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NINEVEH

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POLICY

Articles submitted for publication will be selected by the editorial staff on the basis of their relative merit to Assyrian literature, history, and current events.

Opinions expressed in NINEVEH are those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of NINEVEH or the Assyrian Foundation of America.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Subscribers,

As you have seen in our last issue, we implemented a new layout in an effort to improve and update the design of Nineveh magazine. In this issue, you will enjoy a slightly different layout and we would love to hear your feedback and suggestions that we highly value and appreciate. The editorial staff decided to publish three issues with different designs before choosing the best one for future publications. I'm pleased to announce a new edition to our editorial staff Dr. Elizabeth Mickaily-Huber.



I would like to thank you for your support and contributions to the magazine. I also wish to reach out and ask our readers to continue sharing material and articles related to our Assyrian communities, Assyrian achievements and culture throughout the globe. The material will be reviewed and selected by the editor for publication in the coming issues as there is a limited space. Please send any material to: editor@assyrianfoundation.org

As of today, our magazine reach 800 subscribers world wide. Most of our subscribers are in the United States. The magazine is distributed to 62 countries worldwide. About 40 academic institutions around the world receive Nineveh magazine.

I know that Nineveh magazine is widely appreciated by our subscribers and the editorial staff thrive to keep the magazine strong and vital. That can only be achieved with your support and help as a reader, both financially and material wise.

Thank you,
Ninwe Maraha
Nineveh Magazine, Editor

FROM THE PRESIDENT



“In Pursuit of Happiness”

Recently, I watched a documentary on PBS regarding human happiness. It examined how close relationships and social connections are the keys to a happy and healthy life.

The film began by considering the obvious factors that we assume influence human happiness, things like money, genetics, and life circumstances. It then continued by opening a window onto human behavior. People from different countries, religions, cultures, and lifestyles shared their personal stories of everyday life, honestly and openly. They expressed how they coped with the challenges of life as they struggle to achieve greater happiness and fulfillment.

However, the ones that expressed satisfaction and happiness in their lives had one common denominator – human interaction.

The film ended by coming full circle to the understanding that happiness does not increase with growing wealth and status.

Rather, it is the quality of our relationships, with friends, family and the larger community, that ultimately defines our happiness. Essentially humans are wired for personal connection, because people make others in their lives feel love, enjoy laughter, and build shared memories. Indeed, laughter, tears, and accomplishments hold more value when shared with others.

As I continued to watch the study on how human connections such as those found in social gatherings, strong family ties, and close-knit communities are keys to happiness, I reflected on how our Assyrian culture cultivates happiness through its core values and by embracing the beauty of human relationships.

Through a common history, language, and heritage, we have opened our hearts and our doors to one another and consequently have become one family unit. The strong bond of the Assyrian community is a blessing and a kind of contagious happiness because our compassion and strong support for one another influences other people in our lives and, in turn, the people in their lives. We should be very proud of our culture and of our people, because as a nation without a State, for thousands of years, we have managed to maintain our identity, language, and heritage. We have preserved this treasure thus far, and must continue to preserve it for future generations.

I wish you a very happy and blessed Kha-b-Nisan (Assyrian New Year)!

Jackline Yelda

Assyrian Foundation of America, President

Previously untouched 600BC palace discovered under shrine demolished by Isil in

Mosul

Courtesy of The Telegraph.co.uk

28 FEBRUARY 2017 • 11:40AM

Archaeologists documenting Isil's destruction of the ruins of the Tomb of the Prophet Jonah say they have made an unexpected discovery which could help in our understanding of the world's first empire.

The Nebi Yunus shrine - containing what Muslims and Christians believe to be the tomb of Jonah, as he was known in the Bible, or Yunus in the Koran - was blown up by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) militants soon after they seized huge swathes of northern Iraq in 2014.

The shrine is situated on top of a hill in eastern Mosul called Nebi Yunus - one of two mounds that form part of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh. The Iraqi army retook the area from Isil last month, revealing the extensive damage wrought by the jihadists.

But local archaeologists have told the Telegraph that Isil also dug tunnels deep under the demolished shrine and into a previously undiscovered and untouched 600BC palace. Limited excavation was carried out by the Otto

man governor of Mosul in 1852, which was revisited by the Iraqi department of antiquities in the 1950s. But neither team reached as far as the palace.

"I can only imagine how much Daesh discovered down there before we got here" Archaeologist Layla Salih.

It is the first evidence of Isil's use of tunneling in ancient grounds in their hunt for artefacts to plunder. Inside one of the tunnels, Iraqi archaeologist Layla Salih discovered a marble cuneiform inscription of King Esarhaddon thought to date back to the Assyrian empire in 672BC.

While the king's name is not visible on the cuneiform slab, a historian who has seen photographs of it says phrases are legible which were used only to describe him, in particular his rebuilding of Babylon after his father Sennacherib had it destroyed.

The palace was built for Sennacherib, renovated and expanded by Esarhaddon (681-669 BC), and renovated again by Ashurbanipal (669-627). It was partly destroyed during the Sack of Nineveh in 612 BC.



A marble cuneiform inscription of King Esarhad-don thought to date back to the Assyrian empire in 672BC.

There are only a handful of such cuneiforms recovered from the period, most of which from the second mound just north of Nebi Yunus in Kouyunjik.

In another part of the tunnel they discovered Assyrian stone sculptures of a demi-goddess, depicted sprinkling the “water of life” to protect humans in her care.

“I’ve never seen something like this in stone at this large size,” said Prof Eleanor Robson, chair of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq, suggesting they may

sell. But what they left will be studied and will add a lot to our knowledge of the period.”

She warned that the tunnels were not professionally built, however, and are at risk of collapsing “within weeks” - burying and potentially destroying the new finds.

Experts from the British Institute for the Study of Iraq - alongside other international teams - are bidding to help local archaeologists secure and document the site. Unesco is due to hold a meeting in Paris later this month to decide who will be sent.

The terror group destroyed several other key landmarks



have been used to decorate the women’s quarter of the palace. “The objects don’t match descriptions of what we thought was down there, so Isil’s destruction has actually led us to a fantastic find.

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

Ms Salih, a former curator of the Mosul museum who is supervising a five-man team carrying out the emergency documentation, said she believes Isil looted hundreds of objects before Iraqi forces recaptured the eastern side of the city.

“I can only imagine how much Daesh discovered down there before we got here,” she told the Telegraph by phone from Mosul. “We believe they took many of the artefacts, such as pottery and smaller pieces, away to

in Mosul and elsewhere because they considered the worshipping of shrines not to be in keeping with their Islamic traditions. Isil militants believe giving special veneration to tombs and relics is against the teachings of Islam.

A report just released by the Iraqi Kurdistan regional government lists some 100 sacred buildings damaged or wiped off the map during Isil’s two-year reign.

They closed all of Mosul’s museums and cultural centres during their more than two-year reign over the city. Many of the city’s archaeologists and historians went into hiding.

“Many decided to stay in the city when Isil came, fearing what they might do to their families if they fled,” said Prof Robson. “They hid their books and lied about their expertise. Thankfully, most of them survived.”

Morgan Freeman

Freeman

talks heaven and hell
with Assyrian family
from Modesto

Nationalgeographicchannel.com
BY DEKE FARROW
jfarrow@modbee.com

Academy Award-winning actor Morgan Freeman takes a look at faith as host of the National Geographic Channel series **“The Story of God.”** The show now is in its second season, and the episode **“Heaven and Hell”** includes interviews with an Assyrian Christian family living in Modesto and the bishop of the local diocese of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East.

How can you find a piece of heaven when you're living in a hell on earth?

That's one of the questions Oscar-winning actor Morgan Freeman asks in the latest episode of the National Geographic Channel series he hosts, “The Story of God.” Among those he interviews in the “Heaven and Hell” episode are Modesto resident Mervat Shlimoun and her 17-year-old son, Matios Anioel, who fled religious persecution in Iraq and Syria, and Mar Awa Royel, bishop of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, Diocese of California. Shlimoun, her husband and son are members of the diocese's Mar Addai Parish in Turlock.

In the hourlong program, Freeman says Jesus told his followers they would inherit the kingdom of God. But the actor said he's always struggled to understand what Jesus meant by that: a heaven in the sky, or here on earth?

“THEY’VE LIVED THROUGH HELL ON EARTH, CHASED OUT OF TWO COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH.” says Morgan Freeman, in a clip from “Heaven and Hell” episode “The Story of God” .

“There's one group of Christians that might know the answer to that question,” he says. “The Assyrian Christian church dates its foundation to just a few years after Jesus' death. It claims its theology is what Jesus himself believed. For them, heaven means being close to God, hell is being far from God.”

Sitting down with his mother to talk with Freeman in a Phoenix restaurant in October, Anioel told him he can compare hell and heaven to his own life. Assyrian Christians have lived in Iraq more than 2,000 years, Anioel said, and before the Iraq War, relations between Muslims and Christians were peaceful. Then “everything went downhill.” During the war, Muslim militants believed the Christians were working with American soldiers, he told Freeman.

The boy was 6 when his family fled Baghdad for Syria, where it met more oppression from the Islamic State. The family eventually was granted refugee status from the United Nations and was accepted to enter the United States. He and his parents arrived Jan. 25, 2011, said Anioel, a student at Enochs High School.



Friends at school know his story, the youth said, and he sometimes shares in classes when topics such as Islam, Christianity and religious persecution are being discussed. He's had more questions from people since the episode first aired Monday. The Assyrian story "is very important to tell people to understand the experience in the Middle East," Anioel said, "because not a lot know what's going on and understand what the people have been through."

"WITH THE POWER OF PRAYER, I FEEL PEACEFUL AND LIGHT. HELL, IT'S A REALLY COMPLICATED (CONCEPT). IT'S LIKE A TEST FROM GOD – YOU GO THROUGH HELL TO GET TO HEAVEN."

Matios Anioel of Modesto, on what his Assyrian Christian faith has taught him about heaven and hell The "Story of God" producers found the Turlock church through the website for its Assyrian Festival and originally wanted to come to the festival in 2016, but that didn't work out, said Adrenna Alkhas, parish member and communications director for the Stanislaus County Fair.

In addition to being interviewed – over a period of six hours – by Freeman in Phoenix, the family also was filmed during prayer at its Turlock church, Anioel said. He wasn't nervous about meeting Freeman, but when the cameras rolled, "it was really scary when we first started." He soon relaxed, found the experience fun and was glad to be able to talk about his faith and his experiences.



THE PERSECUTION OF THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS PRACTICALLY UNKNOWN IN THE U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES, AND I BELIEVE THIS EPISODE WITH MR. FREEMAN WILL OPEN THE EYES AND MINDS

OF MANY TO WHAT OUR PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING IN THE MIDEAST. Bishop Mar Awa Royel



Bishop Royel said that with him, Freeman wanted to explore two areas: What heaven and hell are dogmatically, and what the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East believes about heaven and hell – how it interprets the Scriptures.

On what it means to have been featured in the episode, Bishop Royel said, "The Assyrians are the indigenous people of Iraq – that's been proven and demonstrated. To be able to share our story on a very large scale puts us on the map and gives the exposure our people need to educate our fellow Americans and people around the world."

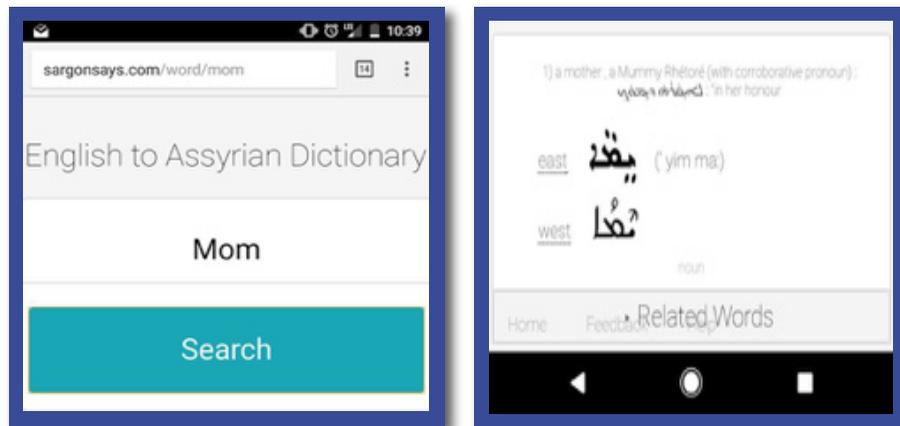
The full episode can be watched at <http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/the-story-of-god-with-morgan-freeman/videos/heaven-and-hell>.



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<https://www.penn.museum/cgi/cuneiform.php>

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of ARCHAEOLOGY and ANTHROPOLOGY

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WRITE LIKE A BABYLONIAN
See your monogram in cuneiform, the way an ancient Babylonian might have written it.

1: Type your full name

2: Type your initials
(maximum 3 letters; do not use periods or spaces)

3: Click inscribe

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Turkey removes Assyrian Sculpture

The Assyrian Lamassu sculpture was removed by Turkish authorities from a public square on January 8, 2017. The sculpture, an Assyrian winged bull known as a Lamassu, was in front of the local council building in Diyarbakir. No explanation has been provided by the Turkish government.

Diyarbakir is home to many Assyrians and is 55 miles north of Mardin and Tur Abdin, the historically Assyrian cities in Turkey.



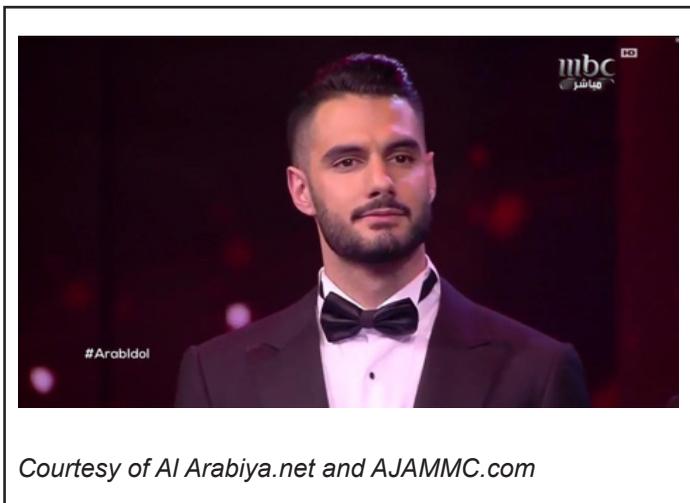
The sculpture was erected by the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), which has many Assyrian members and a strong presence in Diyarbakir. It was removed after Turkey placed unelected government loyalists in charge of the municipality, under the emergency decree issued after the failed military coup in July 2015, which gave sweeping powers to the government. Since the failed coup, Turkey has engaged in a severe crackdown on Kurds in the area, imposing curfews and removing dozens of Kurdish mayors. On November 16, 2016 it removed the only Assyrian mayor in Turkey (AINA 2016-11-17).

Erol Dora, an Assyrian member of the Turkish Parliament from HDP, raised the issue of the sculpture in parliament. He asked the interior minister why the sculpture was removed and what has become of it. No response to his inquiry has been made.

Assyrian Yacoub Shaheen

crowned fourth Arab Idol

“The show’s host confirmed the season 4’s finale had the largest number of votes in all seasons that the show has run. The Arab Idol winner’s prize will include a chance to join the Arab world’s biggest celebrities on the entertainment cruise ship Stars On Board, and a recording contract with Platinum Records.”



Courtesy of Al Arabiya.net and AJAMMC.com

Palestinian contestant **Yacoub Shaheen** has been crowned the fourth Arab Idol as millions tuned in to watch him compete against fellow compatriot Amir Dandan and Yemeni singer Ammar Mohammad.

Shaheen followed in the footsteps of compatriot Mohammed Assaf, the winner of season 2 in 2013, and has become the second Palestinian to win the title. Thousands showed up in Bethlehem where a screen was set up at the Nativity Square.

Syriacs/Assyrians are Christian and church services are conducted in Syriac/Aramaic, a liturgical language related to Aramaic. **Aramaic is an early Semitic language related to modern Arabic, Hebrew, as well as Assyrian, which is the closest modern relative of the language and is also called neo-Aramaic.**

Palestine’s 5,000-strong Assyrian/Syriac Christian community is based primarily in the two neighboring cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. In both cities, there are prominent Assyrian Quarters; in the former, nestled beside the Armenian Quarter and in the latter the Church of the Nativity.

The community traces their roots in Palestine to the final days of the Ottoman Empire in the 1910s and 20s. They originally lived in what is today southeastern Turkey, and were part of the broader Assyrian nation spread between modern Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey.

But the community was targeted for **GENOCIDE** by Ottoman authorities alongside Armenians and Pontic Greeks. Survivors of the massacres were welcomed as refugees in neighboring Arab countries, and hundreds of Assyrians made their homes in Palestine. But the story of Palestine’s Assyrians does not end there.

