



# NINEVEH

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# CONTENTS

4	Goodbye to my Assyrian mother in Iran	33	Nineveh Donations 6/01/2022 - 9/30/2022
8	On the situation of the Assyrians in Turkey, Syria and Iraq: An Update	34	Lola's Assyrian Sewing School in Armenia
16	Gender and Genocide: The Hidden Assyrians	36	When will our differences and divisions end?
18	The Gift	38	AFA Picnic July 2022
22	Gilgamesh: Untold Traumatic Experiences of Vulnerable Refugees	40	The Story of Art and the Art of Stories: Living Culture from Mesopotamia to New York
26	The Genocide Chronicles John Israel	42	Assyrian Progress (magazine) of Assyrian American Benevolent Association of California
28	Lamassu Pharma Leverages Translational Research Techniques to Speed up Drug Development	43	Assyrian Language Section
30	The Life of Timothy M. Soleiman: An Autobiography (Part II)		

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# Goodbye to my Assyrian mother in Iran

Attiya Gamri, Netherlands

It is January 1998, and I feel a sense of doubt about my everyday work in the Netherlands. During one of my dark evenings, I was going through a folder of old documents from my time as a member of the Assyrian Federation of the Netherlands, when my gaze fell upon the words "Mutva Aturaya d-Tehran". It was a fax from Dr. Wilson bit-Mansour, inviting the Dutch Assyrian Federation to the AUA congress, in Iran.

No one had read this fax when it was sent, in 1992, five years prior to that somber evening, because none of us understood a word of English at that time. The members of the Assyrian Federation were from Tur Abdin, most lacking formal education. The fax was given to me to be filed away.

I could not bring myself to throw away Dr. Wilson's fax. Instead, it took up permanent residence on the desk in my small student room. Periodically, it would occupy a few moments of wandering in my mind as I worked.

The following day, after finally managing to get some rest, I decided to send a short fax to the Mutva. After waiting for a week to hear back, I sent a follow-up fax. I was surprised when my reply finally came not in a fax, but a telephone call from Mr. Yonatan bit-Kolia. I was delighted to hear his voice, which felt like a voice from Ashur, a voice from my homeland; though it was not Assyria, but Tehran. He began by saying, simply: "Shlama - and, you are more than welcome in Tehran".



Tehran Airport, Flora Ghajarian 1998

With these words, I immediately began the process of applying for a visa. I remember that my mother prayed to God, asking him to prevent me from going to Iran. In those days, we saw Iran and the Khamenei regime in the news every week. My mother was terrified of the idea of her daughter flying to Iran, not least because the Assyrians I was traveling to see spoke only East-Assyrian, leaving me without a common language, or family to care for me.

Mr. bit-Kolia made the arrangements for my visa, which took some time. In those days, lack of Tehran-bound tourists meant the process was slow and full of snarls. My mother continued her daily prayers, hoping no visa would be granted. When it finally did come and my ticket to Tehran was booked, things suddenly started to happen very quickly, and, in the end, I left without much preparation. With my rucksack on my back, I went to the airport and prepared to enter a new world.

I knew Urmia from the song by Simon Kaplo, and from articles I had read about the Seyfo, Mar Benjamin and Aga Petros. At that time, I didn't have more information than these scant sources; and,



Village Kuhnashar, where Mar Benjamin Chamoun, was killed (with Stella and Jack Bit Kolia)

looking back, I can say with certainty, that I had no clear picture of the condition of Assyrians in Iran, especially their human rights. I took my camera, with the aim to film as much as I could. I hoped to, eventually, give those recordings to Assyrian media outlets.

Now, happily, I can report that my mother's numerous fears did not come to pass. Expressions of concern and kindness began from the moment I arrived in Tehran, in the form of a long jacket to replace my shorter one, which did not meet local standards. I instantly felt at home with the Assyrians of Tehran. Mr. bit-Kolia met me, and asked if I preferred to stay in a hotel or in an Assyrian home. Naturally, I immediately replied that staying with an Assyrian family was what I hoped for.

Thus it was that he drove me to the home of an Assyrian lady, without a partner or children, who until that moment was a stranger to me. From the instant her door opened until the time we separated, there was a special connection between us. Her name was Flora Ghajarian.



Flora Ghajarian



Assyrian Shop in Urmia

As she lived alone in an apartment, she generously allowed me the use of her house. She showed me old photos and told me of past days, and of the situation of Assyrians in Iran. She introduced me to Mr. Givargis, Dr. Wilson bit-Mansour, Rabi Simono, to the Mutva, to her sister and family; a truly warm tapestry of lovely and interesting souls began to fill this new world of mine. With my small camera, I filmed them all in a series of brief, and occasionally quite funny, interviews.

On one occasion, we attended a meeting in the Mutva on the subject of selling the largest building there. I remember hundreds upon hundreds of people in attendance. The president allowed me a moment to introduce myself. I spoke briefly with a "Shlomo", and thanked them for welcoming me in their community. Immediately, someone stood up and said: "Makhleta, ana itli kha buqara". He asked me what strange language I was speaking, as he had never heard it before. I surprised many in that room by answering that I was speaking Assyrian; Assyrian from Tur Abdin. It was in this way that I feel, just as I learned much from the Assyrians in Iran, so too did they learn some things from me.



Mr. Bit Kolia



Assyrian girls



Family Babajan Tehran



Abuna Mat Maryam Urmia





*Assyrians Tehran*



*Assyrian refugee boy from Nineveh*



*Bishop Ramsin, Assyrian Church Tehran*



*Malfono Nimrud Simono with his family and Flora in his house in Tehran*



*Mata d Sangar/Urmia, Loris Urmia*



*Artist Hanibal Alkhas*

It was there that I heard, for the first time, Assyrian names that were previously unknown to me. Names like: Ramsin, Ramsina, Atorina, Zaya, Enlil, and Ilana.

Many of the Assyrians I spoke with told me that they came from Turkey, having traveled from Hakkari to Urmia during the *Seyfo*, the genocide of 1915. Others were from Iraq, and a few from Syria. I was, therefore, lucky enough to meet Assyrians from all parts of Assyria in Iran, and learned much from them. I came to have a much clearer understanding of Assyrian history, free from the problems of Kaldo and Ashur discussions.

Flora told me that the lives of Assyrians were good during the Shah's reign. She said Assyrians had 8 hours each week of instruction in the Assyrian language in school, which explained why so many Assyrians there could read and write our language, and why they were so versed in our history. Flora told me of her mother and father. She was a very strong woman, a writer of poems in Assyrian, and had an important role in the Assyrian movement in Tehran.

My world is richer and more beautiful thanks to my visits to Salamas, Urmia, Sangar, Mar Sargis, Ada, Goytapa and countless other Assyrian villages. I have been further enriched by learning East-Assyrian. That said, my experience with the hard-line Islamic regime, including issues with the police, being held in prison in Urmia, and, above all, being unable to trust others, was very difficult.

My last few days with Flora were serene and filled with contentment. It had come to the point where we were so close that I thought of her as a second mother. She told me that I was her Assyrian daughter, and she wished I would stay with her for more time than we had together.

Well, Flora, you were more than a kind Assyrian woman in Tehran for me. Your family's story was very interesting. Many Assyrians from Hakkari left, during *Seyfo*, to Urmia. Many went to Russia; and, later, returned to Urmia. Flora's father was one of those Assyrians. He left Russia and went back to Tehran, where he married her mother, Rabi Sofia Ghajarian; a

famous Assyrian teacher and poet, who was a great motivator and inspiration for Flora, to follow her path and admire her as a role model.

Fima, Flora, Romeo and Juliette grew up in Iran and they all contributed to many Assyrian arts and culture projects; such as participating in the Assyrian choir which was established and led by Rabi Nebu Issabey, the famous composer, conductor and pianist. Flora's mother, Sofia Ghajarian, wrote many of the poems that were sung by the choir. Her grandfather, Shamasha Basilious Khangaldy, was also a poet, who has two books, and wrote the whole story of the war and genocide in poems.

Flora found her soul-mate and they got married; but, unfortunately, she lost him very soon. After that she stood on her own and focused on her career as a translator and a poet.

She could read and write in Assyrian; her teacher was Rabi Nimrud Simono. Her poems were mainly in Persian. She also translated international best selling books in psychology from English to Persian.

Books by authors like Melody Betty and Louis Hey.

Flora, our time spent together utterly changed my life and impacted the way I view Assyrians; the 6 weeks I spent visiting Assyrians from Urmia, Tabriz, Salamas, and Tehran and all that you told me about what the Assyrians in Iran had achieved. You showed me how to love my nation and language and remain hopeful. The dreams you had for Assyrians, I still believe in and work toward achieving them ever since.

It was only last year that I told my husband and two children about my desire to visit Tehran again after so many years; to be reunited with Flora, my Assyrian mother in Tehran. In October this year, we had planned to finally introduce my two children to her. Looking forward to that day filled me with so much joy. But, that joy was taken away in an instant, when on 23 January I saw a post saying that my Assyrian mother in Tehran, Flora, had passed away. All I could do was to cry and cry. I wish I could say to her now: "*Thank you, my Assyrian mother in Tehran. Thank you. You gave me so much*".



*George bit-Athanas and his Son*



*Assyrian wedding in Tehran*



*Malfono Nimrud in Tehran*



*A Grandmother in Urmia*





# On the situation of the Assyrians in Turkey, Syria and Iraq: An Update

By Abdulmesih BarAbraham, MSc.

## Introduction

If one wants to get a short overview into the current situation and problems of the Christians in the countries of the Middle East, especially of those living in Iraq, Syria and Turkey, one only has to study a few independently published recent reports from April to June of this year, which give a sad insight into the situation of the Christians in these countries.

In the Armenian magazine *Agos*, published in Turkey on April 6, 2022, there is an article entitled "Syrian Christians: Life Between War and Migration." Therein, based on the accounts of the Armenian priest Levon Yeghyaian, the author Vicken Cheterian, explains the difficulties of the community in Qamishly. According to him, a majority of Assyrians and Armenians lived in Qamishly until the turn of the millennium. Before the outbreak of the Syrian crisis, there were 1800 Armenian families living in the city, but now their number has dropped to about 700. In the neighboring town of Al-Hassake, there are currently 89 families, while in Derik (Al-Malikiye) only 69 Armenian families are left [1].

The statistics are similarly dramatic for the Assyrians, who belong to the various Syriac/Aramaic-speaking churches (Chaldean, Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Church of the East) in the region. Prior to the conflict in Syria, their number in the NE region was about 150,000. Currently, their number is estimated at about 45-50,000 in northeastern Syria, according to Gabriel Moushe, a spokesman for the Assyrian Democratic Organization (ADO) in Syria.

The Turkish journalist Uzey Bulut published an overview article on June 9, 2022, titled "Persecution against Christians never ends in Turkey," in which she explores the question of how Christians, most of whom are descendants of the survivors of the 1915 genocide perpetuated during the late Ottoman Empire, survive in Turkey today.

How much respect and tolerance are they given by Turkey's Muslim society and government? Some of her question is answered through her account of a recent incident against the Christian Assyrians in a village in the district of Mardin [2].

Fides News Agency, the Vatican's news information portal, published on June 11, 2022, a brief regarding Muqtada al Sadr, the Iraqi Shiite leader and head of the alliance of the main political group in the current Iraqi Parliament. The report explains that al Sadr has announced the continuation of the work of the ad-hoc committee set up at the beginning of 2021, at his initiative, "with the task of returning to the rightful owners, property that has been unlawfully expropriated in recent years from Christian communities or the religious community of the Mandaeans" [3].

The three aforementioned recent reports, published within a few weeks of one another, point to the tip of an iceberg of problems Christians are confronted with in Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, following the end of the fight against the Islamic State (ISIS). The discrimination, persecution, and displacement of Christians, and the resulting emigration, have a long history that began in the early 20th century with the genocide of Christians in the Ottoman Empire and was shaped by different political events in different countries in the following decades; it continues until today. The Middle East remains the scene of conflict and Islamic fundamentalism, forcing many Christians to leave their countries of origin because they no longer see a future in their home countries [4].

The following article attempts to broaden the view concerning the current situation of the Assyrian Christians based on the reports from the three countries. Subsequently, a cross-country assessment will be added based on the view of a US lobby organization, the IDC (In Defence of Christians).

## Syria (the country)

Vicken Cheterian reports that major cities, including Al-Hassake in northeastern Syria, were founded during the French Mandate: "The city was planned by the French in the 1920s to provide shelter for Assyrians who had survived the Ottoman deportations and massacres. Cities such as Kobane (Ayn al-Arab) and Tel Abyad were also founded by Armenian deportees. Both Assyrians and Armenians were survivors of massacres during World War I and came from what are now the eastern and southern provinces of Turkey."

Father Yeghyaian describes the difficulties of daily life at his church in Qamishly, which belongs to the Armenian Diocese of Aleppo. "Before [the conflict], traveling to Aleppo took 4-5 hours" says father Yeghyaian. "Now one must take the southern route and it might take 15 sometimes 18 hours." With that he is pointing to the military presence of the U.S., Russia, Turkey, Kurdish-led SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) and the Army of Syria in the northeast region that are blocking each other in Syria to reach a peaceful solution for the country. Then he added: "We live here among five different armies, and we need to find a way to live with all of them."

Under the conditions of over a decade of conflict, many years of sanctions, and poor finances, people struggle for survival. "This forces the youth to migrate," says Father Yeghyaian. Referring to the de-facto dual-state structures in northeastern Syria by the Syrian regime and the Kurdish-led self-government, he adds, "Armenian youth here need to learn Arabic and Kurdish, but we also need to motivate them to keep our Armenian identity. How can we do that? By maintaining our schools, clubs, and community network."

