



Established 1964  
Dedicated to the  
Advancement of Education  
of Assyrians

Fourth Quarter 1983



# NINEVEH

Volume 6 No. 4



Where

Do

We Go

# 1984

From

Here?

CULTURAL — EDUCATIONAL — SOCIAL

# NINEVEH

Fourth Quarter 1983

VOLUME 6

NO. 4

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## Assyrian Periodicals

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

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# Letters to **NINEVEH**

*Man is by nature a political animal.*

*Aristotle*

Letter from Mar Timotheus

29 September 1983

Thank you very much for sending us your *Nineveh* Magazine, Vol. 5, No. 5. The publication helped us to understand the progress the Assyrian Nationals are making in different fields like Educational, Cultural and Communal. We are highly appreciative of the way you walk to reach your goal.

The magazine's contents and form were found to be very attractive. **Among the minorities, perhaps the Assyrians are the most suppressed and persecuted nation.** Naturally they lack financial and leadership facilities. The goal before them is indeed high. To reach the goal they must need united selfless endeavour. They have to capture the faith, sympathy and love of other nations. Above all, they should be entirely dependent on the Mercy and Grace of Almighty God for reaching their goal.

We wish you all success in your endeavour. May God's Choicest Blessings be showered on you and your workers.

Yours in Maran Esho-Mishikha,  
Mar Timotheus  
Metropolitan of Malabar & India

## Nineveh

With many thanks, we received the last two issues of *Nineveh* magazine, and we are sending you some printed matters of our publications.

We will publish a book about the Assyrians in Italian and English under the authorship of Prof. Mario Norio of Venice University.

We should also like to ask you to send us, as printed matters exchange, the complete series of *Nineveh*, as we have a public library with an Assyrian section, and we would like to make it as complete as possible.

Thanking you very much for your kindest collaboration.

Herman Vahramian, Secretary  
I/COM  
22, Viale Bligny  
20136 Milano, Italy

## Nineveh

We have been able to locate a copy of the periodical *Nineveh*, Volume 6, Number 3 (1983), and are very much interested in acquiring a complete set of all back issues, if available. We will be glad to pay for these issues.

Helen V. Gochenour  
Assistant to the  
Middle Eastern Librarian  
Harvard College Library  
Cambridge, Mass.

## Human Rights Advocate Threatened

I read *Nineveh*, Vol. 6, No. 3 with great interest. Thank you for reproducing a part of my lengthy letter to "The Tablet" about the difficulties of any so-called 'dialogue' between Christianity and Islam. On this occasion I wrote a letter but I usually write articles about the oppression of Christians in Islamic lands and, although I am an Anglican priest, I have a special devotion for the holy Coptic Orthodox Church.

It may be of interest for your readers to know what it means to criticize Islam in a liberal democracy. Since September 1981 when His Holiness Pope Shenouda III was imprisoned and my output increased I have received abusive letters, threatening phone calls and my wife was attacked in daylight by an arab in a London street.

The worst aspect of these attacks, and we are by no means paranoid, has been the abuse from Christian writers especially priests who are Arabic scholars. The Press in the United Kingdom is generally in direct or indirect service of the Arabic and Islamic tradition. This may be partly explained by the traditional and virulent anti-Semitism (perhaps one should say anti-Jewish) stance of the Christian churches in the West. It is well known that Adolf Hitler was strongly supported by the majority of Christians.

In short, it is extremely dangerous to write in this field of legitimate study. I support an exchange of information with Islam: we tell them what Christianity is and they tell us what Islam is. But I can see no grounds for any 'dialogue' which will not bring Muslims to a knowledge of Jesus Christ as God, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. This is the beginning and end of dialogue and it is for this Faith that our Fathers died whether they were Assyrian, Coptic, or even Anglican. Anything but an exchange of information with Islam is a betrayal of Jesus Christ and Arab oil will not wash away the sin.

I rejoice with you in the affirmation of Dr. David B. Perley: "The soul of Assyria will not be destroyed." Some Western Christians are proud to know Assyrians. In conclusion I wish to support the request of my distinguished friend Dr. Shawky Karas in calling for a United Front of Christians from the Middle East in their struggle against the deprivation of human rights. Every Christian has a duty to prevent further genocide and the recent introduction of *Shariaa* in the Sudan makes the matter more urgent.

Revd. Dr. John Watson  
Norwich, England

## **NINEVEH**

**ASSYRIAN FOUNDATION OF AMERICA**  
1920 San Pablo Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94702

## All Getting Lost

I was going to believe that the Nineveh Magazine is an open minded and a balanced magazine, but unfortunately I was wrong.

I was dismayed at a picture portraying "The Lost Assyrian" in Vol. 6, No. 2 of your magazine. Guess who was identified as being "lost," a Man!!! How many years of existence are needed to make you understand that the Assyrian Nation and the world do not consist only of MEN. The ASSYRIAN MOTHER, who happens to be a WOMAN!!, is the SEED of our NATION. Without her, we would not have lasted for so long.