The creation of Israel in 1948 involved targeted attacks on Palestinians and the mass expulsion of 750,000, among them many Assyrians (in the thousands).

Music has a historic role bringing people from around the world together, and nowhere has Arab Idol’s role unifying fans from across the Middle East been clearer than with Yacoub Shaheen. **He has united Palestinians and Assyrians – two communities both hit by war and displacement – in joy at his success on the international stage.** Whether Shaheen triumphs at Arab Idol in the days to come, the ability of this refugee son’s voice to bring these two disparate nations is a powerful reminder of music’s power to build solidarity.



Yacoub Shaheen reacts after he was announced as the fourth winner of Arab Idol. (MBC)



The Assyrian-Palestinian grew up in Bethlehem and is part of a small community of Assyrians. (MBC)

LANDO VANNATA
VS.
DAVID TEYMUR
(Sweden)
 Live Round-By-Round Coverage



David Teymur, left, and **Lando Vannata** trade blows during their lightweight fight at UFC 209. (John Locher / Associated Press)

David Teymur pulled off the upset! Fighting out of Stockholm, Sweden, the unranked Teymur earned a 30-27 unanimous decision victory over Lando Vannata on all three of the judges' scorecards in a lightweight bout that served as a co-main event for UFC 209 at T-Mobile Arena in Paradise, Nevada, Saturday night, March 4th, 2017

"It was many things that went through my mind, and I don't think everybody believed I was going to win this fight," Teymur said. "I was the underdog, but I proved different. I won this fight. I'm very happy, and also, respect to Lando."

Lando Vannata has generated a lot of interest in short order. First, the now 24-year-old took a fight with top contender Tony Ferguson on short notice and gave Ferguson everything he could handle before falling to a D'Arce choke. Then, he knocked out John Makdessi with a beautiful wheel kick in his next fight, putting the rest of the division on notice. David Teymur is a 5-1 Swedish fighter with KO/TKO wins in both of his UFC fights.

» **Round 1.** Vannata is moving forward but Teymur seems confident in his defense. Vannata hurts Teymur with punches and looks to finish but Teymur survives. Teymur comes back with some hard punches of his own a little bit later and forces Vannata to back off. Vannata lands a hard spinning back kick to the body while missing with a couple other wild kicks. Teymur lands a head kick of his

own. Vannata gets a late takedown but can't get Teymur's back and Teymur returns to the feet. Teymur hurts Vannata with a couple of looping punches late and again swarms on him. That was an exciting and competitive first round. 10-9 Teymur.

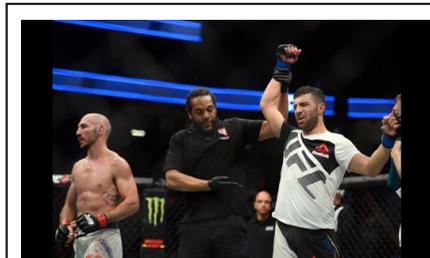
» **Round 2.** Both men connect well with looping punches in an early exchange. The pace continues to be very fast. Teymur pummels Vannata's body with a series of hard knees. Vannata then lands a spinning head kick. Teymur hits Vannata with a stiff superman punch that sends Vannata backwards. Teymur utilizes a series of knees to the body again and then a big punch on the break as well. That was a big round for Teymur. 10-9 Teymur.

» **Round 3.** Teymur mixes his kicks up low and high. He lands a number of knees to the body again. Teymur then connects with a three punch combination to the face. Teymur gets a brief takedown but Vannata pops right back up. Vannata moves in with a big right hand and then another.

Teymur keeps going for takedowns where Vannata will just immediately get back up if he hits the ground. Teymur with a hard kick to the body late.

10-9 Teymur, 30-27 Teymur. Winner: David Teymur, unanimous decision (30-27, 30-27, 30-27).

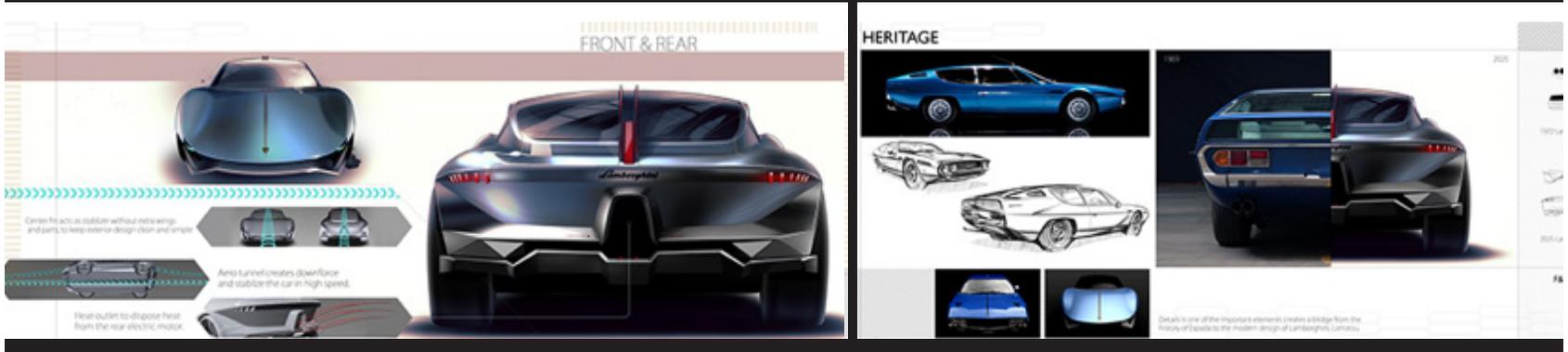
That was a terrific fight. Teymur proved to be a really bad matchup for Vannata. It will be interesting to see how Teymur does against different types of opponents as he moves forward. For Vannata, it's a tough setback. He further cemented his reputation as an exciting fighter to watch but perhaps he doesn't have the competitive upside many thought.



David Teymur (blue gloves) gets his hand raised after winning a unanimous decision over Lando Vannata (red gloves) during their bout at UFC 209 at T-Mobile Arena.

LAMBORGHINI LAMASSU

Courtesy of www.formtrends.com



Alvin Chan imagined the Lamborghini Lamassu shooting brake concept for his final degree show project at Art Center College of Design. Inspired by the fictional lamassu – a winged creature with the body of a lion and the head of a man – the four-passenger concept also drew from Lamborghini's heritage and modern day cars.

Referencing the 1972 Lamborghini Espada as well as the current Huracan and Aventador in its graphical aesthetic, the Lamassu concept's exterior design is heavily focused on aerodynamic attributes, with a central tunnel running over the roof of the car to direct airflow and enhance stability, alleviating the need for additional spoilers.

The basic package is comparable to that of the Ferrari FF, with a front mid-engined package allowing a 2+2 seating configuration on board. The hybrid powered, four-wheel-drive concept measures in at 5000mm in overall length, 2000mm wide and 1400mm tall, making it slightly larger than the Ferrari, while its downsized six-cylinder hybrid powerplant effectively halves the FF's cylinder count – something that's very much on trend.

Targeting the middle-aged male consumer with a median income of \$600,000, Chan used the words sporty, upscale and exclusive to define the vehicle image, with the ultimate intention to appeal to those with an active lifestyle that enjoy driving yet are also keen to take advantage of the benefits of new technologies.

The Lamborghini Lamassu concept takes into account storage and loading options for the active target customer. The rear hatch opens in two parts to allow access to the trunk and the rear seats can be folded down to fit larger items like skis and surfboards. It features two driving modes, one a 'Cruising' mode that emphasizes cabin space and the other coined 'Exciting' mode, which focuses on driving performance.



"Kipteh" (Meatball Stew)

Ingredients

Meatballs:

1 cup jasmine rice
2 lb. ground beef
1/2 cup onions, diced
1/2 cup fresh basil or 1 tbsp dry basil
1/2 cup chopped parsley
1 T. kosher salt
1 tsp. curry powder
1 T. black pepper
1 tsp allspice

Stew:

1/4 cup of vegetable oil
1/4 cup of the fresh basil or tbsp dry basil
1/2 cup onions, diced
2 T. paprika
6 oz. can tomato paste
8 oz. tomato sauce
1 T. kosher salt
1/4 cup jasmine rice
10 cups of water

Method:

Meatballs: Pour 2 cups of water over the rice and allow to soak for 30 minutes. Mix the remaining meatball ingredients. Remove 1/4 cup of rice and add to the meatball mixture. Set the remaining rice and liquid aside to use in the soup. Knead the meatball mixture with your hands and form into 8 large meatballs. Set aside.

Stew: Add oil, onion, and paprika to a 5 qt. Dutch oven. Fry the onions over medium heat, until they are soft. Add tomato paste and the remaining rice, including the water it has been soaking in, to the onions. Add 4 additional cups of water, basil and salt and bring it all to a boil. Carefully drop the meatballs into the soup. Cover and cook, over low heat, for 30 minutes, or until the rice inside of the meatballs are fully cooked.

Variation

You can substitute cracked wheat for rice.



More and more Assyrians are creating videos, blogs, and websites related to Assyrian cooking. In an effort to bring attention to our age-old cuisine and to Assyrian chefs, Nineveh magazine will try to feature one food-related article per issue.

Below is a recipe for "Kipteh" taken from the Assyrian Kitchen (www.assyriankitchen.com), an interactive project based out of Chicago that explores the ingredients and traditions of our ancient Assyrian cuisine.

A mouth-watering meatball stew! Definitely an Assyrian Kitchen favorite. Great as an appetizer or a meal on a cold day. Made with rice or cracked wheat, meat, onions, parsley, etc. and if you're lucky, you can end up with a surprise in the middle....an egg!

COMEDY ASSYRIAN STYLE

by Elizabeth Mickaily-Huber, Ph.D.



V I N C E N T O S H A N A

Thanks to opportunities afforded in western countries, many young Assyrians bring pride to our community by becoming doctors, lawyers, engineers, and so on. Yet, every now and then, we come across Assyrians who are breaking the mold, gaining fame and sometimes fortune in more unusual fields, one such domain being that of comedy. Herein, we feature two young Assyrians, Vincent Oshana and Logan Johnson, who are giving the gift of laughter to thousands of people across the globe.

Vincent Oshana, born in 1979, is an Assyrian actor and comedian best known for his HBO Stand-Up Comedy Set on Russell Simmons's Def Comedy Jam and various roles on Showtime channel's television series The Underground. I had the pleasure of interviewing Vincent to learn more about his life and career in comedy.

A C T O R & C O M E D I A N

Vincent, can you tell us where you were born and from where your family comes?

I was born in Yonkers, New York. My mom and dad are Assyrians from Iran. I don't really know what "tribe" they're from. I know Assyrians like to know that, but I feel that it just creates division among us, so it's not something I focus on. My dad has passed away, but my mom is still going strong.

Where do you live currently?

I live in Hollywood, CA.

Anything unusual or unique you'd like to share with us about yourself?

When I was a kid, my father would invite his friends over. They'd be sitting in the living room in a big circle, drinking tea and eating walnuts. My dad would send me in the middle of the room and would have me tell jokes. That helped me get over any stage fright I may have had as a kid and gave me a love for entertainment.

Do you speak Assyrian? How do your Assyrian origins work their way into your comedy?

I do speak Assyrian. I can even read and write it, although I was better at it when I was growing up and going to Sunday school. My parents were active in the Assyrian community and we'd go to church regularly. I also understand Farsi pretty well, although I can't really speak it.

My Assyrian origins work their way into my comedy because people always want to know who you are and where you're from. Stand-up comedy is one of the most difficult forms of comedy. You've got to relate to the audience quickly and universally. Everybody comes from somewhere, so when you tell them about your background, you're speaking a universal language to which they can relate on some level.

You know, my dad was "Mr. Assyrian". Some people called him "Mr. Nineveh". Because of him and my mom, I feel really bound to and proud of my Assyrian roots. Unfortunately, every now

and then, I feel disappointed when I hear that some Assyrians don't always support me and my work. I want to promote my roots, but we Assyrians need to be united enough to bring one another to the forefront of society, not bring each other down.

What made you decide to do comedy? Who has been influential in your comedy?

My childhood experiences gave me a love for comedy, but I think my biggest influence has been my mother. My mom is one of the funniest, most beautiful, inspirational, loving, amazing people I know. She always knew how to make people laugh no matter what problems they may have had. That's what I'd like to bring to my audience!

How has your family responded to your choice of profession?

Everyone in my family has been really positive about my choice of profession. They like having a celebrity in the family!

Do you write up your own skits or do you have writers?

I write all my skits myself. I even write comedy for others. Comedy comes naturally to me. I always say, "I'm blessed with the curse of comedy" because even when I'm in the worst possible situations, I'm thinking about how I can turn them into something funny. I may be at a funeral feeling sad, but somewhere inside, I'm also thinking about how I could turn it into something that would make people laugh.

What kinds of feedback do you receive from your fans?

Generally, fans and people around me are really positive about my work. Sometimes it gets me down when I hear that an Assyrian here or there doesn't support my comedy. I even had an incident where another Assyrian comedian stole some of my jokes without giving me credit. I don't really understand that kind of mentality. Personally, I'm inspired by the success of others. I don't want to bring people down, I want to build them up. I also

want to make them laugh!

Can you tell us some of the places where you have performed? Also, what's in the pipeline?

I was a regular on the ShowTime program called "The Underground". It's a show that also ran on HBO. I had a part in Joey McIntyre's "The Joey Mac Project".

Coming up, I'll be on MTV's program "Acting Out". Also, I'll be with Kevin Hart on "Comedy Central". I'll be appearing at the "Big Sky Comedy Festival" in Montana, a big venue that showcases up-and-coming comics.

Also in the pipeline is a comedy cooking show I'm working on. I know everybody thinks that their mom is a good cook, but my mom's kipte really are the BEST!

Can you tell us some of your career goals?

I'd really love to get into writing, producing, and directing comedy movies. I also definitely want to keep doing stand-up comedy. Contrary to popular belief, comedians can also have a dark side. Robin William's tragic story is an example of that. Dramatic acting has always been a passion of mine, so I can see myself doing some dramatic roles where I can let that dark side come out to play in a more positive setting.

Any last thoughts you'd like to share with us?

Yes. I'd like to give a bit of advice to Assyrian youth out there:

It's up to you to change the world. Remember, there's a solution to everything, you just have to find it. Young Assyrians, unite! Support one another so that we can move forward as a community and as a people. Lift each other up, move each other forward. The entertainment industry wants diversity, there's no reason why we can't be part of that diversity if we just stay united - we can put Assyrians on the world map.

Logan (Pithyou) Johnson



Logan (Pithyou) Johnson

is one of the main members of the Assyrian Comedy Club. Therein, you'll find a host of videos and memes that are sure to put a smile on your face and maybe even make you Laugh Out Loud (LOL).

Logan, how many people compose the Assyrian Comedy Club crew?

We have about 7 people who work as administrators on the Assyrian Comedy Club page. Myself and two others mainly do the videos, and the rest do all the other content such as the memes and status updates.

Where do you all live currently?

I was born in Iraq and we moved to New Zealand in 1989 when I was just a little kid. I lived there for about 24 years, then about 2 years ago I moved to Sydney, Australia.

All of the Assyrian Comedy Club Crew is now in Sydney, Australia. We have one member, my brother, who is in New Zealand.

Anything unusual or unique you'd like to share with us about yourself?

If there's anything strange or unique about me, it has probably got nothing to do with comedy, but I cut my own hair. I've been cutting my own hair for about 10 years. I've only probably been to the barber 2 or 3 times in the past 10 years. That's something unique that not many people know about me.

How do your Assyrian origins work their way into your comedy?

Being Assyrian and doing comedy pretty much go hand-in-hand because living in a western country where the lifestyle and mannerisms are totally different from what we are accustomed to back in our country. As Assyrians living in a western country, some of the traditions and values that we uphold, are pretty comedic from a western perspective and vice versa. So, when you put the two together, you're guaranteed to have a bit of a laugh.

What made you decide to do comedy?

I'm not sure where it came from. My family has always been interested in comedy. Sometimes, we'd be sitting down and be bored so we'd start making fun of things that we'd see on TV. We'd start imitating different personalities and different advertisements. We'd take these imitations to school and present them to our school mates, and most of them would find them funny. So, I guess that's where it started.

Who has been influential in your comedy?

That's a very interesting question. The biggest influence on me as an Assyrian would probably be Samir Bahi and the Ashur Drama group. I remember as kids we would watch their videos

and we'd have a genuine laugh. All my family and friends were very fond of the Ashur Drama Club.

Do you write up your own skits?

