr. Robert Karoukian, Firas Jatou, Dr. Aryo Makko, Dr. Nahrain E. Kamber, and Dr. Onver Cetrez. We could not have asked for a more capable and passionate team than this dedicated and courageous group to be our voices, eyes, and ears in the field of Assyrian Studies.

The Assyrian Studies Association will officially launch and will be introduced at the AFA’s 9th Annual Appreciation event that will take place in San Francisco on May 5, 2019. This date will mark a “moment” in our history. I hope that you will join us to learn more about the Assyrian Studies Association (ASA), its purpose, and its importance for the future of our nation.

Jackline Yelda, President
The Assyrian Foundation of America is delighted to announce the creation of the Assyrian Studies Association (ASA), an organization created with the intention of promoting interest in and academic study of Assyrians and Assyria, both past and present. Its primary purpose is to encourage the publication of scholarly research, in addition to Assyrian-related materials, such as books. The organization will stimulate cooperative activities, as well as the exchange of information within the field, thus facilitating contact between scholars and scholarly organizations throughout the world interested in Assyrian studies. The ASA will advance academic-level inquiry on all things related to Assyrian culture and heritage.

Through its operating budget, the association will provide support for a variety of programs. Firstly, the ASA will sponsor authors working on books directly related to Assyrians or Assyrian studies, regardless of historical period or geographical region of interest. Secondly, small grants will be available for the publication of independent books on Assyrian subjects. Funds may also be offered to recent doctoral recipients who wish to convert their dissertations into manuscripts or books. Thirdly, the ASA will provide support for the publication of children’s and popular books. These small grants will be given to educators who wish to produce children's books in Assyrian or focusing on Assyrian culture. Finally, Assyrian culture research grants will be available to academics researching understudied areas of Assyrian culture, such as art, music, cuisine, folkloric dance, poetry, family genealogy, and so forth.

The ASA plans to host a biennial conference/workshop whose corresponding proceedings will be published. To honor outstanding contributions to Assyrian studies, a book award will be presented on an annual basis. The ASA also plans to organize and maintain two important databases, the Assyrian Heritage Archive and the Assyrian Oral History Archive, that will centralize key resources for posterity.

The ASA boasts an illustrious Board of Directors:

- President, Dr. Helen Malko, anthropological archaeologist from Columbia University
- Executive Director, Sargon Donabed, professor of History at Roger Williams University
- Secretary, Dr. Hannibal Travis, world-renowned genocide expert
- Treasurer, Dr. Anobel Odisho, UCSF Physician
- Contributing Members: Mark Tomass, Monetary Economist

**Introduction to the Assyrian Studies Association**

by Elizabeth Mickaily-Huber, Ph.D.
Ensuring the Future of Assyrians: Developing the Organized Role of Assyrian Studies

by Michael Youash, Ph.D.

This article will argue that support for Assyrian studies is essential to answering the Assyrian Question for themselves. Assyrian studies is the essential basis for harnessing what we are capable of thinking and then planning as Assyrians, for Assyrians. Assyrian studies can and should strive for a strong and positive role for Assyrian studies are broadly elaborated. Assyrian studies can and should strive to be inclusive of a variety of disciplines within the social sciences in order to adapt to whatever challenges Assyrians are facing. However, this article considers history (ancient, early modern and modern), political science, linguistics, archeology, economics, sociology, security studies and literature as essential fields constituting Assyrian studies. Altogether, these various disciplines in the social sciences can be applied to addressing the 'Assyrian Question'. The Assyrian Question is the term used by western historians to refer to the 1915-1918 genocide of Assyrians by the Ottoman Empire. The fate of their Assyrian allies after World War One (WWI) Western leaders answered the Assyrian Question after WWI by breaking their agreements with their Assyrian allies and murdering those who fought against the Allied cause in order to further the interests of the Assyrians. Foreign powers have been answering the Assyrian Question again and again, leaving no role for Assyrians in deciding their own fate. Assyrians must decide if they want to answer the Assyrian Question themselves. If they do, it is necessary to then invest in Assyrian studies.

Readers may doubt the claim that Assyrian studies is essential to answering the Assyrian Question for themselves. That is understandable because Assyrians have not acted like a sovereign people at least at the aftermath of WWI. Assyrians must regain the self-belief and self-confidence to think and then act collectively in their own best interest. Assyrian studies is the essential basis for harnessing what we are capable of thinking and then planning as Assyrians, for Assyrians. This is exactly what every successful modern nation has always done. Assyrian Americans should consider the profound and yet simple state of thinking and then planning as Assyrian studies is the essential basis for harnessing what we are capable of thinking and then planning as Assyrians, for Assyrians. This is what every successful modern nation has always done. Assyrian Americans should consider the profound and yet simple state of thinking and then planning as Assyrian studies is the essential basis for harnessing what we are capable of thinking and then planning as Assyrians, for Assyrians. This is exactly what every successful modern nation has always done.

Economic and Social Research Council (UK) – In its founding, the “ESRC [British social science research council] addressed six areas: economic affairs, education and human development, environment and planning, government and law, industry and employment, and social policy.” [https://esrc.ukri.org/about-us/what-we-do/our-history/]

If Americans, Britons and Canadians understand that their best scholars in the future, social sciences can meaningfully help resolve major challenges facing their people, then the only important question is can Assyrians afford to ignore this reality? The answer is clearly, No. First, consider for Assyrians, one of the key requirements for establishing Assyrian studies already exists: omutnayeh scholars (like the ‘scholar patriots’ who established the American Academy). Assyrians who care deeply about their people’s future and fate have earned the highest degrees possible in a variety of fields that can constitute Assyrian studies. These omutnayeh scholars require the resources and organizational knowledge in order to make their knowledge and talents relevant for sustainability serving the Assyrians. This article argues that providing these omutnayeh scholars with resources to organize Assyrian studies is essential to our future.

Earning the highest possible degrees in social studies often costs the student a great deal, especially in terms of debt. All students are encouraged to consider the freedom of choice available to them ten the first hurdle and results in reducing the bias in almost every field that dele-

Social Sciences Research Council (USA/ international) – “The SSRC is guided by the belief that justice, prosperity, and democracy all require better understanding of complex social, cultural, and political processes.” [https://www.ssrc.org/about/mission/]

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An organization focusing on Assyrian studies supported by the community will enable some omutnayeh scholars the freedom to choose Assyrian-focused research subjects. They can expect support for holding the types of projects relevant to Assyrians, (iii) creates the intellectual space in academia for Assyrians to advance their work in every discipline where this subject-objects are meaningful subjects-objects in various fields of studies that currently grown upon an Assyrian-focused research agenda. An organization focusing on Assyrian studies supported by the community will enable some omutnayeh scholars the freedom to choose Assyrian-focused research subjects. They can expect support for holding the types of projects relevant to Assyrians, (iii) creates the intellectual space in academia for Assyrians to advance their work in every discipline where this subject-objects are meaningful subjects-objects in various fields of studies that currently grown upon an Assyrian-focused research agenda. An organization focusing on Assyrian studies supported by the community will enable some omutnayeh scholars the freedom to choose Assyrian-focused research subjects. They can expect support for holding the types of projects relevant to Assyrians, (iii) creates the intellectual space in academia for Assyrians to advance their work in every discipline where this subject-objects are meaningful subjects-objects in various fields of studies that currently grown upon an Assyrian-focused research agenda.
Dr. Helen Malko, President of ASA

My current role as president of ASA includes both conducting research and fieldwork on topics related to Assyrian heritage sites and associated local communities, including the re-writing of history in certain parts of the Assyrian homeland. These and other situations have forced Assyrians throughout the world to face yet another crisis, that is the complete loss and obliteration of their heritage, history, and cultural memory. The lack of action from local governments, as well as the International Community, to protect Assyrians and their cultures in their ancestral homeland, makes preserving this ancient culture a critical task as members of this community. To this end, I perceive ASA as an entity that will provide a means to document, preserve, and promote research on Assyrian heritage sites and associated local communities throughout the world and in the homeland, now and in the future.