For your information, as a stateless people faced with anti-Assyrianism everywhere, we are all getting LOST. But with your male chauvinist ideas, we will surely get lost sooner and separately.

M. P.  
San Jose, CA

## Nineveh

I am interested in receiving Assyrian magazines. Is it possible to receive a sample copy of your magazine?

With my Assyrian, Armenian, Irish and Scottish background, I am almost half Assyrian. I am a freelance writer and have worked as a freelance radio broadcaster in the past (for C.B.C.).

I have a great deal of respect for the Assyrian nation and its accomplishments.

Jean Okkerse (nee Gwergis)  
Saskatoon, Sask., Canada

## A National Concept is Needed

Your editorial of Vol. 6, No. 2 issue, "Wisdom Cannot be Imported," is a practical remedy for our national ailment. Your quotation by G. M. Lamsa was an excellent introduction to the subject.

How often do we confess, brag or sometimes unsuccessfully try to hide the fact that we are "Easterners." Notwithstanding the fact that almost all philosophies had their origin in the east, not to mention the prophets, it makes one wonder why should we Assyrians import wisdom from the west.

Assyrians had some of the wisest men — and women — of the time. It is sufficient to mention the great Akhiqar Khakeema — Wise Ahikar — for those who have heard of him, but never really try to know more about him.

Yet, it is utter nonsense for some of us to rush so hurriedly trying to satiate our minds with so much trivia gathered from the western media machine.

For nearly two thousand years we have been believing that a miracle would occur any day, and that we would find our redemption in the sky above, when we are living down — deep — on earth, and on the eastern side of it for the last 6700 years.

The truth can not be nearer or clearer than in your conclusion "... the wisdom we need can neither come from the West nor from the Sky. Eventually, our political wisdom will evolve as we develop our national consciousness ..."

I will conclude my observation by adding a sort of footnote to your conclusion. The first step towards developing our national consciousness is to apply ourselves — individuals and organizations — vigorously in a struggle to achieve a national consensus on a national concept.

S. E. Shalalo, Secretary  
Assyrian Graduates Forum  
Fairfield, Australia

## Human Rights Demanded

Your Nineveh Magazine expresses the true feelings of the Assyrian individual, who has for years been trying to unfetter himself from the Islamic Occupation and clear away from the leech-like entanglements of his oppressive ruler.

Your article, "The Copts Under Arab Occupation," page 15/16 of the 3rd quarter issue of 1983, is a true picture of the harsh conditions the Copts are subjected to, exemplifying the heavy yoke imposed on the Christians of the Middle East by the Islamic repressive regimes. The Zabbalin article in this year's June/July issue of the Geographic Magazine is a vivid example.

The present Islamic upsurge towards fanaticism in countries like Libya, Iran, Egypt, Pakistan and now Lebanon and Cyprus, is frightening.

Being Christians and of good endurance, and having survived for so long does not mean that we should accept to be dispossessed of our homes and be denied of our human rights cruelly and unjustly.

Let us, in addition to holding fast to our Christian faith, learn how to defend ourselves. Let us resurrect our demand for the rehabilitation of the Assyrian people under the Charter of the United Nations, and continue to demand the restitution of our human rights relentlessly. It is our legitimate right!

Fred P. Isaac  
Sydney, Australia

## A Library is Needed

You have been mentioning dissertations, books, and articles of interest to Assyrians and suggesting that we buy them; however, these books are so numerous and often costly that no individual can afford to buy them all. A better suggestion would be to establish a library which, through contributions from individuals, can obtain a greater number of these books and make them available to our community.

T. Simon  
San Jose, CA

---

*Wherever there is human interaction, there is politics.*

William K. Muir  
Chairman of the Department of  
Political Science at the University  
of California, Berkeley, CA

*The Middle East was the home of civilization. It is now the nerve centre of our problem. We dare not permit it to become a hell of power politics . . .*

*There is but one solution to this explosive political situation — the realization of the natural aspirations of all the native elements. If a federated independent community, comprising all the racial and religious minorities were to exist, like the Swiss cantons, it would act as a great stabilizing influence in the Middle East. With such an organization, the majority states would find it easy to collaborate, forming an eventual great semitic Federation. They have lived together since the beginning of times; and before the advent of alien agencies, each has respected the culture and the aspirations of the other.*

*(June 6, 1947)*

David B. Perley, J.S.D.  
President, Assyrian National Federation  
*(June, 1934 - October, 1935)*

*Nations do not die; humiliated and oppressed, they submit to the yoke, while they prepare their revenge and transmit from generation to generation a melancholy heritage of hatred. There are moments of pause in a duel. Such moments must be seized before the combatants stand once more face to face.*



Pope Benedict XV  
(December 6, 1915)

# Intellectual Domination And The Assyrians

By Arian Ishaya

There are different ways of dominating a people. The most direct way is to take hold of their land and resources, deny them statehood, and force their manpower to do the labor work or fight the battles of the conqueror. But there is also a very indirect, abstract form of domination; and that is intellectual. This is the most dangerous form because it penetrates the victim's inner feelings and thoughts. The victim remains unaware and willingly subjugates him/herself to intellectual domination. It is therefore very important for the subjugated people to be aware of it.

