



*Established 1964*

*Dedicated to the  
Advancement of Education  
of Assyrians*



# NINEVEH

THIRD QUARTER 1996

VOLUME 19 NO. 3



## **Assur-Natsir-Pal, King of Assyria**

**(883 BC to 858 BC) present with his Queen at the opening of a new building - by Gilbert Bayes 1906 - Bronze relief on the facade of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia**

# NINEVEH

THIRD QUARTER 1996  
VOLUME 19 NO.3

Julius N. Shabbas ..... Editor  
Joel J. Elias ..... Assistant Editor

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ARTICLES SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION WILL BE SELECTED BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF ON THE BASIS OF THEIR RELATIVE MERIT TO ASSYRIAN LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND CURRENT EVENTS.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS MAGAZINE ARE THOSE OF THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORS AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF NINEVEH.

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## Assyrian Periodicals

*We urge our readers to read and support the Assyrian publications. The active participation of all Assyrians is the only guarantee of the success of Assyrian periodicals.*

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

Thank you very much for your kind letter of April 2nd and the last quarterly issue of Nineveh for 1995. I am looking forward with great anticipation to the next issue.

As requested by you and under separate cover, I am sending an Urmia -and Maragha-based article for Nineveh magazine. It is the story of my maternal grandmother, Ghozal Murhatch, who in Maragha, was one of the unsung heroines of the Great War. From the first day that the refugees started pouring into the city, to my father's death in August of 1923, she devoted her life unstintingly to their welfare. She was a very clever woman. Long before my father's time and before vaccines were known in Iran, my remarkable grandmother had developed a smallpox vaccine, which not only saved many lives but also many from the disfiguring ravages of the disease. During those tragic years she brought all her diverse skills into the service of our long suffering people.

Grandma Ghozal had been christened Rakhie (Tamraz) at birth and until the age of sixteen she was known only by that name. But then one day things changed suddenly and irrevocably. On that day she briefly met a man who found her "Ghozal" (beautiful in Turkish), and such was his power and authority that her real name was soon forgotten and Ghozal she was called to the end of her days. The article then is Ghozal's story, the story of a fleeting but momentous encounter on a long ago summer's day and of a life of dedication to the service of the less fortunate. Her motto seems to have been "I Serve"! I do hope that you find it suitable material for your magazine.

My greetings and best wishes go to you, your family and your readers everywhere.

Elizabeth Y. Campbell  
Traralgon, Vic., Australia

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

I punctually receive your magazine "Nineveh" and thank you very much for it. This is a considerable and original magazine, written in two languages (Assyrian and English) with interesting material about Assyrian life (history, culture, mode of life,

etc). I greet such contents of the magazine and therefore I send to you my little article "Assyrians in Georgia", which gives some idea about the Assyrians here.

I wish to note that now I am 75 (I was born on February 4, 1921), and devoted more than 50 years of my life to the study of the Assyrian (Aramaic) linguistical matters. With best wishes,

Prof. Konstantin Tsereteli  
Tbilisi, Georgia

Editor's Note:

1. We wish to congratulate Prof. Konstantin Tsereteli for his lifetime achievements in the study of Assyrian language and history.  
2. We received the following note: "Tbilisi State University and acad. G. Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Georgia inform that on 4 February 1996 the Academician Konstantin Tsereteli, Member of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of Georgia and Head of Department of Tbilisi State University, will be 75 years old and also has, for 55 years, pursued his scientific activities." Congratulations and addresses can be sent to this address:

Institute of Oriental Studies  
3 G. Tsereteli Str.  
Tbilisi, 380062, Republic of Georgia

Dear Julius,

I respectfully wish to refer to the article by Odisho Warda in regard to the retirement of Enwia Warda, which appeared in Nineveh magazine Vol. 19 No. 1&2 First/Second quarter 1996. On page 31, it is stated that Enwia was the founder of the Assyrian Society of Great Britain. In fact, the said Society was founded by a group of talented Assyrian men and women who came to England from Iraq and Iran in 1956. Fortunately, I personally was in London at that time and have had conversations with founder members. They were: Axania Bet Malik David, Victor and Sandra Wales, Aprim Willis, Helen Atouraita, Sam Amrikhas, Sargon Bet Malik David and David Malik.

Enwia Warda came to England seven years later in 1963 and joined the Society membership in 1964 and was elected Chairman at the General Meeting. When my family and I settled in Kent in 1960, the

Assyrian Society of Great Britain was already in great establishment. With our personal best regards to you and Nineveh staff members.

Andrious Mama Jotyar  
 Editor-The Assyrian Observer  
 Kent, England. Also, former  
 Secretary, Treasurer and Editor,  
 Assyrian Society of Great Britain

Editor's Note:

1. *The statement in question here was made by Yvonne Docwra and not by Odisho Warda, as stated clearly in the Nineveh article.*
2. *Sandra Wales, one of the founders, reports that the Assyrian Society of Great Britain was formed in 1959. (see "The Assyrian" - the official magazine of the Society, March 1985 Vol. 2 Issue No. 1, page 16).*
3. *Victor E. Wales, one of the founders, states that a Committee was set up at the Inaugural Meeting of the Assyrian Society of Great Britain on 4th April 1959. (see "The Assyrian" - March 1989 Vol. 6 Issue No. 11, page 17).*
4. *Victor E. Wales reports April 1959 as the First Meeting of Assyrian Society of Great Britain (now Assyrian Society of United Kingdom). (see "The Assyrian" - April 1994 Vol. 4 Issue No. 14, page 19). He also reports other notable dates, among them: Autumn 1959 - First issue of "The Assyrian". Winter 1978 - First issue of "The Assyrian Observer".*
5. *"The Assyrian Observer" Spring 1979 Issue No. 2, on page 23 under Note by Andrious Mama Jotyar, states that "Mr. Wales is one of the Founder Members of the Assyrian Society of Great Britain and the former General Secretary of the Society for many years."*
6. *In "The Assyrian Observer" - March 1996 Issue No. 51 page 9 under Obituary by Victor E. Wales : states that Aprim Willis was one of the original founders of the Assyrian Society of Great Britain (now Assyrian Society of United Kingdom) in 1959.*

Dear Julius,

I enclose a check for \$50 - \$20 towards my subscription to Nineveh magazine, and \$30 as a donation in memory of my beloved sister,

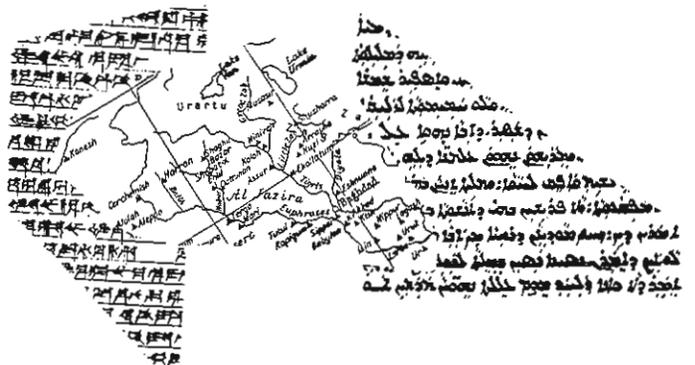
Anna Paulis Jado. Thank you and may God bless you. We enjoy reading Nineveh magazine. Best regards.

Margaret Jado  
 Skokie, IL



**School children in Moscow, Russia.**

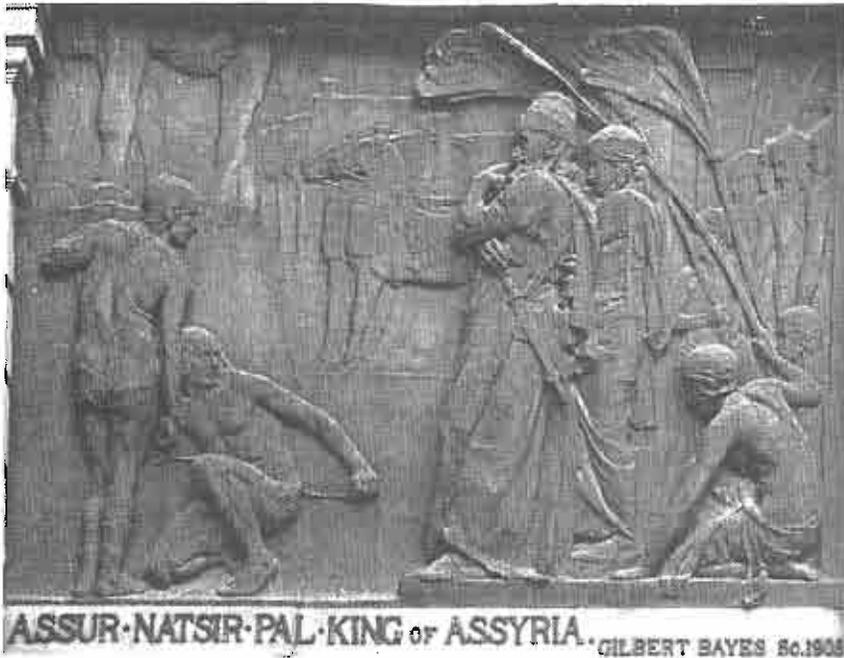
Forefront to the left is Iniyar Davidova, the granddaughter of Nadya Davidova, the author of a travelogue book entitled 'A Soviet Assyrian in India.' In her letter Nadya writes: "It was the first of September 1995 when I took Iniyar to school. I saw her friends' mothers and fathers taking their children's photo happy and cheerful, and so I decided to take this photo and send it to you. She was standing near me taking me by the hand and smiling. When I looked around my heart ached. She would have been happier if she had been with her father and mother like all her friends. But alas! Her father is not able. He is epileptic and quite often has severe attacks. I then remembered my childhood. How I wanted to see my father, to take him by the hand and feel his strength and protection. Let us always think of our Assyrian children who are our pride, hope and future."



Reproduced by kind permission of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney - Australia and the text is from draft Catalogue of British Sculpture in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales by Renee Free.

## Assur-Natsir-Pal, King of Assyria

*Assyrian Panel on the Facade of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia*



*Assur-Natsir-Pal, King of Assyria by Gilbert Bayes 1906 - Bronze relief on the facade of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia.*



*The facade of the Art Gallery of New South Wales with the arrow showing the panel holding the above bronze relief.*

In 1903, the Trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales invited sculptors to submit models in a competition for two panels, each 11ft 3in x 7ft 6in high and the subjects to be chosen were typical of Assyrian and Egyptian Art to form, together with panels already in place, a complete series of the chief historic phases of Art.

The design submitted by Gilbert Bayes (1872 - 1953) of England was selected on behalf of the Trustees by Sir Alfred East and George Frampton in 1903. Gilbert Bayes finished his work in 1906 and he was awarded 50 pounds for ... fine Assyrian panel. The finished relief was placed in position in February 1907. The lettering impressed on the relief were by A. B. Burton, Founder / Thames Ditton in England.

The relief shows Assur-Natsir-Pal, King of Assyria, from 883 BC to 858 BC, present with his Queen at the opening of a new building. After the death of Tiglath-Pileser until his time Assyria was reduced to comparative powerlessness, but under him the boundaries of the empire were extended, splendid palaces, temples and other buildings raised, whose elaborate sculptures and rich paintings bear witness to the fact that in his day culminated the first period of Assyrian Art. The theme of the relief is, then, most appropriate for the selection.

Editor's Note:

*The above research was conducted by Romeo Hanna of Sydney, Australia.*

## ASSYRIANS IN THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

by Prof. Konstantin Tsereteli,  
Tbilisi, Georgia

In Georgia, among the non-native nations, Assyrians have a definite place since, from the language viewpoint, they are the carriers of the Aramaic language which was once widely spread in the whole Near East. Traces of their ancestors in the form of writing and language are found in Georgia and go back to the pre-Christian epoch.