In 2018, the Society for Threatened Peoples and the Assyrian Federation in Germany with its European Sections (ZAVD) had appealed to the so-called "Autonomous Self-Government" in the northern Syrian region of Jazirah not to impose new curricula on the private Christian schools in the province of Al-Hassake [5]. With its statement that "many Assyrian and Armenian Christians fear that their children's credentials will not be recognized by the Syrian government or elsewhere, and that their future plans may be curtailed," the Society summarized the concerns of Christians in the self-ruled region at the time. The society also warned that "the concerns and fears of the Christian communities must be taken seriously

at eye level. Otherwise, the impression can quickly arise that Christians are no longer welcome in northern Syria. Yet they have been at home in the region for thousands of years."

## Turkey

Uzey Bulut's report briefly describes an incident that took place on Sunday, June 5, 2022, in the village of Brahîmiye (Turkish: Işıklar) near the city of Mardin. On that day, the Syriac Orthodox Mor Gevargis parish held a service for the first time in a hundred years after the Assyrian genocide, after their church was gradually renovated by the Mardin Church Foundation beginning in 2015.

On the day of the opening ceremony of the church, many out-of-town guests and dignitaries were present in the village, including the Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan of Mardin, Mor Philoksinos Saliba Özmen, Choirepiscopos of Mardin Gabriel Akyüz, and the priest of Midyat Mor Jacob Monastery, Daniel Savcı.



Picture 1: A service was held in the church of Mor Gevargis in the village of Brahîmiye for the first time in almost a century [photo credit: Süryaniler].

According to the report, a group of 50 Muslims attacked the house of the only remaining Assyrian Christian family in the village, with whom the group apparently had a property dispute. Fortunately, no one was injured in the incident. However, the attackers subsequently set fire to the family's wheat fields. The fire was extinguished before it got out of control. The gendarmerie took precautionary measures for the fields around it. Some members of the Muslim family were



arrested in connection with the incident.

The Barnabas Fund also reported on the incident. One individual from the affected family, Cengiz Yilmaz, is quoted as saying, “they threatened us that they would not let us live in the village ... but we are not afraid. We will continue to stay here.” He accused the attackers of specifically choosing the day of the church ceremony to re-open the land dispute [6].

In her detailed article, Uzay Bulut discusses the historical situation of the Assyrians, as well as the 1915 genocide. She cites a human rights report published in 2017, by the activists Ayşe Günaysu and Meral Çıldır regarding the experiences of the Orthodox nun Verde, who lives alone in the church of Mor Dimet in the village of Zaz (Turkish: İzbirak) in Tur Abdin and has to endure harassment and threats from Muslims from the surrounding area.

Ayşe Günaysu and Meral Çıldır are members of the Istanbul section of the Association for Human Rights - IHD (Insan Haklari Dernegi), which works actively against racism and discrimination. They visited Assyrian villages in 2017, and documented depressing and unresolved reports of harassment and confiscation of Assyrian lands, as well as persecution of Assyrians in Tur Abdin, the historic Assyrian homeland in southeastern Turkey [7].

The European Commission's latest progress report on Turkey, dated from 2021, remarks on the best-known case concerning the lands of the Syriac Orthodox Mor Gabriel Monastery Foundation. The lawsuit for the restitution of the forest lands is "pending before the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR (European Court of Human Rights). Other cases related to the ownership of land belonging to Mor Gabriel Monastery are still pending."

Most Christian villages are affected by expropriations, including other monasteries or families in Tur Abdin. “[People] who return from the diaspora to rebuild their villages often find that their land has been confiscated either by the state or by Kurdish tribes," states a report by Barbara Güsten. Her report, entitled “The Syriac Property Issue in Tur Abdin,” mentions that the number of Assyrians in the diaspora affected by the expropriations is likely to number in the thousands [8].

The same 2021, European Commission report

also mentions the case of Syriac Orthodox monk Sefer Bileçen, who was sentenced to 25-months in prison in April 2021. The monk was convicted of allegedly supporting a terrorist organization. Already on January 9, 2020, he was arrested by Turkish security forces along with two others for allegedly helping members of the PKK, which is classified as a terrorist organization by the Turkish government. The alleged culpability was probably that he had offered food and drink to people "who claimed to be hungry and thirsty.”

Another unsolved case that continues to make headlines in Turkey is from early 2020. The human rights organization International Christian Concern (ICC) reported in January 2020, that Hirmiz and Simoni Diril, the parents of a Chaldean Catholic priest in southeastern Turkey, disappeared in the village of Meer in Şırnak province - near the Iraqi border. The priest later learned that his parents had been kidnapped. The man who witnessed the kidnapping said the couple was abducted by PKK members, two men and a woman.



Picture 2: Şmuni and Hirmiz Diril in their village

Meer was historically an Assyrian-Christian village that repeatedly found itself in the crosshairs of various conflicts. Like a dozen other Assyrian villages (e.g., Gaznakh, Hassane, Herbol), it had already been evacuated in 1989, and 1992, because of the Turkish army's fight against the PKK. Ten years ago, despite the dangers, the Diril couple returned to the village to try to rebuild their houses.

The Turkish authorities' investigation into the disappearance, which began very late, is ongoing. Two and a half months after the couple's abduction, Şimoni Diril's body was discovered in a river near the village of Meer. Her husband is still missing. It is suspected that he was killed as well. There



Picture 3: Laying of the foundation stone for the Syrian Orthodox Mor Efren Church, (Copyright: cumhuriyet.com.tr)

have been several arrests and hearings so far. The investigation is proceeding slowly. These incidents, and the numerous legally unresolved cases of land grabbing involving Assyrian Christians, stand in stark contrast to Turkey's visible efforts for the construction of a church in Istanbul [9], the cornerstone of which was laid by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan himself. To the outside world, Turkey wants to show that it cares about the concerns of Christians.

The Turkish Ministry of Culture, through its permanent delegation to UNESCO, placed nine Syriac Orthodox churches and monasteries in Tur Abdin on the so-called National Tentative List in mid-April 2021. This initiative is to be recognized soon. Turkey has obviously recognized the value of

the ancient churches and monasteries in Tur Abdin for tourism after most of its Christian inhabitants left the country. The submitted list includes cultural properties suitable for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The monuments are located in the center of Tur Abdin, a traditional Assyrian homeland in northern Mesopotamia (southeastern Turkey) for thousands of years. As one of the oldest Christian cultural landscapes, with its main town of Midyat, Tur Abdin was the only majority Christian town in Turkey until the 1980s.

Iraq

Muqtada al Sadr had ordered the establishment of the committee in early 2021, to collect and review complaints about cases of illegal dispossession of Christians in different regions of the country. According to information from Fides, the goal was "to restore justice and put an end to the violation of the property rights of 'Christian brothers,' including those for which members of the Shiite movement led by al Sadr were responsible." The extension of the committee's mandate indicates the importance of the initiative to address the growing number of complaints received by the body.

According to Fides, by the beginning of 2022, more than 120 plots of land and houses had been returned to Christian citizens and Mandaeans who had been victims of illegal appropriation of their property by individuals or organized groups in recent years. As the Fides report points out, the illegal expropriation of property belonging

The Land Grabbing on Assyrian Lands in Duhok governorate:									
#	District	Sub-district	Village	Type of the land grab	Size of the land grab	Sort of Property	Date of the land grab	Side of Transgression	Decisions and Judgments
1	Zakho	Rizgari	Fishkhabour	Agricultural lands	880 Donums	Ownership property		People from neighboring villages	
2	Zakho	Rizgari	Bajd Braf	Agricultural lands				People from neighboring villages	
3	Zakho	Rizgari	Derabon	Building residential Complex	3000 Donums 300 Houses		1997	Former regime, Currently people from neighboring villages	
				Agricultural lands	1000 Donums		1991		
4	Zakho	Rizgari	Qarawola	Agricultural lands	The whole village	Title Deed		People from neighboring villages	
5	Zakho	Darkar	Yousif Ava	Agricultural lands	The whole village		1991	People from neighboring villages	
6	Zakho	Darkar	Shwadin	Agricultural lands	The whole village		1991	Influential individuals from neighboring village	
7	Zakho	Darkar	Mallah Arab	Agricultural lands	the whole village		1991	People from neighboring villages	
8	Zakho	Darkar	Navkindal	Agricultural lands and Pastures	2600 Donums		1991	People from neighboring villages	
9	Zakho	Darkar	Bersive	Building of residential Complex	4500 Donums	Title Deed	1977	Former Regime	
				water stream of the village			1991	People from neighboring villages	
				Agricultural lands and pastures	2400 Donums	Title Deed	1978 /1991	Neighboring villages	
10	Zakho	Darkar	Hizawa	Agricultural lands + Transfer property to Municipality + Building residential complex	1450 Donums		1977	Municipality of Zakho	
11	Zakho	Darkar	Talkber	Transfer property to Municipality + agricultural lands	3000 Donums		1991	Municipality of Zakho	

Picture 4: Excerpt from a listing of expropriations of Assyrian properties in the Dohuk region. Quelle: Assyrian Federation in Germany



to Christian families is closely linked to the mass exodus of Iraqi Christians, who have left the country since 2003, following the US-led military intervention to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime - but also since the targeted attacks by ISIS. Homes and properties left behind have been expropriated without notice, on the assumption that none of the owners would return to claim their rightful property.

The confiscated properties include houses, agricultural land, commercial buildings, and even small factories and stores scattered throughout the cities of Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, and Kirkuk province.

According to a decree (No. 731) issued by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in northern Iraq on August 28 of 2016, 53 cases of land grabbing and takeovers in Assyrian villages in the Dohuk region are listed in order, with details of the district, village, type of property, size of land, date of expropriation, and party to whom the property was transferred. Many of the cases are still open. The properties were mostly signed over to Kurds from the neighboring villages. In some cases, the Kurdish municipalities of Zakho, Sarsink, or the KRG authorities are the expropriators.

According to a report by the Christian Post, the illegal seizure of Christian land in this region has been ongoing since 1991. The Assyrian Aid Society, cited by the report, estimates that some 180 hectares of Assyrian Christian land have been seized from their Muslim neighbors [10].

More recently, MP Fareed Yaqo, also chairman of the Rafidain bloc in the Kurdistan Regional Parliament, has publicly highlighted the problem of land grabbing. His report, written in English, is reproduced below.



Picture 5: Bild: Fareed Yaqo, MP and Chairman of the Rafidain Bloc in the Regional Parliament

**Cross-country commentary by IDC**  
Dr. Richard Ghazal is Executive Director of *In Defense of Christians* (IDC). The following is his assessment of the current situation of Assyrian Christians [11].  
**Asked about the case of the Syrian Orthodox monk Sefer Aho Bilecen and how this fits in with a country that is a member of NATO, meant to uphold democratic values and rule of law, he responded as follows:**

**Dr. Ghazal:** *The case of Father Aho is concerning, but not at all surprising. For decades, and certainly since President Erdogan's 2002, ascent to power, Turkey has weaponized its legal system against public intellectuals, political opposition, and ethno-religious minorities. As a particularly small minority, the Assyrians [known as Süryani in Turkey] remaining in Tur Adbin (southeast Turkey) have borne a disproportionately large brunt resulting from this weaponized legal system.*

*In April 2021, Father Aho was convicted on manufactured charges of supporting terrorism. In 2018, an unknown individual appeared unannounced and hungry at his monastery's front door. Father Aho provided him with food and water. Turkish authorities later claimed that the individual was associated with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) without providing any evidence. Father Aho's trial—which was closed to press and observers—was postponed three times due to the government's inability to offer evidence. This creates the strong appearance that Turkish authorities have manufactured a case that otherwise had no merit.*

*Turkey's crackdown on ethno-religious minorities is manifestly inconsistent with NATO values. The West must understand that Erdogan's game is not merely reckless; it's a very methodical and deliberate test of U.S. and NATO resolve.*

**On June 1, Turkish President Erdogan threatened a new military offensive into northern Syria to "take another step toward establishing a 30-kilometer security zone along our southern border...and gradually advance into other regions" [12]. Turkey claims to be driving out "terrorists" from there. What are the implications for Assyrian Christians?**

**Dr. Ghazal:** *I am deeply concerned for the wellbeing of Assyrian-Syriac Christians (and other ethno-religious minorities) in northern Syria. For*

**Land Transgression of the Assyrian Christian village of Badarash**  
*The land transgression of the village of Badarash is a common unlawful phenomenon anticipating a serious and immediate genuine solution. It is unfortunate that it is depicted in a twisted way by the [regional] government as a problem between two families.*  
*The recent events that occurred in the Assyrian Christian village of Badarash are due to repeated abuses that have remained for years without serious and honest solutions by the local governmental administration. Law and justice have been distorted in the interest of some beneficiaries and opportunists, in a clear circumvention of the law and government instructions and non-compliance with them.*  
*It is unfortunate that nowadays the issue is described by the local government and the ministerial committee as a problem between two families, while it is a violation of citizens' property and their rights. Arresting the rightful owners in a most offensive and unacceptable manner, while we were working to calm down the situation.*  
*Emphasizing that the encroachment on the lands of the Badarash village and other Assyrian Christian villages is not occurring just recently, the transgression file of the Assyrian Christian lands, is overflowed with cases without any sincere steps taken by the regional government to solve or settle these matters of transgressions in an honest way despite our follow-up and demands for many years of the regional government.*  
*We solemnly ask the local government, why was the ruling of the court, which was in favor of the rightful owners, not implemented in the Assyrian Christian villages of Bebedeh, Komaneh, and Qaruola? Years have passed and still the local government is unable to implement these judicial decisions. The worst of all of this is the demographic change that these villages are experiencing without any decent measurable solutions, despite our years of appealing and demanding from the governor's office and regional government authorities. Our calls were and still are unfortunately falling on deaf ears.*  
*There are many other Assyrian Christian villages, areas and towns that are enduring similar circumstances, for example: the village of Enishki and Blejaneh, Bakhitmeh, Nahla, Zakho, Ankawa and many more.*  
*We wholeheartedly stand with the proud people of the Assyrian Christian village and we will be their shouting voice of the truth and justice to protect their lands and defend and preserve their rights and dignity from the unjust and unlawful actions of the police and police director who arrested the village chosen-Chief and the civil activists and intimidating the villagers with dozens of heavily armed men among defenseless families and in a perverted way accusing them of attacking the police station; and using excessive violence and violating the dignity of our Assyrian Christian women who only were there to inquire of wellbeing of their family members who were unlawfully arrested.*  
*In closing, peaceful and fraternal coexistence is not achieved in one direction and its pillars are not complemented by ringing slogans. Rather, it requires an effective application of the law and the achievement of true justice without racial-profile discrimination; therefore, we call on the regional government to properly and honestly address the file of abuses and transgressions of the lands and properties of our Assyrian Christian people, to achieve justice and to impose the rule of law and punish those who disregard or are reluctant to implement or obey the law.*  
*Yours truly*  
*Representative Fareed Yaqo*  
*Head of the Rafidain bloc in the Regional Parliament*  
*Duhok, Iraq.*  
*May 11th, 2022*



over a decade, this ancient Christian community has suffered--first as a result of the Syrian civil war, followed by the ISIS genocide. These survivors of the ISIS genocide now face daily bombardment from Turkish President Erdogan through his conventional Turkish forces as well as Turkish-backed jihadist militias. Since October 2019, Erdogan has violated the U.S.-brokered ceasefire over 2,000 times, in the form of daily attacks into northern Syria, including Christian towns such as Ras al Ain and Tel-Tamar.