Helen Malko’s Contribution

As an anthropological archaeologist working on ancient cultures of Mesopotamia and the cultural heritage of today’s Iraq, I find the establishment of an association that focuses on bringing Assyrians and their culture and history to a wider audience as being of great importance. Meant to promote the academic study of Assyria and Assyrian people through supporting research, teaching, and intellectual collaboration among scholars of archaeology, cultural heritage, language, etc., the Assyrian Studies Association (ASA) bridges fields that have traditionally experiment with Assyrian subjects and provides a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach. Furthermore, the fact that the Association is founded by Assyrian scholars will allow for an emic perspective on Assyrians, their cultures, and histories to emerge and can be shared with more complete academic work. ASA hopes to highlight contributions of Assyrian scholars in science, humanities, social sciences and beyond, bringing them into concert with each other in order to illustrate the vibrant, robust, and authentic experience of Assyria and its heritage. The Association will also build connections with academic institutions and non-Assyrian scholars to strengthen the academic study of Assyrians throughout North America and the world.

Lately, Assyrian cultural heritage, both Christian and pre-Christian, has become a target for what scholars are now calling urbicide, that is, the destruction of cities and urban landscapes due to armed conflict, theft and vandalism, sociopolitical and economic factors. In several cases, Assyrian heritage sites and associated local communities have been simultaneously targeted, thus wiping out the people’s history and threatening their very existence, resulting in the re-writing of history in certain parts of the Assyrian homeland. These and other situations have forced Assyrians throughout the world to face yet another crisis, that is the complete loss and obliteration of their heritage, history, and cultural memory. The lack of action from local governments, as well as the International Community, to protect Assyrians and their cultures in their ancestral homeland, makes preserving this ancient culture a critical task as members of this community. To this end, I perceive ASA as an entity that will provide a means to document, preserve, and promote research on Assyrian heritage sites and associated local communities throughout the world and in the homeland, now and in the future.

Helen Malko, President of ASA

Assyrian Studies Association

Dr. Helen Malko, President of ASA

No other organization or group is going to invest in Assyrian studies. Assyrians are the only group that can invest in Assyrian studies in a manner in which guarantees that Assyrians as a people, whose existence is threatened, benefit from the research work produced by Assyrian scholars. This reality constitutes the last part of the argument put forth in this article.

The nature of the Assyrian Question requires answers from Assyrian studies which are overwhelmingly part of the social sciences: political science, economics, history, security studies, and linguistics, to name only a few relevant disciplines. National and international efforts that constitute territorial states must concern themselves with the full range of social challenges building expertise in the health sector, natural sciences, and similar fields. While most health issues do present a unique set of challenges facing Assyrians due to traumatic experiences, Assyrians benefit from living in adoptive countries that address these other issues. This allows Assyrians the opportunity to focus on those fields which constitute Assyrian studies and serve the national interest.

Reflecting broadly on how Assyrian studies can serve the research community constitutes the concluding part of this article. An Assyrian studies organization can implement critical strategies to advance Assyrian studies but also make the knowledge accessible and, where possible, relevant to the lives of Assyrians. Such an organization must develop and fine-tune linkages with all forms of community organizations (national, regional and local). Disseminating knowledge and empowering Assyrians as community leaders with the knowledge to pursue the best possible solutions to pressing challenges.

An Assyrian studies organization supported by the community can foster a full academic freedom to develop research without political interference but in a manner that remains accountable to the Assyrian people. Developing strong linkages with national, regional and local organizations and Assyrian social networks through donors can ensure that the organization is seen as being responsive to the needs of Assyrians and can be held to account for how well it is performing in serving the Assyrian national interest.

If readers are deeply concerned about the difficult reality facing Assyrians as an indigenous people with fundamental rights and develop strategies to secure some of those rights, Dr. Riva Gewargis and Riva Gewargis have been able to get issues. This allows Assyrians the opportunity to focus on those fields which constitute Assyrian studies and serve the national interest.

And Riva Gewargis have been able to get some work published in highly respected academic journals. By doing so, they help ensure the legitimacy of Assyrians in indigenous studies. This literature impacts on policy discussions dealing with social, economic and political policy questions affecting indigenous peoples addressed in international forums that can impact Assyrians. Finally, laying the foundations for Assyrians within the field of indigenous studies ensures that future Assyrian scholars in this field will face fewer hurdles and fewer challenges. Future scholars can more easily get on with their research work which will further enhance how Assyrians are understood as an indigenous people with fundamental rights and develop strategies to secure some of those rights.

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A Past With a Future: Studying the Assyrian Minority in the Middle East

By Dr. Hannibal Travis

Modern Assyrian studies do not have a very long history as a concept. In the largest searchable corpus of books, “Assyrian Studies” as a field that might include modern topics such as the neo-Aramaic songs of Rawî or the neo-Aramaic dialect of Turoyo does not appear until after 1965. Although the Assyrian Minorities in the Middle East field is now one of the larger subfields of Assyrian studies, its origins can be traced to the work of students and scholars of the Assyrian diaspora, who have provided a wealth of information about the history of the Assyrians of the Middle East.

In 1965, the British Blue Book published accounts of the Assyrian genocide by Surma b’ Bair Mar Shimun, Y.M. Nisan, Dr. Jacob Sargis, Paul Shimmun, and others. In the preface to a handwritten diary of the sufferings of the Assyrians from the 1980s to the end of the First World War, Abed Mushiho Neman described the stories he told as coming directly from the lips of the Assyrians of Tur Abîn and the neighboring villages, who made this journey in 1918, and it may appear from Edinburgh University Press this year or next. Others wrote accounts of the Assyrian genocide, including Abraham Yohannah, Eugene Griselle, Joseph Naayem, Basel Nikitine, Jacques Rihouet, and Hyacinthe Simon.

The prefaces and forewords to many of the works cited here offer insights as to what Assyrian Studies might have to offer. Yohannah described himself as a flârist, gathering the petals and stems of other scholars, including Rihouet, and as writing in a language that is not yet a spoken or written language [etc.] and the latter under the title Ishtar: Documenting the Assyrian Iranian Community. The migration of Otman and Urmiya Assyrians to the United States has been ably studied in several books since the 1980s.

Gabriele Yonan’s Ein vergessener Holocaust: die Vernichung der christlichen Assyrier in der Turkei in 1986, published by the Society for Threatened Peoples, collected testimonies from Assyrian victims and British and German observers, describing the massacres and deportations of the Assyrians from the 1890s to the 1920s.