Aramaic has an important part in the development of world civilization. Suffice it to say that the Aramaic writing formed the basis of many other writings. At the same time, this writing and language played a significant role in the Ancient East, where it was once (V-III century B.C.) the official language of such great and powerful states as Achaemenid Persia, and its script was used by other peoples for a long time after the downfall of the Empire. Here one cannot help but mention Aramaic inscriptions, found on the territory of Georgia (Iberia), varied by their content and made on various kinds of material: stone, metal, ceramics (stone stellae from Armazi near the old capital of Georgia - Mtskheta; pitchers from Uplistsikhe and Urnisi; bowls from Kazbegi and Bori, capital from Dzalisi, etc.). All these inscriptions go back to the pre-Christian epoch (the 3rd century B.C. - the 3rd century A.D.).

Later, the Christian Assyrians established close contacts with Georgia and its population. This was facilitated by a great Christian literature in Syriac (Assyrian) and by an important role played by this language in the Christian East. These contacts are represented by the life and activity of the great Georgian churchman and scholar Peter Iber (Peter from Iberia) in the 5th century. The founding of monastery life in Georgia is also connected with Assyrians - 13 Assyrian fathers founded in the 6th century the first monasteries in Georgia: Gareji, Shiomgvi, Zedaseni, etc. They played an important role in the spread and strengthening of Christianity in Georgia. Their life and activity is described in the corresponding literature and these personalities were regarded by the Georgian Church as saints. This, however,



does not indicate any significant settlement of Assyrians in Georgia in this period. The process of their settlement in Georgia began much later.

It is very difficult to say now when Assyrian emigrants first appeared in Georgia. It is only obvious that one of the most powerful streams of refugees goes back to the First World War period. Even now we can meet those Assyrians who escaped from the persecution and massacre by Moslems and found protection in Christian Russia. We could write many stories of the refugees as told in their native language. Among the written texts there are poems and songs about the struggle against neighbour Moslems. However, the migration process of Assyrians is not limited by the period of the First World War. Such migration might have taken place earlier. In particular, after signing the peace treaty between Russia and Iran (the so-called Turkmen-Chai 1828 treaty) most of this stream of refugees settled in Armenia and Georgia. Interesting information on this fact was presented by the Assyrian Peter Eivazov, whose article "Some Data on Village Koylasar and Aysors" was published in Tbilisi in 1884 ("Collection of Materials on Description of Localities and Tribes of the Caucasus", IV, in Russian). The village of Koylasar is in Armenia, near the capital of Armenia, Erevan, where, according to P. Eivazov, those Assyrians have lived since the Russia-Iran war (1826 -1828) and came mostly from Iran's

Urmia region (Iranian Azerbaijan).

They had their own church, and the Assyrian priest Yuhanna (=Ioan) conducted services in his Urmian dialect. This dialect formed the basis of the modern literary language. According to P. Eivazov, the Georgian priest David Gurgenidze had great influence among these Assyrians. To the same period might belong the Assyrian settlement in the middle of Kartli - in the Mtskheta region, in the village of Kanda. Again it is difficult to determine when Assyrians settled in Georgia - during the Russia-Iran war or earlier. The fact is that there exists a document (July 1770) - the letter of the Assyrian Catholicos Simon (Mar Shimun) to the Georgian King Irakli II (1720-1798), in which the Catholicos petitions the king to allow Assyrians to settle on the territory of Georgia. The king gave a good reception to the delegation of the Assyrian Catholicos and promised all-round help. Unfortunately, we do not know whether this correspondence produced any results and whether at least small groups of Assyrians settled in Georgia. (It should be mentioned, that Assyrians have a special place in the correspondence of Irakli II)<sup>1</sup>.

In the second part of the last century a high incidence of separate Assyrian settlements of people in search of work in all of Russia was observed, and primarily in its big cities. Later they were joined by the Assyrians living in mountainous regions of Kurdistan (so-called Turanai - "mountaineers"). At the beginning of 1916 a large group of Assyrians from Van (Vanai) migrated to Georgia as a result of the crushing of Christian Assyrians in Van vilayet. Even today a certain number of Assyrians from Van live in Tbilisi (primarily in Kukia district).

In Georgia, Assyrians live compactly here and there and create their own villages. Kanda, a big village, which lies on the Mtskheta-Gori road, and the Vasilievka village in the Gardabani region, belong to such kinds of villages. Most Assyrians are citizens of Georgia and many of them live in large cities (Kutaisi, Zestaponi, Samtredia and so on). Among them there are writers, scientists, workers in the intellectual sphere, people of various professions. The Assyrians living now in Georgia use that Assyrian dialect which was spread in their native regions where their

ancestors had lived before they settled in Georgia (Iran: Urmia and Salamas, Jilu and Tiari, Botan and Gawar regions; Turkey: Van region). According to the census of 1979 the total number of Assyrians in Georgia was 5,286 persons and 3,494 of them regard Assyrian as their native language.

It should be mentioned that before the Second World War, in Tbilisi and Kanda, there existed elementary and incomplete secondary Assyrian schools, for which textbooks in Assyrian language were published in Russia and Tbilisi (e.g., "Alphabet" by A. Alaverdov and Sh. Kileta, textbooks in Geography and Natural Science by I. Bedroev and I. Givargizov, the textbook of Assyrian Grammar and spelling by I. Bedroev). Besides school textbooks, "belles-lettres" in Assyrian were also published. Before the 1930's, in the former Soviet Union, Assyrian literature was published only in the Syriac script; and later the Latin writing elaborated in Moscow and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) for Assyrians was widely used. In Georgia this writing was not of great use, though in Tbilisi the Assyrian newspaper "The Star of the East" (*Kukhva d-Madinkha*) used it along with the Syriac script. The Latin writing was not very popular among Assyrians themselves, and this is quite natural if one takes into account that by introduction of the Latin writing the Assyrians rejected their own centuries-long writing and by the use of Latin graphics dissociated themselves from it.

In 1925-1938, in Tbilisi, the Assyrian newspaper "The Star of the East" (*Kukhva d-Madinkha*) came out, but it had its precursors in Tbilisi. These were magazines "*Naqosha*" (*Toasin*) and "*Madinkha*" (*The East*), which first came out in 1914. "*Madinkha*" was edited by the well-known Assyrian poet and physician, Freydoun Aturaya (Bit-Oraham, 1891-1925) who received his medical education in Georgia. He also founded an Assyrian theater company, which existed up to the 1930's. Unfortunately, many cultural initiatives (theater, newspaper, etc.) were stopped during Soviet repressions which affected the Assyrian cultural elite also, as a result of which Assyrian schools were soon closed as well as the newspaper "*Kukhva d-Madinkha*". Moreover, the Assyrian type, made in Tbilisi, which was obtained on the basis of matrices made by the local German polygraphic worker

Mader, was smelted, thus making it impossible to publish literature in Assyrian. Two decades later the author of this paper, with the help of a well-known polygraphic worker, Vaso Skhirtladze, moulded the Assyrian type by the order of Tbilisi University. With this type the Assyrian reading book was printed for students who learned the Assyrian language, as well as Assyrian-Georgian and Assyrian-Russian glossaries, supplementing the reader. Unfortunately, even now, Assyrian writers have to publish their works either in translation (Georgian, Russian) or, more often, put the completely finished works into the desk drawer. Among other Assyrian writers that lived in Tbilisi are: Rabi David Ilyan, whose writings have appeared in the U.S. magazine "Nineveh", with Syriac type in the Assyrian language; poet Simon Shahbazov, whose collection of poems came out after his death in 1979 and were translated into many languages; poets Yosef Mar Yuhanna, Ekatherine Gulyanova and others. The writer Lili Tamraz (Bit-Oraham), now widely known among Assyrians, lived and worked in Tbilisi. Later she went to Iran, where, up to her death in 1992 in Tehran, she carried out active literary work, writing poems and stories, especially for children.

In Georgia particular work is being carried out on the organizing and uniting of Assyrians. Assyrians try to preserve their native language and maintain their own culture. For this purpose in Tbilisi, there is the Center of Georgian Assyrian Culture (headed by general Boris Ivanov), which directs the corresponding activity. In this regard the "Society of Assyrian Literature-Lovers", under the Georgian Art Museum, deserves attention, which from the date of its establishment has been headed by the Chief of the Department for Oriental Art and Culture of this Museum, the Assyrian Angelina Grigolia.

In 1952 a theatre company was formed by the Assyrians of Georgia, and in its creation and guidance a well-known Georgian producer, Michael Sultanishvili, took part. This collective performed first in the Club of Railroaders and then in the Tbilisi Gorki Club under which it existed. At the same time the Assyrian Song and Dance Ensemble was created whose members (Michael Alaverdov,

Dalfira Arsanis, Tatiana and Gulnara Grigolia and others) became very popular among the Tbilisi Assyrian population and elsewhere. The Ensemble went on tours to the cities and republics of the former Soviet Union where Assyrians lived: Moscow, Armenia, Azerbaijan. In Moscow the Ensemble took part in the International Festival where it got first prize.

The Georgian Assyrian Society has relations with the Assyrians in diaspora. At different times guests were Sargon Dadesho, the president of the Assyrian World Congress (USA), Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East, and others.

The critical situation created in Georgia complicates, certainly, normal activity of all the people living in Georgia, among them the Assyrians, which had been very successful up till now. We hope that after normalization of life in Georgia the national activity of Assyrians will be reanimated with special force.

<sup>1</sup> See Konstantin Tsereteli, "Assyrians in the Correspondence of Irakli II, King of Georgia." - *Journal of the Assyrian Academic Society*, vol. VIII, No 2, 1994.

## **An Assyrian Group Tour to the ex-Soviet Union**

**by: The Editor, Julius N. Shabbas**

A group of Assyrian from California toured some Republics in the ex-Soviet Union from May 30 to June 22, 1987. The group included: Julius N. Shabbas, his wife Violet, and two daughters, Semiramis and Dumarina; George Geevargis, his wife Wilma, his sister Valia Ciaccio and his aunt Zina Givargis; the late Babajan Ashouri; and Oraha P. Oraha.

The tour took us to Moscow for 4 days, Baku 2, Yerevan 3, Tbilisi 3, Kiev 2 and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) 7. We met a number of Assyrians in these cities including special trips to four Assyrian towns: Arzni, Dvine (Dujin) and Kuilasar (about 20 km, from Yerevan); and Kanda (about 30 km. from Tbilisi).

### **Thirteen Assyrian Bishops and Fathers in the Republic of Georgia**

On our city tour of Tbilisi, Georgia, our tour guide, a Georgian young woman, pointed to an Assyrian church located close to the top of a

mountain named Mtatsminda. We passed by it while going up this steep mountain in a rail cable car lift. The church has a panorama of the beautiful city of Tbilisi.

According to the tour guide this church was established around the late 5th or early 6th century by an Assyrian Father by the name of Baba David (Mama David in Georgian) or David of Karaje. We were not able to get off the lift to visit the grounds but were told that the church is very well reconstructed and is a land mark. The Georgian State maintains it.

William Badaloff, an Assyrian from Tbilisi, whom we met accidentally in our hotel lobby the day after our arrival in Tbilisi, furnished me with a few names of the Assyrian Fathers who came to Georgia during those times. Other names and information were supplied by Sargon Sada, a young, very bright Assyrian of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). He was a seminary student then (now priest) and son of Mikhael and Zena Sada. Sargon showed me an index file containing hundreds of Assyrian books, pamphlets, magazines, journals and newspapers relating mainly to Assyrian history and church during the Christian era.