In this paper we will examine forms of intellectual domination that have been exercised upon the Assyrian people.

Being members of a small minority, Assyrian children in the elementary or high schools learn about many different types of nations and cultures, except their own. Sometime they come across a passage about the ancient Assyrians in one of their classes. To hear the name Assyrian or Assyria pronounced by a teacher, is very exciting to an Assyrian child. But the excitement soon turns into shame and debasement when the child finds out that his forefathers were among "the cruelest" people on earth. This view of the ancient Assyrians which is still taught in the schools of a most modern nation like America, is borrowed from a source as antiquated as the Bible and is presented uncritically as a historical fact. Neither the author of the textbook nor the teacher stop for a moment to think that those who wrote that passage were, at the time, the defeated enemies of Assyria.

Nor do these teachers stop for a minute to weigh the historical evidence and question whether the Assyrians were anymore cruel than the Roman Emperors who threw their victims in front of lions for sport; or the Egyptians who built their pyramids with slave labor; or the "civilized nations" of today who, without regard to civilian life, destroy whole villages and cities with a little device called the bomb.

In 1982 a number of Assyrian children in the Turlock area came home to tell their parents that they had learned in their history class that the ancient Assyrians were ruthless and cruel conquerors. They were ridiculed by their friends. The children were confused and ashamed. Their parents sent a letter of protest to the public school and a few courageous mothers prevented their children from taking a test based on a textbook which presented the ancient Assyrians in a biased fashion.

The struggle for national liberation must be waged on all fronts, and the intellectual struggle is by no

means of any less importance. The Assyrians are not the only people of course, who are presented in a derogatory fashion in the educational centers of dominant nations. Other national minorities suffer the same fate.

## Orientalism and the Assyrians

The Bible remained the major source of Western knowledge about the Assyrians until the 19th century when the European powers began to dominate the economies and politics of the Middle East. Intellectual modes of domination went with the economic and political modes. Orientalism developed as the "science" of the Orient. An orientalist was a Western scholar who was considered an expert on the Orient and the orientalists were the professionals who introduced the Middle East to the West. And what was the image they drew of the Middle Eastern people? A very negative one.

These Orientalists were full of a sense of Western superiority. They were contemptuous of other ways of life. So they depicted the Oriental people as uncivilized, fanatic, and unprogressive. In recent years Orientalism has come under increasing criticism by historians such as Maxime Rodinson, Edward Said, and Roger Owen. These people have convincingly demonstrated that the Orientalists' view of the Orient was a distorted one. They were viewing the Peoples of the Middle East from the colonizer's point of view, which denied them intelligence, humanity, and rationality--attributes that are purportedly highly valued in the West.

It was a debasing image and of course it suited the colonial powers splendidly, because it justified their plans before their own tax payers and before the subjugated peoples. What were these plans? To turn the Middle Eastern countries into protectorates and exploit them in the guise of "benefactors", to help these "backward" people to "modernize". Of course the results were just the opposite: During that period the natural development of these nations was arrested, and their economies and Societies became underdeveloped progressively as they became more and more dependent upon superpowers for various forms of "aid" programs.

**The contemporary Assyrians no less than other Middle Eastern people have been victims of Orientalism.**

The contemporary Assyrians were first introduced to the West through the writings of missionaries or diplomats who were stationed in the regions where the Assyrians lived. The main task of the missionaries was to provide the Assyrians with spiritual "guidance". But many of them only provided spiritual domination, which resulted in the alienation of the Assyrians from their national church and the traditions of their forefathers.

The early missionaries refused to put any value in the Assyrian beliefs and traditions. They looked down upon Assyrian rituals, their Shakra festivities, their observance of the Saints days, and so on. To them all these were nothing but "dead forms", "superstitions", and "satanic". They insisted that the Assyrians must refrain from fasting, burning incense, kissing the cross and celebrating the Saints days. They advised the clergy to add lengthy sermons to the church service after the Western model.

Their criticism of the Assyrian forms of worship reveal their own arrogance, puritanical rigidity, and intolerance for things which were not western. Missionary Stoddard proudly demonstrated how they tormented the Assyrians: "We strip off all their righteousness, tear away all their hopes, arraign them as condemned criminals at the bar of an offended God".

**Of course the effect of such pressure could only be to shame the Assyrians--particularly the youth--and alienate them from the ways of their forefathers--to lose respect for themselves as a people particularly in a place like the Middle East, where religion was an important element of nationhood.**

#### The Academia and the Assyrians

In 20th. century social scientists replaced the missionaries or the diplomats of the previous century as the "experts" on the Assyrians. But although the experts have changed, the orientalist bias is still there, and reappears in new a new guise. Examine recent manuscripts and publications on the Assyrians. You will notice that it has become almost fashionable for most dissertations, books, or articles to start with the question: "Are contemporary Assyrians really Assyrian?"