Yes and no. Most of the skits that we do, we write ourselves. There are probably about 2 or 3 skits that were translated into Assyrian from a video that was originally performed by Abbott and Costello and we made it into an Assyrian act. Otherwise, most of the other material, if I remember correctly we have written ourselves.

What kinds of feedback do you receive from your fans?

The feedback is pretty good, probably about 99% positive. Sometimes we'll get the odd 1% criticism but we're always gonna expect that. There's nothing you can do about it. I guess it just means that you're doing something well if 99% is satisfied.

What made you choose Facebook as the primary source of distribution of your comedy?

It was all by accident. I chose Facebook over YouTube mainly because we started up a page and it was supposed to be specifically for memes. That is, picture comedy. After that I put together a video that I thought was relatively funny. I thought, if I get too much criticism or negative feedback, then I'm just gonna delete it.

I was at work at the time and my phone just kept vibrating and vibrating, and it was all these shares, comments, and likes. So it sort of went viral within the Assyrian community and ever since that moment, people wanted me to follow up that video with more videos. So I put together more videos and it kind of all kind of happened by accident to be honest.

We haven't really looked at expanding because I see this more as a hobby than as a career at this stage. That's why we haven't really expanded onto any other platforms such as YouTube or Instagram or SnapChat, but maybe in the future, when I get more serious about this, then I'll definitely take it to the next level.

Any last thoughts you'd like to share with us?

I'd like to give a special ShoutOut to Nineveh magazine for giving us this opportunity to share our comedy endeavors. I look forward to reading your magazine.

<https://www.facebook.com/Assyri-ancomedyclub>



Art by Sargon Maraha



Art By Moussa Malki

FATHER COLUMBA STEWART

The Monk Who Saves Manuscripts From ISIS

- Courtesy of TheAtlantic.com



Why a Christian wants to rescue Islamic artifacts

Father Columba Stewart inspects an ancient manuscript as a Syriac monk looks on at St. Mark's Syrian Orthodox Monastery in Jerusalem.

Rescuing the world's most precious antiquities from destruction is a painstaking project—and a Benedictine monk may seem like an unlikely person to lead the charge. But Father Columba Stewart is determined. Soft-spoken, dressed in flowing black robes, this 59-year-old American has spent the past 13 years roaming from the Balkans to the Middle East in an effort to save Christian and Islamic manuscripts threatened by wars, theft, weather—and, lately, the Islamic State.

“Given what’s happened in the last years since the rise of ISIS, it’s very clear that things are really endangered,” Stewart said. “It’s imperative to make sure that these manuscripts are safe, because we don’t know what will happen to them.”

Why ISIS Killed an Antiquities Scholar

As ISIS militants have destroyed countless artifacts, Stewart has attempted to counter them by working with Christian and Muslim communities in hotspots such as Iraq and Syria. He has trained local teams to photograph centuries-old books with the help of the non-profit organization he directs, the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML). Based out of Saint John's Abbey and University

in Collegeville, Minnesota, HMML is dedicated to preserving endangered manuscripts on microfilm and in digital format. So far, it has managed to photograph more than 140,000 complete manuscripts, for a total of more than 50,000,000 handwritten pages, according to the organization's website. But digitization is only the last stage in a slow and sometimes frustrating process. Getting in touch with the various religious orders, cultural organizations, and families that hold manuscript collections can require years of traveling and a lot of diplomacy aimed at gaining trust—with no guarantee of a positive outcome.

Many of the communities Stewart approaches have been scarred by years of war, persecution or displacement, and are wary of outsiders. Some are especially skeptical about granting

Westerners access to cultural treasures, given the tens of thousands of manuscripts looted during the colonial period and now housed in various museums and libraries around Europe. This is where Stewart's reputation as a monk comes into play.

"Everybody knows about the Benedictines—manuscripts and learning, this is part of our identity, a brand which is somehow universal," he said. Indeed, his involvement with manuscripts began almost accidentally when, in 2003, he was asked to join an HMML preparatory field trip to Lebanon due to his monastic connections. "Being a monk puts me in a very different category. People understand I am not representing a big business or an imperialist cultural agency."

Also crucial to this understanding is HMML's policy of training local people, who keep total physical control of the manuscripts. "We never touch the manuscripts," Stewart explained. "They are the ones doing the work and getting paid for it. They feel proud because they can say 'We did this,' which is true."

Technician Shaima Budeiry digitizes a manuscript in Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem, where HMML has been digitizing four Islamic and Christian collections, the process is handled by Shaima Budeiry, who studied manuscript preservation in Dubai. She has spent the past several years photographing thousands of pages, including those of her family's private collection.

"I feel very proud of what I am doing," she said, showing me a beautiful manuscript decorated with gold, owned by the Budeiry Library. She wore gloves

to avoid damaging the delicate pages. "I like this job because this collection belongs to my ancestors."

Stewart visits Jerusalem yearly, and it was there that I recently observed him meeting with stern Orthodox Syrian monks, influential Armenian patriarchs, and cosmopolitan Palestinian families. One morning, as the sun shone on the domes of the minarets of the Old City, I followed him through the narrow alleys of the souq. Stopping in front of an iron door surmounted by a stone arch, he entered the gate of St. Mark's Syrian Orthodox Monastery. A group

"Being a monk puts me in a very different category. People understand I am not representing a big business or an imperialist cultural agency."

of monks sitting around a white plastic table greeted him warmly. After some small talk and a few sips of cardamom coffee, a frail, bearded man led him upstairs into a dusty room. Waiting in wooden cabinets were rows of priceless manuscripts dating back to the sixth century.

Columba visits with the monks at St. Mark's Syrian Orthodox Monastery

Stewart carefully opened one manuscript, lingering over the elegant calligraphy of its yellowed pages. It was written in Syriac, an ancient Middle Eastern language. "Isn't it beautiful?"

he said.

Many Syriac Christians have been persecuted and forced to flee their homes in Syria and Iraq in recent years. Their manuscripts are one of the remaining embodiments of their cultural identity. So, when Stewart approached the monastery in 2011, the monks saw him as a chance to save their history. "These books were left by our Holy Fathers," explained Shimon Çan, the 65-year-old librarian, calligrapher, and amanuensis of St. Mark's, and one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the digitization project. "It is our duty to open these treasures to the world and let our youngsters understand the wisdom they exude."

Dealing continuously with the worries of such endangered communities can be emotionally draining. By sunset, Stewart's energy was starting to wane. "I am almost 60 and I won't be doing this when I will be 70," he told me. "Everybody knows about the Benedictines—manuscripts and learning, this is part of our identity."

Under Stewart's direction, HMML has expanded its activities to India, where it recently photographed 10,000 palm-leaf manuscripts, and to Ethiopia, where it digitized the Garima Gospels, believed to be the oldest surviving Ethiopian manuscripts. The organization has also worked in Middle Eastern countries like Egypt, Lebanon, and Turkey, photographing thousands of manuscripts of all confessions and languages, from Coptic to Maronite and from Greek to Latin.

In 2013, the organization decided to start digitizing Islamic material as well. In Mali, HMML is currently digitizing more than 300,000 Islamic manuscripts, which risked being destroyed

when Islamists associated with al-Qaeda took over the city of Timbuktu in 2012.

With the rise of ISIS, 2,000 out of the 6,000 manuscripts that HMML managed to digitize in Iraq between 2009 and 2014 have been lost or destroyed. Other manuscripts digitized in Syria may have suffered the same fate.

"I try not to think about that, because if I do I get really upset," Stewart said. "But it would be more painful if I heard of something that was destroyed that we didn't photograph, because that would be totally lost."

Shimon Can, the monk responsible for the library at St. Mark's Syrian Orthodox Monastery, gazes at one of its manuscripts. While making digital surrogates of manuscripts can be fairly easy, preserving the originals from physical deterioration is a whole different matter. Because old pages are vulnerable to mold, worms, and insects, manuscripts have to be wrapped and stored in acid-free papers and cartons, sometimes in a climatized environment free of excessive humidity. Once a manuscript becomes seriously damaged, restoring it is a costly process. "We recently spent \$70,000 to restore around 100 manuscripts," lamented Khader Salameh, the septuagenarian librarian of the al-Khalidi Library in Jerusalem, where a collection of 1,200 Islamic, Ottoman, and Persian manuscripts is currently being digitized by HMML. The works span the gamut from medicine to astronomy, from Quranic exegesis to philosophy and poetry. The oldest manuscript, a text on early Islamic history, dates back to the 10th century.

"Although most of the manuscripts are connected with the Islamic religion,

they also make you also understand the culture of the society at the time they were written," Salameh said.

"These works do not belong only to Arabs, Muslims or Palestinians. They are a heritage for everyone in the world."

Stewart examines a religious item he hopes to procure for HMML's museum in Minnesota.

Stewart, whose ultimate goal is to create the single most comprehensive collection of digitized manuscript material, knows that the main beneficiaries will be scholars. But he also hopes that the collection can contribute

"It is our duty to open these treasures to the world and let our youngsters understand the wisdom they exude."

to a better understanding between Christians and Muslims.

"If we don't find deeper affinities, we will always be stuck on our superficial differences. We will remain afraid and suspicious of each other," Stewart said. "Relations were not always easy in the past, but if we learn from places where they lived together, we might learn how to live together."



Art by Moussa Malki

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CELEBRATING AKITU 6767, ASSYRIAN NEW YEAR IN SAN JOSE

Arranged by Assyrian American Association of San Jose, CA, March 25th, 2017

Children's Dance group, taught and managed by Monika Malekdavoud and Joseph Adeh.



‘Priceless’ ancient artefacts found hidden in Isil commander’s house in Mosul

The Telegraph, UK

Iraqi soldier surveys the damage to the ancient site of Nimrud after recapturing the area from Islamic State militants

Iraqi authorities have found more than 100 “priceless” Assyrian artefacts plundered from ancient ruins hidden in an Islamic State leader’s house in Mosul. The discovery was made in the Az-Zirai neighbourhood in eastern Mosul, which the special forces troops recently recaptured from Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil).

Photographs released by the National Security Service on Thursday show more than a dozen clay pots, a handful of large vases, “Palace Ware” pottery and a hand mill, among other smaller pieces.

Historians and archaeologists have confirmed the objects date back thousands of years to the Assyrian Empire.



Assyrian artifacts discovered in an Isil commander’s house in Mosul.

They said they were almost certainly dug up from the nearby Nineveh Ruins site as well as Nimrud - the Assyrian Empire’s ancient capital - which was under the control of Isil militants for two years until the site was liberated in November.

A selection of the relics found in a home in Mosul. Nimrud was a capital of the Assyrians, one of the ancient world's earliest and most ferocious empires. Known at the time as Kalhu, the city was the seat of power from 879-709 BC, an era when Assyrian armies expanded out across the Levant. It was first excavated in 1945 by a British-Assyrian team, which described it as the most beautiful site in the Middle East.

"During a tour of homes in the former Christian area of Mosul, the army received a tip off from a local resident," Talib al-Maa'mari, an Iraqi parliament member, told reporters.

"When the special forces searched this one house, which was being used by an ISIS emir, we were surprised to find many priceless artefacts. But one in particular is very special - it was quite an incredible find."

Commenting on the haul, Prof Eleanor Robson, chair of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq, told the Telegraph: "They are genuine Assyrian antiquities. Now we can be confident that excellent staff are on the case." Isis documents found in the abandoned house show the Islamist group kept a record of each of the items, along with an estimated price each relic could reach. The presumption is the jihadists intended to sell the pieces but were interrupted before they could do so.



"Isil is thought to have made tens of millions of dollars off black market sales of antiquities throughout both Iraq and Syria."

An Isil militant uses a sledgehammer to destroy a several thousand years old stone.

For years Isil has been smuggling genuine, as well as fake, artefacts out of Iraq through their territory in Syria and out through the Turkish border at the Bab al-Hawa crossing.

Since its capture of Mosul in 2014, Isil is thought to have made tens of millions of dollars off black market sales of antiquities throughout both Iraq and Syria, while at the same time destroying numerous archaeological treasures from places such as Nimrud and Palmyra.

The militants' fanaticism devastated Nimrud - one of the most important archaeological sites in the Middle East.

They boasted of the destruction in high-definition video propaganda, touting their campaign to purge their self-declared "caliphate" of anything they deemed pagan or heretical.

Archaeologists who have visited Nimrud since it has fallen back into the hands of the Iraqi authorities say around 60 per cent of the site is irrecoverable.

EARLY ASSYRIAN MUSIC RECORDS

by Elizabeth Mickaily-Huber, Ph.D.

Moneer Cherie (pictured below), an Assyrian from Iran, has compiled an extensive collection of records from the period of the reign of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the last Shah of Iran. According to Mr. Cherie, Assyrian music flourished in Iran from 1941 to 1979, corresponding to the secular Shah's regime.



In his article, he explains that one of the main difficulties involved in creating such a collection is the fact that the Assyrian people have no national music archive, as most countries have. As a result, Mr. Cherie needed to perform substantial research and to create a collection from nothing. The singers /recordings that he showcases in his article are true pioneers of the Assyrian music of Iran from the last century.



Artists such as Robert Ibrahimy, Lilli Teymourazi, Sankhiro Khofri, and Shamiram Issabey are among those featured. The article also provides links whereby the music can be heard or sampled. To read the entire article and to view the beautiful record sleeves collected by Moneer Cherie, please view:

<http://qeenatha.com/blog/early-assyrian-music-records-from-iran/>



Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran

Early Assyrian Music Records from Iran

Compiled & Written by -
Moneer Cherie
www.qeenatha.com

During the reign of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, or better known as the Shah of Iran, Assyrian music flourished in that country. He was secular, pro- modernization and pro-secularization. He reigned from 1941 to 1979.

In this presentation, I will be showcasing some of the most iconic records released during that period. This is a glimpse into the beautiful music that came out in Iran, we still don't know what else is out there waiting to be discovered. My information is based on the actual records that I have been able to obtain either as hard copies or as digital copies. All with the help of a small network of friends including Abboud Zeitoune, and the internet.

When it came to researching early Assyrian records in general, the first hurdle we faced was, as Assyrians we don't have a music archive, a national archive that we can tap into and utilize to learn and expand our knowledge, so we had to build our own collection from Zero, and then begun to understand what is really out there, and what has our pioneer singers and musicians produced. Recorded Assyrian music has now passed the 100 years mark, but the search continuous and who knows

what old records are still waiting to be discovered.

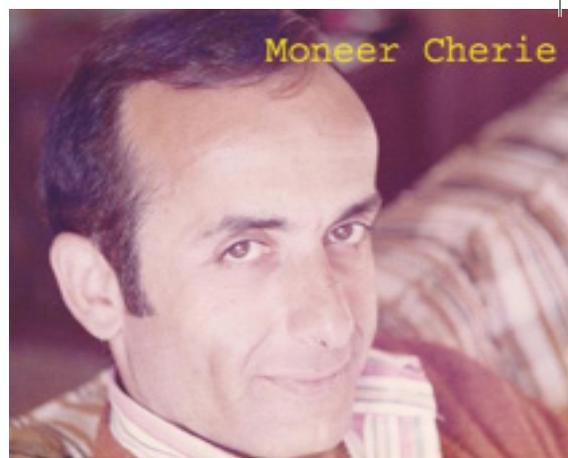
The records on this page are listed according to the years they were released in, or at least the years we think they were released in, as we have not been able to find any record-catalogs from Iran which can help us date them more accurately.

This EP record with its original photo-sleeve was released in Iran in 1961 by Lilli Tamraz (standing in the b/w photo on the left of her Shami-ram group which she managed), She was the project Manager of this EP too, and she wrote the lyrics of three songs on it, Music was Folkloric. (EP stands for Extended Play), since most records had only two songs, these EPs contained four songs. The fourth song was written & music by Edison. This EP was released



on Royal Label, RT- 2415, the four songs were titled 1-Go Karmane sung by Shamiran group 2-Aman Amaneh sung by Edison 3-Hury Pary sung by Shamiram group 4-Yemi sung by Edison.

This record was released by Sankhiro Khofri in Iran in 1964, originally released on Royal Label, RT 1464 (the blue), but then re-released on Froushgah Karoun (the white on right) N#5193, two songs titled:



1-Rozana: Lyrics by Shmuel Benyamin, Music by Asarhaddon 2-Kalu: Lyrics & Music by Asarhaddon Khofri.

Valodiya Ossiboff released this record in 1965, it was released on Foroushgah Karoun label #309, had two Assyrian songs 1-Nineveh written by William Daniel 2-Mokhepta Diyi, it came in this Assyrian pocket Sleeve, with a text caption describing the Ancient Assyrian capital city



of Nineveh.

Simon Issa released this single in 1965 on Monogram Label with two songs, #4141, written by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vania David 1-Yimma 2-Qessat D Prashta. No sleeve has been located for this record yet.