My book Genocide in the Middle East: The Ottoman Empire, Iraq, and Sudan (California Academic Press, 2010), was the first to include a legal analysis of the genocides of the Assyrians in the 1840s and 1850s along with the ones more generally written about, which occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. The British press reported that the Assyrian tribes of the Hakkari mountains were hunted down and exterminated. Raphael Lemkin, the inventor of the treaty against genocide, wrote in Assyrian Countries, the Empires, which was written and deserted because the empire’s “most peaceable inhabitants,” their populations were murdered, including their children. Many subsequent studies refer to about half two to thirds of the Ottoman Empire, and the residence of the Mandate had experienced such a mass displacement, as I learned in the lead up to the Yezidi and Christian genocide of 2014-2015, which has since been recognized by a variety of authorities.

A few from the pre-eminent world political leaders. I offered a commentary in the book by the Israeli prime minister, the organization Genocide Watch, the U.N. Secretary-General’s special adviser on genocide, and others had


3 Eugene Griselle, Syriens et Chaldéens: Leur Martyre, Leurs Espérances (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1918); Jean Naayem, Les Assyro-chaldéens et les Arméniens (Paris: Galignani & Co., 1850); G.P. Badger, The Nestorians and Their Rituals (etc.) and the latter under the title Ishtar: Documenting the Assyrian Iranian Community. The migration of Otman and Urmiya Assyrians to the United States has been ably studied in several books since the 1980s.


7 Ian Bat-Sawoçe and Anahit Khosroeva have extended this kind of research into the archives of the Vatican, and those of the former Soviet Union in Khôroswa’s work. In 2006, Taner Akçam, who has taught at universities in Canada and the United States, wrote that his study of the Ottoman archives, Ottoman deportation policies affecting the Armenians also swept up the Assyrians and Greeks and that these policies had been formulated prior to the war with Britain and Russia, contrary to some accounts.

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warned of religious minorities suffering genocide in Iraq.

The Assyrian genocide in the First World War and its aftermath has been recognized alongside the Armenian genocide by the European Parliament, the Swedish parliament, and the Australian parliament. In the future, more countries will be expected to recognize the Assyrian genocide and subsequent events.

Over the past decade, a group of scholars have worked together with the support of Assyrian foundations to gather, selectively digitize and catalogue, and provide limited previews of essential archival material for use in Assyrian Studies scholarship. This important work is not done in a vacuum, as it remains a challenge to publish or teach Assyrian Studies. There is limited demand for it, in part because some of those who participate in the lucrative markets for Syriac Studies, Persian Studies, Kurdish Studies, Turkish Studies, Arab Studies, and Middle East Studies refer to Assyrians as fake, imagined, dwindling, or “moot.” Countless books and articles have been published, including by British and American scholars, reviving the Young Turk theory of the Armenian and Assyrian genocide, that it was a series of measures needed to defend “Turkish towns” and their residents from foreign powers, especially Russia, and Armenian “bandits.”

There are substantial opportunities for the growth of Assyrian Studies. The republication of historic texts is well along from various presses such as Atour Publications, Gorgias Press, Nineveh Press and Nisibin, and websites such as atour.com and aina.org. Work remains to be done to match what other communities have achieved for their heritage, especially anthologies of journalism and government reports on the Assyrian genocide and subsequent events; many such compilations have appeared for Armenians, Jews, and other groups. Histories of historically Assyrian towns and sub-regions should be written; a notable book series achieved this for Armenian parts of Anatolia. Partial inventories of Assyrian religious and cultural property have appeared in journals, including the Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies, but could be broadened and systematized. Full academic studies must be completed on the Assyrian experience of Turkey’s and Iraq’s civil wars of the 1980s and 1990s, Assyrians during the Iranian revolution and sanctions period, and the intertwined fates of Assyrians, Mandaeans, and Yazidis in post-2003 Iraq.

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Growing up in Urmî, things were simple: we were Assyrians (Sûrâyê/Ătûrăyê; Persian: Āşûrî; Armenian: Ասուր; Turkish: Asöri, etc.). We were from different villages, we had different accents, we went to different churches; but, we were members of one/the same ethnic group, and were recognized as such by all the non-Assyrians around us.

My mother was born in Ukraine and was Pentecostal; my father was the son of a Seyfo survivor, and a Catholic. We went to both churches as well as the Presbyterian Church and Church of the East. We were the same people, speaking and worshipping in the same language, the same god and scriptures.

Things got a bit complicated when we came to the United States. I met Assyrians from Iraq and Syria as well as those born here. I learned of the various tribes and the dialects they speak, some of which I could hardly understand. I also learned of animosity among some Assyrians based on country of birth, tribal affiliation, and even church membership! The Assyrian Foundation of America (AFA) was an exception by whom it was written.

My search for answers started at the public library (this was before Google, Wikipedia, or [personal] computers). Searching for books using the key-word Assyria(-n) did not yield much more than William Soroyan’s book and The Arts of Assyria. It was only after visiting San Francisco State University and consulting the reference librarian that my education on how to search for material/information about Assyria(-ns) started.

In libraries and bookstores I searched in sections on history, art, language, church history, etc., going through tables of contents, indices, bibliographies, footnotes, and references. I learned that I needed to broaden my search criteria, depending on/according to the subject and time-period the book covered and when/where/ by whom it was written.

For example, searching in the ancient history section, using key-words like Assyria, Mesopotamia, cuneiform, etc., was sufficient to get to the desired books and journals.

In 612 B.C., however, at the moment Nineveh fell, there seemed to have occurred an instantaneous and complete disappearance of Assyria and Assyrians! I could not find anything about Assyria or Assyrians from that point onward – this has been changing over the past few decades, with new discoveries in both the Assyrian heartland and the peripheral regions of the empire.

With the start of the Christian era, there, again, is a large amount of material. Much of it on theological and philosophical topics; but, also literary, historical, scientific, and about other disciplines. However, it was not under the key-word Assyria(-n). In the books concerning that period, Assyria and Assyrians were now called Syria and Syrian, respectively; the language, Syriac; and the people divided into Nestorians and Jacobites (or, East-Syrians and West-Syrians, respectively) and, later, Chaldeans, on sectarian grounds (which some authors used – and, some, continue to use– as equivalent to ethnic designations).

This alphabet soup of terms used to refer to Assyria and Assyrians (and our language) has continued to grow and become even more confusing, making life of a young Assyrian student searching for information about her heritage even more difficult. But, the most degrading trend has been to deny us any ethnic identity. In the context of the ongoing overt and covert ethnic cleansing of Assyrians in the Near East, we are referred to as “the Christian minori- ty”; a non-descript religious group. The equivalent “Academic” designation is “Syriac-speaking Christians”; again, no ethnic identity. The local powers have adopted a modified version of this last designation to come up with terms like: “Syriac-speaking Christian Arabs/Turks/ Kurds, etc.”, for obvious political reasons. And, when “academics” use the term Assyrian, in the modern context, it is almost always used in quotations, with an accompanying explanation/disclaimer, stating that modern Assyrians have no connec- tion to the ancient Assyrians.

Until recently, we, Assyrians, have largely been spectators with no input, at the academic level, as our history, culture, language and even iden- tity has been divided chronologically, geograph- ically, politically, and on sectarian grounds, into numerous disjointed and seemingly unrelated groups. There is no academic discipline or book that follows Assyrian history as one continuous narrative, from the beginning to the present.