Erdogan's intensified rhetoric (as of recently) threatens an all-out invasion which would expand Turkish occupation beyond what was annexed following the invasions of 2016-2019. Turkey (and its jihadist proxies) have instituted and enforced Shari'a law over the occupied areas and populations. If Turkish proxies annex and institute Shari'a law in traditionally Christian Assyrian towns such as Qamishly, Al-Hassake, Ras al-Ain, Qahtaniye (Qabre Hewore) and Malikiye, it could be the beginning of the end of Christian presence in northeast Syria.

In recent years we have observed some signs (albeit mixed) of cooperation in the Autonomous Administration of Northeastern Syria. While a Syriac party has ostensibly been given a proverbial seat at the table, the prudent posture remains 'trust but verify'.

**Turkey's bombardments against the positions of the militant Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) continue in Iraq. According to a published report by the Assyrian Policy Institute [13], Assyrian Christians in Iraq have been caught in the crossfire of the ongoing conflict between Turkey and the PKK along the Iraqi-Turkish border. Turkey has consistently pursued the PKK in northern Iraq with little regard for the negative consequences for civilians such as Assyrians living in villages occupied by the militant group. Did the IDC address this situation?**

**Dr. Ghazal:** Christians in Iraq are caught in the crossfire between Turkey and the PKK just as Christians in northeast Syria are, and as Christians in southeast Turkey have been for many decades. It has destroyed the constitution of our people in the homeland and is a primary force driving emigration. This situation is emblematic of the greater, centuries-old situation of Assyrian-Syriac

Christians. For centuries, we have been caught between enemies and empires—Persians and Romans, Turks and Kurds, Sunnis and Shi'a, Americans and Russians (and the list could go on).

**Citing a Philos Project report, the Christian Post published recently an article, claiming that Iran, through its proxy militias, is waging an "invisible jihad" against Christians in the Middle East to create a Muslim demographic purity by creating conditions that push Christians out of the region. How does IDC see the issue?**

**Dr. Ghazal:** For decades, Iran's international proxy militias—including Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen—have threatened the region's remaining Christians and other religious minorities. Indeed, Iran's militant Shi'a proxies throughout the region are among the foremost threats to Christianity's ability to endure in the Middle East.

IDC does not believe an American return to the Iran Nuclear Deal is prudent, as it will only serve to reenergize a rogue Iran. However, as President Biden seeks a return to the negotiation table, IDC continues to urge the Administration that any new deal must be exclusively conditioned on Iran's disarmament and dismantling of its proxy militias throughout the region.

*A foreign policy that strikes at the foundation of Iran's terror franchise is necessary in preserving American national security interests in the Middle East. Such policy will also protect the region's religious minority communities from human rights violations by the radical, theocratic, and expansionist regime.*

### Concluding Remarks

In a press release dated June 3, 2022, the Society for Threatened Peoples in Germany also pointed out Turkey's attacks on the Assyrian villages in the Khabour region in northeastern Syria and called on the German government to unequivocally condemn Turkish threats of war against the Kurdish, but also Christian and Yezidi ethnic groups in northern Syria.

The Society's press release says: "For days, the [Khabour] villages in Tal-Tamer in northeastern Syria, once inhabited only by Assyrian Christians,

have been attacked by the Turkish army and its Syrian Islamist mercenaries. Last May, a total of 17 villages there were targeted by Turkish attacks. At least 500 rockets and artillery shells hit. Normal life there is no longer possible. Both Christian churches and Muslim mosques are attacked by Turkey in northern Syria."

The Assyrian Democratic Party (APP), which is active in the Khabour region, also appealed to the UN in this context to draw attention to the situation in the Assyrian villages in the Khabour region and the effects of the Turkish bombardment. In a letter dated from May 12, 2022, it states:

*"In recent days, some of our Assyrian villages located on west of Tal-Tamer (Tel-Tawil, Um Waghafa and Tel-Shanan) have been subjected to shelling with heavy weapons, originating from the areas where the so-called "National Army" factions are concentrated. This led to the destruction of some houses in the villages, in addition to the injury of two people from these villages, one person's leg was amputated, as well*

*as the martyrdom of a member of Khabour Guards in the village of Tel Shanan.*

*So, there are many Assyrian villages located to west side of Tel Tamer (Tel-Tawil, Um Waghafa, Um-Alkif, Tel-Kifji, and Tel-Jumaa, in addition to Tel-Shanan). Which are located on the line of contact between the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the "National Army" factions located in the city of Ras Al-Ain. These villages are inhabited and owned by Assyrians Christians. It has been bombarded from time to time for more than two years due to the clashes that erupt between the two sides.*

*This bombing has caused a lot of damages to civilians' properties and spreads a state of panic and fear, and as a result of difficult situations, the majority of the residents of these villages have fled from them, abandoning their homes and agricultural lands in order to save their lives. It is well known to all that this continuous bombing for more than two years is mainly due to the stationing of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in these villages"*

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# "Gender and Genocide: The Hidden Assyrians"

Helen Talia, CFO, MBA, CPA, FCC August 7, 2022

In honor of all women across the world who have been affected by the crimes of genocide, I present to you an abstract entitled "Gender and Genocide: The Hidden Assyrians."

OXFORD describes "gender and genocide" as "a consideration of gender which is crucial to the understanding of the crime of genocide, because genocide is a historical process that is, at its core, about group reproduction. The perpetrators must either annul reproduction within the group or appropriate a progeny in order to destroy the group in the long run. While the perpetrators' ultimate aim is the material destruction of the target group, the means used to achieve this tend to target men and women according to their perceived and actual positions within the reproductive process."

As part of the killing process, then, one finds in all genocides a shared set of tortures involving generative and institution symbols such as reproductive organs, infants and small children, and the bonds that promote family coherence, but also the destruction of libraries, religious and cultural sites. It then follows that the intent of a genocide is to destroy a people and their culture, whether vastly or silently, as in the case of the imposition of the Islamic hijab on Assyrian women in Iran. It is always planned and proceeds in several stages across every facet of a community life.

My attempt here today is to challenge impunity and denial by speaking up about the sexual violence that Assyrian women have suffered throughout history at the hands of Ottoman Turkey, the Kurdish paramilitary forces, and during an era that came to be widely known as the "Assyrian affair" when Iraqi

General of Kurdish descent Bakr Sidqi initiated the systematic campaign targeting the Assyrians in and around the village of Simmel in 1933 that forever changed the social, political and economic landscape of the Assyrians in Iraq. And who could forget the ISIS raid and control of Assyrian villages that stretched from the Nineveh Plain in Iraq to Khabour in Syria, sending women captive into sex slavery and human trafficking, causing hundreds of thousands to become imminently displaced from their homes, and flee from their ancestral borders into exodus elsewhere throughout the world in search of refuge, never to return, again. I speak on behalf of the thousands of Assyrian women whose pregnant bellies were slashed open and their unborn babies killed, and the thousands of other girls whose fathers and brothers were forced to watch them get raped – those stories remain untold because their voices have not been heard, nor have their burial sites been marked.

We are told that rape is common during war, but this aggression, this genocide that happened, the rape of Assyrian women was one big project that included planning, commanding and execution. Simply, rape was used as a weapon for ethnic cleansing of my Assyrian people.

So, too, does the destruction of family life. This is where sexual violence is deployed as a deadly weapon. The rapes in Ottoman Turkey during WWI were designed to terrorize and humiliate – by raping women in public – as Ottoman Turks and Kurds intended to drive the Assyrians out of their homogenous lands permanently. The brutality of the rapes and the forcible policy was also designed to prevent further generations of Assyrians from being

born, especially when paired with mass murder of the male population.

Rape serves a strategic function during war, but we must not forget that it is carried out as an act of atrocity to fulfill ethno-nationalist hatred. What is also often less recognized is that misogyny also plays a role in these crimes. The few accounts that exist by perpetrators even show that gang rapes were treated as male bonding exercises. In all these cases, individual women were dehumanized to the point of objects – props in the theatre of war.

"Hidden Assyrians" who were kidnapped and married to Kurdish men and forced into Turkish homes were once war orphans who lost their identity as they were sold to or raised in non-Assyrian environments. Such were the stories of the orphaned little boy Hassan who was earmarked in his Turkish village as "Infidel Hassan" (1) because, to no fault of his own, his mother was an Assyrian who had been forced to assimilate into a Turkish home, or Dawood's sister (2) who, with her Kurdish children, found her way back to her brother's doorstep in the Assyrian village of Korgavana in Northern Iraq decades after she had been kidnapped and married into a Kurdish family.

Rape during war is not about sex. It is to stamp and confirm the violator's will upon its victim. In all families – as in the case of Assyrian families – the honor of a wife, a daughter and a mother are the most valued possession of that family. And if lost, the female becomes a subject of shame to her husband and father, but also succumbs to a complete social annihilation from her society where she is viewed as a "social pariah." This, then, is reframed in her mind and that of the society

around her that she no longer exists as an Assyrian, nor as a Christian. This often leads to the loss of her self-worth, self-respect, honor, and faith – to the point that she is now descaled to a "non-entity." This was essentially the case of an ISIS survivor from Khabour who could not re-acclimate back in her Assyrian society along with her children as they were deemed a product of Islamic rape. (3)

In conclusion, because I hold women and children's issues very close to my heart, I chose to shed light on historical sanctions drawn against Assyrian women and how their implications resulted in the loss of generations of Assyrians in a conscious effort to unite women in matters where women are meant to raise up and regenerate families that grow into communities and ultimately build nations, but to also acknowledge women who were persecuted during wars and how their afflictions are dulled when we remain silent.

Glory and peace to our Assyrian martyrs, and may justice prevail over every nation struggling to be recognized.

1. Atman, Sabri
2. Dinkha, Odisho
3. Abraham, Shamiran

Background art image depicting the womb slaughtering of Assyrian women during the Simmel Massacre of 1933. Location of the painting: "Assyrian Cultural Center" Nohadra (Duhok), Iraq. Photo by Helen Talia, 2008.

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# The Gift

by Marilyn Bookie Ahern, Evy Bookie Horton, Renee Bookie Capovilla

*This speech was presented by Renee Capovilla at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Mar Addai Parish in Turlock, California on June 12th, 2022. Her presentation provides a fascinating perspective on the history of some of the first Assyrians in Turlock, their hopes, dreams, and what was most important in their lives.*



*Representation of what the new Mar Addai church in Turlock will look like*

Greetings your - Holiness Mar Awa III Catholicos-Patriarch, Venerable Prelates, Reverend Priests and Deacons, and the Assyrian community of Turlock and friends. Our family was honored to be asked to speak at this groundbreaking ceremony of the *new* Mar Addai Assyrian Church of the East, on what will mark the 20th Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East to be built in the U.S.

Our speech has four key themes – The Yonan Family – Assyrians in the Turlock Community - The Gift – and the Closing. Additionally, a pamphlet has been provided to everyone that includes a great deal of information about The Yonan family. Let's begin...

## The Yonan Family

John and Shmonie Yonan represent a generation of Assyrian immigrants that came from their native villages of Chal and Thuma, in the Hakkari Mountains, to the U.S. after World War I. They were seeking a better life, one with less persecution and where they could continue their Christian faith. During this time, the Assyrian nation was being led by the late Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII.

Sadly, Shmonie's first husband, the father to her two daughters, Victoria and Grace, passed away. In 1926, her sister Goozie's husband Zia Miroo and John Yonan sailed to America and settled in Chicago seeking work and a place to live for the family.



*From left to right, young Victoria, and Grace with Shmonie, Uncle Neesan, Goozie with young Albert and Mary*

*1758 North Park Avenue, Chicago Circa – 1930*

In 1927, Shmonie, with her two daughters Grace and Victoria, along with her sister Goozie, and her children Mary and Albert, boarded one of the many ships headed for Ellis Island, New York, continuing to Chicago. It was then that John and Shmonie married and welcomed their son Joe, in 1931.

Four Assyrian families purchased 1758 North Park Avenue, a four-flat building. The original Mar Sargis Church was located across the street on the corner of Menomonee Street and North Park Avenue. Because there was no money for contractors, the men of the Church began constructing the Church structure in 1927.