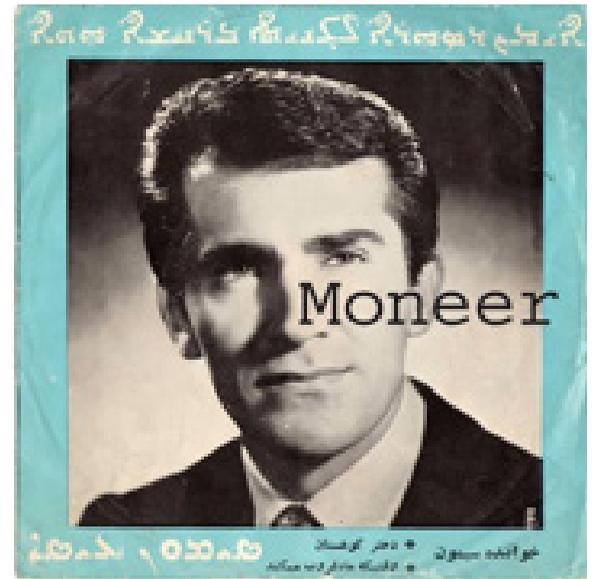
Narmella released her only Assyrian single in 1966, it was released on Iran Gram Label (Yellow) IG 168, then it was re-released on another Iran Gram Label but with a different design 61-IG-168 (light blue), her two Assyrian songs were 1- Shara 2-Brata Shaperta, music: Armenian. As for the photo cover, this was one of her many singles in Farsi, this one was released with the Assyrian

singer Edmond Ternian (both songs were in Farsi released in 1970). No Sleeve has been located for the Assyrian single record.



Shamiran Issaby released this record in 1966 with two Assyrian songs
 1- Taliboota Lyrics & Music by Venis
 2-Palga d Leleh written by Simon Amirkhas, Music by Misha Ashourian. Shamiran Issaby is the wife of late Nebu Issabey the well know music composer and director from Iran who lived in California, his son is the famous music composer and arranger Tiqlat Issabey. The record was released on IranGram, IG-197 (yellow), then re-released on another IranGram Label with different label design, 61-IG-187, no sleeve has been located for this record, (incl. photo of singer).

It was released on Eilbera Label, MT-141.



Darusi Saatloo released this record in 1966 on Royal Label RT-1272, and it was also re-released as an EP on "Oriental" Label with AR-922 number, which is a number I associate with Ahang e Rooz Label? Royal record came with two Assyrian songs both Lyrics & Music by Victor Khodobakhsh; 1-Marya 2 Brated Kokheh, this single was later re-released (for the third time) in US on a Label called "Assyrian Records" in Hollywood California (not showing here).



This record was released by Simon Issa in 1967 with two songs titled 1-Yale W Bnateh 2-Prashta, Lyrics written by Daniel and Music by Sooren Alexander. Record was released on IranGram Label, 62-IG-836, and no Sleeve has been located for this record yet.



Freidon Bet Oshana released this EP in 1971 with a Royal label, serial number RT-1984, which means this was probably released on Royal label, this version was sold by Foroughgah Karoun. Record came with three songs 1-Brata d Umta 2-Bakhcha D Wardeh 3-Khigga d Sheshta, All Lyrics written by Albert Iwas, music arranged by Misha Ashourian. Evin Agassi and his early Music Record Singles.

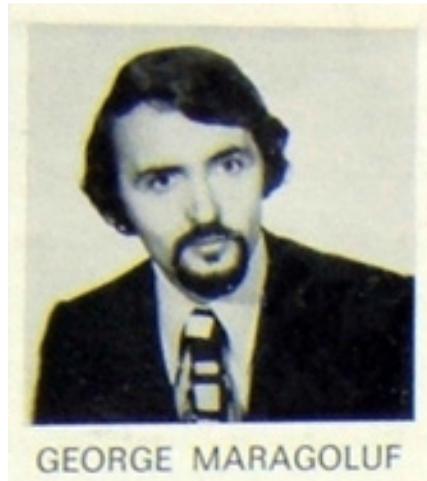


This record was released by Simon Issa in 1968 and it came with a beautiful Photo Sleeve, the two tracks in this record were titled 1-Brata d Turaneh 2-Iman Sahra b Gnet, both written by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vania David.

Robert Ibrahimy released this record in 1973 on Royal Label, RT-2689, in Iran with two Assyrian songs titled 1-Rumyateh Qineh 2-Al Ayna. Lyrics by Misha Ashourian Music by Vania David for both songs. This single came with a beautiful photo sleeve.

George Sarvanus released this record in 1973 on S.A.D Label, I don't have any information about this Label, the record has two songs 1-Ramina 2-Youma Mitrana (Rainy day) Lyrics by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vania David for both songs. And this record came with a beautiful photo sleeve as well.

shown here. (incl. photo of singer).



GEORGE MARAGOLUF

Shlimon Bet Shmuel was forced by the Iraqi regime to leave Iraq, and entered Iran on the hope of immigrating to the west, and while being in Iran he released this single record in 1974 containing the immortal song of Semeleh, written by Dinkha Esha and Music by Shlimon Bet Shmuel, the song commemorate the Genocide committed by the Iraqi Army against the Assyrian civilians living in the Semeleh region of Iraq. This music project was financed by the Assyrian Iranian Federation and released on a privately produced Label. Later a 2nd version of this song was remastered and released in USA.

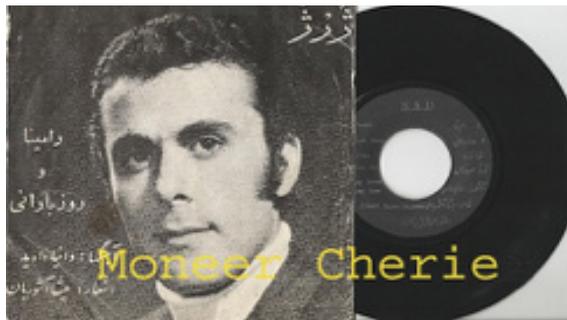
Simon Issa in 1975 released dual-singles in a foldout pocket-Sleeve, it was released on Royal Label, RT-2474, The four Songs were titled 1-Qasra d Matleh 2-Libba D Yimma 3-Kalo D Dashta (feat.Mariam Amirian) 4-Aywateh Metraneh. All Lyrics were written by Misha Ashou-

rian and Music by Vania David. and came with its original photo Sleeve.

Gewargis (George) Munaphy released this record in 1977 with the participation and assistance of the Assyrian Folkloric group of Ashoor, with their logo on record as a "Label". Record came with two songs 1-Bidayet at Bidayet, Lyrics written by Isho, and Music by Vanid David and 2-Tera D Yamateh Lyrics written by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vania David.



This Single was released with two songs one sung by Clara Nassara & Robert Ibrahimy, and the other sung by Simon Issa, the record was released in 1975 on "Stereo" label, Number 130, Clara & Robert song is titled 1-Bet Tpaqta written by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vania David. Simon Issa song is titled: Kumra, Lyrics written by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vania David.



Robert Ibrahimy and Clara Nassara (later: Shino), released this record in 1974 on Ashur Gram Label, with two duet songs titled 1-Lina d Khamra Lyrics Iramia Sliwa Music by Vania David 2-Brata ta Tlubli, Lyrics by Iramia Sliwa Music by Vania David. This is the original Sleeve showing both sides.

George Maragoluf released this single in 1974 on a Label named (Stereo), N#1601, with two songs titled 1-Youmaneh Khedyeh 2-Marza d Yamatha Lyrics written by Misha Ashourian and Music by Vanida David for both tracks. Both record sides

I hope you have enjoyed this short Journey into early Assyrian records and songs from Iran, after all music is part of our culture and heritage, and it has to be collected and preserved for us, and for our future generation, hope to see you in my next presentation.

To sample and hear some of this beautiful Assyrian music, please visit:

<http://qeenatha.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/13-Simon-Issa-Kalo-d-dashta-feat.-Maryam-Amiryian.mp3>

<http://qeenatha.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/14-Robert-Ibrahimy-Clara-Nasara-Brata-Ta-Tlubli.mp3>

<http://qeenatha.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/8-Prashta-simon-issa.mp3>

<http://qeenatha.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/5-Shara-Narmella.mp3>

<http://qeenatha.com/blog/tag/assyrianmusic/>

Courtesy of Modesto Bee

Council names Amirfar as Turlock, CA Police Chief



With hugs from his family, warm words from a pastor and a unanimous vote by the Turlock City Council, 26-year department veteran Nino Amirfar took his post as chief of the [Turlock Police Department](#).

A swearing-in ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at the Assyrian American Civic Club, 2618 N. Golden State Blvd., Turlock, for Amirfar, who has been acting police chief since Robert Jackson stepped aside in August.

Amirfar bested a field of 38 candidates in an extensive selection process. A mix of union leaders, community members, city department heads and council members winnowed the list to 15, screened by City Manager Gary Hampton, a former Turlock police chief, down to eight. Those eight were interviewed by a panel of business, school, faith and civic leaders, as well as police from other cities, with the top three getting further scrutiny by Hampton and a final choice by the council.

Tuesday's vote followed an endorsement by the Rev. George Shahbaz of the [United Assyrian Evangelical Church](#). "I see him as a man of steel. He stands there, always sure of what he's doing, and not only the Assyrian community but the Turlock community can be proud of such a man," Shahbaz said of Amirfar.

Mayor Gary Soiseth noted he was a Turlock High student when he met Amirfar, then serving as a school resource officer.

78The number of sworn officers in Turlock. The Police Department also has 71 civilian employees.

"I have loved Turlock since the first day I was brought up here by my mother and father for our Assyrian conventions," Amirfar said after his appointment. "It's an honor to stand here before you and say thank you. I will not let you down."

The new chief stressed that he supports community and police working together. "This community's continued vibrancy and the quality of life we all enjoy is our priority. You are the Police Department and the Police Department is you. That's what we're here for. We're just human beings, doing the work our community asks us to do," Amirfar said.

He credited community policing for sharp declines in burglaries and low-level offenses across the city in 2016, in a separate presentation of the year's crime statistics. A 12 percent rise in reports taken and faster response to complaints came from a higher priority on customer service, he said.



“YOU ARE THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IS YOU. THAT’S WHAT WE’RE HERE FOR. WE’RE JUST HUMAN BEINGS, DOING THE WORK OUR COMMUNITY ASKS US TO DO.”

- New Police Chief Nino Amirfar

Vehicle thefts overall went up 5 percent but dropped dramatically – 25 percent – for holiday shoppers in the city’s retail hub, Monte Vista Crossings, as the department responded to merchant complaints, Amirfar said.

“Outstanding. As we look toward bringing businesses here and economic development, business people are going to hear about this and understand,” Councilwoman Amy Bublak said. “That’s a real positive.”

Top-tier crimes, though few, rose in 2016. The city had seven homicides, up from two in 2015, and 22 rapes were reported last year, up from 17 in 2015.

Reached later, Amirfar said the homicides showed no trends. In March a woman was stabbed during a fight over a phone. One man was shot by another with no known motive in April. A road-rage incident escalated in May. A June drug bust by Modesto officers went sideways in Turlock. And on the list went, only one believed gang-related, a drive-by shooting in October.

“Unfortunately, homicides is one of those crimes that’s emotionally based and opportunity based. There’s no way to predict that,” Amirfar said. The 5 percent rise in rapes, he said, included more cases where the victim and suspect knew each other, and the department has provided training on staying safe in gatherings with alcohol.

“You see those areas of reduction (in lower-level crimes). There, we can take a proactive approach, use predictive policing. There is just no way that I know of to predict homicides,” he said.

Turlock Fire Chief Robert Talloni reported department statistics for the previous month. Since Dec. 13, fire crews were called out 846 times, a 20 percent year-over-year increase. The calls included 27 injury accidents and seven structure fires, one being a heater/air conditioner fire that temporarily closed the McDonald’s area of Wal-Mart. The majority of calls, 57 percent, were medical emergencies.

ASSYRIANS EXCLUDED FROM IRAQ'S RECONSTRUCTION PLANS

Christians are being excluded from the reconstruction plans for northern Iraq, further eroding the likelihood of their return once Islamic State has been militarily defeated there, an alliance of UK-based charities has warned. **Iraqi Christians firmly believe that Iraq is their spiritual homeland; their presence dates back at least to the 3rd Century.** Before 2003, there were approximately 1.5 million Christians in Iraq, but estimates now range from 200,000 to 500,000.

Approximately 70% of Iraq's Christians are from the Chaldean Catholic tradition, while the remainder are Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Armenian and Protestant.

After the Allied invasion of Iraq, many Christians fled the Baghdad area for the north, where some towns (such as Qaraqosh) had been almost 95% Christian before 2003. **It's estimated that at the time Mosul was invaded by Islamic State in June 2014, only about 3,000 Christians were left from the 35,000 there in 2003.**

Now the UK coalition of mainly Christian charities work-

ing in Iraq and Syria says it's "clear" that leaders of religious minority communities are being excluded from the National Settlement plan being put together by Iraq and other regional powers and presented to the UN. The 88-page report, *Ensuring Equality*, which brought together contributions from 16 NGOs, adds that it is vital that Christians and other minority populations have support for their political and security concerns if they are to feel reassured enough to return to Mosul or the surrounding Nineveh Plains region, rebuild their communities and undertake any reconciliation process.

"This must include full citizenship status and the rebuilding of churches and community centres," says the report.

Participating charities have repeated the oft-reported claim that Christians are not being supported by the international donor institutions, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and are having to rely on

churches that are trying to run their own aid programmes with limited funds.

The NGOs who contributed include Aid to the Church in Need, the Assyrian Church of the East Relief Fund, the Syrian Network for Human Rights, Syrian Christians for Peace, the Evangelical Christian Alliance Church in Lebanon and the Alliance Church of Jordan.

"All the NGOs involved in this report state that the vast majority of Christians and other 'minorities' avoid UNHCR camps and facilities because



Christian refugees in a camp internally displaced people in a church yard in Erbil, Iraq (September, 2014)

of continuing discrimination and persecution,” the report says, adding: “It is utterly unacceptable that a place of sanctuary should be a place of fear that repels those it is designed to save and protect.”

However, it says that those who remain outside UNHCR camps “have fared ... unequally in the allocation of international aid, funding, political support, media attention, and asylum placements”.

The report urges the UNHCR to scrap its “need not creed” approach and acknowledge minorities’ particular experiences. It calls on the UNHCR to open more mobile registration units to enable asylum-seekers outside UN camps -- who tend to be non-Muslims -- to register. It also urges the UNHCR to employ more non-Muslim registration and security staff, and translators, to reduce discrimination against non-Muslims. It recommends that Western governments giving aid should promote tolerance of minorities by objecting to materials or media outlets that promote extremism, and says the UNHCR should give converts from Islam to Christianity urgent protection, because they “face a high risk of assassination -- even at the hands of fellow migrants in Europe”.

The report also recommends that the Balkan states that have expressed a desire to take Christian refugees as part of their “EU allocation” should be helped to do so. **“At present this is being undermined by pressure and threats from Germany and the dead hand of political correctness,”** it claims.

A similar call for more international aid was issued this week by a 14-member delegation of church leaders, who visited Baghdad and Erbil. The group, brought together by the World Council of Churches, met officials from the Baghdad and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the UN. After a briefing from the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator in Iraq, Rev. Frank Chikane, moderator of the WCC’s Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, said: “The international donor support is woefully inadequate to meet the continuing need, leaving the host communities and the KRG to carry the burden on their own.” In the Kremlin, the Russian Foreign Minister on Wednesday (25 Jan.) accused the European Union of “avoid[ing] the discussion on the problems of Christians in the Middle East [by] putting itself under the infamous mask of political correctness”.

Meanwhile the AI-Monitor news website reported last month that the viability of the project for Iraqi national reconciliation, outlined in December in the “national settlement” document, is threatened by its exclusion of the country’s minority populations, such as its Assyrian Christians.

One of Iraq’s few Christian MPs, Yonandam Kanna, sec-

retary-general of the Assyrian Democratic Movement, told the website that the settlement did not include any clause determining the fate of disputed minority areas, control of which is sought by Arab Iraq and the semi-autonomous Kurdish region -- such as the Nineveh Plains for the Christians and Shabaks.

He added: “Minorities do not have a say in this and they are not even allowed to determine their own fate. The settlement does not take into account the views of Christians or Yazidis, or any other less influential minority groups.”

Mr. Kanna has previously criticised the national reconciliation projects put forward by the larger political groups for failing to provide guarantees that people who have committed atrocities against minorities, such as Yazidis and Christians, would be brought to justice.

Another Christian Iraqi MP told a conference in Washington DC last summer that the Iraqi Parliament “does not take minorities into account”.