The thirteen Assyrian Fathers came from Nisibin, Edessa and other Assyrian Christian centers during the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. They brought the Christian faith and teachings, ascetical, monastic life and ideals to Georgians and other nations of the western Caucasus. They founded some great and well-known churches and monasteries in Georgia. Up to the present time the Orthodox Georgians and Russians still honor the works and accomplishments of these Assyrian Fathers. The records are well preserved and are all mentioned in the Russian Church Calendar. The following are the names of the thirteen Assyrian Fathers:

Joane (Yovane or Yonan) of Zedazeni  
Abibos, Bishop of Nekressi  
Antony of Martkobi (Mart Kobi)  
David of Garedja (Kareja)  
Zinon of Ikalto  
Tade (Thaddeus) of Stepanatsminda  
Isse (Eshu), Bishop of Tsilkani  
Joseph, Bishop of Alaverdi  
Isidor of Samtavissi  
Michael of Ulumbi  
Pirr of Breti  
Stephan of Hirza  
Sheeo of Mqwime

## Statistics of Assyrians Living in the Soviet Union

by: Iliya Vartanov

*Translated by the Editor, Julius N. Shabbas*

Iliya Vartanov, in his article written in Assyrian which appeared in the Second/Third Quarter 1987 issue of Nineveh magazine, gives some statistics of Assyrians residing in the Soviet Union (now The Commonwealth of the Independent States). He writes:

1. At the end of the 19th century, according to official documents there were more than 6,000 Assyrians living in the Soviet Union.
2. During the period 1915-1918, according to official documents, 50,000 to 60,000 Assyrians escaped from Iran and Turkey and stayed in the Soviet Union. (Editor: according to Professor Konstantin Matveyev, 100,000 Assyrians flocked to Russian Transcaucasia during World War I and from there they gradually moved to the hinterland of the country. In 1915, he says, part of the Assyrians returned to north-west Iran, reoccupied by the Russians, but about 50,000 remained in Russia).
3. Russian official records of 1926 report a figure of 9808 Assyrians. This figure is incorrect. An Assyrian literary magazine which appeared at that time states that many Assyrians were registered as Armenians, Georgians and Greeks, and reported a correct figure of 30,000.
4. In 1939 a figure of 20,300 Assyrians was reported. This is also incorrect for the reason that in 1937 the Assyrian Unity Association took a census of all the Assyrians in the Soviet Union, and came up with a figure of 70,000. This figure was reported in the book written by Yosip Mar Youkhanan of Gavilan. It is unfortunate that in 1938 all the officers of the association were imprisoned for a long time.
5. Assyrians reside in over 45 cities and towns in the Soviet Union. (Editor: When George Geevargis and I interviewed Iliya Vartanov in the then Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) in mid-1987, Iliya showed us a large map of the Soviet Union where he had marked diligently all Assyrian settlements in the country. George

- recorded on video the locations and the interview).
6. In Moscow 5,000 to 7,000 Assyrians live who are not in the official registry as such.
  7. In Georgia, according to 1970 official documents, there were 5,617 Assyrians, and 900 of these were in the villages. This figure is not accurate either. In Tbilisi alone there are more than 5,000 Assyrians, 1,500 alone in Dezweele. According to the Tbilisi daily newspaper dated July 7, 1982, there are about 25,000 Assyrians that live in Georgia.
  8. In Armenia, according to official records of 1970, there were 5554 Assyrians. We cannot believe the accuracy of this figure, because Dujin (Dwine) has an Assyrian population of 4,000, Arzni 3,000, Kuilasar 2,000. An overall figure of Assyrians living in Armenia is over 20,000.

9. If we analyze the natural population growth of different nationalities in the Soviet Union during a twenty-year period 1959-1979, we find some astonishing results. The Assyrian population growth is strikingly less than the other nationalities.

Editor's Note:

*At present, Iliya Vartanov along with his lovely wife and daughter live in Chicago. He wrote me when he first came to the United States to publish his recollections and experiences of the Assyrian Siberian tragedy (1949-1956) that he had written. These were published in concise form over a period of several issues. Now, Iliya has published this part of history in Russian, and the book was subsequently translated into Swedish and published. It is also available in Assyrian, and the English version is being printed.*



*This photo represents a group of Assyrian intellectuals: writers, poet, musicians and teachers, who were members of the Assyrian Literary Society in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 1933.*

*-photo submitted by Iliya Vartanov*



# REMEMBERING ESTELLA M. CHAMBERS

*by: Sweetlana Yaldaei Jamal*

Estella Chambers was born in St. Louis, Missouri on February 28, 1908, and died in Duarte, California, on September 23, 1995. That she lived for 87 years is perhaps not so remarkable, but the accomplishments of her lifetime provide us, who knew her, with a model of living and service to others that excite our intellect and gladden our hearts.

A nurse and teacher by profession, Estella received a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Washington University and a Master of Science in Nursing Education from Western Reserve University. The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. appointed her to serve in Iran, so it was in August of 1936 that she became director of the nursing school of Westminister Hospital in Kermanshah. During World War II she served in North Africa and France as a member of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. She returned to Iran in 1946, this time to Abadan, and organized a new school of nursing for the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. In 1953 she was reappointed to her former post in Kermanshah, and when the Westminister Hospital closed in 1959 she transferred to the American Christian Hospital in Tabriz, where she served as Director of Nursing until 1971, when she returned to the United States.

Retirement is a time when most of us rest, enjoy life, and generally do those things we didn't have time to do when we were earning our daily bread. Estella did exactly these things, but the things she didn't have time to do before were just a bit different from what we would expect. For 15 years, Estella volunteered in prison fellowships, teaching weekly Bible classes and helping to run Sunday services for women in prison, children in juvenile detention centers, and patients in nursing homes. In 1986, at age 78, Estella reached out to yet another group of God's troubled when she joined a volunteer group working with drug addicted youngsters in Flatbush, Brooklyn.

But what is the story behind these statistics? What gifts did this remarkable woman bestow on those recipients of her kindness and generosity? I speak as one of

her "girls," as she referred to her nursing students. This is what I know.

Committed to establishing and maintaining only the highest standards in her schools of nursing, Estella established a link between Tabriz University and the nursing school, making it possible for nurses to graduate with a degree comparable to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She was a protector of the poor and the less fortunate in the church and surrounding community. When her girls were feeling lost and homesick, her kindness and understanding made it "all better". By expecting only excellence from us, she received only excellence. We realized the importance of achieving our goals and performing at our level best. She instilled in us a sense of humanity and caring, a joy of selflessness. A stranger in a foreign land with a totally different culture, Estella, with her courage and strength, based on her Christian faith and love of God, was able to touch lives in ways most of us will never know. But thanks to her, WE WILL TRY!

The author wishes to thank Mrs. Jeanne K. Romer at the Mission Personnel Office in Kentucky, and Estella's grandnephew, David Hegmann, in Texas for their efforts in providing biographical information, and to extend heartfelt appreciation to Ms. Patricia Bushey for her valuable contribution.



1986 New York City - Left to right:

*Freida T. Neale*

*Sweetlana Y. Jamal*

*Ms. Estella Chambers*

*Faezeh Golkar*

*Maggy Jesraly*

*- Photo taken by Veronica A. Chen*



1964 Tabriz, Iran - Graduation ceremonies at the American Hospital grounds. Front row: on the right is Ashton T. Stewart, M.D., Medical Director of the hospital. Third row: on the left is Ms. Ryahi, head of nursing education in Iran. To her left is Ms. Estella Chambers.



1970 Tabriz, Iran - A group of students and instructors in front of the new nursing school and dormitory building. Estella Chambers is in the front row, extreme right; and next to her is Alberta Tedford who took over the school after Ms. Chambers left Iran.

- Photo submitted by Angel Azizi



**Atur Shabbas**, son of Sargon and Jermaine Shabbas of Hercules, CA, graduated in June 1996 from Salesian high School, and will be attending Diablo Valley Junior College. He plans to continue his education at the University of California at Davis, where he intends to major in computer science.

# The Visit of Patriarch Mar Benjamin Shimon to Timar

by *Solomon (Sawa) Solomon*

On occasion the Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East would visit the Turkish governor of Van Vilayet in the city of Van. And, since the Timar Assyrians lived in the vicinity, the Patriarch would pay them a visit, and in his capacity as the head of the church, he would inspect the churches and if necessary, ordain clergy. On April 12, 1903, Mar Benjamin Shimon was ordained Patriarch by Metropolitan Mar Ishak Khnanisho shortly after the death of his uncle, Patriarch Mar Rowil Shimon. A month later, he paid a visit to the governor of Van picking up on his way Malik Sapar of Sara and Malik Youkhanna of Timar, and as was the custom, Mar Benjamin decided to pay the Assyrian villages of Timar a visit. On May 14, 1903, Rayes Malham Rasho of Hawshesur received the news that the Patriarch with a large party was on his way. There was near panic in the village. Rayes Malham was angry that he was not given enough time to prepare for such a great occasion. The village was about four hours walking distance from Van, sitting on the edge of a mountain, and had about 19 houses. Hawshesur was established by a man by the name of Murad some two centuries earlier. He had left his ancestral village of Zerineh in Jeelu. Zerineh was the largest village in Jeelu with over 100 households. Murad had moved to Soowa in Diz, a small village with less than 20 households before descending to Timar and establishing Hawshesur. The village had two churches, Mar Tooma and Mar Sliwa. The latter was not an active church. Mar Tooma was prepared for services. It was an average size church with a low gate in order to force parishioners to bow their heads when entering. Rayes Malham decided that the Patriarch should not sleep where another man had slept, so the store room was emptied, cleaned and furnished.

In the afternoon of May 14, 1903, the Patriarchal party arrived. The governor had sent an officer and two soldiers to accompany the Patriarch, and also in the party were Maliks Sapar and Youkhanna. Rayes Malham welcomed them all. Dinner was served, a diwan was held, then Mar Benjamin retired

for the night. The soldiers slept at his door step. In the morning of May 15, the entire village attended mass at Mar Tooma during which time the Patriarch ordained Younathan Khamo and Goriel Suleiman as deacons. Goriel was only eleven years old, and after having breakfast the Patriarch left the village never to return.

The Patriarch was to be murdered by the Kurdish Chief Simco in Persia in 1918. Deacon Younathan Khamo was to marry the daughter of Malik Youkhanna Badawi and raise a large family. His only surviving son lives today in Modesto. He was to die in Hawshesur in 1915. Deacon Goriel was to marry the niece of Malik Sapar. In 1950 he was to be ordained a priest for the church of Mar Kardagh in Baghdad. He died in 1966. Malik Youkhanna Badawi was to die during the flight from Urmia to Hamadan in 1918, and his son Marawgil became the Malik of the Timaris. Rayes Malham was murdered by local Kurds near the village. An eyewitness later revealed that he had refused to renounce the Christian faith as a price for his life. May they all rest in peace. The village was finally abandoned in March 1918. One final note to this story, it is reported that the crop of apricots for that season, for which the village was famous, was so great that they had to give most of it away to other villages lest it be spoiled. This abundance was attributed to the visit of the Patriarch.



*Mar Benjamin Shimon - Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East (1903-1918)*

# Marie Shayans

## The Precious Language of Colour Compiled by: Madlaine Davis-Moradkhan

*Note: This article has been compiled from a dozen or so of articles written by prominent art critics and journalists notably Piero Bargis, Enrico Buda, Vergilio Guidi, Vittorio Bottino, Luigi Carluccio, Patrick Cothias, Shahin Akhavi, Andy Hall, and A.T. Zand.*

Few Assyrians know Marie Shayans, and still fewer are familiar with her artistic works. Yet Marie Shayans is a terrifically talented Assyrian artist and is well established among European museums and distinguished collectors. If, in fact, you were to go to the **Musea Sforzesca** in Milan you would find several of her works on permanent display.

Marie Shayans was born in Hamadan, Iran, and has lived in Italy for nine years and completed her artistic apprenticeship at such prestigious schools as Venice's **Accademi di Belle Arti**, under the direction of men like **Guidi** and **Saetti**. Shayans drew her historical strength from her Assyrian ancestors who have crafted refined artworks since the fourth millennium B.C., and also from her native Iran. It was in here that, in the Christian Era the schools of Shiraz, Herat and Bukhara have, in a long miniaturist tradition, manifested one of the most precious languages of colour there is to admire.

But perhaps we should err in thinking that it was this nonstop output of excessive colour that influenced the young Shayans. Rather it was the solemn, stylized immobility of the **Assyrian bas-reliefs** and of the similar reliefs on Darius' grand staircase at **Persepolis** or the Sassanid reliefs of **Naqshe Rostam**. In some of her fundamental works, it is without doubt the sacred character behind this kind of representation that leaps at once to the eye.

Marie Shayans, a cosmopolitan Assyrian, has established an international reputation, and having studied in Italy, it was only natural to have been influenced and have found a public there. She has exhibited her works and been praised in Venice, Ravenna, Bari and Milan.