Noting this absence as well as the growing number young Assyrian women and men choosing to pursue graduate work in academic fields where we are un/underrepresented, the AFA decided, some twenty years ago, to focus its (limited) educational grants to encourage and support those students. Over the years, with the generous support of our members as well as the Assyrian community, in general, we have been able to increase our annual budget for cultural/educational projects to over $30,000.

And, now, with this issue of Nineveh magazine, we are pleased to announce the establishment of the Assyrian Studies Association (ASA). An academic organization established by Assyrian scholars to fulfill a great gap and need in Assyrian Studies. As stated in the name, it will be inclusive of all things Assyrian, from the dawn of history to the present. It will restore the con- tinuous narrative of our artificially fragmented history and heritage. In this issue, are included articles by a few members of the ASA, detailing its founding, goals, projects, etc.

The AFA is proud to support the ASA financially and otherwise; however, it must be made quite clear that the ASA is not part of the AFA. It’s an independent, not-for-profit, academic organiza- tion, with its own set of by-laws. The AFA will in no way dictate or interfere with its activities.

I invite you to join the AFA in congratulating our scholars in this undertaking and to help us continue to support them and the many other cultural and educational projects, here in the San Francisco Bay Area and internationally.
The Akitu festival was one of the oldest Mesopotamian festivals, dating back to the middle of the third millennium BC. It was during this twelve day ceremonial event, which began at the first New Moon after the Spring Equinox in March/April, that a unique tradition took place in order to humble the king and remind him of his role to serve the will of the god Marduk in order to properly provide for the community. The head priest would strip the king of his regalia and slap him hard in the face. The Babylonians believed that if the king teared up, Marduk approved him to be king for another year.

In a featured article about the ancient tradition of slapping the king, The Jerusalem Post writes: “It might be interesting to note that a great Babylonian king like Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 BCE), well known in our chronicles as the destroyer of Judea and of the First Jerusalem Temple in 597 BCE, the mighty conqueror of the entire ancient world who considered himself to be the king of kings, would willingly and meekly, once a year, submit himself to such a humiliating procedure”.

Yet the ceremonial removal of the king’s power was considered a vital procedure to reaffirm the bond between the community and the gods, the community here being represented by the king in temple ritual.

Front of the throne base of Shalmaneser III of Assyria, showing the Assyrian king and Mardukasakiršumi I of Babylon shaking hands in a public display of Assyro-Babylonian friendship. From Kalhu. Iraq Museum, IM 65574. Image source: University College London.

The Akitu festival was dedicated to the rebirth of the sun god Marduk, one of the chief gods in the Babylonian pantheon, who was believed to have created the world out of chaos. To prevent the god of chaos from regaining control, the New Year ceremony reenacted the original victory of Marduk over the forces of destruction. It began with a great procession that included the king, members of his court, priests, and statues of the gods passed through the Ishtar Gate and along the Processional Way to the “Akitu” temple, dedicated to Marduk.

The Akitu Festival began with a great procession through the Ishtar Gate towards the temple of Marduk. Image source.

On either the fourth day of the festival, the king was to face his trial. The high priest greeted the king before temporarily stripping him of his crown and royal insignia, and dragging him by the ears to the image of Bel, in front of whom he was required to kneel. The king was required to pray for forgiveness and to promise that he had not been neglectful of his duties.

“The list of the king’s promises and assurances was long and contained all that both clergy and the ordinary people usually demand from their ruler,” writes JPost. “It was only after the king finished this list of assurances, well prepared ahead of time, that the chief priest struck him hard upon the cheek, with an open hand but as strongly as he could. The blow had to be decisive and hard, for according to tradition tears had to flow from the king’s eyes as an indication that Bel (and his wife Beliya) were friendly, an omen which purported to assure king’s future success and the prosperity of the country.”

A steady flow of tears assured the priest and the people the king’s reign would be prosperous and his crown and royal regalia were returned to him. As well as testing the gods’ approval for his reign, the hard slap was intended to remind the king to be humble and to inspire him to remain focused on his duties and obligations towards his people and his gods.

“However, the humiliation of the king during the New Year ritual served a double purpose,” writes JPost. “It demon-
Meet Construction’s Rising Stars, Movers and Shakers of the Year

Approximately 180 million people work in construction worldwide. To celebrate just a small fraction of the talented and hardworking individuals in the building sector, last month, we launched a call for nominations for 40 Under 40: Construction Champions of 2018.

We’re excited to finally announce our 40 Under 40 list. While many accomplished and up and coming builders were nominated for the program, we believe our list is a glimpse into some of the finest talent emerging from leading construction firms and projects around the world. Read on to learn about some of the biggest disruptors and change makers in construction inspiring us all to build a better industry and world.

30. Sabrina Odah
Company: The Boldt Company
Title: Sr. Continuous Improvement Engineer

Throughout her career, Sabrina has worked on significant healthcare construction projects including St. Luke’s Replacement Hospital and the Sutter Health Hospital at Van Ness and Geary Campus in San Francisco, CA. During her time at Boldt, Sabrina has grown as an expert and thought leader on lean construction principles. She’s continuously sharing her wealth of knowledge with her project teams as well as the larger construction community including attendees of the Lean Construction Institute (LCI) Congress.

Our own Sabrina Odah, daughter of our AFA members Sue & Paul Odah, made it to this list and was listed as number 30. Sabrina is still in her late 20’s and has lots to give within her field of knowledge and expertise.

Nineveh Magazine wishes to congratulate Sabrina Odah and her family on this amazing achievement.
**Gilgamesh Musical Album Updates**

www.OOJAABAA.com

Our brand new website is up and running (www.OOJAABAA.com) and (GilgameshMusical.com) will direct you to Gilgamesh Musical’s dedicated page on OOJAABAA.com. This will help us to focus more on OOJAABAA MUSIC company and its product “Gilgamesh Musical Album”. This website’s capabilities will provide us with more advanced marketing solutions and overall better visitor experience. Check it out and let us know what do you think.

**Gilgamesh Musical Products**

We have discontinued some of our products. Poet’s package, Composer’s Package, Cast Member’s Package and sponsorship packages are no longer available. Sorry if you missed it but “exclusive” or “limited edition” should serve their meanings. We are adding more products with different options in the near future. Currently we offer free shipping on all of our products within the United States. At this time, we do not offer international shipping.

**Why the release of Gilgamesh Musical Album is delayed?**

The simple answer is the funding. We are in orchestration and recording phase. Our progress is limited by the amount of funds we receive for our project. This is the only reason that is delaying our project. Everything is ready to go, songs are written, narrations are completed and recorded, translation to English is done and Farsi is in progress, and casting is completed.

**How can you help?**

Please be proactive, it is free, share our project with your friends and family and encourage them to contribute to this musical project. Every amount counts and goes toward completion of this album. We will be posting on OOJAABAA’s Instagram and Facebook. Please follow our page and share our posts.

**AFAs Second Contribution**

We would like to thank the Assyrian Foundation of America for their second generous contribution of $5000 to OOJAABAA MUSIC for Gilgamesh Musical project. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Karoukian for his second personal contribution to our project.

During this project, the Assyrian Foundation of America is one of the few organizations that have been very consistent with their support of Gilgamesh Musical. On top of organization’s sponsorship, we have received contributions from many of its members and directors.

**List of Donors for 2019**

The below list includes donations received from 12/4/2018 to 3/5/2019 only! Any donations received after 3/5/2019 will be included in the next issue of the Nineveh Magazine.