Global charity Open Doors, with others, has produced a detailed report on the vital contribution that Christians make in Iraq (and Syria). The report’s co-ordinator Rami* (not his real name) said: “We need recognition for the vital role of the Church in rebuilding and reconciliation... Maintaining the presence of Christians is not only about them; it is for the good of society as a whole. In the reports and research we’ve conducted, we have mapped, in a way, all the contributions Christians have given to Iraq.”

The report begins: **“When Christianity spread across what we now call the Middle East and we see that since then until now Christians have contributed to societies in literacy, in health, in translating and contributing to the Arabic language. Some of the best early centres of learning in the world were founded by Christians. Christians were among the first to introduce charitable works and NGOs. We see them involved in politics, and in the development of the Iraqi state. Christians are among the most well-known business people. And in the future Christians, alongside other numerical minorities, are vitally important for the stability of [Iraq]. Policy-makers and researchers agree that we need to maintain diversity in order to counter extremism and radicalisation. We need diversity to ensure sustainable peace and lasting stability in the Middle East.”**

The way that Open Doors is tackling these issues, Rami told World Watch Monitor in November, involves working with indigenous church leaders, engaging with governments and decision-makers across the globe, and trying to collect One Million Voices in a petition in support of a campaign to bring **“Hope to the Middle East”**.

Indigenous people are threatened in Iraq

- By Kara Hermez and Bernadet Lazar Mati, Sweden

Iraq once consisted of many different ethnic groups, but since the 2003 invasion it has become a polarized and sectarian state where indigenous peoples and minorities' rights are threatened. That Jews once lived in the country is but a memory, and the Mandaeans who have lived there for thousands of years have been practically wiped out as a result of persecution. Now the remaining indigenous peoples and minorities continue to disappear from the country.

In Nahla valley in northern Iraq are seven Assyrian villages surrounded by mountains and greenery. The nature in the area is dominated by grapevines, pomegranate and fig trees. The people who live here belong to one of the world's indigenous peoples. They are a welcoming people who are happy to share their stories over a cup of tea and homemade yoghurt and cheese. But there is a problem that is affecting the villagers, and they constantly talk about it as they worry.

One of the biggest challenges that confronts the indigenous peoples

and minorities, such as Assyrians and Yezidis, is the systematic confiscation of land. The oppression they must endure under the rule of the Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq creates a deep concern about the very future of these groups. The economy in the Kurdish parts of northern Iraq in recent years has flourished, partly due to various development projects such as constructing roads and airports. Assyrians in the area argue that this development comes at their expense, and that of other minorities who are often forced to leave their land for the benefit of these development projects.

On April 13 this year, Assyrians from the Nahla Valley organized a demonstration against the land confiscation. The human rights organization Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that thousands of protesters were prevented from participating in the demonstration by Kurdish security forces who blocked the roads into Erbil. 23-year-old Sargon took part in the planned demonstration.

- I feel frustrated with the situation.



The people who are trying to confiscate our land is cousins with Masoud Barzani [president of the Kurdistan Regional Government], and therefore no one listens to us. We don't know what to do.

KaraOchBernadet1: Many have hoisted the flag in the Assyrian villages of Nahla as a protest against land confiscations.





According to the report by HRW, this is not the only abuse against Assyrians this year. The Assyrians in the region have turned to relevant authorities such as the police and the government without having received any reply.

With Iraq's development and construction phase after the war, and today's challenges with the Islamic State rampage, assaults on minorities continue to be overshadowed. Sargon talks about his concern that Iraq will become empty of diversity and pluralism.

- If the Assyrians disappear, diversity and pluralism in Iraq will disappear too, and with it thousands of years of culture, language and traditions, which would be a loss not only for Iraq but also for the whole world, he says.

KaraOchBernadet2.1 alt 2.2 .: Martha bakes bread for the inhabit-

ants of the villages in a traditional way.

Ankawa-youth engage against injustices. We are sitting at the cafe Eskilstuna in Ankawa, a suburb of Erbil, along with a group of young people. The coffeehouse is modern and the street looks like it could be any street in Stockholm. When you sit there and sip on a coffee with milk, it is difficult to understand that you are in a coffee house in Iraq, not far from the Islamic State.

The youth group was formed because of all the injustice that occurs in the area. In the beginning, they encountered resistance from locals because of fear of reprisals. The only airport controlled by the Kurdish Regional Government is located in Ankawa. The youth also tell us that this airport is illegally built on Assyrian land. Those who owned the land have not received any compensation for the construction.

- This was done by the government and they did it just because they can and because we can't resist. The people who have had their land confiscated dare not object because of fear of reprisals, said 25-year-old Enkido, who is a medical student.

The fear of continued oppression is ever present in the everyday life of the Assyrians. This paralyzes any development potential and erases the confidence in the future of indigenous peoples.

- We want to live in an Iraq where we as indigenous people are allowed to live and develop our culture further, says Enkido.

* Sargon and Enkido's real names have been changed.

*This article was published previously in Swedish in FUF i Varlden

ISIS DESTRUCTION OF JONAH'S TOMB

ISIS' Destruction Of Jonah's Tomb Leads To Discovery Of Biblical King's Ancient Palace

Following the Iraqi army's liberation of some parts of the ISIS-occupied city of Mosul recently, Iraqi archaeologists announced their discovery of the palace of the Assyrian King Sennacherib. The palace turned out to be buried underneath the tomb of the prophet Jonah in the Assyrian city of Nineveh.

The discovery would not have been made had the ISIS militants not destroyed the burial site of Jonah, who is known as Nabi Yunis in the Quran, in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul in July 2014.

At first, the archaeologists expressed dismay that ISIS militants demolished the site using dynamite. The jihadists also dug tunnels underground and carried away

hundreds of precious artefacts to sell on the black market. But upon entering the tunnels, the archaeologists were stunned to find an unexpected treasure: the 2,300-year-old palace of Assyrian King Sennacherib, who reigned from 720 BC to about 683 BC.

The tomb that ISIS destroyed was that of Jonah, a prophet of the Lord who was called to deliver a message of repentance to the city of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. According to the Bible, Jonah refused to heed the Lord's bidding and tried to escape by way of the sea. However, a violent storm developed, and the men aboard the boat had no choice but to cast Jonah overboard, at his request. "Jonah was then suddenly swallowed by a great sea monster which had been prepared by the Lord for this

purpose," per Bible History.

The archaeologists acknowledged that ISIS' destructive efforts produced positive results, however ironic that may sound. Before the Islamist militants came to the site, it was largely unexplored, they said. The last excavation made to explore the site was made way back in the 1950s, but the explorers never reached as far as Sennacherib's palace.

"There's a huge amount of history down there, not just ornamental stones," said Iraqi archaeologist Layla Salih, who is supervising the team carrying out the unscheduled exploration.

"It is an opportunity to finally map the treasure-house of the world's first great empire, from the period of its greatest success," she added.

ISIS' Destruction Of Jonah's Tomb Leads To Discovery Of Biblical King's Ancient Palace



LOOTED IRAQI ART

Courtesy of NYTimes.com

The National Museum of Iraq soon after it reopened, in March 2015

Looted art and ancient works from Iraq that have never been exhibited outside that country will appear in its pavilion at the Venice Biennale this year, organizers announced on Monday.

The Biennale brings a top-flight roster of international visual art that is organized into a main show and national pavilions. This year's Iraq pavilion, called "Archaic," will include medical artifacts, statues, toys and jugs dating back over 7,000 years. The ancient works come from the National Museum of Iraq, which was looted after the American-led invasion of the country in 2003 and stayed closed until 2015, when it reopened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Some of the looted pieces were recovered, and a number of them will be on display in the pavilion. A newly commissioned piece by the Belgian artist Francis Alÿs will also be shown, as will works by contemporary artists including Sherko Abbas, Sadik Kwaish Alfraji and Ali Arkady. The Ruya Foundation, a nonprofit organization focused on Iraq's cultural heritage, organized "Archaic," which was curated by Tamara Chalabi and Paolo Colombo.

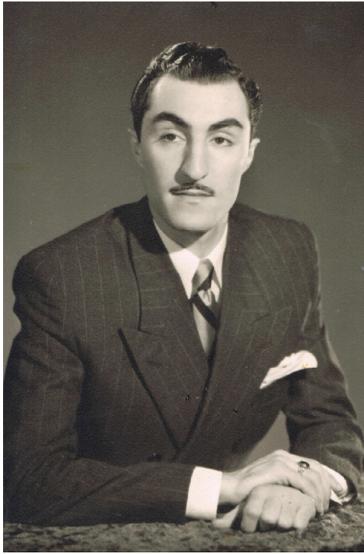
Looted Iraqi Art, Since Recovered, Will Be Shown at the Venice Biennale



Here are some of the other highlights planned for the Biennale, which opens in May:

- One hundred and twenty artists will show work in the central exhibition, "Viva Arte Viva." Curated by Christine Macel, the show features work by major names like Lee Mingwei, Olafur Eliasson, Frances Stark and the film director and visual artist John Waters ("Hairspray," "Pink Flamingos").

- The Icelandic artist Egill Sæbjornsson, who was charged with creating the art for his country's national pavilion, announced this month that two folkloric trolls, Ugh and Boogar, would take over as the artists of his show. Updates attributed to the trolls are being regularly added to the Icelandic pavilion's Instagram account.



Fredrick Eshoo Biography

- author By Lilea Eshoo

Fredrick Eshoo was born in Tehran, Iran on November 17th, 1926 to parents Ishobek and Lilly Eshoo. He had three younger brothers, Freidon, Kurosh, and Dariush and one youngest sister, Sophia. At the age of five, he went to live with his aunt, Raqqel-khannum and her German husband, his namesake, Fredrick Noyer. His uncle was a very influential figure and during those years, Fredrick learned not only to speak German, but also many technical skills and a meticulous work ethic.

Fred attended Firouz Bahram High School in Tehran. He was an active youth and his height made him a natural fit as a soccer goalie. By the age of 16, he possessed a rare and sought-after skill; he could fix radios. He would travel around Tehran and neighboring cities by train arriving in towns to find a pile of radios awaiting him. He would spend the night fixing them all, then travel back overnight to attend school the next day.

Fredrick graduated high school in 1944, continuing his education to become an electronic engineer, specializing in radar technology. He gained employment at the new Iranian Department of Aviation at the first airport in Tehran where he quickly stood out as an intelligent, hard-working, and motivated young man. He was then sent by the government to Sweden to study in the field of aircraft navigation with a focus in radar technology. He became an expert in electronic signals for navigation and the interface of the aircrafts with these signals. Fredrick brought "Link Trainer" units from America to Iran and implemented a flight training program for all Iranian pilots to learn and use instrument flying thereby enabling planes to fly in restricted-visibility conditions.



Fredrick married Atoria Jacob of Urmia and they moved to Tehran to start their life together in 1952. They had three children, Fredrika, Nazli, and Rene.

Not one to sit still, he joined three friends (General Nader Jahanbani, General Khatami, and Mr. Hossein Zanganeh) in a venture to create the country's first "air taxi" service that took people and cargo across Iran, connecting the country in new ways. The Shah, intrigued by this new era of aviation and commercial travel, would visit Tehran Airport often. He was curious about the new technology and eventually wanted to learn instrument flying. Fredrick stood out as the most qualified instructor for the job and taught the Shah on one of these simulator units. Ever attentive to detail, to make sure Queen Soraya wouldn't be bored during the Shah's flying lessons, Fredrick would ask that the pilots import the latest German fashion magazines, hot off the presses. "How did you get this?" she would ask him in wonder.

In the mid-1950s Fredrick began developing his idea for a paper converting factory. It had humble beginnings in a small home office where Fredrick designed and built the machinery and he and Atoria made the first paper rolls. He soon saved up enough money to buy a building and launch "Iran Roll." The factory grew rapidly and soon covered an entire city block, employing more than 600 people and created a wide array of paper and aluminum products. He was the first in the country to convert aluminum foil.

He traveled to Europe frequently for business, learning about the latest in manufacturing technology and importing machinery to Iran. Through the 1970s, Iran Roll became the largest paper and aluminum-converting company not only in Iran but throughout the Middle East.





Fredrick Eshoo was born in Tehran, Iran on November 17th, 1926 to parents Ishobek and Lilly Eshoo. He had three younger brothers, Freidon, Kurosh, and Dariush and one youngest sister, Sophia. At the age of five, he went to live with his aunt, Raqqel-khannum and her German husband, his namesake, Fredrick Noyer. His uncle was a very influential figure and during those years, Fredrick learned not only to speak German, but also many technical skills and a meticulous work ethic.

Fred attended Firouz Bahram High School in Tehran. He was an active youth and his height made him a natural fit as a soccer goalie. By the age of 16, he possessed a rare and sought-after skill; he could fix radios. He would travel around Tehran and neighboring cities by train arriving in towns to find a pile of radios awaiting him. He would spend the night fixing them all, then travel back overnight to attend school the next day.

Fredrick graduated high school in 1944, continuing his education to become an electronic engineer, specializing in radar technology. He gained employment at the new Iranian Department of Aviation at the first airport in Tehran where he quickly stood out as an intelligent, hard-working, and motivated young man. He was then sent by the government to Sweden to study in the field of aircraft navigation with a focus in radar technology. He became an expert in electronic



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Fredrick adopted many hobbies including growing exotic fruits and vegetables in his garden. His specialty were peppers; he grew 40 different kinds of peppers from all around the world and would send them for competitions in America where he was a proud member of the Pepper Club. He would send some to the for the King and Queen to enjoy. These quickly became a palace favorite and Fred would meticulously arrange and send baskets over.



His other hobbies tended to be much faster and more extreme. He would go ice lugeing, water skiing, surfing, and car racing. He imported a Lotus from England and competed in and won many car racing competitions. He also entered high-speed ice luge races in St. Moritz, an exclusive winter resort in Switzerland, where he took first place in their competition, earning the memorable nickname in a front-page headline “Babylonian Tycoon.”

He always made a point of giving back to the Assyrian community and has stood out as a pillar of support to family and friends. Among his many philanthropic endeavors, most of which he insisted on doing anonymously, he was particularly proud of a school he helped build in the village of Ada, in the Urmia region of Iran, dedicated to the memory of his father.

In the early 1970’s, Fredrick became the first known person in the country to obtain a ballooning license and bring a hot air balloon to Iran. He studied and flew it in several parts of the country, often taken for a UFO by the confused and bewildered people who had never encountered such a thing.

He traveled to many major ballooning events in Europe and the U.S., most notably in Albuquerque, to New Mexico’s famed Fiesta Ballooning Event.

Fredrick then envisioned and worked to create a solar-powered balloon because he felt limited by the amount of propane he could carry in a standard hot air balloon. He designed, built, and patented the Sunstat, the world’s first maneuverable solar-powered air balloon, which took its maiden voyage on January 31, 1978 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He used a standard balloon design, but used clear material on

one side, allowing the sun’s radiation to collect in the inner surface, heating the inside air. His invention was quickly hailed by national and international media as a great success and a groundbreaking accomplishment in ballooning. He is featured in countless books and magazines, including the Smithsonian and National Geographic, was bestowed with a key to Flint Michigan, and even had a room in a ballooning museum set up in honor of his invention.

When the Iranian Revolution began, Fredrick and his family were fortunate enough to be outside Iran, although they only had the contents they had packed with them and were forced to start a new life. Due to the risk involved in returning to a country now controlled by the new Islamic Regime, they all remained in the United States for many years. The family united in San Francisco where they lived until 1985 when they moved to San Jose. He was a proud and involved grandfather to his seven grandchildren.

Fredrick’s adventurous and entrepreneurial spirit did not fade and he traveled as far as Thailand and Madagascar exploring new endeavors and advising colleagues. In 1988, Fredrick, along with other notable Iranian industrialists, received a government invitation to return to Iran to offer their expertise. Fredrick returned a few months later and then in 1990, he filed a patent for “List-o-Label” an automatic ordering method and apparatus for inventory.

His natural curiosity never faded and even into his late 80’s, Fredrick was still inventing and planning. The family used to hand him papers and marvel as he could still determine the exact thickness, weight and origin. He had a work space in a corner of his son’s workshop where he would tinker on inventions and fill notebooks with detailed calculations.

On Monday, April 11, 2016, Fredrick passed away in Gilroy, CA surrounded by his loving family. Fredrick was a proud Assyrian and a true visionary who was never satisfied by what others said could or could not be done. He fixed problems, imagined the future, and then worked tirelessly to make it come true.



HAPPY AND BLESSED ASSYRIAN NEW YEAR 6767 / 2017



HOMER ASHURIAN (1936-2016)

By Solomon (Sawa) Solomon



HOMER ASHURIAN – born in 1936 in Urmia, Iran, obtained his B.A. and M.A. degrees in Archaeology from the University of Tehran. In 1958, he was appointed as Curator and Head of the Anthropological Museum of Tehran. Later, he continued his career as a teacher and high school principal.