Marie has also held exhibitions in Italy, Iran, Spain, France, Belgium, Korea, Japan and the United States. Among her awards are first prizes at the 1960 **Biennales** of Mestre and of Carvazare, both in Italy; and at the 1963

**Biennales** of Venice, Italy. She is a member of **Barbaroux Gallery** in Milan, the **Traghetto Gallery** in Venice and the **Associazione Diplomatica di Belle Arti**, also in Venice. Her works have been acquired by Venice's **Museum of Modern Art**, Milan's **Sforzesco Museum**, the **Bertinetti Collection** and by private collectors and member of the Iranian Royal family including Empress Farah, Princess Ashraf and Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda, who was one of her leading admirers.

### Calm daring in paint

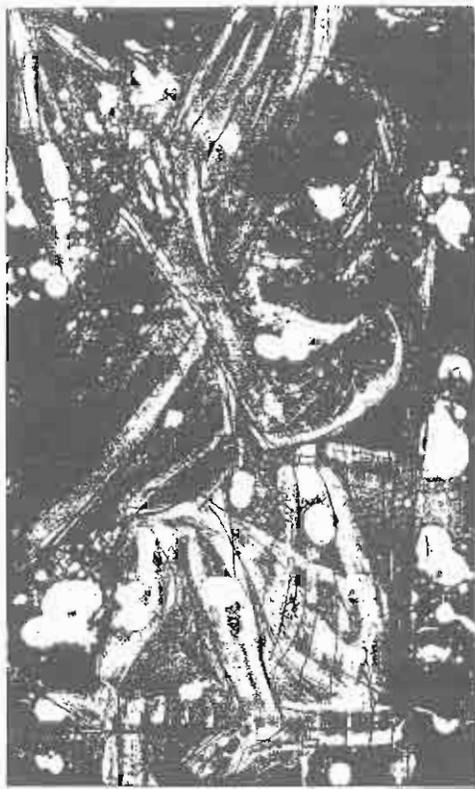
Many of Marie's paintings have prompted remarks by critics about the masculine strength of her brush. This is one of those suggestive descriptions whose meaning can vaguely be understood but which can be related to the artist's magic for bold statement that, even while forceful, is finely worked. Whichever period of her tempera painting that one picks (she describes them as her calm, ochre and mountain periods), one finds a consistency of technique and an evenness of vigorous expression that clearly marks the whole as the work of a single painter.

When she speaks about her work, she is the quintessential artist. "I paint for myself. I don't think it's possible to paint what people like and still be an artist. I am my own most demanding critic - I'm never satisfied".

"It would be impossible for me to be satisfied", she says with uninflated sincerity. "If I ever became satisfied, there would be nothing left for me to do, I might as well stop living".

### Too painful, personal

Many of her paintings, she says, are the result of more than dissatisfaction: the result of basic unhappiness in her life. When



*Artist's magic for bold statement*



*Inspired by intense and troubled emotions, Shayans was turned to religious and mystical subjects.*

questioned about some of her paintings, like **Christ**, it becomes apparent that she cannot say everything. Something about it is too painful, too personal to discuss.

In many of Shayans' masterful paintings, her pastoral scenes of 1959, the nude of 1961, or the mountains of 1970, for example, one finds a beautifully subdued light treatment that edges the subject in soft shadow that gives way to luminescent focus. The effect - greatly enhanced by her tempera medium - is to convey a composed, thoughtful expression.

This composure is the essence of her magic that can be seen in her serene landscapes, her obscure, almost mystical religious subjects and her desolate mountain scenes. In her earlier paintings one can't help feel that she was inspired by intense and troubled emotions. It is as though these works were executed after an unhappy personal experience that turned her to religious and mystical subjects.

In her mountain scenes, her expression is more open. The apparent loneliness of bare, far-flung mountains has captured her imagination, but she has not simply painted random peaks piled up on top of one another. Rather, the peaks are a collection of personalities bounded together in a common ageless loneliness. They almost talk to one another. And she speaks about a period, "my rose period, when I was terrifically happy".

### **Flamboyant use of Colour**

Shayans' art, characterized by its flamboyant use of colour, encompasses three surprisingly different areas: conventional canvasses, etchings and Byzantine mosaics. She studied and specialized in mosaics while on a scholarship at Ravenna, and gained such competence that when a group of Italian mosaics was damaged during shipment to Tehran, her repair work won praise from the Italian Embassy. Her mosaics are very Iranian in their concept and what is surprising is that she doesn't plan the mosaic design beforehand but builds it up as she goes along.

In addition to a number of her engravings, Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda commissioned Marie to create a 10-meter mosaic for a pavillion in his garden which aroused the interest of distinguished foreign



"Young Woman" in the style of ancient mosaics



Persian Woman



The Tree of Life of La Varenne

visitors.

In 1970 she was commissioned to do a 10-meter Byzantine Mosaic for the Royal Palace in Tehran and for etchings to be used in Darioush and Kourosh Hotels in Shiraz. And in 1971 she was commissioned by the Iranian Government to make a 36 square meter fresco and another of twelve sq.m. of Byzantine Mosaics for the Cameron Hotel in Bandar Abbas, where 200 of her etchings dotted the rooms. These works represent life in that once flourishing gulf port. Impressed by her talent, the French commissioned her, in 1984, for a 4 sq.m. Byzantine Mosaic for **La Varena Saint Maur Synagogus** in Paris.

But her favorite medium is still the canvas, and here too, her work is considered very Iranian by some critics. Her statuesque women in their chadors (what critic **Piero Bargis** describes as a deep sense of mystery enwrapping the female figure) are a recurring feature. Her landscapes reflect Iran too, particularly the harshness of the desert and mountains.

Although most of her paintings feature prominently a single colour, one is struck by her sense of control of that colour that transforms gradually, subtly, into other shades.

### The Assyrian influence

Marie shayans has been influenced by her research of Assyrian and Sumerian art, from which she has evolved a unique style. Her piece **Christ** is created simply from triangular forms, but she has also assimilated the Assyrian sense of the volume of a subject (readily recognized in Assyrian bas-reliefs) so that her simple geometric forms carry a sense of dimensionality. In looking at Christ's arm, for example, one can almost sense the muscles beneath.

Whereas modern painting has lost its sense of the sacred, Marie, like her **Assyrian ancestors**, respects the sacred, reconsiders it, restresses and recalls it, depicting the human figure as a compact mass of such majesty that it brings to mind **Lionello Venturi's** pronouncement on **Giotto's** two unforgettable **Marys** crouching before the Deposition: "They hardly seem women because they are made of stone". In fact, the immobility is only apparent since the structural line causes a



*Statuesque woman in chador*



*"The Spouses" - depicting the human figure as a compact mass*

sense of energy to break through.

### **A universal artist**

When asked whether she sees herself as being more Assyrian or European influenced she answers that artists ought to be international in their approach, that art should transcend national boundaries. Having lived in Iran add a different flavour to her work, but then so has spending nine years of study in Europe and numerous trips abroad. Her work is essentially universal and international, even though it owes much to Iran, as even a cursory inspection reveals. **Piero Bargis** in his appraisal of her exhibition at Turin reflected on the influence of the Sumerian and Assyrian cultures on her work. Even if his language was a little flowery there is no denying the basic truth of this.

### **Evolving new styles**

"If I am an artist, I should ensure my life with my work", so said Marie Shayans when asked how she coped with the traditional insecurity of an artist bent on evolving new styles. She has done both: evolved new styles and ensured her life with it, a process that began when she was just seven years old when she first began her artistic career. Since that time she has worked with a myriad of media, from pastel to tempera, from canvas to graphics.

Technically, her work is highly original and much of this is due to her continuous research with different media. Graphics tend to be her proving ground. "I like to work with graphics because of the freedom it allows."

Tempera is a particular process of painting that uses a gelatinous medium, such as egg whites, as the vehicle instead of oil. It was a process popular in the 16th and 17th centuries (**Rembrandt** used it); and Marie likes it mainly for two reasons. First, when it is properly treated it is nearly indestructible; and second, because it allows relief and textural technical possibilities whereby each stroke is raised off the canvas which makes the painting appear three dimensional.

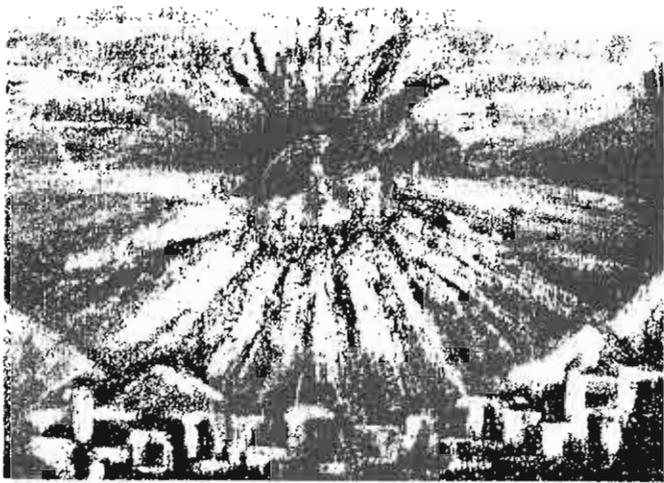
Essentially, she has studied and researched such a variety of technical elements - colour, form, media, light, to name but a few - that she is truly an accomplished artist. One of



"Three Dancers"- a choreographical study



"Love of Two Fishes"



"The Sun"



Marie Shayans with one of her former teachers, Prof. Abbis, at the Galleria d'Arte Il Traghetto during her exhibition there in 1973. In the background is the "Woman with Cat".

her paintings, an impressionistic landscape depicting a group of buildings on a lake is a genuine masterpiece.

When Professor **Paul Lingren**, of San Diego State College, was conducting his graphics workshop in Tehran, he saw some of her works and became so excited with her accomplishment that he begged her to show him how she had achieved some of her effects.

"I can show you the roads, she replied. "But you need fifteen years and a willingness to work, to study, and to try everything. There is no other way.

Among her other works which have received acclaim are:

**The love of Two Fishes** - The woman watches the two fish hovering plump yet at the same time light.

**The Sacrifice**

**The Brides** - Exalting the woman's moral conscience.

**Persian Women**

**Woman with Cat**

**The Loneliness of a Tree** - A bare tree in the foreground, forgotten by the townsmen, analogous to the loneliness of man.

**The Sun** - Parching the naked earth with shooting vectors, symbol of desert regions.

### Brief history

Born in Hamadan, Iran, Marie Shayans is undoubtedly the pride of the Assyrian nation. The innumerable and the most important exhibitions in her career and life as an artist, beginning in 1955, testify to her talent, her worldwide fame, and to her untiring quest for perfection.

# PROFILES OF GREAT KINGS

by Ninos Isaac

*In Profiles of Great Kings, Ninos Isaac assesses the eclectic personalities of five kings of Neo-Assyria — Ashurnazirpal II, Tiglath-Pileser III, Sargon II, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon. Each exhibited different characteristics of greatness and possessed different tastes and personalities. The author wishes to bring these personalities to the attention of the Assyrian reader so that he or she might appreciate them just as other nationalities take pride in their own national heroes. It is important to personally identify not only with recent Assyrian leaders, but also with those Assyrian kings who, after all, were human beings, proud Assyrians.*

## PART FOUR

### Sennacherib (704-681 BC.)

Sennacherib, son of Sargon II, is a misunderstood king. He is widely thought of as a bloodthirsty king who wrought destruction upon all of his Mesopotamian neighbors. After all, this was the same Sennacherib who came down upon the two tribes of Israel "like the wolf upon the fold." Yet this dire assessment of Sennacherib is grossly unfair for two reasons. First, there is a failure to account for the contributions of Sennacherib in areas such as engineering and administration. Second, and perhaps more significantly, there is a failure to understand the unfavorable political circumstances which surrounded his reign. Sennacherib is better understood as a victim of political circumstance. He attempted to deal decisively with fast-evolving developments around him, and in so doing gained the reputation of a tough king who was never hesitant to mete out hearty portions of justice to those who aggrieved Assyria. To better understand Sennacherib it is imperative to visit the context of his rule. Only then might one better understand him and his response to the difficulties of his day.

The reign of Sennacherib was filled with civil strife and international upheaval from the very beginning. After the unexpected death of his father, Sargon II, provinces previously loyal to Assyria saw an opportunity to assert their independence from Assyria. Unfortunately for Sennacherib, the primary areas of insurrection were at the two furthestmost ends of the empire: Babylonia, to the immediate south of Assyria, and Palestine to the far west. This meant that to whatever part of the world



Sennacherib turned his attention, the other part would suddenly require it. The Assyrian army, as powerful as it was, was not equipped to deal with major campaigns at both ends of the empire.