Thank you for your generosity and support

Robert Karoukian 5,000.00 Flora Kingsbury 500.00
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*The amounts listed are charitable donations only and exclude subscription fees and membership dues.*
In Memoriam

David William Lazar
Assyrian Activist and Patriot

It is with deep regret and sadness that we announce the passing of David William Lazar on January 5, 2019 at age 59. David’s untimely death was completely unexpected and came as a shock to all who knew him. He was a highly respected Assyrian activist who fought for the rights of all Assyrians and worked to further the Assyrian cause, co-founding several non-profit organizations (among many): Assyrian Aid Society of America, American Mesopotamian Organization, and Restore Nineveh Now Foundation.

David was born in Baghdad, Iraq. He was fluent in Assyrian, Arabic, and English. He held a BS in Industrial Engineering, followed by an MBA in Technology Management. Furthermore, he was tremendously knowledgeable about Assyrian history, as well as of the Geo-political complexity of the Assyrian nation. He spent a lifetime lobbying for the independence/autonomy of Christian Assyrians in their native homeland of Iraq. David was also a proud conservative American patriot.

David William Lazar was deeply devoted to his family and leaves behind his wife Ninva (of the Younan family) and two lovely children Delmin and Tiamet Lazar. May God rest the soul of this unforgettable Assyrian soldier.

Written by Elizabeth Mickaily-Huber, Ph.D.

Mr. Lazar’s many Assyrian Nationalist Achievements are summarized below:

1980 - David co-founded the Assyrian American Student Society at California State University, Northridge. He held multiple positions including various committee chairs, board member, Vice President, and President.

1979 to 1996 - Active member of the Assyrian American Association of Southern California including various committee chairs, delegate to the Assyrian American National Federation’s annual conventions, Los Angeles Assyrian radio program director, board member, vice president, and culminating with the Presidency of the association for two terms 1992 & 1993.

1979 to 1999 - Active member of the Assyrian American National Federation including chair of several committees.

1979 to 1986 - Active member of the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) including representative to several AUA congresses. He was AUA’s delegate to multiple Assyrian American National Federation Conventions.

1982 - Co-founded the Assyrian Universal Alliance’s Los Angeles Chapter.

1987 - Co-founded the Assyrian Democratic Movement (Zowaa) US & Canada Supported organization, setting in motion the formation of International Zowaa organizations.

1991 - Co-founded the Assyrian Aid Society of America, setting in motion the formation of Assyrian Aid Society organizations internationally, including in Iraq.

1997 - Co-founded Mar Shaleeta Parish of the Ancient Church of the East.

2009 - Co-founded the American Mesopotamian Organization (AMO)

2014 - Co-founded Restore Nineveh Now organization

2015 - Spearheaded efforts and led campaign to form Nineveh Plain Protection Units (NPU)

2015 to 2018 - Held the following roles and activities:
• Adviser to Donald Trump 2016 presidential campaign
• Board Member of the American Mideast Coalition for Democracy
• Co-founder of Gazertz Protection Forces
• Supporter and adviser of Guardian Forces of Khabour and Tel Tamar
• Co-founder of Al-Rafidian region
• Supporter and adviser of Roosh 24
Following in the footsteps of the late Assyrian nationalist, Malphono Shukri Chartmoughy, who opened the first Assyrian school in Qamishli in 1908 (which was administered by the Syriac Orthodox church), Rev. Fr. Gibrail Kanne of the Chaldean Church established Al-Kifah school in 1916, which was the first school administered by the Chaldean church in Qamishli. He built the school next to the Chaldean Church and was fully accredited by the Syrian Ministry of Education in 1939. Assyrian language was an important part of the school curriculum and was taught along with church hymns.

In 1943, the school established the Boy Scouts, which consisted of sixty members and a brass band, all led by a teacher named Anis Hanna Melaywae. In 1944, the school launched a theatrical group and presented a play by Shakespeare, the first ever presented on-stage in the city. In 1947 a sports club was established at the school named, “Chaldean Sports Club”, which consisted of a soccer team and a boxing team.

Al-Kifah school excelled at the academic level and when Rev. Augustin Sadiq, publisher of Babylon magazine, visited the school in 1964, he was very impressed when he learned that the school had ranked first in the national exam in the Jazeera province of Syria for the 1963–1964 school year. By the 1967–1968 school year, student enrollment had reached 291, based on the records kept by the school. By the late 1960s, the Assyrian educational system in Qamishli consisted of eight schools—six primary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The Syriac Orthodox Church administered six of them, while the Church of the East and its school committee administered another, the Faris Al-Khouys primary school, and the Chaldean Church and its school committee administered the last, Al-Kifah primary school. Unfortunately, in 1968 all of these privately-run schools were put under governmental control during the Ba’ath regime and most were later forced to shut down.

The history of Al-Kifah cannot be narrated without noting the influence of an interesting and patriotic figure from the Chaldean Church, the Very Rev. Fr. Paulos Bedaro. He was born in 1887 in the village of Bedaro, in the Zakho region of Assyria, and was educated in Mosul. He served as Al-Kifah’s principal from 1953 to 1960.

One of Qasha Bedaro’s daring moves occurred while serving as school principal—he ignored the government-mandated recital of the Syrian National Anthem, which he saw as promoting and glorifying Arabism and Islamic ideologies. He instead mandated his students to begin morning classes by reciting a patriotic Assyrian poem that he composed and called, “ Ninwe u’ Babil” (“Nineveh and Babylon”).

Qasha Bedaro was a learned man; he was well-educated and fluent in many languages besides Assyrian/Syr iac, his mother language. He was fluent in Arabic, French, English, and Latin. He authored and published dozens of books, mainly in Assyrian and Arabic. The subject matter of many of his books revolved around the history of the Chaldean Church as well as Sefya, the 1915 Assyrian Genocide. He was a proud and staunch defender of his mother tongue, which was demonstrated by his renowned book addressed to the Arab academia titled, “Qunbulat Bedaro” (Qasha Bedaro’s Bombshell). In this book, Qasha Bedaro compared the two languages and highlighted the Assyrian language’s superiority over the Arabic language.

Qasha Bedaro instilled upon his flock the importance of general education and the teachings of the Assyrian/Syriac language along with national pride. He was a great motivator, which did not sit well with the Arab ideology in the Syrian government, as well as the Catholic Church hierarchy. This led to his forced transfer back to Mosul in 1960 where he lived until his death in 1974.

The British Museum’s blockbuster exhibition on the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal, one of history’s greatest rulers, took place between November 8, 2018 and February 24, 2019. The exhibition told the story of Ashurbanipal through the British Museum’s unique collection of Assyrian treasures.

Ashurbanipal was not a romantic conqueror. He was a warrior and a scholar, capable of mercilessly obliterating his enemies and of eternal creation. Destroying the Egyptian city of Thebes and enslaving its inhabitants were equally as important to him as accumulating books for his library, which at 30,000 works was the largest collection of its time. He is possibly the only person in history to have been both a librarian and a warrior. He is depicted with a stylus, a writing instrument, tucked into his belt, proclaiming the pen to be as mighty as the sword. Shortly after his mysterious death, the Assyrian empire fell, and the great city of Nineveh was destroyed in 612 BC, its ruins lost to history.