In 1976, Mr. Ashurian was elected to the Iranian Parliament to represent the Assyrians of Iran. During his service as an Assyrian Congressman, he accomplished many vital projects for the Assyrians, such as building roads, schools, water treatment plants, electrical facilities in almost all of their villages in Urmia, as well as expanding Shushan School, the school of the Assyrian Church of the East in Tehran.

In the national arena, Homer was an active person since his teens. He was a member and officer of the Assyrian Youth Cultural Society. He was also one of the founders of the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation (AUAF) and served as the Deputy Secretary General for many years.

He wrote quite a few articles in Assyrian, in addition to some in Farsi and English, about Assyrians. He was a member of the editorial staff and Editor of publications such as “Shvila”, “Kirkha”, and the AUAF Newsletter.

Mr. Ashurian was living in Chicago with his family and working for the AUAF in the capacity of Head of Cultural Affairs and Director of Assyrian Research Programs at the Ashurbanipal Library.

Mr. Homer Ashurian died on Saturday, July 30, 2016 at the I.C.U. at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston, IL where he was suffering from several ailments. His funeral service took place on Thursday morning, August 4, 2016 at the Assyrian Christian Church in Chicago. The Reverends Yonan, Douglas Aurahim, Athanasis, and Shlemon officiated.

Mr. Ashurian is survived by his wife Suzy, and his two sons, the Reverend Tiglad and Ramin. May he rest in peace.

SON OF TURLOCK

Courtesy of Modesto Bee



TURLOCK , CA

Henry “Hank” Adams, son of the patriarch of Turlock’s Assyrian community, died Friday at the age of 92. A Turlock native, he graduated from Turlock High School in 1943 and enlisted at Castle Air Force Base in Atwater at 18. [In World War II, Mr. Adams served as an Army Air Corps flight officer and bombardier, participating in more than 20 bombing missions against Tokyo.](#) He was on the Lucky Lady B-29 while it stood by as backup for the Enola Gay as it dropped the first atom bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.



Son of Turlock’s Assyrian community founder dies at 92

[He left the service as a lieutenant at 22, moving to San Francisco where he married Joanne Tuohey in 1955.](#)

Mr. Adams later worked at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Space in Sunnyvale, where he was an engineer and supervisor in the sensors department. He retired in 1989 and the couple moved to Turlock.

Mr. Adams was one of eight children born to the Rev. Isaac and Sarah Adams, who settled in Turlock in 1911. Isaac Adams helped establish the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, Mar Adai Parish, and encouraged other Assyrians to come and farm in the region. An estimated 20,000 Assyrians live in Turlock today, the largest such community in California.

The Assyrian Festival held by the church each year honored Mr. Adams in a ceremony at its August event.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Joanne; two daughters, Nora Adams and Nellie Adams-Morse; two grandchildren; and sister Florence Essa Johnson.

Margaret Sargon 1925-2016

Margaret Sargon was born in Basra, Iraq on February 25, 1925. She was the second child of six siblings to Samuel Dadisho and Victoria Jendo. She married Esha Sargon in 1942 and they started their family which consists of four beautiful daughters, Elizabeth, Marlene, Linda, and Anita.

A woman of great faith, she and her husband belonged to Assyrian Presbyterian Church in Baghdad. They raised their family together in Baghdad, Iraq until the passing of her husband. Being the strong woman that she was and to complete her husband's dying wish, Margaret decided to immigrate to the United States with her four daughters. In 1972 they fled to Damascus, Syria and then to Beirut, Lebanon where they awaited the approval of their refugee status for 18 months through the World Council of Churches.

On December 4, 1974 Margaret and her four daughters arrived in Chicago, Illinois to join her brother-in-law, Dick Sargon and his family and her sister, Agnes Daniel and her family.

Although she was an immigrant with little knowledge of the English language she did not allow that to hold her back from raising her four daughters. She immediately found a job with Ametek Power where she was employed for 18 years. In her free time she loved to listen to Assyrian radio especially the church programs.

On April 14, 2016 at 7pm, Margaret Sargon rested peacefully with loving family by her side. Margaret's legacy lives on through her daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Eldest daughter, Elizabeth Adams and her husband, Ninos Adams and Elizabeth's children Tom Zarco and Arabella Alqas and her husband Peter Alqas and their children Suraya and Christian. Second eldest daughter Marlene Shilaimon and her daughter Valerie. Third daughter Linda Sargon-Swenson. Youngest daughter Anita Daniel and her husband Frank Daniel and their children Jason and Amanda. Her sister Agnes Daniel and her family. Her brother's wife Naema Dadisho and her family. Her sister's husband Henry Daniel and his family. Her husband's nephews Sargon D. Sargon and family, Ashur Sargon and family, and the family of Raman Sargon. Her nephew, Abraham Dadisho and family.

Until her dying moment Margaret praised Jesus' name and rejoiced in her undying faith. A value she instilled with great pride in her children and grandchildren.





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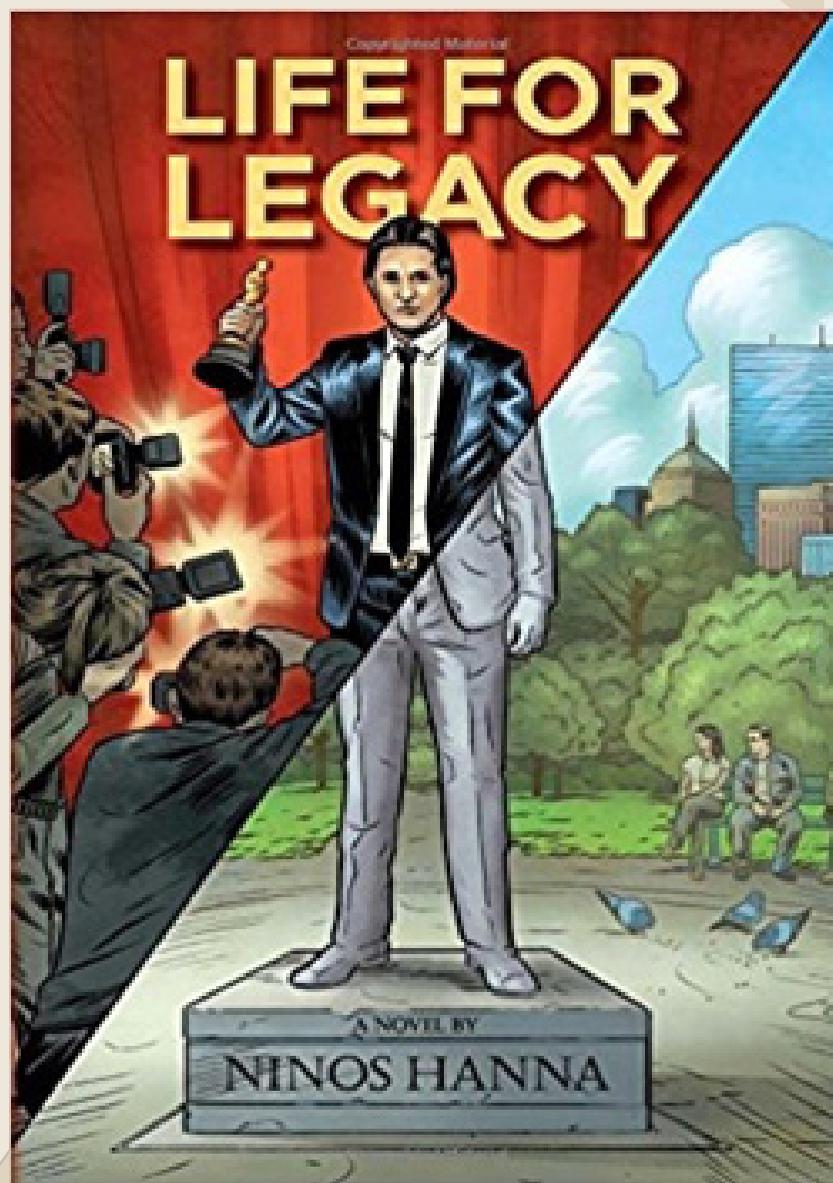
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Life for Legacy

Author: Ninos Hanna

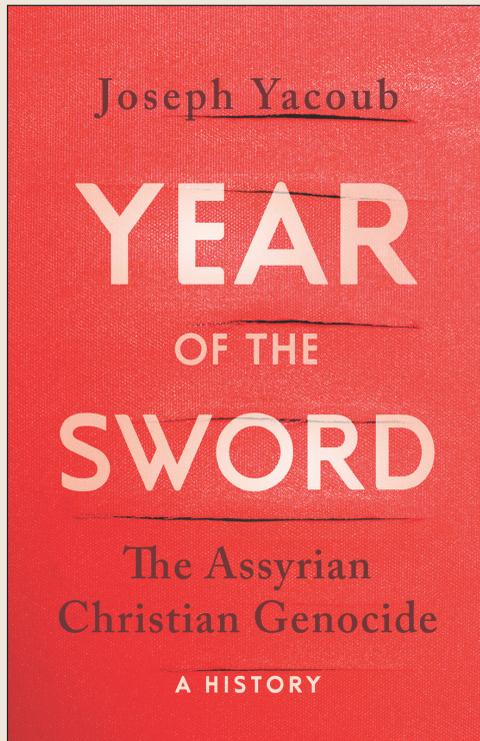
Aiden Blair, an ambitious high school graduate from Boston, has his sights set on only one thing: becoming a legend in Hollywood. After toiling in the trenches of bit parts and part-time jobs, his uncanny talent and determination take him to the top of the movie industry. Yet his rise to stardom comes with consequences. Navigating the demands of fame while maintaining his personal integrity and loyalty to his family will become the most challenging role he has yet to play.

When Aiden makes a highly charged Oscar acceptance speech in which he criticizes Hollywood's insulated snobbery and urges viewers to recognize the genocide of Assyrians in the Middle East, he finds himself an outcast from the town he once ruled. Estranged from his family and fans, he hits the road and sets off across the country and across the globe. It is a journey of self-reflection, self-discovery, and self-renewal. As entertaining and moving as an Oscar-winning Hollywood drama, *Life For Legacy* examines the costs of human ambition and the desire for success—even when the cost is our life.



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YEAR OF THE SWORD

The Assyrian Christian Genocide:
A History

JOSEPH YACOUB

Linking past and present, this is the first general history published in English of the mass killings of 1915 in which the Ottomans sought to extirpate the Aramaic-speaking Assyrian, Syriac and Chaldean Christians of the Middle East

The Armenian genocide of 1915 has been well documented. Much less known is the Turkish genocide of the Assyrian, Chaldean and Syriac peoples, which occurred simultaneously in their ancient homelands in and around ancient Mesopotamia — now Turkey, Iran and Iraq. The

advent of the First World War gave the Young Turks and the Ottoman government the opportunity to exterminate the Assyrians in a series of massacres and atrocities inflicted on a people whose culture dates back millennia and whose language, Aramaic, was spoken by Jesus. Systematic killings, looting, rape, kidnapping and deportations destroyed countless communities and created a vast refugee diaspora. As many as 300,000 Assyro-Chaldean-Syriac people were murdered and a larger number forced into exile.

The 'Year of the Sword' (*Seyfo*) in 1915 was preceded over millennia by other attacks on the Assyrians and has been mirrored by recent events, not least the abuses committed by Islamic State.

Joseph Yacoub, whose family was murdered and dispersed, has gathered together a compelling range of eye-witness accounts and reports which cast light on this 'hidden genocide.' Passionate and yet authoritative in its research, his book reveals a little-known human and cultural tragedy. A century after the Assyrian genocide, the fate of this Christian minority hangs in the balance.

Joseph Yacoub is Emeritus Professor at the Catholic University of Lyon and the author of several books on minorities and Christians in the Middle East.

August 2016 / Hardback / 240pp / 9781849046428 / £25.00

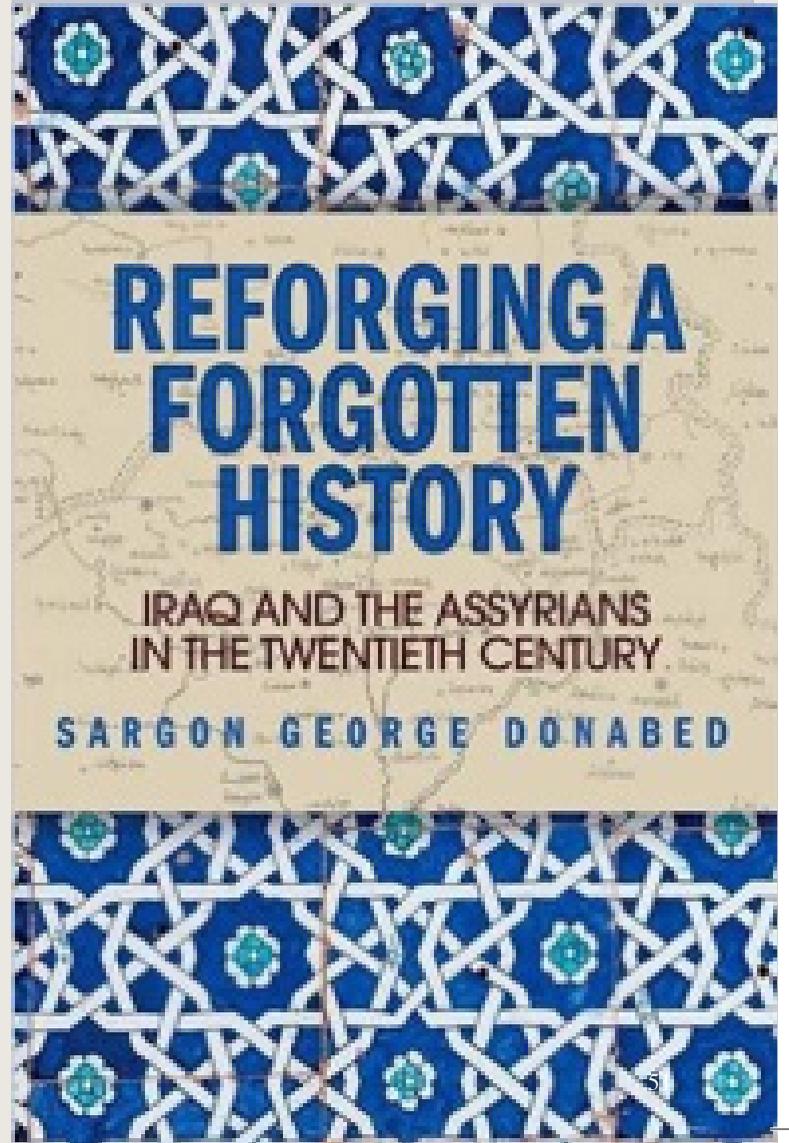
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“

Who are the
Assyrians
and what
role did they play
in shaping
modern
Iraq?”

Were they simply bystanders, victims of collateral damage who played a passive role in its history? Furthermore, how have they negotiated their position throughout various periods of Iraq's state-building processes? This book details a narrative of Iraq in the twentieth century and refashions the Assyrian experience as an integral part of Iraq's broader contemporary historiography. It is the first comprehensive account to contextualize a native experience alongside the emerging state. Using primary and secondary data, this book offers a nuanced exploration of the dynamics that have affected and determined the trajectory of the Assyrians' experience in twentieth-century Iraq."



THE BAQUBAH REFUGEE CAMP

An Account of Work on behalf of the Persecuted Assyrian Christians

PREFACE

THE following pages have been written with the twofold object of bringing to the notice of the British and American public the travails, of a small Christian nation, which unreservedly threw in its lot with the Entente cause during the late World War, and suffered grievously in consequence; and, secondly, to emphasise what Great Britain, practically unaided, has taken upon her own already greatly overburdened shoulders to ameliorate the sad lot of these fugitives from their former homes.

The writer, as late Commandant of this huge Refugee Camp, almost from its inception, should obviously be in a position to discuss with some knowledge of the facts the matter presented in this little book; and if by so doing he succeeds in raising the interest of others in the fate of the obscure Assyrian nation he will feel that his task has not been in vain.