Sennacherib has drawn more severe criticism for his actions in Babylon than in Palestine. Our investigation in this essay shall therefore be limited to the turmoil in

Babylonia.

### **Sennacherib in Babylonia**

In Sennacherib's day, Babylonia had become host to an array of polarized, political forces. Three nations in particular exercised considerable sway over the internal politics of Babylonia: Assyria (to the north), Chaldea (to the south), and Elam (to the east). Babylonian political identity was therefore determined by whoever happened to exercise the greater political dominion over the region at any particular time. During the reign of Sargon II, the Assyrian elements were dominant. At Sargon II's death, anti-Assyrian forces, most notably the Chaldeans and the Elamites, joined together to overthrow the pro-Assyrian faction. They also invited the armies of those two nations to invade Babylonia itself. It was in many ways analogous to the Germans of the Czechoslovakian Sudetanland, prior to World War II. The German Czechs had invited Adolf Hitler's regime to conquer Czechoslovakia so as to appease their particular ethnic enclave of fervent nationalists. In Assyria, a similar sequence of events had aroused the anger of Sennacherib. He responded with a full-scale invasion of Babylon. He quickly captured the capital city. Sennacherib was extraordinarily merciful to his vanquished foes. He took great pains not to harm any inhabitants of that city, particularly those elements which had opposed him. The ousted Chaldean king of Babylon, Merodach-Baladan, fled into the marshes of the Shatt-Al-Arab, and was replaced by the son of Sennacherib, Ashur-Nadinshumee. In spite of this, it was not long before the Chaldeans once again began to foment rebellion in Babylon. Seeking to put an end to this anti-Assyrian activity, Sennacherib recruited the services of expert Phoenician naval forces. With a sizable number of Assyrian troops, he then sailed down the Tigris river into the Chaldean heartland. The Chaldeans were defeated on the north shore of the Persian Gulf. Yet, while Sennacherib did battle with the Chaldeans, the Elamites seized the opportunity to invade northern Babylonia. Largely unopposed, they were able to capture Babylon along with the recently installed Assyrian King of Babylon, Ashur-Nadinshumee. He was taken to Susa, the capital of Elam, and an Elamite king was

installed on the Babylonian throne in his place.

Sennacherib returned north and attacked Babylonian cities which were controlled by Elamites. He managed to take all major cities except the grand prize of Babylon itself. Despondent from an inability to capture the well-fortified city, Sennacherib turned his attention to Elam. Sennacherib was motivated by the opportunity to rescue his imprisoned son, as well as by the desire to exact revenge on the Elamites by attacking their homeland.<sup>2</sup> Sennacherib's plans were soon thwarted. This time his enemy was more formidable than an Elamite army. For the winter of 693 BC. brought with it the most terrible weather. Famine broke out, and the imperial Assyrian army was forced to return to Nineveh. The Elamites were saved.

The Elamite-controlled city of Babylon had officially declared both its independence from Assyria and its new alliance with the Chaldeans. Nevertheless, the city's loyalty was still torn. Pro-Assyrian forces demanded the return of Assyrian hegemony to Babylon. Sennacherib therefore responded with a 15-month siege of the city. The long campaign became a source of unacceptable irritation to Sennacherib since it was a complete drain on his military resources. Even for the Assyrian troops themselves, the city had become a symbol of hostility. Therefore, at its conquest Babylon was shown no mercy by either Sennacherib or his troops. The soldiers exacted their own brand of revenge. They leveled the city, destroying aqueducts, city walls, and temples. They even seized the statue of Marduk, chief god of Babylon, and took it back to Nineveh. Sennacherib wisely chose to personally disassociate himself from the actions of his men, insisting that his soldiers had taken matters into their own hands. Yet the widespread vandalism of his men was left unpunished.

The sacrilegious treatment of Babylon was perhaps the major turning point in Assyro-Babylonian relations. Babylonia had at times been strongly pro-Assyrian and at other times had been mildly pro-Assyrian. Now there only seemed to be anti-Assyrianism there. Sennacherib had resorted to drastic measures in Babylon, for which he has become infamous.<sup>3</sup> In an attempt to destroy Babylon, Sennacherib succeeded only in destroying the

political sympathies of a whole nation. His son, Esarhaddon who preferred appeasement to military action would later rebuild the city in an attempt to right the wrongs of his father.

As a consequence of the Babylonian campaign and his sweeping attacks in Palestine, Sennacherib earned a reputation somewhat akin to that of Attila the Hun. This is an unfair conclusion not only in light of Sennacherib's inability to wrest himself from the unfortunate state of international relations during his day, but also in light of his own remarkable contributions to civilized society. For among other things, Sennacherib was a remarkable engineer and imperial administrator.

### **Sennacherib: The Civil Engineer**

The accomplishments of Sennacherib in the area of civil engineering are unparalleled. Sennacherib developed the first-known safari park, which included innovative methods of artificial irrigation. His futuristic aqueducts were the model for the later Roman Empire.<sup>4</sup> In fact, so sturdy were the aqueducts that many still stand today. The aqueduct at modern-day Mosul, which is a favorite picnic-site for the locals, is a Sennacherib creation. Primary sources also point to other urban developments. Sennacherib's projects in Nineveh included a widening of the shopping squares, a resurfacing of city streets and the construction of a royal roadway. The latter was lined with monuments dedicated to great Assyrians of the past. Sennacherib also completed a refurbishment of city defenses by 694 BC. The wall of Nineveh was extended to a width of two chariots. With a total of eighteen gates and a moat, the Assyrian capital became a fortress city. Sennacherib's own palace within Nineveh was reportedly an architectural wonder. John Malcom Russell devotes a whole book to the palace, which he terms "*Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival at Nineveh.*"<sup>5</sup>

### **Sennacherib: The Effective, Hands-On Administrator**

Sennacherib was a hands-on leader who took a personal interest in his work. His father must have recognized this trait quite early on. For Sargon II commissioned his son to handle the most important affairs of state.

As Crown Prince, Sennacherib essentially ran the empire. He must have performed his duties excellently, since the Assyrian Empire under Sargon was more unified and more powerful than it had ever been before.<sup>6</sup>

As King of Assyria, Sennacherib not only undertook many momentous building projects, he meticulously supervised each of them. This is evidenced by the bas-reliefs where depictions of many of his building projects have been preserved in clay. In those scenes Sennacherib is always seen supervising his workers, giving them personal instruction as to where they should build and with what material. Sennacherib's life came to a rather horrific end. He was murdered by rebellious sons in 681 BC., and succeeded by his youngest son, Esarhaddon.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Notes:*

- 1 This is from Lord Byron's famous poem. The first and last stanzas are quoted in Ninos Isaac, The Vilification of a Great Civilization: Assyria in the Face of History, Journal of the Assyrian Academic Society, Spring, 1993, Volume VII, No. 1, at 5-6. According to Biblical accounts, it was Sennacherib of Assyria who had laid siege to Jerusalem and lost 185,000 of his troops to one sword-swipe from the angel of the Lord in the process. In perhaps the most unpopular and ignoble act of the age, Sennacherib had laid waste to the holy city of Babylon.*
- 2 The king of Elam, learning of the forthcoming Assyrian attack, fled for his life. He left Susa, Elam's capital, and hid in the Persian mountains.*
- 3 To what degree his strategy was influenced by the political machinations of his own royal court is a momentous question, ripe for further investigation.*
- 4 The prevalence of city sieges during Sennacherib's reign also led him to develop the first effective siege-engine. This of course became the precursor of the siege-engines which dominated European castle warfare.*
- 5 John Malcolm Russell, Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival at Nineveh, (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1991).*
- 6 Perhaps the combination of Sennacherib's administrative skills and his father's military prowess was the key to this. Furthermore, the extent to which Sargon's diplomatic accomplishments are attributable to Sennacherib is a question worthy of extensive study.*
- 7 This event is documented in II Kings 19: 37. The Bible implies that the murder of Sennacherib was a consequence of his siege of the holy city of Jerusalem in 700 BC.*

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Envia Warda, Kent, England . . . . .	60.00
Birishwa Yalda Oshana, Modesto, CA . . . . .	16.00
Raabi Regina Michael, Skokie, IL . . . . .	40.00
Doreen Elias, Stockton, CA . . . . .	25.00
George Khoshaba, Humble, TX . . . . .	30.00
Younia Aprem, Vancouver, Canada . . . . .	25.00
Aprim Toma, Houston, TX . . . . .	20.00
William K. Kanon, Modesto, CA . . . . .	60.00
(subsc. to self, Esther Malik, Modesto, & Youshia Kaanon, Phoenix, AZ.)	
Anonymous . . . . .	20.00
John W. Badal, Turlock, CA . . . . .	50.00
Eshaya H. Isaac, Skokie, IL . . . . .	20.00
Martha Yosiph, Turlock, CA . . . . .	100.00
Kasper A. Saffer, Worcester, MA . . . . .	20.00
Margaret Jado, Skokie, IL . . . . .	20.00
William Yoel, Cleveland, OH . . . . .	25.00
John Kaninya, Fresno, CA . . . . .	25.00
Yooshia K. Poloss, Hollywood, CA . . . . .	20.00
Oshana B. Soro, Niles, IL . . . . .	40.00
Fraidoon Ishak, Calgary, Canada . . . . .	50.00
(for self & Zaia Ibrahim, Canada)	

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### Needy Assyrians, Education and other Donations

Awya Albazi, San Jose, CA . . . . .	\$ 20.00
Anita Alexander, Yorba Linda, CA . . . . .	30.00
Eshaya H. Isaac, Skokie, IL . . . . .	30.00
Margaret Jado, Skokie, IL . . . . .	30.00
(In memory of her sister Anna Paulis Jado)	
Yooshia K. Poloss, Hollywood, CA . . . . .	20.00
Raabi Regina Michael, Skokie, IL . . . . .	38.00
William K. Kanon, Modesto, CA . . . . .	40.00
Oshana B. Soro, Niles, IL . . . . .	60.00
Fraidoon Ishak, Calgary, Canada . . . . .	25.00



Chicago, IL. -- A representative of Gov. Jim Edgar's Office greets visitors to the Ethnic Village at the Illinois State Fair. The Ethnic Village sponsors ethnic food booths and ethnic entertainment. Pictured left to right: Pat Michalski, Assistant to the Governor for Ethnic Affairs and Angel Kindo, Executive Director, Assyrian National Council of Illinois.

## **ISTAD YACOUB AGHAKHAN BENYAMIN** *by Sargis Michael*

From time to time we go back to history, review the episodes of our martyrs, heroes and those who have sacrificed for, or helped, our glorious betrayed nation. Yacoub Aghakhan Benyamin was one of those who helped his Assyrian nation and lifted up its name.



He was born in Solduz, Urmia, Iran, on July 1, 1903. He studied in Urmia schools, in his childhood, but due to the upheavals of World War I he could not continue his education, and so he relentlessly pursued his self-education until he was one of the well educated of that time. He was zealous and had an insatiable thirst for knowledge and the truth. One day, in 1983, I asked him: "How is it that you are so enlightened, sharp-minded and knowledgeable?" He said, "When I am not engaged in my work, I don't waste a moment; I read and learn. I have read the whole Bible from beginning to end five times and started reading it again."

Yacoub was married to Regina Shmoel Kasha Elia in Baghdad, Iraq on August 16, 1930, and was very happy with his marriage. While in Gailani Camp, Baghdad, from 1923-1938, he was at all times helping, and repairing all the Assyrian Church equipment, as well as that of his neighbors and friends, always free of charge, although he spent his own money for the repairs.

I knew him in the Royal Air Force Station at Habbaniya, Iraq, from 1938-1955. He was working for the Air Force in the Engine Repair Squadron as an expert in mechanical and

electrical repairs. He was also proficient in carpentry and many other trades. Anything he laid his hands on, he would make it perfect in no time. He was well-known and respected by his employers as a sharp-minded, industrious, and honest gentleman, who would solve their work problems and do amazing, ingenious jobs for them and for his friends. So they called him Istad (tutor) Yacoub.