The question is then followed by a painstaking paring of the racial and cultural traits of the Assyrians of today with the remnants of the past archeological relics to establish whether historical continuity between the two exists or not! What these scholars and some of their readers do not seem to realize is that to question the legitimacy of the name of today's Assyrians is not a "scientific" act; it is a political one, because this is the type of question that the colonial powers raise to deny the territorial and cultural rights of several dominated peoples.

**The Palestinians in Israel, the Kurds in Turkey, the Africans in South Africa and the Assyrians in Iraq (The heartland of ancient Assyria is within the present borders of Iraq)--all face the same problem. Their very name is denied so as to deny their peoplehood. For the Jewish state the Palestinians are only "Moslem Arabs" for the Turks the Kurds are "mountain Turks"; and for the Africaners of South Africa (the white ruling minority), the Africans are just diverse Bantu tribes, and not a single people.**

**In the same way the Assyrians are merely "Syriac-speaking Christians" from the point of view of the Iraqi Arab government.**

In view of these facts it is evident that scholars, by posing the very question of identity, are providing the ruling powers with a weapon to use against their minorities. What other purpose can an utterly unscientific question serve? Why is the question unscientific? Because there has been a tremendous amount of cultural and racial admixture among human societies through the centuries. Cultural and racial continuity is impossible to be established for any national group.

Moreover, during the 20th. century old nations have been dismantled and new ones created without any regard to cultural and historical realities-- as a glance on the map of Europe readily shows. In Europe after WWI people who shared the same language and culture were torn apart to constitute different "nations" and people with diverse linguistic and racial characteristics were forcefully sandwiched together to form one nation. **And since the arrangement suited the superpowers, no questions are asked about the legitimacy of these nations on cultural or historical grounds and yet the Assyrians are on the millstone for those very reasons!**

**The Assyrians call themselves Assyrians for a very simple and convincing reason: they are age old inhabitants of ancient Assyria.** That is their homeland. They have churches there that date as far back as 3rd. and 4th. century A.D. That is sufficient and says it all. There is no need to engage in the inconclusive argument of racial and cultural purity. When the Palestinians say they are Palestinians because their forefathers inhabited Palestine, and the French say that France is their homeland because they have lived there for many centuries. One claim is as valid as the other. What makes the French claim more respectable and that of the Palestinians questionable, is not science, it is politics pure and simple.

**Therefore the question of whether the contemporary Assyrians are Assyrians, should never be asked. When a scholar makes that a topic of research, he is playing a political game in the guise of science.** There is no excuse for the academics to remain naive any longer. The scholars have no choice but to decide what they want to do with their profession: put it in the service of the people or use it to promote the interest of the ruling Powers. Whatever choice they make, they can be sure that they can no longer fool the people.



Undena Publications



# Assur



*Assur is a journal entirely dedicated to ancient Assyria (from 3000 to 600 B.C.), covering history, archaeology, and philology. Edited by a group of eminent scholars in the field, it publishes articles by a number of international authorities for the study of ancient Assyria.*

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*The mortal enemy of the Assyrian Nation is assimilation and loss of identity both in Bet-Nahrain and in other countries where Assyrians are presently residing.*

*Dr. Eden Naby, Harvard University.*

The body and face of the colonized are not a pretty sight. It is not without damage that one carries the weight of such historical misfortune. If the colonizer's face is the odious one of an oppressor, that of his victim certainly does not express calm and harmony. The colonized does not exist in accordance with the colonial myth, but he is nevertheless recognizable. Being a creature of oppression, he is bound to be a creature of want.

How can one believe that he can ever be resigned to the colonial relationship; that face of suffering and disdain allotted to him? In all of the colonized there is a fundamental need for change. For the colonizers to be unconscious of this need means that either their lack of understanding of the colonial system is immense or that their blind selfishness is more than readily believable. To assert, for instance, that the colonized's claims are the acts of a few intellectuals or ambitious individuals, of deception or self-interest, is a perfect example of projection: an explanation of others in terms of one's own interests. The colonized's refusal resembles a surface phenomenon, but it actually derives from the very nature of the colonial situation.

The middle-class colonized suffers most from bilingualism. The intellectual lives more in cultural anguish, and the illiterate person is simply walled into his language and rechews scraps of oral culture. Those who understand their fate become impatient and no longer tolerate colonization. They only express the common misfortune. If not, why would they be so quickly heard, so well understood and obeyed?

If one chooses to understand the colonial system, he must admit that it is unstable and its equilibrium constantly threatened. One can be reconciled to every situation, and the colonized can wait a long time to live. But, regardless of how soon or how violently the colonized rejects his situation, he will one day begin to overthrow his unlivable existence with the whole force of his oppressed personality.