H. H. A.
April 1920.

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CHAPTER I

The Camp; and events that led to its formation

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Administration and Organization of the Camp

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A Glimpse of Life in the Camp

CHAPTER V

Further Aspects of Camp Life

CHAPTER VI

Educational and other matters

CHAPTER VII

Final Observations

APPENDIX

Assyrian Thanks to British
FOOTNOTES

The picture is of some Assyrian orphans in the camp



BRIGADIER-GEN. H. H. AUSTIN

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LATE COMMANDANT

1920

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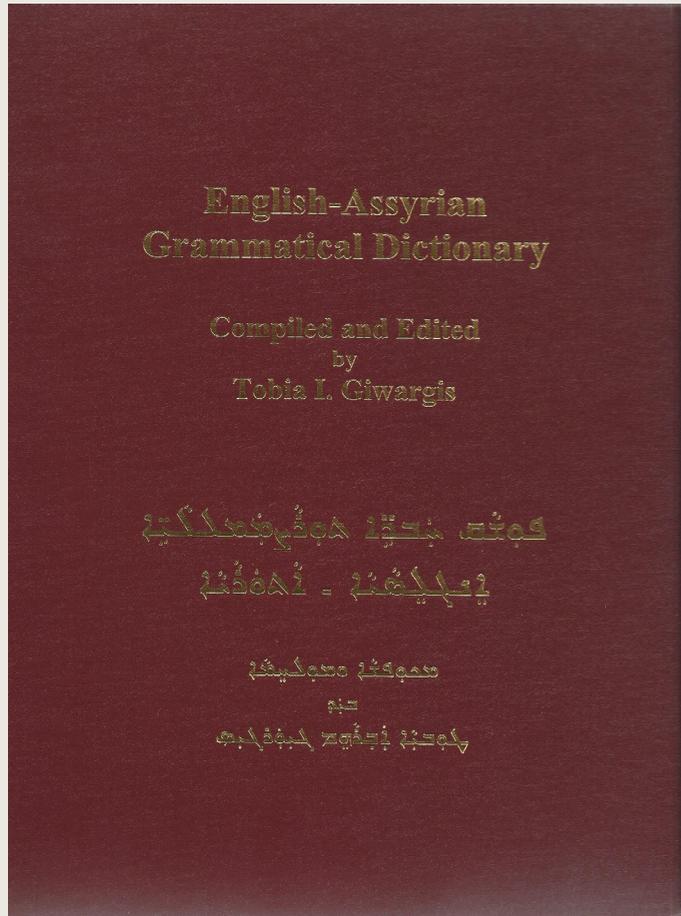
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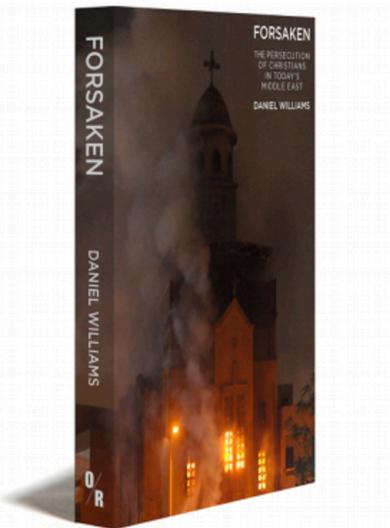
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Forsaken

THE PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN TODAY'S MIDDLE EAST

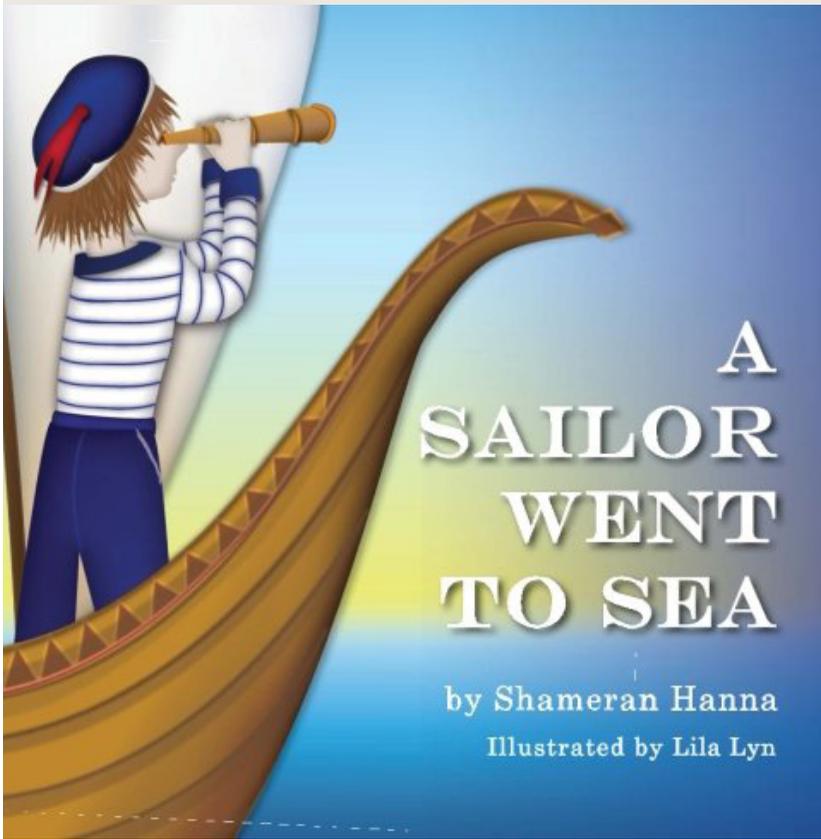
DANIEL WILLIAMS

“Daniel Williams has given us a vivid portrait of what he rightly calls ‘not only a human tragedy but a historic cataclysm.’ His compelling blend of historical perspective and on-the-ground reporting in Christian communities across the Middle East gives authority to his practical proposals. This book should be required reading for policymakers in Western capitals.” —Jackson Diehl, deputy editorial page editor, *The Washington Post*

“Veteran Mideast correspondent Dan Williams provides a gripping account of the ongoing persecution and destruction of the Middle East’s ancient Christian communities, while Western leaders continue to look the other way. *Forsaken* is required reading for anyone who cares about the survival of Christianity in the region of its birth or the fate of Christians forced to flee.”
—Trudy Rubin, Worldview columnist, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

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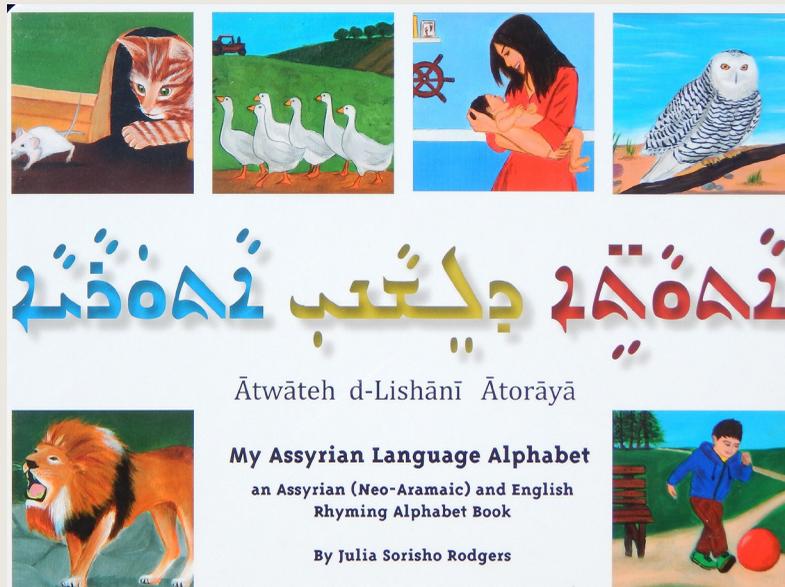
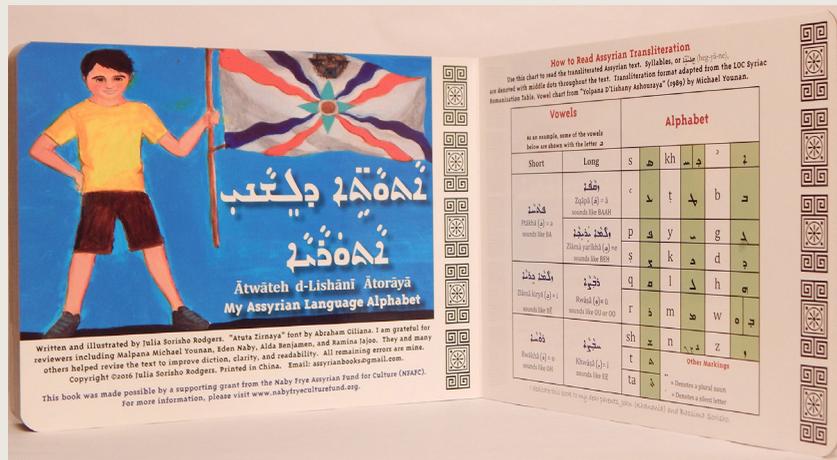
Children's philanthropist and author Shameran Hanna combines classic storytelling with modern illustration, creating an adventurous tale about courage, wisdom, and the pursuit of happiness through gratitude.

From the Author:

This book is dedicated to the Assyrians in Iraq and Syria and Christians around the world who have fought and continue to fight for their lives and faith.

100% of proceeds are dedicated to the aid and support of displaced Christians in Iraq and Syria.

-Shameran Hanna



Shlomo habre rhime,

with great pleasure I am informing you about the publishing of my new book. Now, after eight years of research work and digitization of numerous works, the result is achieved. With my second book about our modern music I would like to document this heritage for future generations.

You can order the book now by choosing one of the packages I offer:

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For further information join my Group on Facebook (Modern Assyrian Music) or visit my website (www.musicpearls.net)

Please enter your order in the contact form on my website (<http://www.musicpearls.net/3.html>) or reply to this e-mail.



This book covers the history of modern Assyrian music (also known as Syriacs or Chaldeans). The basis of this work is my first book (Music Pearls of Bethnahrin) from 2007. After publication of the first volume the need for an update was recognized, because many aspects of modern history were not sufficiently known and also the lack of many east-Assyrian music albums in the album part. Some well-known and deserving persons are introduced by their biography.

The research on the modern Assyrian history in general and the music history in particular is always a challenge. Due to the ongoing persecution and oppression in their home countries, a sustainable cultural scent couldn't be developed. The last 100 years have been characterized by genocide (Seyfo), displacement and emigration. And in the diaspora there are no institutions guaranteeing the cultural coherence (here: archiving). Therefore, the research for this book was conducted in many countries and in several languages.

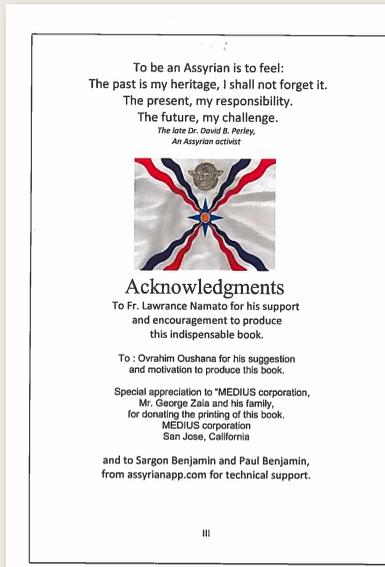
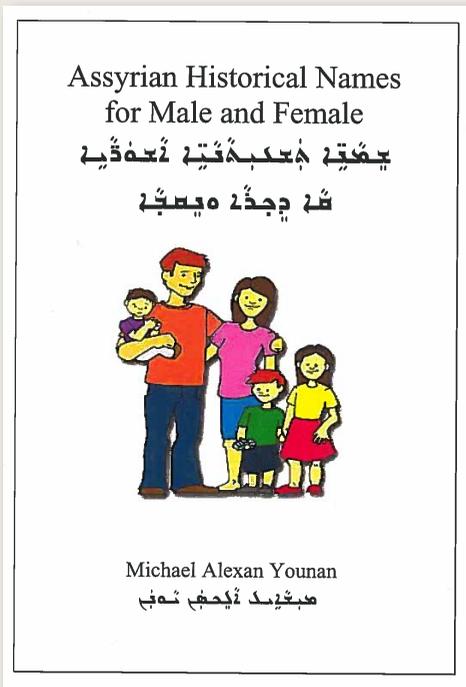
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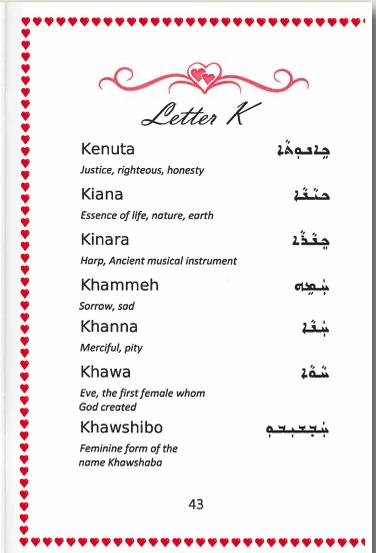
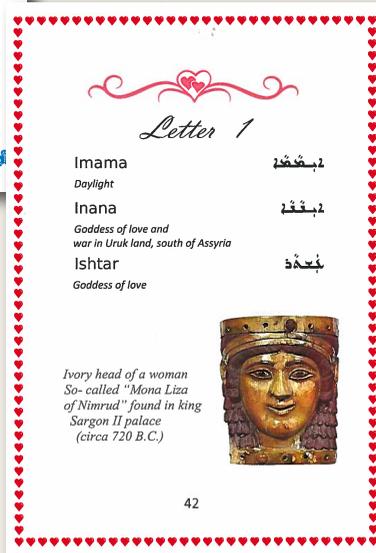
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THE CHOSEN ONE
ܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ
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ASSYRIAN IDENTITY IN ANCIENT TIMES AND TODAY¹

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Introduction

The Neo-Assyrian Empire was a multi-ethnic state composed of many peoples and tribes of different origins (cf. Postgate 1989). Its ethnic diversity notwithstanding, it was a uniformly structured political entity with well-defined and well-guarded borders,² and the Assyrian kings certainly regarded it as a unified whole, “the land of Aššur”, whose territory they constantly strove to expand (Tadmor 1999; see also below). To the outside world, it likewise was a unified, monolithic whole, whose inhabitants were unhesitatingly identified as Assyrians regardless of their ethnic backgrounds.³ However, just how far did the masses of the Empire’s population actually share the Assyrian identity? Did they consider themselves as members of the Assyrian nation, identifying with the ideals and ways of life of the Assyrian ruling class, or did they rather identify themselves in terms of their diverse ethnic origins, loathing and resenting the Assyrian rule and way of life? I shall try to answer these questions by first considering the matter briefly from a theoretical perspective and then reviewing the available evidence, both Assyrian and post-Assyrian, in detail.

1. The Role of Ethnicity in Multi-ethnic States

Contrary to what one might be prone to think, national and ethnic identities⁴ are not mutually exclusive, nor does the former depend on the latter. Most citizens of multi-ethnic states have, in addition to their national identity, one or more secondary ethnic identities (Vasady 1989, 47-48; Alba 1990, 41; 50).⁵ To take an obvious example, first-generation American immigrants generally maintain a strong attachment to their home countries but, after many years in the country, may start developing a secondary American identity (Kivisto and Blanck 1990, 115, contra Hansen 1937b [1990], 205-207). Their children, who were born in the country, are Americans by birth; but they still (often subconsciously) maintain a strong ethnic identity, having been exposed as children to their parents’ native language and cultural heritage (Alba 1990, 22; 25).⁶ In the third generation and later, ethnic consciousness recedes to the background, without necessarily disappearing altogether (Kivisto and Blanck 1990; Alba 1990, passim, especially the on pp. 64 and 68).⁷ The development of national identity thus goes hand in hand with language acquisition and social

integration. The moment an individual fully masters the language of the country he (or she) lives in, and has internalised its customs, traditions, values and religious beliefs, he (or she) becomes a fully integrated member of the society and, consciously or not, shares its collective identity (Hall 1999, 34-36). The whole process takes a maximum of three generations to complete and is by no means limited to the United States only but is universal (e.g., Deniz 1999).

The presence of ethnic communities in the host country may help maintain the ethnic identities of immigrants and their descendants, but it cannot halt, slow down or reverse the assimilation process (Kivisto 1989; Odisho 1999). Any ethnic shift usually begins with acculturation and ends up with assimilation.⁸ Ethnic consciousness is, however, related to education so that educated people may cultivate an inherited or adopted ethnic identity long after the critical three-generation limit (Alba 1990, 29). It is also related to social discrimination and persecution, so that oppressed and persecuted ethnic minorities may develop stronger identities than undisturbed ones (cf. Alba 1990, 27; Hall 1999, 34).