A co-worker relates: "When we were installing electricity in the New Houses of Parliament, Istad Yacoub was carrying a large bottle of distilled water. The bottle slipped off his hands, fell down and broke. He did not have enough money on him, and so borrowing two Dinars, he went and bought a replacement bottle. We were telling him, 'why do you spend your money? This is a work accident, the company should pay for it.' But he said, 'It is my fault, I broke it, and I will pay for it.'"

He was a great friend of the Assyrian leaders: Mar Eshai Shimun, Mar Yusif Khnanisho, Mar Sargis, Malik Yacoub, Rab Khaila Zia, Rab Trema Odisho, etc., and all the Assyrian Levy Officers. Whenever any one of them had problems with their electrical or mechanical equipment, Istad Yacoub was there to repair it, without obligation, and he was happy to have been of service to them. Once he made a very beautiful pocket knife for Mar Eshai Shimun. It was so exquisite you wouldn't believe your eyes if you saw it. On another occasion the R.A.F. was selling unserviceable cars. Rab Trema Odisho bought two trucks. They were towed to a place near his house. Yacoub worked on them, in his spare time, for about a week and put them in perfect working order.

Istad Yacoub was a tall, good-looking, wiry, energetic man, always bent on some good deed moving intently from one completed job to another.

When the Royal Air Force Station at Habbaniya closed down in 1955 he got a job as an electrical supervisor with Messrs. James Kilpatrick & Son Ltd., a British electrical engineering firm in Baghdad, who were doing electrical installations for major Iraqi projects such as: The New Kings Palace, Dokan Dam, Republican Hospital, New Houses of Parliament, etc. In 1959, James Kilpatrick had contracted a German firm to

install electric turbines in Dokan Dam. After installation, the huge turbines would not start. James Kilpatrick had six British electrical engineers try, but they could not start them.

They had a meeting, trying to find a solution to the problem: should they delay the project until some new engineers from Germany would arrive? While thus immersed in thought, one of the James Kilpatrick engineers said, "Let us send Jacob" (Yacoub Aghakhan). In the past Yacoub had solved many problems for the company. He was well-known for his ingenuity. All agreed to send Yocaub to Dokan to work on the problem. Once there, he looked the turbines over and as if by inspiration, made some disconnections, some connections, pressed the switch and the turbines started.

He came back to his job as usual, as if nothing had happened. That was his nature. He was not consumed by pride or arrogance for having solved an important electrical engineering problem.

When the electrical installations in the New Kings Palace (now called Kasir Al-Jamhuri, - Republic Palace) were completed by James Kilpatrick, according to contract, they had to do the maintenance for a few months, and the company appointed Yacoub Aghakhan and his crew of four to maintain the system. As soon as the maintenance period was over, Yacoub and his crew were sent off. "Atoori bil Kasir Al-Jamhuri? Shnon yeseer?" (Assyrian in the Republic Palace? How is it possible!). They were replaced by the best engineers Iraq had, all graduates of European universities.

The Palace was an independent unit; it had its own power house, electrical, telephone systems, etc. About a month later the Palace power system suddenly broke down. The Palace engineers could not do anything about it. Then the Rais Al-Jamhuriya, (President of the Republic), Sayid Ahmed Hassan Al-Bakr (God Bless him), came out roaring in rage: "Who was maintaining the Palace before?", he asked. "Five Assyrian electricians", the staff replied. Enraged, he ordered them to bring back those Assyrians immediately! So Istad Yacoub Aghakhan and his crew of four resumed their work at the Palace. It is said that Istad Yacoub first inspected the failed power system in his usual ardent way. He then proceeded to dig in a place by the Palace

wall, did some connections there, and the whole Palace was up in light and power again.

Istad Yacoub continued supervising the whole Palace electrical system. He was greatly respected and admired by all the Palace personnel until he resigned and left Iraq for the United States on October 15, 1977. Yacoub was also well-liked by Sayid Ahmed Hassan Al-Bakr.

One day, so solely occupied in thought, doing his inspections in the Palace, he passed by the President unaware. "Sayid Yacoub!", the President called. Alert and apprehensive that he was in the presence of the President of the Iraqi Government, Yacoub stood at attention, and responded most respectfully: "Naam Sayidi!" (Yes, your Excellency). The President asked him in a friendly manner, "Where is your home?" "Yem Jundi Al-Majhool, Sayidi." (near the Unknown Soldier, Sir), replied Yacoub. "Where are you from?" "I am Irani, Sayidi, min Iran." "I know you Sayid Yacoub", said the President, "you are Assyrian, your origin is here in Iraq, and you are more Iraqi than I am. This is your country. Welcome."

Every now and then a General in the Palace would invite him to his office for a cup of tea and a chat. One day as he was doing his inspections, a Palace chief asked him, "Shnonak (how are you) Istad Yacoub?" Yacoub turned to him and said, "we have had no electricity in our house for the last two days. We keep calling Abakhana, (Electric Company) but they are not coming." "Rah ashaal deenhum!" (I will give them hell), said the chief. Mrs. Regina Aghakhan, Yacoub's wife, relates: "Suddenly we saw our house surrounded by cars and trucks, workmen rushing around our house, connecting our electricity. Then they came to me in apology, and said, "For God's sake why did you complain to the Palace?"

When 'not even a fly' could approach the Palace, the Assyrian Sayid Yacoub was there doing his inspections. Even the Palace guards stood at attention as he passed by.

Yacoub Aghakhan Benyamin passed away in the United States, after a short illness, in the Holy Family Hospital, on October 15, 1983. He is survived by his wife, Regina Aghakhan; two daughters: Gladys and Alice; three sons: Freydon, Frederick, and Fiorder; their spouses; and seven grandchildren.

handsome young man, now plays football for the University of Michigan, where he is studying for his degree. There is an article written about him in the Nineveh magazine Second Quarter 1992.

*Editor's Note:*

*It was during the Presidency of Ahmed Hassan Al-Bakr that His Holiness the late Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, made a historic visit to Iraq on April 24, 1970 and stayed for over a month. Under Al-Bakr's administration, the government diligently and seriously studied the Assyrian question that led to the denationalization and deportation of His Holiness in 1933, just a few months prior to the Simele massacre of Assyrians.*

*The visitation was arranged by His Grace Mar Yosip Khnanisho, Metropolitan of Rustaq and Patriarchal Representative in Iraq, and Ammanuel Scopila who had visited President Al-Bakr on the occasion of Eed Al-Ramadan (the Moslem feast). At this meeting President Al-Bakr opened the subject of the Assyrian Church in Iraq. Evidently, he was aware of tension within the Church. The Metropolitan had assured the President that His Holiness, in all his epistles, has strongly appealed to and urged the Assyrians to be loyal to the country of their residence. The President suggested that His Holiness write such a letter to the Assyrians of Iraq. His Holiness happily sent the letter along with a special message to the President, and as a consequence, Mar Eshai Shimun was graciously invited to Iraq.*

*The impact of this visitation was: the restoration of his citizenship, and as he said in an exclusive interview with the 'Baghdad Observer' on April 30, 1970, that this was "a noble gesture on the part of the Iraqi Government, and we know this has been appreciated by all the Assyrians not only of Iraq but throughout the world." The restoration of all the Churches and properties to the Assyrian Church of the East, as well as the recognition of Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII as the supreme head of the Assyrian people in the Republic of Iraq.*

*Full report of this trip as well as the second on September 10, 1971 will appear in another issue of Nineveh magazine.*

## **To Martha**

**by: Mary Froba Shepherd**

Martha, I've known you for a short while,  
And fallen in love with your gentle smile.  
It speaks of love and faith dedication.  
Your presence sparks my admiration.

I've heard you pray and not wondered a lot  
That God would HAVE to answer - how could He not!  
For your prayers exude - a soul full of wonder and belief  
In a God that you trust will always send relief.

I've watched your hands pray and I see fingers of a child  
Who calls to the number she's many times dialed  
And asked "God, can you help? I know that you will  
So here's my heart with love for you filled."

I've watched your eyes pray - they're closed tight  
Like a lass who's kneeling by her bedside at night  
But I know God sees a woman with faith and wisdom  
And know that He sees a woman of vision -

A vision to see beyond what's here  
Beyond the hustle and bustle of what's near.  
A life of ninety years that never knew "I can't"  
A true masterpiece of creation - a Martha Rembrandt!

So Martha, keep telling your stories. We love them all.  
Keep saying your prayers. They help us stand tall!  
Keep living your life! It's an inspiration.  
We'll all meet again at your centennial celebration!

*Editor's Note:*

*The above poem was written and read at the 90th birthday celebration of Martha Yosiph d'Agha Lazar Elia of Charbash. Her life story and her family's appeared in the Assyrian section of the last issue of Nineveh as told by her to John W. Badal of Turlock, CA. We congratulate Martha Yosiph on this occasion, and her outstanding memory of events of World War I in Urmia, Iran.*



## NOTES ON Khabur Assyrians

By Solomon (Sawa) Solomon

Following the tragic events of 1933 many Assyrians moved to French-controlled Syria to settle in the Khabur region, and chief among them were upper Tiari and Tkhuma tribes. They were soon followed by other Assyrians so that, by the time it was over, some 35 villages were established on both banks of the Khabur river between Hassaka and Qamishli. Of these, 25 villages were on the north side and 10 on the south side. The Assyrian settlement was about 29 kilometers stretching from Tal Hermiz in the East to Tal Taweel in the West. The width of the area ranged from 2.5 kilometers to 3 on each side of the river. There was a bridge at Tal Tammor and a smaller bridge on Zargan River, a tributary of Khabur near Tal Tammor. The last town was about a distance of 7 kilometers to Tal Taweel. Upper Tiari tribesmen occupied 6 villages (by some accounts 8 villages), while Tkhuma established 11 villages, but the Tiari villages were bigger. Each of the following had two villages: Quchanis, Gawar, Baz, Jeelu, Dizen, Sara; and the following lived only in one village: Timar, Lewon, Barwar, Nawchiya, Eiel and Mar Bisho.

The nearest Arabian tribes in the area were Bagar Al Jabal. They lived in the Abdul Aziz mountains in the south of Khabur. Their chiefs were Sheikh Eisa Salman and Raqib Albasheer. To the north of the river lived the Sharabien and the Muamara tribes. The last one was under Sheikh Abdul Aziz Muslib. The main road in the area ran from Hassaka to Qamishli on the north side of the river, while a mountain road serviced the south side. In the northeast there is a water reservoir and just to the west of it is a farming airstrip.

Tal Tammor is the largest of the settlements, and it houses several hundred families. It is the administrative center (Mudeer Nahiya) and it houses the police headquarters as well. Two other police stations are located in the villages of Abu Tina and Tal Kharita. Tal Tammor was also the home of Malik Yacu Ismail of Upper Tiari and his brother Malik Daniel, both former Rab Tremmas (senior officers) of the Assyrian Levies. Malik Yacu was to die in Baghdad while on official visit in 1974, and Malik Daniel was to die in Tal Tammor in 1952. Tal Hermiz was home to Malik Lawco of

Tkhuma. He was to die in Chicago in 1977. Umm Keif was the home of Malik Marawgil of Timar. He died there later.

In the settlement, there was a church with a priest in every village, and until 1985 the affairs of the Assyrian Church of the East were administered by the late Bishop Mar Awrahim Youkhanna. In February 1985, Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis of the United States visited the Khabur Assyrians, and while there he ordained Rev. Giwargis Athneiel as Archdeacon and Head of the Church. Mar Aprim also appointed a committee to help the Archdeacon. He also ordained others. A son of Archdeacon Giwargis by the name of Aprim is studying in Chicago to prepare himself to be a future bishop for Khabur. The Diocese of Khabur is part of the Archdeacon of Lebanon and Syria under Metropolitan Mar Narsai DeBaz of Lebanon. In addition to the village churches there exists in Qamishi a church under Rev. Youkanna Arkin, and in Hassaka the church is serviced by Rev. Kolo. In 1992 a bishop from the Ancient Church of the East (Julian Calendar) by the name of Mar Yacoub Daniel arrived in Khabur to run the affairs of that church in Syria. He was formerly a priest in the church of Mar Yousif in Tel Keif. Today Mar Yacoub administers the following churches: Mar Bithion at Tal Hermiz, Mar Shalita in Umm Ghargan and Mar Aprim in Qamishli.