Technology is used in the exhibition, which makes it come to life. Projecting colours on some of the reliefs helps them look just as they would have done when they were originally painted. A blue aqueduct breathes fresh life into the green vegetation around it, and Assyrian gods look resplendent in their white robes. It’s smartly done, for instance, when visitors switch to the battle scenes and war drums kick in from the speakers, bringing dramatic flair to the telling of these tales of war and death. You almost expect the figures in front of you to animate and start moving.

Eye-blistering friezes show Ashurbanipal fighting lions to prove his superhuman virility. Lions are shown being shot at close range with arrows or speared in the neck. There are some dazzling reliefs of crowded battle scenes and an impressive cabinet of cuneiform tablets, which were originally part of his great library that contained works of literature, soothsaying and magic. Other cuneiform texts include letters that shed light on such diverse topics as sibling rivalry, Assyrian board games, teaching, and the training of the king. There is also his letter to his father written when he was 14, describing how he has been learning all the proper skills for a king. How often do you get so close to objects personally used by one of the great figures of ancient history?

On one tablet he writes, “I am able to recognise celestial and terrestrial omens and can discuss them in an assembly of scholars. I am capable of arguing with expert diviners... I can resolve complex mathematical divisions and multiplications that do not have an easy solution. I have read cunningly written texts in obscure Sumerian and Akkadian that are difficult to interpret; I have carefully examined inscriptions on stone from before the Deluge that are sealed, stopped up, and confused.” Ashurbanipal’s library was destroyed by fire in the destruction of Nineveh at the end of the seventh century BC, but clay tablets don’t burn. They were hardened and preserved by the heat.
Dr Gareth Brereton, Curator of Mesopotamia and of this exhibition, said: “It has been a wonderful experience, and the exhibition has been a tremendous success and well over-subscribed. The exhibition gives an insight into the life and legacy of kind Assurbanipal.”

Large crowds attended the final day; Assyrians from worldwide communities were present and took an active role in concluding this exhibition. They took great pride in having their culture and heritage displayed in the world’s most famous museums.

The Assyrian community of the UK participated in this exhibition through their folk-dance group. The dancers’ chanting voices reverberated throughout the museum hall. The sounds of the pulsating Dowolah (drum) accompanied by a shrilling Zurna (flute) echoed throughout the morning and afternoon. Their dancing inspired curiosity about Assyrian heritage from the audience.

The acclaimed Nineveh dance group from the Assyrian cultural club of Gutersloh, Germany, gave electrifying performances. Their energetic, fast-paced dance routines dazzled the audience. They wowed the audience with their take on Khazadde (the Reapers’) song. The group, dressed in colourful traditional Assyrian customs, performed the characteristic rhythms of Assyrian folk music, drawing audiences with their theatrical musicality.

The Nineveh group was set up over three years ago, and it performs regularly at festivals and special cultural events.

The Assyrian Swedish-based fashion designer Nahreen Odisho applied conventional motifs in her representation of female Assyrian dresses. The designer took great pains to portray the decorative patterns. The Assyrian dresses were lavishly decorated, some covered with intricate ornamentation. Woven and embroidered patterns and fringes were used with great profusion. The designer, Nahreen Odisho, and her models walked the catwalk under the eyes of Lamassu.

Some colourful Assyrian customs from various Assyrian regions were on display, courtesy of Mrs Julia Cherri. She has dedicated years to researching different forms of Assyrian traditional clothing. There were some moving poetry recitals performed by Nineb Lamassu and Jamie Osborn, and by Breitel Suleiman from Australia with her soprano voice.

A thrilling music concert was performed by members of the Gilgamesh Arts and Culture foundation. Several Assyrian songs were performed, sending mellifluous echoes around the great museum. The audience seemed overcome with spiritual rapture, as though the music had raised them to the highest heaven.
Nineb Lamassu, Director of the Assyrian Language and Culture Trust, which was the main supporter of this exhibition, said: “We worked hard to showcase Assyrian continuity through art and culture; I personally would like to thank everyone involved. I have been blessed and honoured to have worked with such an amazing, selfless group of individuals. We have worked very hard as an international team of dedicated individuals to make this happen, and we have had the moral and financial support of the public and prestigious Assyrian and non-Assyrian Associations.”

He added: “We have had so much support from the Assyrian and non-Assyrian public at large; support from people we never knew nor expected anything from. Everyone's dedication can't be measured, especially not in monetary value; everyone's dedication is manifested by Rabita Julia Cherri: she was hospitalised, yet she directed her display of Assyrian traditional costumes right from her hospital bed. What an example of a true and a great human spirit. I thank the British Museum for the wonderful ‘I am Ashurbanipal’ exhibition and for working with the Assyrian community of the UK and other parts of the world to make sure that modern Assyrians were included in such an international exhibition that focuses on their ancient and most revered king.”

As the moon scattered its gleaming light on the museum. Ashurbanipal's majestic roaring voice rang concussively in my ears:

I am Ashurbanipal; I ruled the largest empire that the world had ever seen.

The mighty gods granted me outstanding strength.

I crushed my enemies and made them bow down before me.

I held the bow and made arrows fly and pierced the throats of raging lions.

I am Ashurbanipal, great king, mighty king, king of the world, king of Assyria.

Robert Ewan is an Assyrian-British journalist and author based in London. He has contributed many articles to the British media. He is the author of "Doves in Crimson fields, Iraqi Christian martyrs" and "O creator of light" a collection of prayers and hymns of the Church of the East.
Surayt Textbook

The Šlomo Surayt Textbook has been published in different languages. At the moment you can download the free PDF copies of the English and German versions. Soon, the Swedish and Dutch versions will be made available at this site. The other languages (French, Turkish and Arabic) will follow this. Please stay tuned.

available at www.surayt.com

Homer and the Wooden Horse of Troy

By Youarsh Haido

This book, which is in modern Assyrian language, is an abridged and adapted translation of one of Greek’s literary masterpieces: the Iliad by Homer. Rabi Youarash Haido is one of the most learned Assyrian authors in classic and vernacular Assyrian, and has worked extensively on ridding the modern Assyrian language of foreign words and expressions by borrowing from the classic Assyrian language. This book will hopefully be enjoyed by those Assyrians who are not able to read the original story in other languages and more so by students who wish to learn the more correct sentence structures and powerful Assyrian words that can express feelings that up until now have been conveyed with non-Assyrian words.

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In late 2013, I was at an Assyrian social club in Erbil - Iraq, having dinner with my friend and talking about the Assyrian cause. We found ourselves talking about Assyrian leadership, asking ourselves who we could name as a true Assyrian leader, and names like Ashurbanipal, Shamiram, Tiglathpileser, Mar Benjamin Shimun and a few others from our ancient and modern history were brought up. However, we were disappointed to realize that as a nation we do not have a current leader that we can look up to, learn from, and follow.

With weeks passing by, then months, we came up with the idea of an educational institution to empower potential leaders, enhance leadership skills within our youth, children, and women and ultimately generate new leaders. We did not have a name for our concept yet, but we started working on our original concept. We immediately started helping them find shelter, food, female hygiene products, infant needs, and medical supplies.