Shmonie frequently prepared lunch for the men who worked tirelessly for their church. Mar Sargis Parish was Chicago's first Assyrian church, and Shmonie was an active member of the Mar Sargis Ladies group, never missing church on Sunday.

In 1940 when Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII arrived in the United States settling in Chicago, Shmonie was one of two women who went door to door to Assyrian families raising money to furnish the Patriarch's home. She also volunteered weekly to clean the Patriarch's residence. She never turned away from time spent on church work.



*John Yonan came from Thūmā and Shmonie David came from Chal, two villages in the Hakkari mountains, home to many Assyrians at one time in our history*





*John and Shmonie Yonan*



*The Yonan Family Home - 1358 East Avenue Turlock*

### Assyrians in Turlock

In 1946, John and Shmonie, along with the three children moved to Turlock. John said Turlock reminded him of the “old country”. It was an easy adjustment for them, picking up right where they left off in Chicago, devoting themselves to the family and the church.

John and Shmonie Yonan became part of the third generation of agricultural Assyrians living in Turlock. They owned a small apricot orchard at 1358 East Avenue. They raised their family in a small farm-style home. It was a simple lifestyle, no-frills, and a great deal of hard work. Their home was always open to anyone who wanted to stop by. No invitation was needed.

We'd like to share excerpts from Victoria Yonan Nevel's May 1962 paper, "A History of the Assyrian People in the Turlock Community." The paper was presented to the division of Social Science at Stanislaus State College as part of her Master of Arts degree requirements. She interviewed a special generation of Turlock Assyrians, including pioneers, priests, former leaders, deacons, first-generation Assyrians in America, Assyrian authorities, and Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII's family members. The paper examines the Assyrian community in Turlock and how they adapted to the American way of life. The agricultural Assyrians were the original families who settled in the Turlock area beginning in 1905 – Dr. Isaac Adams, Mr. George Peters, Mr. Joseph Adams, Mr. Sargis Hoobayr, and Mr. Odishoo Backus.

Chapter 9 discussed the state of Assyrian Churches in Turlock:

“When the Assyrians first arrived and settled in Turlock, they didn't have their own church. Because religious life was so important to them, they banded together over time to build their own church.

The members of the ancient church of the East were growing in number in Turlock as Assyrians continued their move to this area from the East and elsewhere. Finally, through hard work of many Assyrians and donations given by many others, the church located on Canal and Olive Street was built in 1948 and consecrated in January 1950.”

Shmonie's devotion to the church never wavered or waned. She often put her work for the church before her own family. She was known to say, “Don't complain, you are working for GOD, not for people.” We can only define her by her actions – Joe said of his mother, “My mother did not ask us to do something that she herself would not do.”

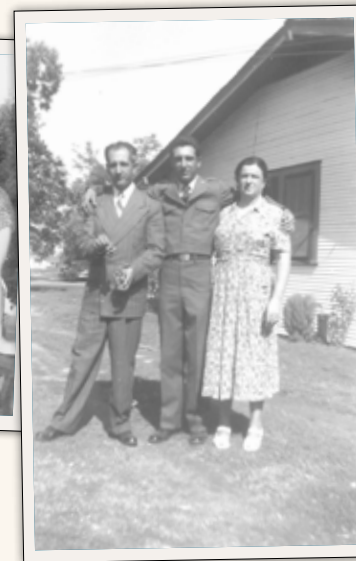
### The Gift

Webster's definition of a gift is: “a thing given willingly to someone without payment.” This “gift” has come to mean in our family and, hopefully, for the Assyrian community in Turlock the following – “our churches are the Assyrian nation; it is the essence of who we are as Assyrians; we must protect and defend; it is our homeland sprinkled throughout the world.”

It is a humble “gift”, one given out of love for family and church. It is meant to bring Assyrians in Turlock and around the world together. A place to worship, to gather, to share our traditions, our language, our customs, and our generational stories of the “old country.” When Uncle Al was asked what the gift meant to him, he shared how his Khaltie and Uncle Yonan's deep devotion and love of the Church led to this most miraculous, generous gifting by Joe and Shirley Yonan



*From left to right - Shmonie, Marilyn, Goozie, Mary, and Victoria at the Turlock home*



*Young Joe visiting his parents in Turlock, while on leave from the Army Air Force.*



*Original Mar Addai Parish on the East on Canal and Olive Street Circa 1950*

and Victoria and Joe Nevels.

In March of 2018, in an Assyrian Podcast interview, his Holiness Mar Awa was asked some very fair and pointed questions - Why are Assyrians not going to church? What is the value of the Assyrian Church of the East today? What does it matter to the youth? He paused for a moment, then chose to restate the question to the interviewer – “Why is the Church of the East of any importance to the Assyrian nation – to any generation?” – “Our ethnicity is our church - our Assyrian nation - the church is our land – an identity for us. The church is our country. Our parishes have been keepers and carriers of our faith – the soul of our nation.”

So, if you're wondering if John and Shmonie Yonan could have imagined or asked their children Joe and Victoria to build this church, I believe the answer is now clear.

### The Closing

In 2024, it will mark the "100th year of the first Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East being registered in the United States." A historic achievement that

we should all be proud of. Hopefully, we've shared some unique, never-before-heard perspectives on the meaning of "the gift". We've made a copy of Victoria's thesis paper, which we'd like to give to his Holiness Mar Awa III and the Turlock Assyrian community. It is an honor for us, as their family members, to have been asked and entrusted with seeing their wishes come true.



*Joe and Shirley Yonan*



*Victoria Yonan Nevels and Joe Nevels*

### Sources

The Gift – Written by: Marilyn Bookie Ahern, Evy Bookie Horton, Renee Bookie Capovilla

The Gift photos prepared by: Renee and Gianna Capovilla

Eulogies of Shmonie David Yonan, Joseph Yonan, Shirley Yonan, and Gracie Warda.

*A History of the Assyrian People in the Turlock Community*, Victoria Nevels Yonan, May 1962 Aquatem exceatur atem faccuptiur?



Assyrian Podcast Episode 6, March 27, 2018: Mar Awa Royel <http://podcast.assyrianpodcast.com/e/mar-awa-royel/>



# Gilgamesh: Untold Traumatic Experiences of Vulnerable Refugees



Project website: [www.vulnerable-groups.com/gilgamesh](http://www.vulnerable-groups.com/gilgamesh)

Three Assyrian scholars, Dr Naures Atto from University of Cambridge, Dr Önver Cetrez and Soner Barthoma from Uppsala University have initiated the project “Gilgamesh: Untold Traumatic Experiences of Vulnerable Refugees” which received a prestigious grant from the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences.

The recent wars in Syria and Iraq, labelled as the worst human disaster since WWII, have had incalculable effects for the civilian populations in terms of forced displacement and human suffering. Proportionally a big number of refugees have an ethno-religious minority background. More than half of these populations in Syria and Iraq have been displaced.



In Iraq, the number of Christians (with all denominations) has dwindled from approximately 1.5 million to between 250,000 and 500,000. The Yazidis reported that since 2005 their population decreased by nearly 200,000 to approximately 500,000.

Christians in Syria in 2011 numbered approximately 10% of the population of 22 million. From the beginning of the Syrian civil war 40% of Christians have left the country, while at the time of writing it is believed that about two thirds have left the country. These statistics are estimates only, as it is very difficult to gather reliable data.

These vulnerable groups were targeted by the Islamic State in the summer of 2014 and confronted with different forms of persecution, such as expulsions from their houses, imposing the Jizya tax, or conversion to Islam, became victims of mass raids, kidnappings, killings and destruction of their cultural heritage. This added to their collectively experienced suffering resulting from earlier similar forms of persecution, for example the genocide of 1915, massacres and persecutions before and during the Saddam regime, and an economic and socio-political emigration resulting in becoming uprooted.

The extent of the displacement and emigration of Christians, Yazidis and other ethno-religious minorities from the Middle East has attracted the attention of eminent scholars who fear that the presence of these indigenous groups in the region is endangered.



The Gilgamesh project aims to make the untold experiences of vulnerable minority groups (Assyrians and Yazidis) visible and illustrate how the fear of extinction is embedded in their collective narratives and expressed in different artistic forms. In order to realise this, the project team organized and curated an art exhibition in the Museum of World Culture (Världskulturmuseerna) in Gothenburg, Sweden; prepared a documentary movie and organised a specific workshop at the University of Gothenburg.

The Gilgamesh project is a successful example for an interdisciplinary collaboration across arts, humanities and social science research. The project is built on three main activities:

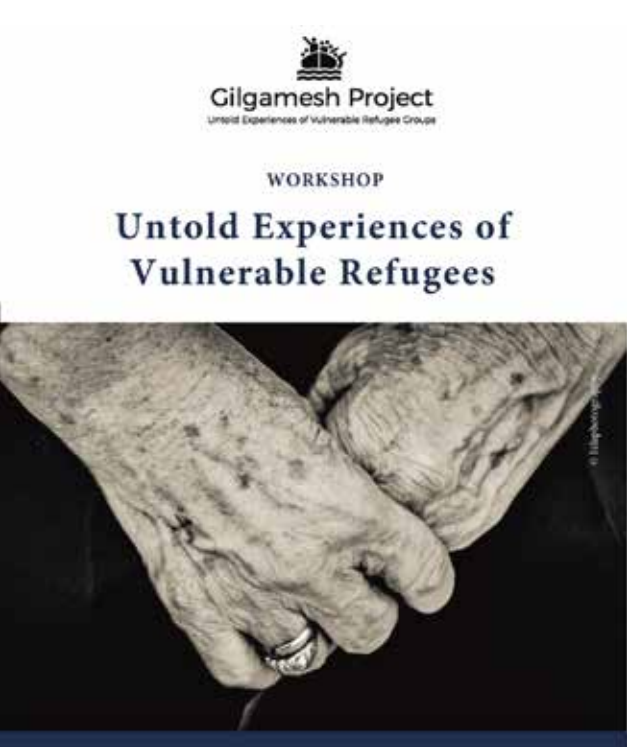
## Workshop on Untold Experiences of Vulnerable Refugees (21-23 September 2017, Gothenburg)

This workshop took place at the Centre on Global Migration (CGM), University of Gothenburg with the participation of international scholars and NGO representatives who have expertise on the situation of vulnerable refugee groups originating from the Middle East.

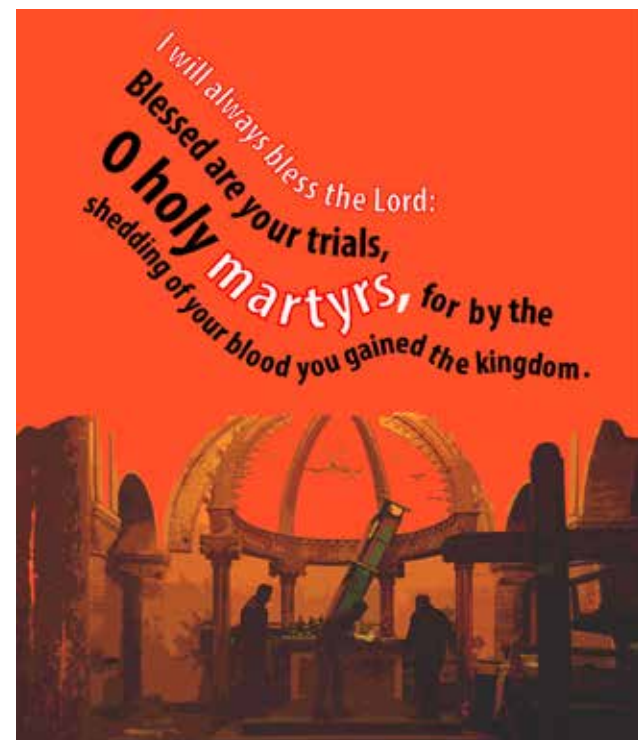
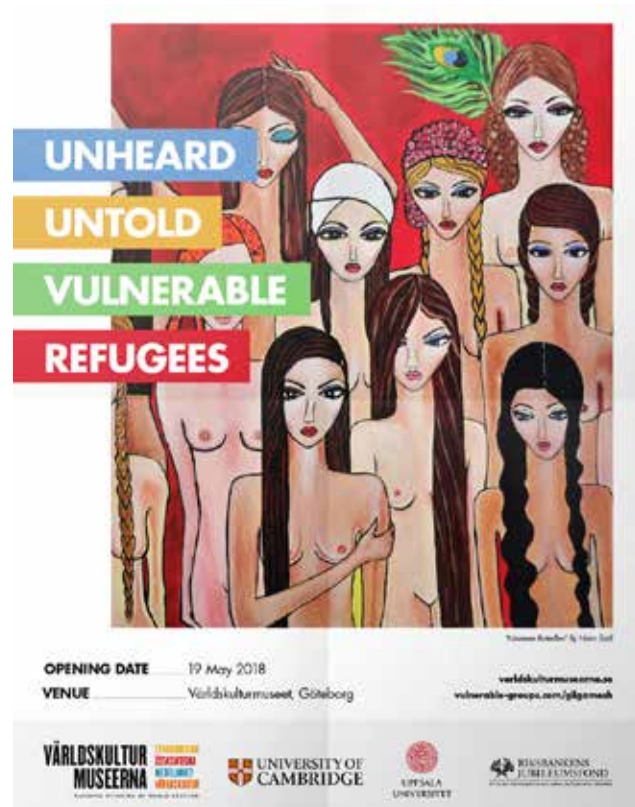
The workshop was structured along several thematic sessions where the participants discussed different vulnerable communities and their survival strategies, and focused on the trauma aspect that these groups are experiencing on different dimensions. A synopsis report about the workshop has been published on the project website.