In each of the Assyrian villages there is a mukhtar who acts as a village chief. I have enclosed their names in the accompanying list. Here I wish to extend my gratitude to Rev. Goliad Attu for identifying church names and their priests; for Hawil Mikhail for help with the names of mukhtars; for Zaya Dankha, Mirza Samano, Hermiz DeBaz for general information without which I would not have been able to prepare this article. I would like to add that priest names are from the sixties; mukhtar's names are from the seventies and eighties. The following list contains the names of Khabur villages, their makeup, names of their churches, priests and mukhtars.

## Profile of Villages in Syria

VILLAGE	TRIBE	CHURCH	PRIEST	MUKHTAR
Tal Taweel	Tiari	Mar Sawa	Rev. Attniel	Khiyo Yousip Khiyo
Umm Waghfa	Tiari	Mar Kuryakos	Rev. Attniel	Khiyo Yousip Khiyo
Umm Keiff	Timar	Mar Tooma	Rev. Tooma	Tooma Dawid
Tal Keifchi	Lewon	Mar Gewargis	Rev. Zoomaya	Shmoel
Tal Jumma	Tiari	Brashmuni	Rev. Lazar	Melkizdic Shakaro
Tal Ahmar	Tiari	Mar Youkhana	Rev. Tooma	Gateene
Tal Tammor	Tiari	Mar Sargis	Rev. Yonan	Mirza Samano
Tal Nasri	Tiari	Mart Maryam	Rev. Warda	Deacon Beito
Tal Hifian	Quchanis	Mar Shalita	Rev. Enwiya	Badal
Tal Meghas	Gawar	Mar Gewargis	Rev. Abdul Masih	Yonan Hedina
Tal Mesas	Barwar	Mar Gewargis	Rev. Nestoris	Odisho Gorgo
Tal Jedaya	Gawar	Mar Sawa	Rev. Nestoris	Tetjoo
Tal Faitha	Nawchiya	Mar Kuryakos	Rev. Oraham	Chitto Bado
Tal Damsheech	Quchanis		Rev. Enwiya	Yacu Siamo
Tal Najma	Sara	Mar Sliwa	Rev. William	Doctor Yacu
Tal Jazeera	Eiel	Mar Yonan	Rev. William	Ezarya Darmoo
Tal Baz	Baz	Mar Gewargis	Rev. William	Shaheen Tooma
Tal Rumman (Foukani)	Baz	Mart Maryam	Rev. Aprim DeBaz	Yonan Guroo
Tal Rumman (Tahtani)	Tkhuma	Raban Bithion	Rev. Surisho	Khoshaba Dawid
Tal Shameh	Tkhuma	Mar Zia	Rev. Shlimon	Brikha Yonan
Tal Wardiyat	Tkhuma	Raban Bithion	Rev. Shlimon	Moshi Patrus
Tal Sakra	Tkhuma	Mart Maryam	Rev. Ishak	Barrota Shmoel
Tal Barbeech	Tkhuma	Mar Gewargis	Rev. Khoshaba	Zia Safer
Tal Arboosh	Tkhuma	Mar Gewargis	Rev. Aziz	Shaboo
Umm Ghargan	Tkhuma	Mar Shalita	Rev. Sheeba	Esho Malik Yonan
Tal Shamiran	Mar Bisho	Mar Bisho	Rev. Tooma	Koorish
Tal Talla	Sara	Mar Sliwa	Rev. Enwiya	Edwar
Abu Tina	Jeelu	Mar Shimon Sabai	Rev. Warda	Tammoo
Tal Quran	Jeelu	Mar Zia	Rev. Warda	Samson
Qabr Shamiya	Dizen	Mar Shalita	Rev. Nisan	Daniel Youkhana
Tal Ballouwa	Dizen	Mar Kuryakos	Rev. Youel	William Youel
Tal Kharita	Tkhuma	Mar Shimon Sabai	Rev. Youkhana	Brikha Patros
Tal Makhatha	Tkhuma	Mar Kuryakos	Rev. Ijmael	Ammo Gewargis
Tal Taal	Tkhuma	Mar Odisho	Rev. Moushi	Esho Dammoo
Tal Hermiz	Tkhuma	Raban Bithion	Rev. Bota	George Yonan

## Veterans hope to set memories in marble

Assyrian Americans raise cash for monument

By Daniel Borsky

Chicago Tribune Staff Writer

John Hosanna, an 85-year-old World War II veteran, has a magnificent dream. It may well be the very last dream he can make come true. For the past two years, Hosanna has been struggling to collect enough money to



*photo by Paula Bronstein*

John Hosanna in his World War II uniform.

raise a monument in honor of Assyrian Americans in Chicago who, like himself, served in the U.S. armed forces during World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

To raise money, Hosanna last year put together and published a booklet devoted to Assyrian American veterans. "We are raising the fund since we published this book," said Hosanna, a Morton Grove resident. Each book sold adds \$10 to the pool, but Hosanna must rely mostly on donations from other veterans or Assyrians. "One of our boys passed away and left us \$5,000," Hosanna said. "Another lady passed away last week. Before she did, she drove to my house and gave me a check for \$4,000."

The one who, would rather see the memorial

erected than donate it money through his will is Lincoln Peters, another Assyrian World War II veteran and a longtime friend of Hosanna. "Before we die, we would like to see it built to show that we [Assyrians] are still alive, we're still kicking," said Peters, 71.

Throughout history, the Assyrians, citizens of a 4,000-year-old nation, were forced to kick just to survive. Despite fighting on the Allies' side in both World Wars, the Assyrians repeatedly have been denied their wish to live in their own country again. Once a mighty and prosperous empire, the nation has been plummeting into oblivion ever since it lost its homeland. It can't be found on the world map today.

Perhaps that's why Assyrians today are commonly confused with Syrians or often called Kurds, after an area in southern Turkey and northern Iraq where many live.

In the U.S., when an Assyrian is asked where he or she is from, the answer may even be "Lebanon." That's because some Assyrians identify with the closest entity to be found on the map that has a similar religious background. Like half of the Lebanese, Assyrians are Christians.

"The history of Assyrians began with the history of Christianity," Peters said. "Our first patriot and the head of our church was St. Peter." And although it was Peter who denied Christ, the Assyrians in the Middle East still practice Christianity in the face of suppression from their Muslim neighbors. "They're under the thumb of Saddam Hussein," said Peters, referring to the Iraqi strongman, "but they still keep their faith."

Apparently, Hosanna also has preserved the defiance encoded in his pedigree. Although he needs a little help to climb the stairs or get in the car, he is determined to see the memorial completed. Together with his son, he designed it, and together with Peters he is doing most of the work connected with fundraising and obtaining the most suitable site for the monument.

Peters said the monument site has been decided. "It'll be at Elmwood Park Cemetery, because all these boys are buried there." Peters said. To avoid additional expenses, he and Peters are forced to bargain over the grave sites at the cemetery. They intend to exchange graves in order to patch together the site for the monument. "We have about 20 graves

that they could exchange," Hosanna said.

What is not decided yet is the size and configuration of the memorial. Hosanna would love to see a monument with three black marble panels. The middle panel would feature the names of 14 Assyrian American warriors killed in action, and the two side panels would bear the names of another 250 who survived: "With all probability, it will be a small monument," Peters said. In the end, it will depend on how much money Hosanna can collect. He hopes for about \$30,000. So far, he said, he has collected about \$17,000.

Estimates of the number of Assyrians living in Chicago vary from 50,000 to more than 75,000. Peters and Hosanna say they hope that some of the more affluent among them will help Hosanna's last dream of a lifetime come true.

For more information, contact John Hosanna at 847-966-8043.

**Editor's Note:**

*The donation of \$5000 referred to in the article was donated by the late Benjamin Sayad Adams of Tucson, Arizona, an Assyrian American veteran of WWII, who passed away on April 12, 1995. This was arranged by Julius N. Shabbas, the Editor of Nineveh magazine, a good friend of Ben S. Adams.*

*You may send your tax-deductible donations to:*

**Assyrian Veterans Memorial Fund  
AMVET Post 5 Fund  
9042 N. Central  
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053  
Attn. John Hosanna, Treasurer**

## He's An American In His Heart



**Abram L. George**, an Assyrian, living in

Modesto, CA with his wife, was officially recognized by the City of Modesto for his many contributions. Abram came to the United States in 1921 from Iran. After World War II, he studied literature and philosophy at the University of San Francisco. He has written many articles and letters to the Editor of the Modesto Bee and local publications. In addition, his articles have appeared in Nineveh magazine.

## City of Modesto Proclamation

WHEREAS, Abram Lloyd George, resident of Stanislaus County for over twenty years, has generously given of his time and resources to the people of Modesto; and

WHEREAS, Abram Lloyd George has actively participated in and promoted the rich cultural heritage of the Assyrian people of the Central Valley; and

WHEREAS, Abram Lloyd George, through his knowledge, education, and diverse background, has provided invaluable assistance to many senior citizens, recent immigrants, and young adults; and

WHEREAS, Abram Lloyd George, a World War II veteran, faithfully served his country as a member of the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, Abram Lloyd George, in his eighties, realized his lifelong goal of becoming a published author through the publication of his book, Thoughts to Live By; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Modesto, because of his unselfish dedication and commitment to the community, hold Mr. Abram Lloyd George in the highest esteem;

Now, therefore, on behalf of the  
Modesto City Council, I do hereby proclaim

that the City of Modesto officially recognizes Abram Lloyd George for his many contributions and extends to Mr. George warm and fond congratulations and best wishes on his eighty-sixth birthday.

Signed: Frank T. Muratore  
This 11th Day of June 1995

Dear Mr. Shabbas:

I always do look forward to reading Nineveh magazine, as it is the voice of the Assyrian nation around the world. I read it from cover to cover, especially the pages about the history of Assyrians beginning from the period before the outbreak of World War I ending with the present times. I read it with my close friend, George Akopov, your relative, who regularly receives it from you.

I am enclosing some photographs of our long lost relatives which are more than 50 years old. We received them from the U.S.A. when my grandparents Daniel Mooshi (nicknamed Shakira) D'Ardishai and Souriya D'Shamshajiyani were corresponding with them, and it ceased prior to World War II, and did not hear from them since.

Would you please be so kind as to publish these photographs in your wonderful and enlightening Nineveh magazine, with the hope that someone of their descendants would respond, and I can give them more information about their relatives, and other

events and stories that I have heard from my parents and grandparents which had happened to them in those days.

I would like to inform you that Rev. Shimon Yosip D'Shamshajiyani whose photo appeared in the Fourth Quarter 1994 issue of Nineveh along with the article by Mikhael K. Pius entitled, "Other Notable Features of Gailani Camp" is also our relative - first cousin of my grandmother, Souriya. I am enclosing a similar photo of his which he had sent from Baghdad in 1925. His daughter, Sophia, lived together with our family in Tbilisi until she got married to Sargis, moved to Gorky street in Tbilisi, and had two children, son Tolik (Anatoly in Russian) and daughter Nona (Nonia). The family left for Iran in 1944.

Daniel M. Sarkisov  
Professor in Oriental Studies  
at the University of Tbilisi,  
Republic of Georgia



Rev. (Kasha) Shimon Yosip  
D'Shamshajiyani

Seated (l to r): Sophia, daughter of Rev.(Kasha) Shimon Yosip D'Shamshajiyani; Souriya of Kurtapa (my grandmother - died in 1963); Daniel Mooshi D'Ardishai (my grandfather - nicknamed Shakira -died in 1937); and their children. Standing: third right is my father, Mikhail, who died in 1979. This photo was taken in 1926 in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Photos submitted by Daniel M. Sarkisov, Tbilisi, Georgia



*Khnania, nephew of my grandfather Daniel, with his wife Esther. In Tbilisi, they lived on Mikolaevskaya street.*

← *Saul (Shaul) and Shirin Joseph. Shirin is the sister of my grandfather, Daniel; and the mother of Khnania. In the 1920's she, along with her son and his family left Tbilisi, Georgia, for the U.S. Shirin as a widow was married to Saul Joseph (also a widower) in the U.S. They lived in Chicago.*

*Khnania and Esther Joseph with their children*



## Congratulations



On May 25, 1996 **Famena J. Khaya** graduated as a Master of Politics and Public Policy from Deakin University in Victoria, Australia. She is the daughter of Awigail Daryowish. Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1963, she emigrated to Australia with her family in 1968. Famena attended local schools in Sydney completing her high school education at Holroyd High School in 1981. She then attended Macquari University in Sydney, graduating in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree majoring in Archaeology. Her undergraduate studies included fieldwork in the Middle East.