## The two answers of the colonized

The two historically possible solutions are then tried in succession or simultaneously. He attempts either to become different or to reconquer all the dimensions which colonization tore away from him.

The first attempt of the colonized is to change his condition by changing his skin. There is a tempting model very close at hand—the colonizer. The latter suffers from none of his deficiencies, has all rights, enjoys every possession and benefits from every prestige. He is, moreover, the other part of the comparison, the one that crushes the colonized and keeps him in servitude. The first ambition of the colonized is to become equal to that splendid model and to resemble him to the point of disappearing in him.

By this step, which actually presupposes admiration for the colonizer, one can infer approval of colonization. But by obvious logic, at the very moment when the colonized best adjusts himself to his fate, he rejects himself with most tenacity. That is to say that he rejects, in another way, the colonial situation. Rejection of self and love of another are common to all candidates for assimilation. Moreover, the two components of this attempt at liberation are closely tied. Love of the colonizer is subtended by a complex of feelings ranging from shame to self-hate.

The extremism in that submission to the model is already revealing. A blonde woman, be she dull or anything else, appears superior to any brunette. A product manufactured by the colonizer is accepted with confidence. His habits, clothing, food, architecture are closely copied, even if inappropriate. A mixed marriage is the extreme expression of this audacious leap.

This fit of passion for the colonizer's values would not be so suspect, however, if it did not involve such a negative side. The colonized does not seek merely to enrich himself with the colonizer's virtues. In the name of what he hopes to become, he sets his mind on impoverishing himself, tearing himself away from his true self. The crushing of the colonized is included among the colonizer's values. As soon as the colonized adopts those values, he similarly adopts his own condemnation. In order to free himself, at least

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# NINEVEH

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so he believes, he agrees to destroy himself. This phenomenon is comparable to Negrophobia in a Negro, or anti-Semitism in a Jew. Negro women try desperately to uncurl their hair, which keeps curling back, and torture their skin to make it a little whiter. Many Jews would, if they could, tear out their souls—that soul which, they are told, is irremediably bad. People have told the colonized that his music is like mewling of cats, and his painting like sugar syrup. He repeats that his music is vulgar and his painting disgusting. If that music nevertheless moves him, excites him more than the tame Western exercises, which he finds cold and complicated, if that unison of singing and slightly intoxicating colors gladdens his eye, it is against his will. He becomes indignant with himself, conceals it from strangers' eyes or makes strong statements of repugnance that are comical. The women of the bourgeoisie prefer a mediocre jewel from Europe to the purest jewel of their tradition. Only the tourists express wonder before the products of centuries-old craftsmanship. The point is that whether Negro, Jew or colonized, one must resemble the white man, the non-Jew, the colonizer. Just as many people avoid showing off their poor relations, the colonized in the throes of assimilation hides his past, his traditions, in fact all his origins which have become ignominious.

Those internal convulsions and contortions could have attained their goal. At the end of a long, painful process, one certainly full of conflict, the colonized would perhaps have dissolved into the midst of the colonizers. There is no problem which the erosion of history cannot resolve. It is a question of time and generations. There is, however, one condition—that it not contain contradictory ideas. Well, within the colonial framework, assimilation has turned out to be impossible.

The candidate for assimilation almost always comes to tire of the exorbitant price which he must pay and which he never finishes owing. He discovers with alarm the full meaning of his attempt. It is a dramatic moment when he realizes that he has assumed all the accusations and condemnations of the colonizer, that he is becoming accustomed to looking at his own people through the eyes of their procurer. True, they are not without defects, nor even without blame. There is concrete foundation for his impatience with them and their values. Almost everything

in them is out of style, inefficient and derisory. But what is this? They are his own people, he is and has never ceased to be one of them at heart! Those rhythms balanced for centuries, that food which fills his mouth and stomach so well, they are still his own; they are still himself. Must he, all his life, be ashamed of what is most real in him, of the only things not borrowed? Must he insist on denying himself, and, moreover, will he always be able to stand it? Must his liberation be accomplished through systematic self-denial?

Nonetheless, the major impossibility is not negating one's existence, for he soon discovers that, even if he agrees to everything, he would not be saved. In order to be assimilated, it is not enough to leave one's group, but one must enter another; now he meets with the colonizer's rejection.

All that the colonized has done to emulate the colonizer has met with disdain from the colonial masters. They explain to the colonized that those efforts are in vain, that he only acquires thereby an additional trait, that of being ridiculous. He can never succeed in becoming identified with the colonizer, nor even in copying his role correctly. In the best of circumstances, if he does not want to offend the colonizer too much, the colonizer will use all his psychological theories. The national character of peoples is incompatible; every gesture is subtended by the entire spirit, etc. If he is more rude, he will say that the colonized is an ape. The shrewder the ape, the better he imitates, and the more the colonizer becomes irritated. With that vigilance and a smell sharpened by malice, he will track down the telltale nuance in clothing or language, the "lack of good taste" which he always manages to discover. Indeed, a man straddling two cultures is rarely well seated, and the colonized does not always find the right pose.