## Art exhibition “Untold | Unheard | Vulnerable | Refugees” (19 May 2018 – ongoing)

Together with the curators in the Museum, the project team designed and curated the exhibition which displayed the selected artwork of twelve international artists who are members of the Assyrian and Yazidi communities, minority groups who are faced with extinction and forced migration. Their artwork visualises the suffering of these minority groups, their fear of extinction, and their hopes for the future. The exhibition opened on 19 May 2018 with a reception event at the Världskulturmuseerna in Gothenburg where local artists, journalists, the research team, and a victim of the IS-genocide (Farida Abbas Khalaf) has delivered speeches. The chef editor of the cultural section of the Swedish daily Sydsvenskan, Rakhel Chukri







interviewed Farida Abbas and wrote an article about the exhibition. Around hundred guests participated in the reception event.

In order to be more inclusive, the team designed the exhibition in a digital format where the whole exhibition space is filled with projections in various sizes of the collected artworks. Some followed a looped pace while others are highlighted. With this concept, we have provided visitors to walk into the visual world of the artists. In the exhibition room we have also provided subtle songs from the minority groups, which is something adding to the evocating atmosphere of room. On a specific screen, with headphones and a seat in front of it, the documentary “Pomegranate” is shown in certain time intervals. In order to get the visitors engaged with the exhibition, a notebook has been placed in the exhibition room.

The Museum is planning to keep the exhibition open until the end of 2018. Thereafter, the Museum is planning to move the exhibition to Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm. Yet a final decision for this has not been taken.

Documentary film “Pomegranate: Voices of Sinjar”  
The project team prepared the short documentary “Pomegranate: Voices of Sinjar” which is based on the testimonies of three female victims of genocide perpetrated by ISIS in 2014. The project team interviewed twelve female victims in Germany and Sweden. The interview material transcribed and translated into English. Based on this material, a manuscript for the documentary was prepared together with the editors (DragonLight Film Company, Cambridge). The complete production of the documentary took 8 months and the documentary is released together with the opening of the art exhibition in Gothenburg. Pomegranate has received many positive reviews for being one of the best documentaries prepared about the victims of IS-genocide by providing a non-intermediated lens on victims and their narratives.

**Pomegranate in Cambridge Festival of Ideas (20 October 2018)**

The documentary was screened in Cambridge Festival of Ideas which is one of the most exciting and dynamic occasions in the Cambridge cultural calendar. The Festival of Ideas focuses on fuelling the public’s interest in and involvement with the arts, humanities and social sciences in a unique and inspiring way. The screening of

Pomegranate attracted a highly engaged group of audience. In the evaluation of festival activities, the documentary top scored.

The project aimed to make the less-known experiences of minority refugee populations visible, illustrate how the fear of extinction is embedded in their collective narratives, and from an interventionist perspective, empower the concerned groups. Looking at the conducted activities and created products, the project has reached its identified aims and realised its objectives.

- The workshop has put the issue of endangerment of these minority cultures on the table and provided a contextual discussion about the challenges these groups are facing through forced migration.
- Both the exhibition and the documentary have contributed positively to the visibility of these groups and their problems in the most effective way by using creative arts.
- Both the documentary and the exhibition share the same methodological approach to empower the groups engaged: While the exhibition is built on the artwork of artists who are member of these groups, in the documentary the victims tell their experiences and talk about their sufferings without any external narration.





# THE GENOCIDE CHRONICLES

## John Israel: A World War II Veteran with Extraordinary Experiences

By Professor Arianne Ishaya

*This column commemorates the survivors of the WWI Assyrian genocide who came to America, worked hard, and made many contributions to their adopted country.*

*The family histories of the Assyrian old-timers were collected by Arianne Ishaya, professor of anthropology, in Turlock in 1981-1982.*

Date of Interview: 2/23/82

*John's father had come to the USA in 1912, before World War I. The family joined him in 1923. They settled in Chicago. In the late 20's John had to leave school and work two jobs to support the family as his father was laid off. During World War II he was drafted into the army and sent to France, Belgium, Holland, England, and Germany. He thought there were no Assyrians in his group, but he met his own brother in Germany.*

We fled from Iran to Russia in 1915. I was four years old then. My father had come to America in 1912.

We fled behind the retreating Russian troops. I was 4 and my sister was 2. My mother took me on her back and my sister in her arms. But after walking a couple of blocks my mother returned and left my sister with my grandmother because she could not carry us both. My grandma had a house full of furniture, an orchard, and vineyards. She would not part from them. She thought no one would harm an old woman. But she was mistaken. All those who remained behind were killed. I remember one thing distinctly. As we

were walking, my mother fell on her face in the snow. A Russian soldier dismounted and put me on his horse and helped her get up. He carried me on his horse for the rest of the time. On the way, my mother found a 10-month-old baby left in the snow. She picked him up to make up for the baby she left behind and took him along. He became a physician in Chicago. He passed away a year ago. Once in Russia, we suffered from hunger. My mother had a belt with a gold buckle. We were hungry. She sold it for a loaf of bread. Those were black days....Little children were sent begging. At one time they put them to pick cotton in the fields. My uncle was in Russia. We stayed with him. But war started there too. We could not get in touch with my father in America for 10 years. We were near Rostov. One year we were in Leningrad; and one in Moscow. The Assyrian refugees in Russia made a living by peddling or by begging. The peddlers used to take the cloth to villages and bring back flour. The conditions were bad. There was war. [The reference is to the Bolshevik revolution.]



There was famine. But, once the war was over, conditions improved. I used to go to school. We were taught Assyrian half the day and Russian the other half. We found pa. Letters were exchanged through priests. He sent us passage money and we came to the United States in 1923. We went first to London, England; from London to Canada, and from there to Washington D.C. by land.

My father had rented a flat in Chicago. My uncle (his brother) used to live with us. I went to school to learn English and other subjects. I was eager to learn. But my father was not making enough money so my parents took me out of school for four months and I started working. I worked in a restaurant twelve hours a day. My father used to work in a different restaurant. When they laid him off, I started working two jobs to feed the family. I made \$22.00 a week. I was a hard worker.

The Assyrians in Chicago had four Churches; Nestorian, Presbyterian, and Baptist. They were not far from one another. The Assyrians were very friendly, and very close in times of hardship and depression. All lived in one quarter: on Chicago Avenue and Clark Avenue. Qasha Hedoo's Church was there too. Many Assyrians lost their homes during the depression. When they first came, they worked as dishwashers. Later they learned plastering, painting, drove taxis, and became cooks. There were many Assyrians in the painting craft. They were mostly from Taka Aridshay, a village in Urmia.

I was drafted into the army in 1943. I was married then. I married Agnes in 1940. I was in the war for two and a half years. I was sent to France, Belgium, Holland, and England. I met my brother in

Germany. He was enlisted too. I did not recognize him. Because we were always at the front. See, our group- there were five of us-. We were the observer scouts. We were to find the enemy. So when you got nervous, they would send you once a month to the back to relax for 48 hours. He was at the back. He was a radio operator.

I was standing there. He came and said, "What are you doing here?" I said I'm waiting to see where they'll send me. He said, "Bajo, (nickname) don't you recognize me?" So I recognized him and stayed the night with him. He filled his cup with snow and dissolved some chocolate powder and poured it over it. So we had Slurpee!

**"THE ASSYRIANS  
WERE VERY FRIENDLY,  
AND VERY CLOSE IN  
TIMES OF HARDSHIP  
AND DEPRESSION."**

Being in the war was no good. Especially because we could not take prisoners of war. Only I survived. All in my group were killed.

After the war I started driving a taxi; because painting materials could not be found. A woman got into my cab.

She said her son was in the army too. She looked so much like her son. I said, are you so and so's mother? She said how did you know? I said we used to share bunk beds. Her son was killed next to me. We were sitting to dine. Suddenly he said, "a sniper hit me." So he died.

Her son had talked to me about his mother and her great coffee. So I started talking to her about her son. She wanted to know how he was killed. I didn't tell her. I said I was not here when it happened. Ya, they killed them all. I was lucky. It was due to my mother's prayers.

I returned from the war in 1945. My brother did too.



## Lamassu Pharma Leverages Translational Research Techniques to Speed up Drug Development, Ending Medical Research Bottlenecks Forever

Courtesy of [www.starup.info](http://www.starup.info)

### First of all, how are you and your family doing in these COVID-19 times?

**Gabi Hanna:** My family has been doing very well, and we are very appreciative of our health, considering the circumstances. At the outset of the pandemic, when all work became remote, I decided to move to Ohio to be closer to my parents and other families, and I have been working remotely ever since. Having my kids close to their cousins, uncles, aunts, and grandparents is a blessing and made the impact of social distancing very minimal.

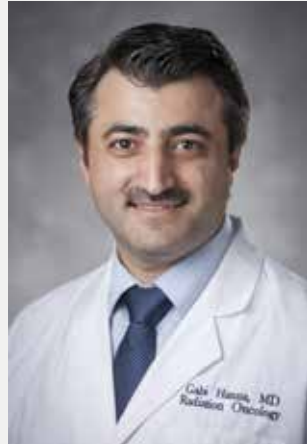
### Tell us about you, your career, how you founded Lamassu Pharma.

**Gabi Hanna:** My background: My brother, Rabi, also an MD, and I grew up in Qamishli, Syria, near the Turkish border. My father was the Chairman of Commerce, so I grew up exposed to business, and the excitement of how business deals can help individuals, people, and countries grow. My first business venture was in the summer of 5th grade; I had a sugar and tea stand. It was so successful that I opened a second location and hired my first employee. I made more money that summer than the annual salary of the average worker in Syria. With that exception, every summer, my father would take me with him on his business trips, which I greatly enjoyed. As I watched him buying, selling, negotiating, analyzing, and making business deals, I felt the excitement of how an idea can translate to become a reality and grow day by day. The impact a single idea can have on the community by improving

the incomes and livelihoods of the people. But we were also Christians living in the Middle East in a turbulent time, so there was always uncertainty about the future. I stayed in Qamishli through high school, then went to Aleppo for university and medical school. In 2005, I moved to the United States for my medical residency, which was followed up by a surgical internship at the University of Texas at Galveston. I finally started my career at Duke University as a postdoctoral fellow and research associate. But the goal was always to move back to Syria, after completing my residency and postgraduate training, to help in my own community. In 2011 the war broke out in Syria, making that permanent move home an impossibility, so I had to dream a new dream, and I leaned on my upbringing to get me there.

From early childhood, my family taught my siblings and me that the most important thing in life is people and that improving lives is the most noble thing any man can do with their time on Earth. I have always had this clear priority in whatever I try to accomplish with my time.

*A dream to help millions of patients at once:* So, my new dream became finding a solution to a major problem in medical treatment and innovation: despite billions of dollars being spent on medical research each year, very few research projects translate into positive outcomes for patients. What this means is that most medical research knowledge generated each year stays on paper and never goes anywhere else due to the complexities



**Gabi Hanna, MD of Lamassu Pharma** is leveraging innovative and insightful technology to drive collaboration between academia and industry through translational research

and costs associated with drug development.

I saw the research and knowledge at Duke University first-hand, recognized the potential of this research, and understood what was standing in the way of this knowledge reaching those it could really help. I was itching to do something that would make a real impact on people, but not just one at a time; I dreamed that by translating all of this knowledge into tangible medical benefits, I could help millions of people. I took this problem and proposed solutions to the Dean of the Duke University School of Medicine, and the Duke Preclinical Translational Research Unit was born. Under my direction as co-founder and Executive Director, DPTRU was one of the first academic centers dedicated to accelerating the transfer of data and knowledge from academic research to commercially viable solutions and treatments that can directly benefit patients.

*Lamassu Pharma becomes a reality:* To fill specific treatment needs in medicine and overcome the slow pace of regulation associated with drug development, Rabi and I, along with my friend

and colleague Dr. Greg Palmer, founded Lamassu Pharma, LLC in 2018—our second company—to expedite drug development and commercialization based on our previous work in translational research. Lamassu is currently focused on RABI-767, a novel small molecule lipase inhibitor drug candidate developed by the Mayo Clinic to treat severe acute pancreatitis. Today, there is no treatment, drug, or cure for severe acute pancreatitis, which kills around 18,000 people each year in the United States alone and causes lifelong complications in survivors.

While I'm working on translational research at DPTRU, my time at Lamassu is currently focused on driving RABI-767 to market. We know that the earlier we bring this drug to market, the earlier patients will benefit and that more lives may potentially be saved. In both cases, we're helping to ensure that viable treatments make it to market and that companies don't drop viable therapeutics. And it's all towards the most important goal, the goal I've always had: to help as many patients as possible.

### How does Lamassu Pharma innovate?

**Gabi Hanna:** Lamassu Pharma is a scientifically-driven company focused on collaboration between academia and drug development. We start by designing flexible drug pathways that combine best practices for business with advanced scientific solutions to accelerate the drug development process from early-stage through clinical trials. This combination increases the likelihood that viable drugs will go to market. By following this effective and sustainable process, we solve problems in early drug development from the business pipeline perspective, including poor reproducibility in the pre-clinical stage, probability of success at phase 1 and phase 2 clinical trials, the timing for patent life versus profitability, etc. You

wouldn't believe how many viable medical treatments stop short of the market because the project takes 15 years to succeed due to issues throughout the development process. The patent expires before the therapeutics can achieve profitability. For the first time, we're applying proven business models usually reserved for go-to-market strategy and requirements usually reserved for human clinical trials to the entire drug development process, and it's working. We see huge reductions in errors that typically hold up drug development and a rapid acceleration in the full process.

Our future goal is to continue developing solutions for previously untreatable diseases and bring more drugs to market more quickly and cost-effectively with a high success rate.

### How does the coronavirus pandemic affect your business finances?

**Gabi Hanna:** The pandemic has presented several challenges and uncertainties for medical research and Lamassu. It's been challenging to stay on schedule, especially in our life sciences division, because we have faced many logistical issues, from delays in shipments to operational shutdowns. However, we closed our Series A fundraising just prior to the onset of the pandemic, so we had secured stable funding. The other side of that coin is increased costs and losses to keep business operations running.