In 1989 Famena was appointed foundation Director of the Sydney Children's Museum. She left in 1991 to join the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia as a policy officer. She currently holds the position of Director Administration/Secretariat with the Federation, located in Australia's capital city, Canberra, which represents at the federal level Australia's linguistic and culturally diverse migrant population.

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## Universal ups Neesan to vp of production

By Cathy Dunkley

Universal Pictures has promoted Paul Neesan to vp production. Neesan will acquire and develop film projects for theatrical release. "Paul has proven himself to be an astute and extremely valuable member of our production team, and I'm delighted to be able to acknowledge his many contributions," said Hal Lieberman, president of production of Universal Pictures.

Neesan, 27, joined Universal in 1995 as director of development. He began his career in 1994 working with producer Joe Singer at John Davis Entertainment, serving as co-producer on "Courage Under Fire" and co-executive producer on Universal's forthcoming action drama "Daylight".

Among the projects he is developing are "New Jersey Turnpikes"; "Confucius Brown," to star Jackie Chan and Wesley Snipes; and "Ohio," a film about the 1970 Kent State tragedy.

Editor's Note:

*Paul Neesan is the son of Assyrian Foundation members Sami and Lily Neesan of Hercules, CA; and the nephew of Julius N. Shabbas.*



## IN MEMORIAM

*Shushan Akopov*

*Julia Akopov*



*Left to right: Shushan, George and Baba  
- photo taken by Germaine Badal.*



*Julia flanked by her daughters, sons-in-law  
with George on the right.*

*- photo taken by Germaine Badal.*

Born in Urmia, Iran, Shushan Akopov, wife of Baba Akopov, passed away on January 20, 1996 at age 83 in Tbilisi, Georgia. She was a teenager when her family along with thousands of Assyrians followed the Russians to escape the ravages of war in Urmia.

Shushan was a gentle and kind-hearted person, deeply devoted to her husband and family. George, in his letter to me says, "during the last few months I have lost my two very dear and very close persons. I had a remarkable mother, who was my friend indeed all my life."

Shushan is survived by her husband Baba, a son George, two granddaughters and grandchildren.

Baba is the cousin of Julius N. Shabbas' mother. We extend our sincere sympathy and condolences to the family. George also informs me that my mother's nephew, Shaul, also passed away a year ago. We convey our condolences to his wife Nina, and sons David and Johnny.

Julia Akopov, wife of George Akopov, passed away on July 14, 1995 at age 62 in Tbilisi, Georgia. She was a devoted wife and a caring mother, and was loved dearly by the family. She took great pride in raising her children, and in later years she was just as proud and joyful in watching her grandchildren grow. "I still can not get used to the thought that my dear Julia is not here, beside me. It happened so unexpectedly, so suddenly," says George.

Julia is survived by her husband George, two daughters Irini and Diana, and grandchildren. She will be greatly missed by all the family, and pleasant memories of her will remain in their hearts.

George is the cousin of Julius N. Shabbas. Our families offer their condolences and kind thoughts on their loss.

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كَلِمَاتٍ مِّنْ حَيْثُ مَنَعَهُمْ .  
كَلِمَاتٍ مِّنْ حَيْثُ مَنَعَهُمْ .

كَلِمَاتٍ مِّنْ حَيْثُ مَنَعَهُمْ .

21

لَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .

22

لَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .

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لَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .

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لَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .

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لَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .

26

لَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .



كَيْفَ مَنَ مَعَدِّيكَ إِذْ لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ .

7

هَلْ يَلْمِزُكَ صَمِيحًا دُونَكَ لَنْجَبٍ :

حَتَّىٰ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ إِذْ لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ .

يَلْمِزُكَ صَمِيحًا دُونَكَ هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ نَوْجًا :

لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ دُونَكَ .

8

لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ دُونَكَ :

حَتَّىٰ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ دُونَكَ :

يَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ دُونَكَ هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ نَوْجًا :

لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ .

9

خَدَّوْنِي هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ حَلَاةٌ دُونَكَ :

دَلَّكَ سَمِيحًا مَعْبُودِيكَ لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ .

هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ سَمِيحًا حَتَّىٰ يَدْرِكُكَ نَوْجًا :

لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ .

10

خَدَّوْنِي هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ سَمِيحًا دُونَكَ :

لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ دُونَكَ .

كَيْفَ يَدْرِكُكَ سَمِيحًا حَتَّىٰ يَدْرِكُكَ نَوْجًا :

سَمِيحًا حَتَّىٰ يَدْرِكُكَ نَوْجًا دُونَكَ .

11

لَمْ يَدْرِكْكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ .

حَتَّىٰ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لِمَعْبُودِيكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ .

هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ سَمِيحًا حَتَّىٰ يَدْرِكُكَ نَوْجًا :

هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ .

12

أَتَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ :

لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ .

هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ :

كَيْفَ يَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ .

13

هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ :

هَلْ يَدْرِكُكَ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ لَمَّا كَانَتْ .















تَدْوَتَا دِهْبَتَا دِهْبَتَا دِهْبَتَا دِهْبَتَا  
 تَحْدَوِي، تَعْنَا 1972 كِه دُهْنَا  
 دِهْبَتَا دِهْبَتَا. مِم بَصِيَتَا لِهْمَتَا  
 كُفَلَا تَدْوَتَا :  
 زُهْبَا زُهْم - لِهْم دَلِيْم مَهْم -  
 تَعْمَتَا زُهْبَا بَهْم .  
 كُفَلَا هَدْوَتَا :  
 مَهْلَه مَهْلَه مَهْلَه مَهْلَه  
 زُهْبَتَا زُهْم - مَهْلَه  
 مَهْلَه مَهْلَه - زُهْبَتَا دُهْنَا



كِه دُهْنَا دِهْبَتَا دِهْبَتَا دِهْبَتَا تَحْدَوِي 25 تَحْنَا، 1968 .  
 مِم بَصِيَتَا لِهْمَتَا :، كُفَلَا تَدْوَتَا : مَهْلَه مَهْلَه مَهْلَه مَهْلَه  
 مَهْلَه - دُتَبَا زُهْم تَحْمِيْم - كُفَلَا مَهْلَه مَهْلَه  
 مَهْلَه مَهْلَه . كُفَلَا : مَهْلَه مَهْلَه - زُهْبَا زُهْم .



# سید حجیب ایدہ لہ من کہ ذہن دہکامہ

## اے ذہن، تھمتا سوتلہ بہذاتک منورہ

تم: ہذہ صبحات منہم۔ یہ اوقہ داندہ تہکد، اہذک

سوتلہ کبعلہ ملکہ، کہ صوبتہ، دتھوتہ کاندہ دتھہ نوتہم تہتہ  
 1919. تہ لہ من اہ منہ، تہتہ اذ منہ اذتہتہ تھوتہتہ 2 تھتہ 1996  
 اھتہتہ تھوتہتہ تہ لہ من تہتہ، 1960، تھتہ دتھوتہ اھتہ تھوتہ  
 کہ تہتہ، دتھوتہ کہ صوبتہ، دتھوتہ، وکھتہ تھ تھوتہ تہ تہتہ 1991.  
 اھ تہ سوتلہ لاندہ داندہتہ، وکھ تہ تھوتہتہ داندہ من اہتہ اہتہ  
 تہ تہ تھوتہ تہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تھوتہتہ تہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ  
 صوبہ دتھ تھوتہ تہتہ تہتہ کہ صوبہ تہتہ تہتہ، دتھ تہتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ  
 تہتہ دتھتہ تھوتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ  
 ”تھوتہ تہ تہتہ تہتہ، اہتہ تہ تھوتہ“

تہتہ سوتلہ تہتہ من تھوتہ تھوتہ، وکھ تھوتہ تھوتہ کہ تھوتہ  
 تھوتہ دتھوتہتہ تھوتہتہ، تہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ من تھوتہ، وکھتہ،  
 وکھتہ تھوتہتہ تھوتہتہ دتھوتہ دتھوتہ، تھوتہ من تھوتہتہ کہ تھوتہ  
 تھوتہ، اھتہ تہتہ تھوتہتہ تہتہ، وکھ تھوتہ تہتہ تھوتہ تہتہ،  
 تھوتہتہ تھوتہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ  
 اھتہ، وکھتہ تھوتہتہ، وکھ تھوتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ تہتہ

- 1 - اھتہ دتھوتہ: تہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ، کہ تھوتہ تھوتہ دتھوتہ تہتہ
- 2 - اھتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ: تہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ
- 3 - تھوتہ تھوتہ: وکھ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ
- 4 - تھوتہ تھوتہ: تھوتہ تہتہ 200 تھوتہتہ (تھوتہ)
- 5 - تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ
- 6 - تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ
- 7 - تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ
- 8 - تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ

تہ تھوتہ  
 تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ  
 تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ

”کہ دتھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ، تہ تھوتہ تھوتہ، تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ  
 (تھوتہ) اہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ  
 تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ تھوتہ

# سورة البقرة

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

۱. الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِیْ

۲. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۳. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۴. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۵. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۶. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۷. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۸. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۹. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۱۰. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۱۱. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۱۲. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۱۳. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۱۴. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

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۱۹. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۲۰. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

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۲۳. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۲۴. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۲۵. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۲۶. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

۲۷. عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ





















# ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

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١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

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١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

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١٨٤١ : ١٨٤١

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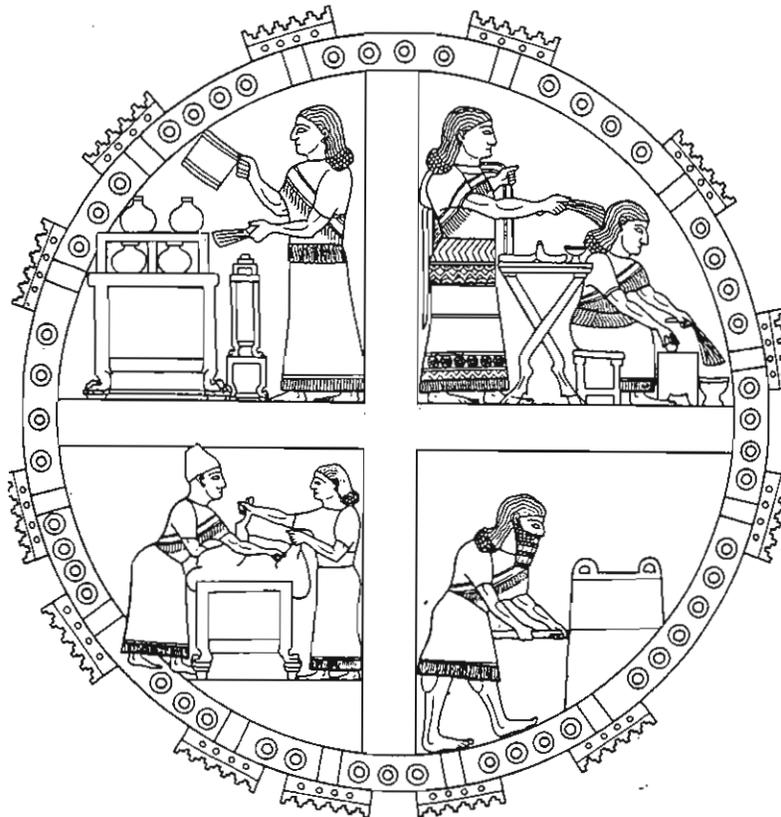
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# ܩܠܘܢܐ

From a relief from the throne room  
of the North West Palace at Nimrud;  
Assyrian, 9th century B.C.  
British Museum.



**An Assyrian Encampment**  
A butcher, a baker and other food makers are  
at work.

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