Fast forward to August, I am with my team on the rooftop of one of the centers housing internally displaced people (IDP), planning the next day’s doctors’ visit from the International Swedish Hospital team in Erbil to the center, a few of the children were playing right next to us. Mina (who was probably around 3 years old) and her cousins Faris and Fady (same age) started talking about how to play what they called the “Daesh Game” (Daesh in Arabic means Islamic State, or ISIS). I heard Mina telling Faris, “I will be at home, and you will be Daesh, and you will come and take me as a hostage. Then Fady has to come and rescue me from you”. Hearing that from a 3 year old was devastating and shocking. They obviously understood what was going on around them. They had nothing else to do, so they were coping by making a game out of their horrific situation! Imagine 24 hours a day, doing nothing: no toy to play with, no school to learn at, and no parent to seek attention from as their parents were trying to find food, water, and basic necessities for their children. At that moment I realized the urgent need for an organization to support the mental, psychological, and emotional well-being of our children and youth.

We immediately started working on our original concept of building leaders, with a modification being the current situation of our people. The first thing we did is partnered with a Danish organization called Cross Cultures Program Association (CCPA) and created sports and educational programs that helped the youth and children cope. These programs also helped with their communication, teamwork, and leadership skills while also enhancing their self-esteem and building strong character. Hundreds of internally displaced youth and children participated in our programs.

These programs were life changing to me as an organizer and the participants. Here’s a quick glimpse into one of the activities we ran...

We would gather around 60 internally displaced youth in a soccer field. We would divide the soccer field to 6 stations. Each station had two games and a topic to discuss. We would divide the 60 youth into 6 groups matching our stations. Group A would start at Station 1, and then move to station 2 and so on. At the end of the day all the groups had been to all 6 stations, played all 12 games, and discussed all 6 topics. Our games required more than just sports, they required intellect and reasoning. The subjects were different at each station, but they included discussions about questions like “why did we leave our homes?” or “how can we use this experience as a strength?” or conversations about topics like “girls are equal to boys” and more.

A week later, we brought in 200 other internally displaced children, and we had the older youth that we had trained and practiced this specific program with, replicate the program with these children, with our supervision and assistance. We started noticing amazing changes in the personalities and behaviors of these youth, especially the girls. Allowing them to take control and be responsible for a program and a group of children gave them the self-confidence they lacked in those IDP camps. We were successful in helping the IDP youth cross the self-defeating state of being victims into the uplifting state of being survivors—as they understood that being displaced was just another situation that they needed to get through, and it does not define them, that they were capable of doing anything if they set their minds to it, worked hard, and received the support they needed.

In August 2016, we announced our concept’s name as “Etuti”, meaning “My Existence”. For over a year, we struggled with bringing a name that is Assyrian, original, unique, interactive, and alive. The idea behind the name is that everyone’s existence matters, and everyone can have an influence on our existence as a nation—where that impact is through language, culture, academia, economy, politics, or anything else.

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Our Projects

Education:
Progressing the notion of learning and knowledge development through educational programs for all ages, with a special focus on the advancement of college and university graduates into higher levels of education, research, and specialized studies by arranging scholarships and sponsorships.

Trainings and Workshops:
Training programs and educational workshops provided for the children, youth, and volunteer workers to learn leadership skills, management, communication, social media proficiency, languages, technology, environmental awareness, global citizenship, governmental policies and ideologies, philanthropy, heritage preservation, human rights, and more.

History and Heritage:
Preserving our history, heritage, and culture through educational videos published on various media outlets as well as instilling knowledge into newer generations about our history and heritage through touristic programs in the Homeland.

Human Rights:
Working for peace, justice, and freedom by advocating human rights, preparing the youth to meet the required qualifications, and will assist in finding job opportunities and capital needed in order to shape and start their career. Euti will provide professional trainings and courses as well as tools and academic curriculum of the homeland, Euti will provide professional trainings and courses as well as tools and educational videos published on various media outlets as well as instilling knowledge into newer generations about our history and heritage through touristic programs in the Homeland.

Affordable Services:
Arranging special offers on services and products with significant discounts for internally displaced and vulnerable families.

Careers and Jobs:
For the youth who have interest and skills in specific areas that are not promoted or available in the educational curriculum of the homeland, Euti will provide professional trainings and courses as well as tools and capital needed in order to shape and start their career path and will assist in finding job opportunities and preparing the youth to meet the required qualifications.

We also have our annual Christmas Gifts Campaign that started since 2014.
We started as a team of 2 people. Then we became 3, and then 4, and soon 5, and now we are more than 160 volunteers.

For more information, or if you are interested to volunteer or donate or sponsor, visit us at:
Website: www.etuti.org
E-mail: info@etuti.org
Facebook: Etuti.Institute
Instagram: Etuti_institute
Twitter: Etuti_institute

Herge Online:
Assyrian Virtual School

Herge Online is an exciting new project of Assyrian Language and Culture Trust (ALAC Trust), a Cambridge based charitable organisation whose objectives are to document, preserve and enrich the Assyrian language and culture.

This Project of the ALAC Trust has been funded by Mrs. Pat Splinter. Mrs. Splinter is a successful Assyrian business woman whose love for our language and culture is a deep rooted family tradition. Mrs. Splinter is the great niece of the renowned scholar, the late Mar Abimalek Timotheus, the Assyrian Church of the East Metropolitan of India. This blessed metropolitan was the founder of the renowned Mar Narsai Press and the mentor and cousin of the much celebrated scholar and instructor, the late Rev. Joseph de Kelaita.

Herge Online is a virtual school designed to meet the challenges facing our people when it comes to learning our endangered language.

Herge Online consists of language experts specialising in the Assyrian language. This team of experts teaches the Assyrian language, both Surit and Şurayt, and Syrian through meticulously set curricula.

Students are able to attend live virtual and interactive classes via their computers and smartphones and tablets. They are able to interact with the teacher exactly as one would in a normal class setting and they are able to submit assignments and set test and exams.

The courses run in stages, each stage consisting of a block of four lessons; one lesson per week. There are three assignments to submit with each stage and a test to set at the end of each of these stages. There is a small symbolic fee to be paid for these courses but Assyrian Language and Culture Trust waves this symbolic fee off for those students that are based in Iraq, Syria, Iran and Turkey. Students living outside of our homeland can submit a request to have this fee waved, if they can demonstrate their inability to pay this symbolic fee.

Herge Online has been running a teachers’ training for a group of Assyrian teachers in Russia and Armenia. This course is conducted free of charge and its objective is to graduate a team of well equipped and competent teachers whose objective is to establish Assyrian schools in Russia and Armenia.

You can visit our website and signup as a student on Herge Online, our website is: www.erge online . Once you have signed up, you can then go ahead and register on the course or courses of your liking. You can also download our iOS and Android Herge App from the App Store and the Google Play Store. Once downloaded, you can use the app to attend our live lessons.

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When I first read this story, I found it to be a genuine, fascinating and picturesque episode of Assyrian history. It is an adventure executed by ancient Assyrian tribal shepherds carrying their families, households, walking sticks, dogs, tents and sheep, in search of alternate pastures & a permanent abode in the extreme southern parts of Beth Nahrain, located in today’s Iraq. Those shepherd tribes used to supply dairy products as rations to the troopers of the Assyrian Empire on a contract basis. Their adventures took place long before the existence of Arabs in the territory of Beth Nahrain. At that time, there were scores of Assyrian shepherd tribes all over the uninhabited southern parts of Beth Nahrain, corresponding to current day Saudi Arabia and the states of the Arabian Gulf deserts. At those days, the Assyrian name for the Arabian Gulf was “Qdalta d’Hermis”. The nomadic Assyrian shepherd tribes knew one another and sometimes they argued or competed to gain good grazing land.