2. The Shaping of Assyrian Identity in the First Millennium BC

To return now to Assyria, there cannot be any question that it was and remained a multi-ethnic society, and many of its ethnic minorities seem to have retained their identities (at least to some extent) till the very end of the Empire. For example, legal documents from Asur, Nineveh, and Dur-Katlimmu on the Habur dating from the last decades of the Empire mention numerous Assyrian citizens identified or identifiable as Egyptians, Israelites, Arabs, Anatolians and Iranians on the basis of their names or the ethnic labels attached to them. It is questionable, however, how far these ethnic names and labels actually reflect ethnic consciousness and ethnicity (Zadok 1997). Ethnonyms like Arbāyu “Arab”, Mādāyu “Mede”, Mušurāyu “Egyptian”, and Uraṭāyu “Urartian” are from the late eighth century on frequently borne by fully Assyrianized, affluent individuals in high positions. The sons of all the three men with Israelite names mentioned in texts from Dur-Katlimmu had Aramaic or Akkadian names (Radner 2002, no. 37; cf. Lawson Younger 2003, 66). Certain parts of the Empire, such as Babylonia, were for political and ideological reasons allowed to keep their traditional institutions and administrative

infrastructures, which naturally helped preserve their ethnic identities.⁹ In addition, some nomad tribes and a few ethnic pockets in inaccessible areas within the borders of Assyria may have never been fully brought under Assyrian rule. Thus it would be absurd to claim that every individual or group of people in Assyria shared the Assyrian identity. On the other hand, it is an undeniable fact that from the latter part of the second millennium BC on, the population within the Empire's provincial system—that is, within Assyria proper¹⁰—was for centuries subject to a continuous and systematic process of assimilation and integration. Especially the policy of mass deportations introduced by Ashurnasirpal II and continued on a vastly increased scale by Shalmaneser III, Tiglathpileser III and the Sargonid dynasty, utterly changed the political, demographic and linguistic map of the Near East. Between 830 and 640 BC, an estimated 4.5 million people from all parts of the Empire were removed from their homes and settled elsewhere, mostly in the Assyrian heartland and the big urban centers there (Oded 1979). These deportations may originally have had purely political and economic goals, but in the long run they ended up having far more extensive linguistic, social and cultural consequences.

1. The Aramaization of Assyria

In the first place, they brought hundreds of thousands of foreign, mostly Aramaic-speaking people into the Assyrian heartland and the eastern provinces of the Empire, thus turning the previously largely monolingual society of Assyria into a multilingual one. Within a relatively short period of time—already by the middle of the eighth century—Aramaic became established as a common language (*lingua franca*) throughout the Empire (Garelli 1982; Tadmor 1975, 1985; Eph'al 1999, 118-119). Concomitantly with this, the Assyrian administration started using the Aramaic alphabet alongside the cuneiform script. Aramean scribes writing on papyrus or parchment scrolls beside Assyrian scribes writing on clay tablets or waxed writing-boards are depicted on royal reliefs from the mideighth century on (Tadmor 1982, 1991), and Aramean scribes working with Assyrian ones are mentioned in administrative documents already half a century earlier.¹¹ By about 700 BC, the Aramaic alphabet effectively replaced cuneiform as the Empire's everyday writing system (Parpola 1997b, xvi).

2. The Assyrianization of the Empire's Population

Secondly, the massive deportations of foreign people into Assyria, and the concomitant reorganization of the conquered areas as Assyrian provinces, subjected huge numbers of new people to a direct and ever-increasing Assyrian cultural influence. This included, among other

things, the imposition of taxation and military service, a uniform calendar, judiciary, and conscription system, as well as imperial weights, measures, and other standards (Parpola 2003b; for details see Postgate 1974 and 1976, 63-72; Radner 1999; Kaufman 1972; Levine 2003; Eph'al and Naveh 1993, 61-62; Gitin 1995; Lipiński 2000, 548). In addition, Assyrian royal ideology, religious ideas and mythology were incessantly propagated to all segments of the population through imperial art, emperor cult, religious festivals, and the cults of Aššur, Ištar, Nabû, Šin and other Assyrian gods (Porter 2000a and 2000b; Winter 1997; Watanabe 2002; Pongratz-Leisten 1997; Holloway 2001; Parpola 2000a, 2001; Parpola in press).¹² The peoples of the newly established provinces routinely became Assyrian citizens (Oded 1979, 81-91). While the process of Assyrianization thus put under way undoubtedly worked fastest in the big cities of central Assyria, it must have proceeded rapidly in the new provinces as well, as they were no longer the countries they used to be. Their intelligentsia had been deported to Assyria and replaced with Assyrian administrators, their capitals had been razed and rebuilt in Assyrian fashion, and their populations now included, in addition to deportees from other parts of the Empire, also considerable numbers of Assyrian immigrants and colonists.

3. The Social and Cultural Homogenization of the Empire

The intense acculturation process thus started continued for a period of more than two hundred years. It was boosted by intermarriages, participation in common military expeditions, building projects and business ventures, and continuous interaction between all segments of population in all aspects of daily life. As a result, at the same time as Aramaic developed into the *lingua franca* of the Empire and the use of the Aramaic alphabet in its administration steadily increased, its originally heterogeneous population became progressively homogeneous socially and culturally (Garelli 1982; Postgate 1992; Pedersen 1986).¹³ This development finds a perfect parallel in the social and cultural homogenization of the United States, which also involved the transformation of an initially multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural society into a uniform one through the adoption of a common *lingua franca* (American English). As in the United States, this process gradually obliterated all tensions that may have originally existed between various ethnic groups. In the end, the ethnic origins of the people became largely irrelevant, as evidenced by the Neo-Assyrian onomastics, which includes hundreds of Akkadian names adopted or given to their children by individuals bearing non-Akkadian names, as well as a fair number of Aramaic names given to their children by parents with

Akkadian names (Garelli 1982, 441; Zadok 1997; Parpola in press).

4. The Internationalization and Bilingualism of the Assyrian Ruling Class

These developments cannot be dissociated from the progressive internationalization of the Neo-Assyrian ruling class (Parpola in press). While men with non-Akkadian names only sporadically appear in high state offices in the ninth century, they are frequently encountered on all levels of administration in the late eighth and seventh centuries BC (Tadmor 1975 and 1982; Oded 1979, 105-109; Garelli 1982; cf. Alba 1990, 6). These newcomers to the ruling class were carefully educated in Mesopotamian literature and culture, they dressed and behaved in the Assyrian way, and they spoke Akkadian and used the cuneiform script as distinctive markers of their social class. Their primary language of communication, however, like the rest of the Empire's, was certainly Aramaic, and the entire ruling class, including the royal family, must have been fully bilingual by the beginning of the seventh century at the very latest. All Neo-Assyrian kings from TiglathPileser III to Esarhaddon had Aramaic-speaking wives or mothers (Kamil 1999; Melville 1999; PNA s.w. Ataliā, laba and Naqī a), and there are indications that at least some of them spoke Aramaic as their first language.

Seventh-century BC Assyria was thus divided into two major language groups: speakers of Aramaic-in practice, the entire population of the country-and speakers of Akkadian, including the largely bilingual inhabitants of the Assyrian heartland and the fully bilingual ruling class. This dichotomy was, however, largely social, not cultural, and it came to an end with the fall of the Empire and the subsequent massacre of the Assyrian aristocracy. Although Neo-Assyrian certainly continued to be spoken and written in Harran at least until the end of the reign of Nabonidus (539 BC; Schaudig 2001, 73), Aramaic now fast became the only language spoken in Assyria outside the Assyrian heartland, and eventually in the latter as well.

5. The Creation of Assyrian National Identity

Ethnic identities develop spontaneously. National identities, however, especially those of multi-ethnic states, are consciously and systematically created. That is why some social historians like Rodney Hall argue that national identities are the product of modern times and did not exist in "territorial-sovereign" states, which dominated the international order prior to the nineteenth century. Hall believes that the abstract notion of citizenship, which he correctly sees as the necessary precondi-

tion for the development of national identity, came about only with eighteenth-century nationalism; consequently, he sees "nation building" as a central characteristic of the modern nation-states only, which rely on the "imagined community" of the nation as a legitimising principle rather than on dynastic legitimising principles (Hall 1999, 4-5). It should be noted, however, that nationalism and the concepts of nation and citizenship are by no means new phenomena but already played an important role in the ancient world, not only in ancient Athens (cf. Coleman 1997) and Rome but also in ancient Mesopotamia.

In view of the considerable benefits that came with the citizenship of Rome, for example (Crawford 1996), it would be absurd to claim that the average Roman citizen did not consider himself Roman or did not share the national collective identity of Rome.

As regards Assyria specifically, the concept of Assyrian citizenship was central to its expansion, and we can be sure that the Assyrian kings systematically and resolutely strove to unify the multitudes of people ruled by them into a single nation. The very name of the country, "land of Aššur", connoted a kingdom of God set apart from the rest of the world. It originally was only a province around the city of Aššur, but it grew with the addition of new provinces. Every new province was turned into an integral part of the original "land of Aššur", and their peoples became regular Assyrian citizens (*mārē* or *nišē māt Aššūr*, or simply *Aššūrāyē*) with full civil rights and obligations.¹⁴ As Assyrians they had to pay regular taxes and do the required military and labour service; but in return, they got safety and prosperity, were equal before the law, and could appeal directly to the Great King in case of dire need (Postgate 1975). The king, who ruled as a chosen Son of God (Parpola 1997), was the bond that united the nation by virtue of his role as helper in distress. He was the rescuer of the weak and the destitute, the great healer, the sun of his people, the good shepherd that loved and protected his sheep and guided them to the right path (Parpola 2001; Annus 2002).

The long-term strategic goal of Assyria thus was not the creation of an empire upheld by arms, but a nation united by a semi-divine king perceived as the source of safety, peace and prosperity. As we have seen, this goal was achieved through a systematically implemented assimilation and integration policy geared to delete the ethnic identities of the conquered peoples and to replace them with an Assyrian one. The efficacy of this policy is strikingly demonstrated by the fate of the tens of thousands of Hurrians who were deported from their homeland and resettled in Assyria in the middle Assyrian period.

1. For the bibliographical abbreviations see H. D. Baker (ed.), *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, Vol. 2/II, Helsinki, 2001, B28-32.

2. The “border” or “territory” (*mišru*, *tahūmu*) of Assyria is referred to over 300 times in Neo-Assyrian sources; “crossing” or “violating” it is referred to 15 times. The frontiers of the Empire were heavily garrisoned (Parker 1997) and their crossing points well guarded (see, e.g., SAA 1 186-187 and NL 40; SAA 16 148). Extradition of fugitives and political refugees from Assyria was a standard clause in Neo-Assyrian treaties and a recurrent topic in Neo-Assyrian administrative correspondence. The relevant contexts make it clear that the term “territory of Assyria” denoted areas permanently incorporated into the provincial system of Assyria, as opposed to non-annexed vassal or allied states, which had borders of their own.

3. Cf., e.g., Isaiah 7:18-20 and 8:7. In ABL 1430, a letter from Babylonia from the time of Assurbanipal, eight Assyrians (LU.as-sur.KLMES) are referred to by name; four of them have non-Akkadian, mostly Aramaic names (Idriya, Sabini, Sames-idri, Ubarsayasu).

4. By “national identity” I understand “national collective identity” in the sense of Hall 1999, but differently from Hall, I believe that such identities already existed in ancient societies, long before the rise of nineteenth-century nationalism (see below). By “ethnic identity” I understand, with Alba 1990, 25, an individual’s subjective orientation toward his or her ethnic origins.

5. Ethnic identity naturally constitutes only one of the several secondary identities an individual may have. “An individual can be simultaneously a male, a Polish American, a father, and a plumber” (Alba 1990, 23)—one could add, a Catholic, and many other things. Many people are strongly attached to a particular family, city or city quarter.

6. Hansen (1937a) argued that the second generation, keenly aware of the contempt in which the foreign accents and customs of their parents were held, did their utmost to forget their ethnic heritage. In his words, “Nothing is more Yankee than a Yankeeized person of foreign descent” (1937a [1990], 194). However, this view needs tempering as too extreme.

7. Hansen postulated a general resurgence of ethnic consciousness in the third generation. His famous thesis of a third-generation return to ethnicity (“What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember”, Hansen 1937a [1990], 195) is, however, not borne out by facts, see Kivisto and Blanck 1990.

8. I owe this observation to Edward Y. Odisho.

9. Babylonia (actually, “the land of Akkad”) de facto became part of Assyria in 731 BC, when Tiglath-Pileser III, following a pattern already set by Shalmaneser III (858-824) and Adad-nerari III (810-783), invaded the country at the invitation of the clergy of Marduk and assumed the kingship of Babylon. Despite several revolts, the country was allowed to remain nominally independent till the end of the Empire. Parts of it (Dur-Šarrukku, Lahiru, Der, Ur, and the Sealand) were, however, annexed to Assyria as provinces already in the eighth century, and the whole country was incorporated into the provincial system in 656 at the latest (see Frame 1992, 271, for the eponym officials of the years 656, 645 (643), and 633, all of them entitled “governor (*pāhutu*) of Babylon”), but probably much earlier. An Assyrian governor of Babylon exercising control over the entire “land of Akkad” is already attested in 710 and probably stayed in office until the last year of Sennacherib (681); see SAA 15 nos. 217-238 and the discussion *ibid.*, xx-xxiii and xxxviii. Under Esarhaddon, the governor of Babylon bore the traditional Babylonian title *šākin ṭēmi* (Frame 1992, 73). If this was part of Esarhaddon’s reconciliatory

Babylonian policy (Porter 1993, 38), then the reintroduction of an Assyrian *pāhutu* in 656 may well have triggered the Šamaš-šumu-ukin rebellion (652-648 BC).

Other annexed areas comparable to Babylonia were the Philistine city states and the kingdom of Hlakku (Cilicia), which functioned as buffer states against Egypt and Phrygia respectively and continued enjoying nominal independence despite recurrent revolts and despite the fact that they had de facto been incorporated in to the Assyrian provincial system (Otzen 1979, 255-256; Gitin 1995).

10. Cf. Postgate 1992, 252

11. See Appendix 1.

12. Though people deported to Assyria were not prevented from practicing their religion in their new homeland, the annexation of a rebel country usually involved destruction of its main cult centre, pillage of its sacred objects and gods, and establishment of Assyrian cult centres in the rebuilt capital and elsewhere (Cogan 1974; Frame 1997; Parpola 2003b, 100-101). The images of the deported gods either received a permanent new home in Assyria and were incorporated in the pantheon of the Empire, or were recreated in the temple workshops of Assur in Assyrian fashion and returned to the annexed country along with a new theology (Nissinen and Parpola 2004).

13. The two Hundurāya families in Assur discussed by Pedersén (1986, 85-95) were deportees from the Iranian city of Hundur, settled in Assur in 714. Their sizable archives, which cover the years 681-618 BC, show that in less than one generation, they had become entirely Assyrianized in every respect, including their names. The same is true of the other archive discussed by Pesénder (1986, 125-129), that of the Egyptian colony at Assur, whose leaders had names such as Urdu-Aššur “Servant of Aššur,” Kišir-Aššur “Host of Aššur,” and La-turammanni-Aššur “Do not forsake me, O Aššur!”

14. The formulaic phrase used in the royal inscriptions was *itti nišē māṭ Aššūr amnušunūti* “I counted them as citizens of Assyria.” This phrase is already attested in the inscriptions of the Middle-Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser I

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מחזור תענית ליום חמישי
ליום חמישי

כֹּה חָבַד לְכָל דְּבִישׁוּי יְלִידוֹת מִדְּבַר
אֲחֻזָּה וְכִסּוּי וְדִבְרוֹת חֲסוּדוֹת וְשִׁבְעָה
❖❖❖

שִׁשְׁתֵּי חַטֹּאת מִיָּמֵינוּ אֵלֶיךָ יְיָ וְדַבַּר
מִלִּישׁוֹת לְפָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת לְפָנֶיךָ
❖❖❖

דְּמִישׁוֹת כֹּה נִשְׁמַע מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר
יְהִי לְפָנֶיךָ מִבְּרַחֲמֶיךָ לְכָל דְּבִישׁוּי וְכִסּוּי
❖❖❖

וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת
וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת
❖❖❖

וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת
כֹּה נִשְׁמַע מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר
❖❖❖

וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת
וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת
❖❖❖

מִבְּרַחֲמֶיךָ יְיָ וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת
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וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת
וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת מִדְּבַר חֲסוּדוֹת וְדַבַּר חֲסוּדוֹת
❖❖❖



"لَا تَكْفُرْ بِاللِّسَانِ" . جِدِّدْ مَبْدَأَ كَلِمَتِكَ بِعَيْنَيْكَ

ك. صفك، آ!

2. آسفه هعيتي هعيتي صدبي

كهم هقدد هعيتي رقببي

صكك هقدد هقدد

هصدك كسمك كك هقدد

هصدد هصد هصد

صفك، آ!

3. ككك هصد هصد هصد

صفك، آ!

4. ككك هصد هصد هصد

صفك، آ!

د. ككك هصد هصد هصد

صفك، آ!

ه. ككك هصد هصد هصد

صفك، آ!

و. ككك هصد هصد هصد

صفك، آ!



Established 1964



سینه

مجله تخصصی اسناد و کتابخانه ملی

شماره 41 ❖ زمستان 1-2 ❖ 6767



Adad Gate in Nineveh, Iraq

کتابخانه

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