Albert Memmi

*The Colonizer and the Colonized*

*Nineveh's Note:*

Albert Memmi is an author and expert on the sociology and psychology of the colonized people. He now lectures at French universities. His message has much relevance to the plight of Assyrians. We highly recommend his writings.

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## ASSYRIANS IN POST EMPIRE ERA

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Unlike Egypt, Iraq accommodated not one but two provincial identities, the Assyrian and the Babylonian. Both cultures had of course suffered violent destruction on their fall a thousand years before the Arab conquests: as Nabopolassar and the Medes turned Assyria into 'heaps and ruins' in 612 B.C.,<sup>64</sup> so Xerxes razed the walls of Babylon, expropriated its citizens and turned its god into bullion after the revolt of 482.<sup>65</sup> **Both identities nonetheless survived, the first under a Christian aegis, the second under a pagan.**

This unusual division of labour between Christianity and paganism was a result of the differing impact of foreign rule on the two provinces. **Assyria, which had neither the fabled wealth nor the strategic importance of Babylon, had been left virtually alone by the Achaemenids and Seleucids,<sup>66</sup> condemned to oblivion by the outside world, it could recollect its own glorious past in a certain tranquillity.<sup>67</sup>** Consequently when the region came back into the focus of history under the Parthians, it was with an Assyrian, not a Persian let alone Greek, self-identification: the temple of Ashur was restored, the city was rebuilt,<sup>68</sup> and an Assyrian successor state returned in the shape of the client kingdom of Adiabene.<sup>69</sup> The Sasanids put an end to the autonomy of this kingdom,<sup>70</sup> but they did not replace the local rulers with a Persian bureaucracy: though reduced to obedient servants of the Shahanshah, a native aristocracy therefore survived.<sup>71</sup> In one respect, however, their position in the Persian state was an uncomfortable one. Already under the Parthians the Shahanshahs tended to demand religious conformity in return for political significance;<sup>72</sup> and under the Sasanids they did so systematically, thus imposing a Persian truth on an Assyrian identity. As long as the level of integration remained low this disharmony could be disguised by syncretic manoeuvres;<sup>73</sup> but as the Sasanids brought the local aristocracy into closer contact with the Persian court, the meshes were closed.<sup>74</sup> A Persian monarchy thus did for an ethnic God in the east what an ethnic God did for Greek culture in the west, and here as elsewhere the provincials were faced with the choice between the rectification of genealogy and the rectification of faith, *tashih al-nasab* and *tashih al-din*. Like the provincials of the west, the Assyrians stuck to their genealogy, but unlike them they could not merely go heretical: even a heretical Zoroastrian was still conceptually a Persian, and vis-à-vis the Persians the Assyrians therefore needed a different religion altogether.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, even an orthodox Christian was still only a Greek by association; vis-à-vis the Greeks a heresy therefore sufficed. **Consequently, after a detour via Judaism, the Assyrians adopted Christianity and found their heresy in Nestorianism.<sup>76</sup>**

Babylonia, by contrast, had never been left alone. Apart from its massive Jewish diaspora, it was flooded with Persian immigrants under the Achaemenids, Greeks under the Seleucids and more Persians with the Sasanids; the latter built their capital there and in due course added yet another batch of foreigners in the form of Greek and Syrian prisoners of war.<sup>77</sup> As a result the Babylonian polity was dissolved. It is true that the ghost of Babylon haunted lower Iraq for some two centuries in the shape of the client kingdom of Mesene which, though founded by an Iranian satrap, soon went Aramaic;<sup>78</sup> and there were no doubt other Aramean kings under the Parthians.<sup>79</sup> **But in the first place the Babylonian identification of Mesene was weak,<sup>80</sup> and in the second place the Sasanid choice of lower Iraq as the centre of their empire hardly left much room for a native aristocracy, and whereas the Assyrians had a clear memory of their own past, the Babylonians did not.<sup>81</sup>** One might indeed have expected the Babylonian identity to vanish altogether, and if it did survive it was not because it remembered itself in isolation, but because it transcended itself and won universal respect: the Greeks bowed in deference to Babylonian astrology and borrowed it without disguising its Chaldean origin,<sup>82</sup> and consequently the Chaldeans could borrow Greek philosophy without losing their identity. The fusion of Greek and Babylonian paganism generated a variety of astrological religions which, unlike the parent paganism, could hold their own against the supreme truths of Zoroastrianism, and which unlike Christianity were possessed of an ethnic label: an Assyrian had only an identity, a Christian had only a truth, but a Chaldean had both identity and truth. In Chaldea pagans therefore survived.