### Did you have to make difficult choices regarding human resources, and what are the lessons learned?

**Gabi Hanna:** Early operational shutdowns did have some impact on our workers and contractors; however, all of our staff are essential workers, and we can't achieve our goals without them, so we quickly pivoted to get everything and everyone back online. We also worked with our vendors and partners on small

logistical details that we usually don't address. We recognized early on that the pandemic necessitated a different type of management and operations style, and we have been quite effective at keeping up productivity by making small changes.

### How did your customer relationship management evolve? Do you use any specific tools to be efficient?

**Gabi Hanna:** Right now, our customers are our board, shareholders, investors, and clinical partners, so keeping a very tight relationship with them is critical. We increased team meetings and email communications due to the lack of ability to meet in person, so video conferencing applications proved to be the most important tool for us over the past year.

### Did you benefit from any government grants, and did that help keep your business afloat?

**Gabi Hanna:** Lamassu Pharma did not receive any special government grants during the pandemic. At the onset of the pandemic, we had just completed Series A fundraising and received a \$1.5m Small Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) unrelated to the effects of COVID-19. This allowed us to continue our research for RABI-767 nearly unhindered, and despite the ongoing nature of the pandemic, we expect to begin clinical trials of RABI-767 within the next few months.

### Your final thoughts?

**Gabi Hanna:** It is very easy to become distracted by the coronavirus pandemic and the ever-changing world right now. I'm committed to remaining focused and persistent in achieving our goal: to quickly bring viable medical solutions to patients. If we focus and keep our eyes on the prize, we are more likely to achieve success.

### Your website?

<https://www.lamassupharma.com/>





*Madraseh dar Urumiye 1910*



*His Holiness Benjamin Shimun XXI (1887-1918)*

## The Life of Timothy M. Soleiman: *An Autobiography (Part II) From 1914 to 1942*

*In the summer of 1914, I graduated from the American Missionary School called Madrese Marefat. The school building was bought from a wealthy Persian named Saleh. It was in the city of Urmia near Ark Gate.*

There was a large old building in the center of the yard also a vineyard. It was not very far from our house and those of the other students. All of us used to walk to school every morning. We had about 8 teachers. Two were Mohammedans, Aghne Abelfaz and Mirza Ahmad, who taught the lower classes. Aghne Abelfaz used to teach Persian and Arabic. We had two American teachers, Mr. Shedd who taught Religion, and Mr. Muller who was younger, taught bookkeeping, arithmetic, and algebra, and was the school principal. Kasha Jacob was vice president and used to live with his family close to a house attached to the school buildings. He was the most popular teacher. Hence, many people would call the school, Kasha Jacob's School. He was in charge of all the school affairs, and anyone who had school-related business had to see him. He was like a school superintendent and used to teach English also. Our school was the most prominent, top-notch school in the city. It was like a high school and sometimes offered one extra college level class. Other teachers who I recall were Rose Joseph for French, Rabi Besmat Amerkhas for Assyrian grammar, Rabi Prim Armenian for Russian language, Rabi Yows for Turkish, and Pasun Samom for Armenian.

I studied at this school for 4 years. Students consisted of all nationalities; more than 50% were Muhammadans, 40% Assyrians, the rest Armenians and Jews. Every morning we had a prayer meeting in the hall, mostly performed by Kasha Yacoub, and sometimes by Mr. Shedd or Mr. Muller. The announcement was given in Turkish since most of the natives were of Turkish descent. The Turkish language in Urmia is different that spoken in Turkey, but it is the same as the dialect spoken in Caucasus, which at one time was under Persian governance and was taken over by Russia about 150 years ago.

The school building was on the sides of two floors and, in the center, was a very big room that was a guest or parlor room modified to a large hall. There were many small rooms that

before were used as bedrooms, but were transformed eventually to classrooms with desks and chairs. Every hour, a bell would ring and all the students would go to the hall, exchange their books, and go to another room with a different teacher to learn a different subject. Time was divided into periods, 4 in the morning and two in the afternoon, with a two-hour lunch recess at noon. Some students used to go home for lunch, while others brought it with them. After lunch, those who ate at school would have plenty of time to play.

We would play basketball, football, baseball and Tasma, which was very interesting and popular among the boys. We used to draw a circle on the ground, 4 yards in diameter. 8 or 10 boys were divided in 2 groups. One group would stay in the circle and the other group would have leather belts 30 to 36 inches long. The goal was for the boys inside the circle to remain there without being hit on the leg with a belt by one of the boys outside the circle [somewhat akin to dodge ball].

Our class was composed of 22 boys. Some were old, about 30 or 35 years old, and two of them were married. Five were Assyrians from our city or neighboring ones, four were mountain Assyrians, two were Moslems from the city of Khoi, and one was the son of Mr. Allen, a missionary in Urmia. The rest were Assyrians from other villages. Only 2 of the boys were younger than me, each by 6 months. All the others were very much older. I was 16 years old when I graduated from high school in the summer of 1914.

I spent four years in that school. Before that, I spent 6 years in primary school and 2 years in kindergarten. We used to go to kindergarten at a very young age. Since I could not go to school alone, someone had to take me. We had a neighbor by the name of Lazar who was older than me. He took me with him. I remember the first day that my mother asked me to go to school. I didn't like it and told her I wouldn't go. My mother responded, "If tomorrow morning you don't go, I will hit you or punish you." Shortly thereafter, I said, "Mother, don't punish me tomorrow morning, I will go to school with Lazar." So I did from then on. I did not miss any class in all the time in school. I was never punished because of my good work.



*General Agha Petros*



*From left to right Suria Soleiman (Wife of Timothy), Shirley Soleiman (Daughter), Suria's Mother, Andy Soleiman, Suria's Father.*



*Our house in Tehran*

At that time, if a student could not learn his lessons, he would be punished. Teachers used to hit the boys, so we were very afraid of them. Even if we didn't like to do our homework or prepare our lessons, we had to do it because we would get punished. Teachers used to slap children on their faces or hit them with tree branches. Our Moslem teacher was very cruel to us. He used to put a pencil between our fingers and press forcefully down with his hand. It was very painful. We could hardly stand it without screaming or crying. Teachers always had a bundle of sticks for hitting the boys. Some teachers had a whip in their hands, just like animal trainers in a circus. However, the animal trainers usually only frighten the animals but rarely hit them, but we would be hit. As I said before. I was seldom punished, but there were boys punished every day if they did not know how to read a word. Teachers would scream at them, and even if they knew the answer, they would forget everything because they were frightened.

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My mother got sick in the summer of 1917 when we were at home in Urmia, before the troubles started there. She died in November of 1917. She was born in 1871. I was 19 years old, and my mother was 46 years old when she died. My grandmother Mary was 68 when she was killed. She was born in 1849.

When my mother died, I had two brothers. Their names were Andrew, who was 8 years old, and Phillip, who was 6 years old. My father was 60 years old. In 1913, my grandmother Mary went to Tiflis (Georgia) with my Aunt Khanie. When in 1917, she heard of the sickness of her daughter, Shulamit, my mother, she came back to Urmia. A month after her arrival, my mother died. I heard later from other people that my grandmother had told them that she would stay with us until I was married and after that she would leave for Tiflis to once again stay with my Aunt Khanie.

At the same time, I was inducted into the Assyrian army as an artillery mountain gunner soldier. Our company was stationed in Charbash, a village near the city border. We stayed there from December 1917 to April 1918. At about this time, Mar Benyamin Shimun and roughly 100 of his guards were killed in Kohna Shaharwere by Simko, a Kurd.

The Kurds massacred thousands of mountain Assyrians in Khoi. Thereafter, they wanted to go to Salamas where there were also many thousands of Assyrians, some natives of Salamas while others had come from the mountains and had settled there. As the news came that the Turks and Kurds were approaching Salamas, General Agha Petros and Malik Khoshaba, along with 1000 troops from Urmia, were sent to help stop the enemies. At the same time our mountain gunners, with 50 members of our company, were ordered to go to the front. It took us 2 days until we reached Salamas. One night we stayed near Kurhiey, and the next morning we crossed the Kushie pass to Khantakh. Near Khantakh, there is a small port on the Lake of Urmia. At this time, about 100 Assyrians soldiers and officers boarded a boat to go to Sharafkhaneh. There were large supplies of Russian ammunition for guns and rifles and other supplies. Our people wanted to get hold of them before the Turks would get them, and it was planned that we would go around the lake to Sharafkhaneh. Unfortunately, the Turkish army was so strong that it pushed our army back and we narrowly escaped. One whole day we were nearly surrounded. We were lucky that they did not push further, so we arrived in Khantakh that night. We stayed there for the night. Suddenly, at midnight, we heard the sound of thousands of people all arriving with their belongings, horses, mules, donkeys, cattle. All were coming from villages that were previously settled by Assyrians. We learned that the Turks had pushed forward on all fronts, so it was decided that we should go back to Urmia because we couldn't hold Salamas anymore. Thus, everyone had to move back toward Urmia. We were a defeated army. We had concentrated all our troops around Urmia to make the front smaller. In the morning, we began the trek to Urmia which took 48 hours.

As we approached the city's suburbs from the north, we heard the sound of guns coming from the west side of the city. We then veered around the city to west side. We crossed the city's river and headed to a village called Heidor loovi which was on the slope of the Seir mountain, about 3000 feet higher than the village. The Turkish army had their guns on top of Seir Mountain and they began shooting at our soldiers. We were about 50 soldiers, with only one mountain gun.

We had two Russian officers with us. Our infantry foot soldiers, a company of 50, had climbed the mountain. They had started fighting with the Turks. Before we came to the village of Handosluyi, the Turks had come down there once they learned that our people had climbed the mountain to surround them. They



ran away before they were completely surrounded. After sunset, we returned to our barracks.

That day, the Turks were only 4 miles short of reaching the city of Urmia. Our artillery company had 2 mountain guns and more than 100 horses. There was shortage of feed for the horses, so we were ordered to go to another village called Shamshajian, about 6 miles south of city which had grass growing lands to feed our horses.

We stayed there in tents for 2 months. One day, we saw an airplane in the air. First, we didn’t know if it was an enemy plane or a friendly one. As the pilot landed on north side of the city where there was level land, our soldiers rushed to the airplane when they found out that the pilot was a British officer. They took him to the chief of our army in the city. A meeting was called with General Agha Petros and the other prominent chiefs of our army.

Flight from Urmia in 1918

I was serving in the mountain artillery, one of 8 that was left by the Russians when they retreated from the front in Urmia, later named Rezaiyeh after Reza Shah. For many months, we were surrounded on 3 sides and we were getting short of war supplies. The British troops were in Bijar, Kazarin, Kermanshah, and Hammadan.

One morning, an unexpected airplane was seen flying above us. We found out that he was a British air officer who was sent to Urmia from Hammadan. He told our people that, if we could hold on fighting with the Turks, the British government would supply us with money and ammunition. It was decided that the British would bring our supplies to Saen Kalla. On a certain day, their people would send a convoy to bring promised supplies to Agha Petros who was given the task to fulfill this service, as he was chief general of our army. He had to tear the front on the east side to open a safe road to meet the British army. He had to push back the Turkish army so that they would not be able to interfere until he could reach the British and come back safely. This was a very dangerous and treacherous task. It took us about 2 weeks to fight and reach Saen Kalla. Unfortunately, we had been unable to get to Saen Kalla in the allotted time. The British had come and waited two days there with the supplies. As they did not see us there, they went back to Takan Tape, which is about 50 miles farther than us. Because there were a few mounted soldiers with the convoy, they couldn’t stay longer, else they could have been captured by the Turkish or Kurds. Thus, when Agha Petros arrived in Saen Kalla with his army, there were no British soldiers to be found, nor the promised ammunition and supplies. Thus,he decided to proceed forward so that he may reach the British convoy he met them Takan Tape.

We were ordered by General Agha Petros to stay in Sulduz, on south side of Lake Urmia, about halfway between Saen Kalla and the city of Rezaiyeh. We were about 50 persons of mounted artillery. Two days following the departure of Agha Petros from Sulduz, we suddenly saw large crowds of people approaching us. At first, we did not know who they were; we thought they might be enemy troops, but we found out that they were our people who had run away from Rezaiyeh. As the Turks continued, our people in Rezaiyeh heard the bad news, fleeing to avoid being captured and massacred by the Turks. In all, 40 to 50 thousand men, women, and children arrived with their

belongings, some taking on their bags, other loaded on carts horses, mules, donkeys. All started to move to the south toward Sulduz. All the roads were full of crowds. Soon, most roads and bridges were clogged by slow or broken carts. So the people took to country small roads as alternatives. As many could not cross the Boranduz River Bridge, they tried to cross through the river. However, at that season, the water level was high and many carts got stuck in the water. Many carts were abandoned on the road with loads of food, housewares and belongings. Those who could run fast escaped, but thousands who were left behind were captures by the Turks and Kurds, robbed and killed. Many thousand did not reach Saen Kalla.

As we saw so many thousands of people arriving in the city of Nghaola, our officer ordered us to start moving because he thought if we would stay there we might be get captured by Turks and massacred. We knew that Turks would never treat us as prisoners but would kill us as soon as we were in their hands, so we started moving from Sulduz toward Meyanduab (this name means two waters). This city has two rivers, so we moved with the other thousands of our people. Most people were walking, very few were riding horses, mules, carts, donkeys. Many carts were driven by oxen and water buffalo which were abundant. In this part of our country, most wealthy farmers had water buffalo. Female buffalo supplied part of our dairy needs as milk, butter, cream. Milk of buffalo is much richer in fat content than cow's milk. So the cream and yogurt is nutritious and delicious.