Eventually, a few of those Assyrian shepherd tribes ventured with their families and animals, down the narrow strait of the sea into uninhabited lands known today as “Somalia”. Still others ventured into the uninhabited lands that are now known as “Yemen”. When this happened, a few tribes noticed that some of their fellow Assyrian shepherd tribes were missing and had not been seen for a very long time. The tribes who knew the new locations of the others explained that many tribes had crossed and ventured to the "Simmala d’Yama". In the Assyrian language, this phrase means "on the left hand side of the sea". Many others had ventured to the "Yammena d’Yama", similarly meaning "on the right hand side of the sea". Thus, for many years those two new Assyrian settlements were known as "Simmala" and "Yammena".

At that time, the Prophet Mohamed, founder of the Islamic religion, was in close contact with the clergy of the Assyrian Church of the East. As a result he gave the Assyrian Christians an Ay-sized document, called the Declaration of Freedom in the Arabic language. Indeed, I have a copy of that precious declaration in my files.

Moreover, the Prophet Mohamed gave the Assyrian Christians of the Middle East an exceptional title, known as "Al Ahil Alketab", meaning “The People of the Book". In those days, the Assyrians were the only group who knew how to read and write equally well in Assyrian and Arabic as in Greek. The Assyrians did all the translations for the local people including translations needed for the administration of the Prophet Mohamed.

Furthermore, I have two Ay-sized sheets that, in small print, indicate the names of the many towns, cities, churches, clergy and inhabitants of each Assyrian town or village. Because the Assyrian Church of the East was well established in these areas, all this information was readily available. These wonderful sheets are a part of this fascinating, historical episode. The information included is only a small sample of this historical episode and shall be included as two separate enclosures in support of this article.

Personal note: After the Second World War 1939-1945, the Iraqi Administration for Commerce, Iraqi Airline, Iraqi Airforce, Diplomatic Corps in Baghdad, the oil Industry including the pumping stations such as K1 – K3 (Kirkuk) T1 (Tripoli) & H1 (Haifa) pipe lines were all manned by the Assyrian youth of my generation including the three RAF British Stations Habbaniya, Basrah and Shubaiha because we could read, write and speak Assyrian, Arabic and English with great fluency. We established the only Assyrian Latin American Dance Band and played such music all over Iraq, including to royalty and in high places such as Mansour, Aliyin, and British clubs, including foreign embassies in Baghdad. I used to order the dance music sheets from London via the RAF Post at Habbaniga. We played in Baghdad, where the only other form of entertainment was the cinema. The people said to one another Ekkrah Batikom, "Hal Fira da ghaboon musika al-lathe kannat fee l Cinema".

THE TRUE ASSYRIAN STORY OF SOMALIA & YEMEN

Translated from ancient Assyrian documents

By Andrious Mama Jotyar – MBE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name of City and origin</th>
<th>Names of Churches</th>
<th>No. of Priests</th>
<th>No. of Deacons</th>
<th>No. of Families</th>
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<td>Fayen</td>
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<td>Mar Adai &amp; Mar Marie of Kt 77 Apostles</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>Aps.Mar Daniel Ex.</td>
<td>Mart Marias</td>
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</table>

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20
Once upon a time, the ancient Assyrian Church of the East, the first
creator of Christianity, shone like stars and its Patriarchs like the
silver moon all over the Middle East. It was from here that the rest
of Christian denominations sprung. During pioneering days, thousands
of churches, clergy, men, women and children were sacrificed in distant
lands for the cause of Christianity. The Assyrian Christians
Ambassadors pioneered from the lands of Assyria into Persia, China,
India, Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Today it is weakened, its
traces in many lands eradicated, and now no one cares to extend a
helping hand.

AD 747
There were a great number of Assyrians in Egypt who came from
Assyria and Babylon for the expansion of Christianity.
Patriarch Ava consecrated the first Apiskopa in Egypt.

AD 980
Patriarch Mar Qodis consecrated Salaman Apiskopa for Egypt.
Patriarch Mar Youhana Nasokh promoted Apiskopa of Egypt to
Metropolitan and posted him to Persia.
Patriarch Elia Walki posted Metropolitan Khalvan of Persia
to Egypt.
Patriarch Sorisho Tanbaw consecrated Apiskopa Youkhawan to
Metropolitan and posted him to Egypt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name of Clergy and Origin</th>
<th>Names of Churches</th>
<th>No. of Priests</th>
<th>No. of Deacons</th>
<th>No. of Families</th>
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<td>306</td>
<td>7300</td>
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<td>Tamana</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4025</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shilax Ex.Mosul</td>
<td>The 12 Apostles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Youhana</td>
<td>Mars Mar Mar</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youhan Ex.Tehran</td>
<td>Youhan</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexa-</td>
<td>Mar Ghosha Ex.Dwakos</td>
<td>Youhan</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4025</td>
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<tr>
<td>nia</td>
<td>Mar Mar Mar Ex.Grama</td>
<td>Youhan</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rashidy</td>
<td>Apiskopa Mar</td>
<td>Mar Petros 'Delays</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khnanisho Ex.Jrvai</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Cont'd.)
بلدنا خذ صنف فضية
تم ذكره بعضها وجدناه ضيفاً
وشق وجدت آخره في القرية.
ولكن نحن نرى صفحته في كتاب
كما هو مذكور من قبل.
لكنني لم أكن في مكان.
في مكانه كتبه في كتاب
فإنها مكتوبة في كتاب
لكنها مكتوبة في كتاب
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لكنها مكتوب...
في سرد النص، لم يتم اكتشاف أي نص يمكن قراءته بشكل طبيعي.

إن النص بشكل عام يحتوي على الأحرف العربية، ولكن دون أي سياق يمكن التعرف عليه بشكل دقيق.

لذا، لا يمكنني تقديم نص باللغة العربية بشكل طبيعي.

من الممكن أن يكون النص يحتوي على بعض الأخطاء، وقد يكون من الصعب القراءة بشكل صحيح.

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى أي مساعدة أخرى، فأخبرني بذلك.
لا يوجد نص يمكن قراءته بشكل طبيعي من الصورة المقدمة. الصورة تحتوي على نص عربي لكنه غير قابل للقراءة بشكل طبيعي.
لا معلومات يمكنني قراءتها بشكل طبيعي من الصورة المقدمة.
Looted away by their corruption

Coined by the poet, i.e wearing turbans

Newly born snakes

Quiver

Tumor

Cancerous Tumor

Our aid

Flipflops

Parliament

Brokers

Mask

Politicians

The rebellious ones

Candle

Go our
50

Bleed 1
Hammers 2
Wretched 3
Show solidarity 4
Blood drops 5

1 Coined by the poet, i.e. it became here
2 Denotation
3 Provocation
4 Their corruption
5 They are

Protest 8
Protestor 9

8 Coined by the poet, i.e. it became here
9 Denotation
10 Provocation

Kaf Hanim (Ps 22, 24)

Kaf Hanim (Ps 22, 24)

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50
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Assyrian Fashion show at the British Museum, UK during “Living Assyria” day with the Designer in the middle; Nahren Odisho