**Christianity did, of course, spread to Babylonia; but whereas in Assyria it was a way of sanctifying a provincial identity, in Babylonia it was a way of desanctifying two.** To the highly cosmopolitan environment of lower Iraq, Christianity, like Manichaeism, was a protest against ethnic religions, not a way of acquiring one: Manichaeism transcended the Chaldean and Persian truths by combining them as lesser insights within a larger and more grandiose scheme of things, and Christianity did the same by rejecting both as identical. The Christians of lower Iraq never lacked identity: they included Persians, Greeks, Elamites, Arameans, Qatraye, Arabs and others.<sup>83</sup> Like the Assyrians, they might call themselves *Suryane* in contradistinction to the pagans; but they never shared any single identity between them: the only identity there was to inherit was Chaldean, and on conversion the Chaldean renounced his ethnicity as Magian and his culture as Zoroastrian.<sup>84</sup> The Assyrian Christians have a genuine precedent for their name, but Christians were only called Chaldeans by way of abuse.<sup>85</sup>

There were thus two distinct versions of Christianity within the Nestorian church: on the one hand the local church of Assyria, a chauvinist assertion of a provincial identity; and on the other the metropolitan church of Persia with its centre in Babylonia, a cosmopolitan assertion of a gentile truth. But if the Assyrian church was in this respect comparable to that of Egypt, its chauvinism took a rather different form. Egypt had preserved an ethnicity and a language peculiar to itself among its peasantry, whereas its aristocracy belonged to the larger Hellenised world; Assyria by contrast had an aristocracy peculiar to itself, whereas it shared its ethnicity and language with the larger Aramaic world. Hence where Coptic chauvinism was ethnic and linguistic, that of Assyria turned on the memory of a glorious past. In this connection two timely conversions served to clear the Assyrian kings of their Biblical disrepute. Firstly Sardana the son of Sennacherib, thirty-second king of Assyria after Belos and ruler of a third of the inhabited world, submitted to the monotheistic message of Jonah and instituted the Ninivite fast which saved Ninive from destruction;<sup>86</sup> and the fast having saved the Assyrians from the wrath of God in the past, it was reinstated by Sabrisho' of Karkha de-Bet Selokh to save them from a plague a thousand years later.<sup>87</sup> Secondly, the conversion of Izates II of Adiabene to Judaism was reedited as the conversion of Narsai of Assyria to Christianity.<sup>88</sup> **In other words the Assyrians were monotheists before Christ and Christians after him, and the past therefore led on to the present without a break. Thus the history of Karkha de-Bet Selokh begins with the Assyrian kings and ends with the Assyrian martyrs: Sargon founded it<sup>89</sup> and the martyrs made it 'a blessed field for Christianity'.<sup>90</sup> Likewise in the seventh century before Christ all the world stood in awe of Sardana,<sup>91</sup> and in the seventh century after Christ the saints took his place as the 'sun of Athor' and the 'glory of Ninive'.<sup>92</sup>**

The church in Babylonia, by contrast, had neither the ethnic and linguistic pride of Egypt nor the historical pride of Assyria. As against Egypt, they identified themselves as gentiles<sup>93</sup> and used both Persian and Syriac.<sup>94</sup> **As against Assyria, they renounced the Babylonian past to the pagans: Nimrod, in Assyria an ancestral king commemorated in the names of Christian saints,<sup>95</sup> in Babylonia retained his identification with Zoroaster<sup>96</sup> and was either rejected as the originator of Persian paganism<sup>97</sup> or conciliated as the oracular guide of the Magians in search of Christ;<sup>98</sup> in either case he remained a foreigner.** Likewise the tradition represented by the Christian Isho'dad of Merv is as totally detached from the Babylonian past, for all its considerable learning, as that represented by the pagan Ibn Wahshiyya is totally in love with it, for all its considerable errors.

Both the Assyrian and the Babylonian churches, however, differed from that of Egypt in being aristocratically orientated; the first because its Assyrian identity was vested in a native aristocracy, the second because the disinvestment from a native identity permitted a full acceptance of Persian aristocratic values. Consequently the Nestorian church as such was constituted by its

nobles: the endless succession of peasants in the sayings of the Egyptian fathers gives way to the endless succession of magnates in the acts of the Persian martyrs, and whereas the Egyptian magnates could only just redeem their worldly status by going Monophysite, the Nestorian sources virtually brim over with aristocratic legitimism.<sup>99</sup> **The awe of Assyria for its local Nimrodids or Sennacheribids is matched by the metropolitan reverence for the royal descent of a Saba, Yuhannan or Golindukht,<sup>100</sup> and the Nestorians were thus united in their high esteem of power, wealth and worldly renown.<sup>101</sup>** It is true that from time to time the intolerance of the Shahanshahs precluded service at court;<sup>102</sup> but local magnates could and did stay in power, laymen played a prominent role in the Nestorian church, and tolerant Shahanshahs received the willing services of their Christian subjects:<sup>103</sup> of all laymen it was Yazdin of Kirkuk, the fiscal officer in charge of taxes, tribute and booty for Khusraw II, who was honoured as the 'defender of the church in the manner of Constantine and Theodosius'.<sup>104</sup> Consequently the Nestorians were similarly united in their attitude to the Persian king: all had accepted the political supremacy of the Persian Empire, **and even the Assyrians could hardly hope for a Sennacheribid restoration; what they resented was the ethnic intolerance of Zoroastrianism, and what they aimed at was therefore not secession from the rule of the Shahanshah, but his conversion.**<sup>105</sup>