At the same time, many people were driving their herds of cattle and sheep, hence the roads were full of people and animals. For miles, you would see people resting by the side of road some just preparing to leave. Some had to stay because they were tired, especially women with their young children who had no means of transportation. They had to carry their children on their backs. Some old people were either sick or tired, and many had sore feet, so they could not walk. They were resting on the road side. Nevertheless, everyone was trying hard to move forward. They were afraid that soon they would be caught by the enemy Kurds or Turks. It was a terrible time.

People were walking day and night. Many were lost, especially children who had lost their parents. All night you would hear people calling out loud the names of their parents, brothers and sisters. It took 3 or 4 days and nights to reach Saen Kalla, where our forward troops with Agha Petros had reached the British soldiers. Many times you would hear the sounds of guns and rifles that meant somewhere enemies were attacking the long lines of refugees, mostly on the back side of line. They would cut the line and those who were left were robbed and murdered in cold blood. They were never heard from again, very young children and girls, men, old women were killed. Some young women were taken away by the enemies. Very few of them, after many years, found a chance to run away to Tabriz or Hammadan or to other cities where our people settled following the first world war. It took our people roughly one month to reach Hammadan. From Urmia to Hammadan, all roads were full of our dead people; some were killed, others died from sickness, hunger, or thirst. It was estimated that only 50% of people that left Urmia arrived at Baquba. Others perished on the roads. There is no correct sense of the number of people that were in Urmia and how many arrived in Baquba.

List of Assyrian Foundation of America Donors

The below list includes donations received from June 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022 only!  
Any donations received after 9/30/2022 will be included in the next issue of the Nineveh Magazine.

Thank you for your generosity and support.

	Amount	Needy	Nineveh	Education	Memorial
Aaron & Julia Shiles	\$50		\$50		
Archy Ray	\$50		\$50		
Bani J. David	\$225	\$225			
David Farhad	\$60	\$60			
Dolphine David	\$100	\$100			
Dr. Arianne Ishaya	\$100	\$60	\$40		
Dr. Ghazi & & Edna Shaba	\$150	\$75	\$75		
Dr. William & Kathleen Suleiman	\$250	\$100	\$50	\$100	
Dr. William & Kathleen Suleiman	\$250	\$100	\$50	\$100	
Edward Nadirsha	\$50		\$50		
Esther Lang	\$100	\$50	\$50		
George & Therese Yana	\$50	\$50			
Irene Dilak	\$40		\$40		
Joshua Neuman	\$100	\$60		\$40	
Jouzafin Younan	\$100	\$50	\$50		
Khana & Donald Daniel	\$40		\$40		
Michael Younan	\$100		\$40	\$60	
Nathan Nasserri	\$60		\$60		
Ovrahim Oushana	\$50		\$50		
Raman Adam	\$50			\$50	
Robert Isaac	\$50		\$50		
Rowena Dmar Shimun	\$100		\$100		
Sanharib William Shabbas	\$140				\$140 In memory of Shalim Shabbas-Tatar
Shamoon Ourshano-Olghi	\$40		\$40		
Violet Sayad	\$45			\$45	
Wellton & Linda Khoshabian	\$150	\$100		\$50	
William Ramsini	\$320		\$120	\$200	
Youhana Khosrowabadi	\$40		\$40		
Zacharia O. Zacharia	\$100		\$50	\$50	
Total Donations	\$2,960	\$1,030	\$1,095	\$695	\$140

\*The amounts listed are charitable donations only and exclude subscription fees and membership dues.



## Lola's Assyrian Sewing School in Armenia

By  
Romena Jonas

**In 2021, Assyrians for Education (AFE) and the Assyrian Foundation of America (AFA) funded the establishment of Lola's Sewing School in the village of Dvin, Armenia. The purpose of creating this school was to promote education, create jobs, empower our people, and provide opportunities for growth and independence, specifically for our Assyrian women living in Armenia.**

Now, a year has passed, and the school is still running smoothly. Moreover, our students are improving in skills and increasing in numbers.

Recently, the school was commissioned by Saint Mary's Assyrian Church of the East in Tarzana, California to sew 30 outfits with an Assyrian Flag motif. These outfits were worn by the church youth during their annual festival parade. The sewing school students also made a beautiful dress for me to wear in one of my folklore music videos. Currently, the students are commissioned to sew bedding for some of the village people, as well as clothing for some of the children.

Since its inception, both the AFA and AFE have collaborated on this beautiful effort to support Lola's Assyrian Sewing School. We are pleased that the school has become a well-known and respected entity, not only in Armenia, but within the Assyrian community globally.

*Romena Jonas is the founder of Assyrians for Education, in addition to being a renowned and beloved Assyrian Singer.*

<https://www.facebook.com/100084031460787/videos/1113248526270548>





# When will our differences and divisions end?

By Michael A. Younan



Please accept my apologies for writing this article because most of the information are known and practiced by the Assyrians. I use the term Assyrians to include all the denominations of our blessed Churches regardless of the appellations used, for we are all Assyrians of one historical and national race (people, land, language and civilization) and our destiny and future are undivided. I chose the title of this article 'When will our differences and divisions end?' because unfortunately we are divided against each other, whether we like it or not. There is no point in crying over the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon. We shed some generous tears. All proclaim and declare that we are all one people, but this is only for courtesy and complacency. How can we be one people with three names? Why not be realistic and admit that we are all Assyrians. The term 'Assyrian' is the only identity that can help us to transcend the differences between us and is a living evidence of the fact that we are all one people.

I will mention just the important points briefly:

- Disputes about the Divinity and Humanity of Jesus Christ began from ancient time to the present day.
- We differed and we are divided into several Churches with different names, from the Church of the East (the mother Church, the Holy Apostolic Catholicos Church) whose believers were the overwhelming majority of Assyrian people. But unfortunately, two schisms occurred: one in mid of 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Assyrian Rabban Mar Yaaqoub Bar'Addai (505-578) splits from the Church of the East, thereafter, founded a Church under the name "Jacobite Church" also known later as "Syriac/Suryani" Church". And in mid of 16<sup>th</sup> century (1551), a schism occurred over the custom of hierarchy of choosing a Patriarch for the "Church of the East". A group of Assyrians convoked by the bishops of Arbil, Salamas and Azerbaijan met in Mosul and chose an Assyrian Rabban "Seoud Bar'Daniel", known as Sulaqa (Ascention), they split from the Church of the East. Rabban Sulaqa was sent to Rome with other bishops. The Roman Catholic Church ordained him as Patriarch of "Chaldean Catholic Church". Today, the two respected Churches, each, consider herself a Nation (Race, Language and Culture) and each has opposing visions for our future.
- After 1964, a schism resulted in the church of the East when H.H. the late Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII replaced the old Julien calendar to the new Gregorian calendar especially for the Feasts of Nativity of Jesus Christ, Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Feast of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This schism resulted a division in the "Church of the East". One branch remained on the old Julien calendar, under a new name "Ancient Church of the East" and the other branch followed the Gregorian calendar for the above mentioning Feasts, under the name "Assyrian Church of the East"
- We differed and we are divided on the name of our Assyrian language. One Church called it Syriac/Suryany language, and one Church called it Chaldean language. They neglected the Assyrian mother language.
- We differed and we are divided on the commemoration of the Assyrian Martyr's day, to the extent that the associations and clubs in the same city hold memorial services separately.
- We differed and we are divided on the emblem and symbol of the Assyrian flag into three different flags.
- We differed and we are divided on the commemoration of the Assyrian Babylonian New Year 'Akitu'.
- We differed and we are divided into different political parties, each leans to its ecclesiastical affiliation or tribe or fanatical clan. In addition, some political parties are divided among themselves.
- We differed and we are divided on our national rights in our homeland 'Ashur' (modern-day Iraq and eastern part of Syria).
- The National demands and aims of our Assyrian political parties varies as follow:

An Assyrian State, an Assyrian Province, an Assyrian Regional Government and an Assyrian self-administration. Others, want all Assyrians to live in any part of Iraq as Iraqi citizens, content with our representatives in the Parliament with ministerial positions and civil positions.

Sorry if my memory fails me for forgetting other disagreements!

If we remain as we are now, then the proverb "we agreed not to agree" would apply to us. And if we do not dignify history and what has befallen us despite all those differences and divisions, our conscience will scold us that we are neither sincere nor honest with ourselves (to the Assyrian people). We deny the

historical truth and practice our conditions according to what is dictated to us. The time has come, perhaps for the last time, to turn the page of the past and begin with full sincerity and confidence to practice of a new approach, especially in Iraq as a start, and thereafter in the countries of diaspora.

There is nothing that can outweigh the damage done by schism, disunity is a terrible wound. We must be convinced and agree that there is no salvation for us except by unifying our national message and agenda under the name "Assyrian people and Assyrian nation" as a nation and not as a Christian component, likewise Arabs, Kurds, Turkmans and Yezidies, although they are all Muslims, but they are called by their respective national names, therefore, we should deliver our message to the three presidencies in the Federal Republic of Iraq and in the Kurdistan Regional Government (the President, the Prime minister and the President of the Parliament).

Our message should contains the following demands:

- In term of reference, replacing the name Christians, and or, Christian component to our historical and national name "Assyrians" whenever it is found in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Iraq, and in the Election committee.
- Our existence should not be based on our dwindling number of today, but as indigenous people and by our great history and civilization.
- Adding an article to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Iraq, and to the Kurdistan Regional Government stating that only Assyrians have the rights to elect their own Assyrian representatives and members of Parliament and to be regulated by law.
- Adding an article to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Iraq, and to the Kurdistan Regional Government stating that it is not permissible to seize and confiscate private properties and lands belong to the Assyrians, and expropriate them from their rightful owners, and forcibly impose a new reality on the Land. The right to property is enshrined in the world constitutions, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our belief is that the earth/land embrace its citizens, if this legitimate right is taken from us, who will embrace us?
- Implement Section Five of the Iraqi Constitution, Chapter One and Chapter Two to allocate in the Nineveh Plain an Assyrian Regional Government , and or, Province comprising of the three remaining districts, inhabited by the Assyrian people, such as:

Al-Hamdaniyah, Tel keifeh and Al-Shaikhan, and sub-districts and villages, per Section five, Article 116 – 123 and Article 125 of the Iraqi Constitution, and also Chapter Three, Article 35 of the Kurdistan Regional Government Constitution. It is also worth to mention the "Charter of the United Nations", Chapter XI Article 73, 74 and Chapter XII.

This self-determination will enable the Assyrian people to preserve its distinctive identity, culture, language and history under the international covenant on civil and political rights, which has been ratified by the leading nations of the world, including Iraq. It will also give the Assyrian people a hope to remain in Iraq and live with our neighbors in peace and harmony. As for appointing employees in the public and private sectors, it has been happening since the Iraqi royal era (1950s). This in itself benefits the employees and their families for a better life as individuals and does not benefit the Assyrian cause nor the Assyrian legitimate rights. Also the freedom to establish Assyrian political parties is for courtesy and complacency only.

The Assyrians are in dire need for a long-term and lasting and permanent solution in Iraq, no matter what might be the formula of future of Iraq! Otherwise, if the above claims are not met, I think the Assyrian people will live in despair in Iraq and all the promises, meetings and lectures of the Iraqi officials will be on papers only, and the emigration of the Assyrian people will continue to leave our ancestral homeland. Maybe this is the official policy of the successive Iraqi officials in power!

In conclusion, I would like to make an appeal to all the great Iraqi people and their esteemed representatives, with all due respect, please do not "deprive" the Assyrian people of their legitimate rights.

Respectfully, Michael A. Younan,  
California, May 31, 2022





## AFA Picnic July 2022

The Assyrian Foundation Annual Picnic for 2022 was held on July 16th at the Lafayette Lake Upper Site Picnic Area. Shaded by large trees & ample parking, this area has been our favorite spot for several years. The approximately 93 individuals in attendance enjoyed the smells & tastes of delicious chelo-kabob catered by Milas and Marlene of San Jose. The tasty selection of desserts, as usual, were provided by our club members. Assyrian music was heard at times, and Nar Takhta / Backgammon could be seen being played, a favorite game at our picnics. Most of all, we were able to visit each other again and meet many new attendees at this, our favorite mid-summer event.





# The Story of Art and the Art of Stories: Living Culture from Mesopotamia to New York

by Alexandra Lazar

On August 27, the Assyrian Studies Association (ASA) hosted a special panel discussion, *The Story of Art and the Art of Stories: Living Culture from Mesopotamia to New York*, with Assyrian-Iraqi artist Nenous Thabet, Iraqi-American activist and poet Ahmed Badr held at The Assyrian Sculpture Court at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) in New York City. The discussion also featured introductions by Dr. Sarah Graff, the Curator of Ancient Near Eastern Art for the MET, who spoke on the importance of preserving and cherishing Assyrian art through educational events and guest speaker Reine Hanna, executive director of the Assyrian Policy Institute (API) who discussed the API work in bringing issues of Assyrian cultural heritage to members of political office in the United States. The event was moderated by Professor of History and Cultural Studies at Roger Williams University and Board Member at ASA, Dr. Sargon Donabed who also served as translator.

Surrounded by Ancient Assyrian reliefs dating back to the reign of Ashurnasirpal II, the panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Donabed, included an in-depth conversation between Nenous and Ahmed's cultural preservation processes and how they both engage in different artistic avenues to honor both Assyrian and Iraqi culture and heritage. Nenous, a sculptor and painter from Bakhdida, a town in Iraq's Nineveh Plains, a region invaded by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL). He made international headlines at the age of

sixteen for sculpting Lamassus as an act of defiance against ISIS's destruction of Assyrian antiquities.

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, upon entering the Assyrian Sculpture Court where two prominently placed lamassus stand, Nenous was faced with the feeling of "powerfulness and closeness." Being in the same room as the lamassus, ancient protective deities that once were prominent in the Nineveh Plains, Nenous expressed his hope that "one day these artifacts could return home for everyone to appreciate again because these are pieces from our history and hold a lot of meaning and power."

Ahmed, whose work seeks to combine poetry, archival collections, and other multi-media to explore the complexities of migration, identity, and self-expression, with a focus on reframing and reclaiming the power of tragedy, felt a deep connection to the Assyrian antiquities. Born in Baghdad, Iraq, Ahmed was familiar with Assyrian art and, "felt a sense of responsibility to engage with these [artifacts], a sense of appreciation...and that all these artifacts tell a story that need to be articulated in a way that's making meaning of this space, your relationship with this space, and the objects in this space," said Ahmed. In 2019, Ahmed's organization, Narratio, which provides a platform for activates, supporting, and highlighting the creative expression of displaced young people through fellowships, collaborated with the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Ancient Near East Department in 2019 to host poetry

performances by resettled refugee youth and a series of local and national photography and writing exhibits. For him, being back in this space "I've always found it [The Assyrian Sculpture Court] to be inviting...it's a space that's alive and I feel a sense of responsibility to engage with these objects, and I'm grateful for it," said Ahmed.

As the discussion progressed, Nenous and Ahmed discussed how they engaged in different artistic avenues to honor both Assyrian and Iraqi culture and heritage. A graduate of Mosul University, Nenous earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 2020. Since then, he has been crafting large sculptures, paintings, and drawing projects on street walls in Iraq to preserve the Assyrian identity. He recently displayed his artwork at the *Tell Our Stories: Artifacts From the Assyrian Genocide* exhibition at California State University, Stanislaus, which was made possible from the support of California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the University of California at Stanislaus, the Assyrian Art Institute, and the Assyrian Studies Association.

Ahmed's cultural preservation approach involves creating "spaces for other stories to exist besides your [story] and beyond your [story]...and so I dedicated my life to building an infrastructure for people in the community to engage with their stories," said Ahmed. Most recently, Ahmed has authored *While the Earth Sleeps We Travel*, a collection of stories, poetry, and art from young refugees worldwide that seeks to center and amplify the often unheard perspectives of those navigating through and beyond the complexities of displacement.

The event at the Metropolitan Museum of Art was made possible with support from the Assyrian Arts Institute,



Left to Right: Ahmed Badr, Alexandra Lazar, and Nenous Thabet.

the Assyrian Policy Institute, and the Assyrian Studies Association. Special thanks to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the collaboration.

--  
Alexandra Lazar is the Executive Director at Assyrian Studies Association, a nonprofit organization that promotes the interest in and academic study of Assyrian culture and heritage. She also is a Ph.D. student of political science at the University of California, Davis.



Discussion with Nenous Thabet, Ahmed Badr, and Dr. Sargon Donabed on cultural preservation.



Sarah Graff, Curator of Ancient Near East Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Left to Right: Denise Sargis Brown, Dr. Ruth Kambar, Violet Lazari, and Emma Lazar.













بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## تہذیب ذہنی و علمی تہذیب

[illegible]

**پہلے:** خد یدھنن لئس یت ولتہ یت، خجدہس ۛ موستہس ۛ لشدن،  
 لکدس۔۔ لئن یو ۛ ولتہس ۛ لئس؛ دکن دی بلکن لئ مئی  
 لشدن یل لکن یل ۛ مو، یل لشدن ۛ یل دسبہ، یل  
 دکن ۛ یل شمن ۛ لکدس ۛ لشدن ۛ لشدن۔

**مِلْكَۃُ:** يَكْفِيكَ مِنْ خُذَّةِ لَيْحِي:.. لَيْحِي مَوْجِدٌ يَنْتَدِي إِلَيْهِ. قَمْعِي مِنْ  
مَدِينَةٍ لَتَتَّيْزُ فِيَّ لَيْحِي لَيْعًا فِي نَفْسِي بِأَهْمِيَّةٍ دَمَوْدِيَّةٍ لِي؟  
**يَمْكُنُ:** مَخْلُوبٌ بِسَوءِ الْهَوَى مَوْجِدٌ.

[illegible][illegible]

**مِلَّةٌ:** نَبْتُ الْكَلْبِ مِنْهُدٌ سَجَافِيْمَةٌ. لَيْتَ فُخْصَةً تَفْشِي فِيهَا شِدَّةُ ذَوْنِهَا  
مُحِبَّةٌ دَرِيْهَةٌ. تَمُودِيٌّ بَنُوهُ لِي كَوْنٌ مُدْمِيٌّ مَجْدُوتٌ

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تَذَكَّرْتُ، لَمْ تَحْ تَحْ  
يَسِّرْ لَمْ يَمْ  
قَدْ هُ هُ  
جِ مَسْمَعِ مَذْ مَذْ



مَعْمُودٌ كَبِدٌ مَسْتَمٌّ كَسَ تَجَدُّ دَسْمُهُذَةُ

سَكَنَ دِيْمَرِ جِس سَهْتَنَ  
 دِهْهَس دِسْمَنَ لِهْ صَدَدَنَ  
 هَذْ هَمْهِنَ هَسْ ذِ دَهْتَنَ  
 حَكَمَ دِسْهَبْلَا دَنَ مِهْتَنَ

٢٥٢ ٢٥١ ٢٥٠ ٢٤٩ ٢٤٨ ٢٤٧ ٢٤٦ ٢٤٥ ٢٤٤ ٢٤٣ ٢٤٢ ٢٤١ ٢٤٠ ٢٣٩ ٢٣٨ ٢٣٧ ٢٣٦ ٢٣٥ ٢٣٤ ٢٣٣ ٢٣٢ ٢٣١ ٢٣٠ ٢٢٩ ٢٢٨ ٢٢٧ ٢٢٦ ٢٢٥ ٢٢٤ ٢٢٣ ٢٢٢ ٢٢١ ٢٢٠ ٢١٩ ٢١٨ ٢١٧ ٢١٦ ٢١٥ ٢١٤ ٢١٣ ٢١٢ ٢١١ ٢١٠ ٢٠٩ ٢٠٨ ٢٠٧ ٢٠٦ ٢٠٥ ٢٠٤ ٢٠٣ ٢٠٢ ٢٠١ ٢٠٠ ١٩٩ ١٩٨ ١٩٧ ١٩٦ ١٩٥ ١٩٤ ١٩٣ ١٩٢ ١٩١ ١٩٠ ١٨٩ ١٨٨ ١٨٧ ١٨٦ ١٨٥ ١٨٤ ١٨٣ ١٨٢ ١٨١ ١٨٠ ١٧٩ ١٧٨ ١٧٧ ١٧٦ ١٧٥ ١٧٤ ١٧٣ ١٧٢ ١٧١ ١٧٠ ١٦٩ ١٦٨ ١٦٧ ١٦٦ ١٦٥ ١٦٤ ١٦٣ ١٦٢ ١٦١ ١٦٠ ١٥٩ ١٥٨ ١٥٧ ١٥٦ ١٥٥ ١٥٤ ١٥٣ ١٥٢ ١٥١ ١٥٠ ١٤٩ ١٤٨ ١٤٧ ١٤٦ ١٤٥ ١٤٤ ١٤٣ ١٤٢ ١٤١ ١٤٠ ١٣٩ ١٣٨ ١٣٧ ١٣٦ ١٣٥ ١٣٤ ١٣٣ ١٣٢ ١٣١ ١٣٠ ١٢٩ ١٢٨ ١٢٧ ١٢٦ ١٢٥ ١٢٤ ١٢٣ ١٢٢ ١٢١ ١٢٠ ١١٩ ١١٨ ١١٧ ١١٦ ١١٥ ١١٤ ١١٣ ١١٢ ١١١ ١١٠ ١٠٩ ١٠٨ ١٠٧ ١٠٦ ١٠٥ ١٠٤ ١٠٣ ١٠٢ ١٠١ ١٠٠ ٩٩ ٩٨ ٩٧ ٩٦ ٩٥ ٩٤ ٩٣ ٩٢ ٩١ ٩٠ ٨٩ ٨٨ ٨٧ ٨٦ ٨٥ ٨٤ ٨٣ ٨٢ ٨١ ٨٠ ٧٩ ٧٨ ٧٧ ٧٦ ٧٥ ٧٤ ٧٣ ٧٢ ٧١ ٧٠ ٦٩ ٦٨ ٦٧ ٦٦ ٦٥ ٦٤ ٦٣ ٦٢ ٦١ ٦٠ ٥٩ ٥٨ ٥٧ ٥٦ ٥٥ ٥٤ ٥٣ ٥٢ ٥١ ٥٠ ٤٩ ٤٨ ٤٧ ٤٦ ٤٥ ٤٤ ٤٣ ٤٢ ٤١ ٤٠ ٣٩ ٣٨ ٣٧ ٣٦ ٣٥ ٣٤ ٣٣ ٣٢ ٣١ ٣٠ ٢٩ ٢٨ ٢٧ ٢٦ ٢٥ ٢٤ ٢٣ ٢٢ ٢١ ٢٠ ١٩ ١٨ ١٧ ١٦ ١٥ ١٤ ١٣ ١٢ ١١ ١٠ ٩ ٨ ٧ ٦ ٥ ٤ ٣ ٢ ١ ٠

كَبَّ شَوَّيْ سَقْلَى دِلْمَه  
 عَمَلْ دِلْمَه دِلْمَه  
 تَلْ دِلْمَه دِلْمَه دِلْمَه  
 دِلْمَه دِلْمَه دِلْمَه

يَدُ يَحْدَهُ سَوْنٌ دَلِيلٌ  
 مَعَ يَحْتَمِلُ دَلِيلٌ هَذَا  
 كَمَ دَلِيلٌ كَمَ نَ تَذَلُّعٌ  
 نَ دَلِيلٌ هَذَا مَحَلٌّ

[illegible]

هَذَا فِي مَعْنَى دَلَمَ حَقَّقَ  
 صَدَقَ. يَنْتَ بِنَ حَقَّقَ  
 جَدَّيْ دَسَمَدَ مَلَّحَ دَهْدَه  
 مَلَّ دَسَمَدَ حَقَّقَ أَفَ

انا في هذا من مكدك  
 لعب لعلكم قد سمعتم  
 خذوا هذه حبيبتي  
 اني اريدكم كلهم سائمي

[illegible]

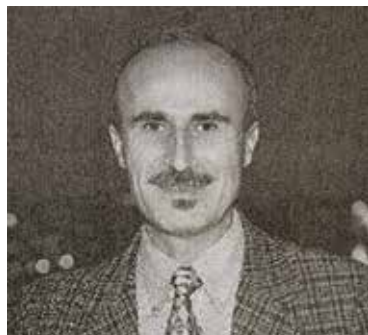
محمد، مخدوم، مہیہ تہہ مہم  
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 محکمہ محکمہ محکمہ محکمہ

اَؤْذِى كَلَمَہ كَمِیْدِیَس  
 مَسْمُومَہ لَہْ دَیْ  
 دَلَمِ دَلَّتْ مَحْمُومِہ  
 تَمَہ

مَجْدُكَ يَجْعَلُكَ كَمَا  
 كُنْتَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَكُونَ  
 كَمَا كُنْتَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَكُونَ  
 كَمَا كُنْتَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَكُونَ

بَدَّ يَجْعَلُكَ دِهَاقًا دِهَاقًا  
 لَأَمَّا دِهَاقًا مَلَكًا مَلَكًا  
 تَذَهَبُ دِهَاقًا قَدْ ذَهَبَ  
 دِهَاقًا تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ





## مهمتهما لخدمتهما بملقتهما

سَبَد: مَتَسَمَ هَذِهِ هَذِهِ هَذِهِ

مَكْتَبَ هَذِكِه ۰ هَذِكِه ۲ ۲۳۵

دُتَب ۛبُتْدُ ۛكِس مِکَنُ مِ حِم ۛمِفْدُ  
حَمُ دُحَۛۛ حِم ۛ دِمِۛۛ ۛ قَدِۛۛ بُتْدُ  
مِ يِتَدُ ۛكِس قُۛۛ مِمۛۛۛ ۛۛفْدُ  
حَمُ دُتُبُ، ۛس ۛ ۛقُۛۛۛۛ مِ ۛۛ ۛۛۛفْدُ

مِنْ لَمَّا دُفِدُوهُ حَقَبٌ عُنِي  
 جِ فَتَبَّ لِي سَيِّئًا، صَفَقَ هَئِ  
 بَدَ مُكَلِّفًا دُمُومًا مَعْدِنًا بَدِي  
 كَحَمَقَ حَسَبَ عَيْتٍ، كَعَيْتٍ زَمَانًا

جَعَلَهُمْ دُجْدُودًا كَذَٰلِكَ دَعَا جَعَلَهُ  
 لَبَّ دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا  
 لَبَّ دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا  
 لَبَّ دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا دَعَا

[illegible]

يَسْتَدْبِرُ سَيْدَتِي فِي هَذِهِ نِعْمَةً  
 عَلَى دُكَيْمٍ دِينِي دُكَيْمٌ دِينِي  
 يَا تَكْبَهُهُ، يَا تَكْبَهُهُ، يَا تَكْبَهُهُ  
 يَا سَيِّدِي سَيِّدِي، يَا سَيِّدِي سَيِّدِي



**مجلس الكنائس - القدس**  
**دعوتنا لهذا العام 2022**

مذہب : نسل : نژاد :



استفتاء:

43. .... من مستحبه جدك

47.....سَمَ دَهْدَه دَهْدَه

## تجدد: ذکاوت هکله دښمنان

49.....مستمط من مستط حه حدك

50.....مقدمہ کذا مذکورہ درجہ

تجد: هذكم هذج







# ܣܠܬܐ

ܡܠܚܡܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ | ܡܠܚܡܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ | ܡܠܚܡܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ



ܡܠܚܡܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