As members of an aristocratic church the Nestorians likewise differed from the Copts in having a rich secular culture: their high esteem for worldly power was matched by their high esteem for human reason, a point endorsed by Nestorian theology. Their official authority, Theodore of Mopsuestia, did of course know the traditional doctrine of the Fall, according to which an initial state of human immortality and bliss had been disrupted by sin and deteriorated progressively until the dramatic return of grace with the redemptive death of Christ. But he also taught a variant doctrine positing an initial state of imperfection from which man had progressed under divine guidance until immortality was regained with the exemplary resurrection of Christ.<sup>106</sup> One doctrine emphasised man's need of grace, the other his ability to help himself: if the divine instruction was to be of any effect man must necessarily be able to distinguish between good and evil and to act in accordance with his reason, and sin must therefore be an act of will and an act against better knowledge.<sup>107</sup> It was for this second view that the Nestorians opted, and if they did not go Pelagian<sup>108</sup> or reduce the redemption to a mere symbol of future immortality,<sup>109</sup> they certainly did play up reason at the expense of grace.<sup>110</sup>

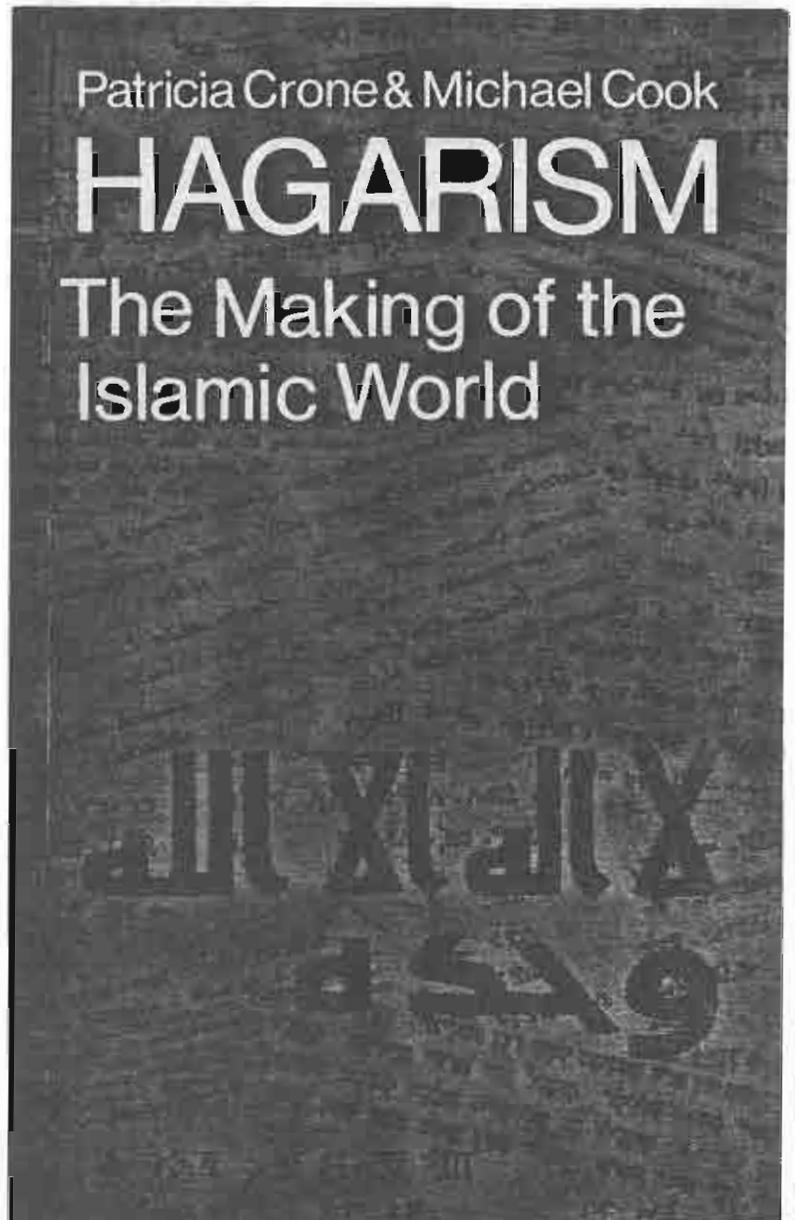
The possession of a secure social and doctrinal locus for secular intellection did two things for Nestorian culture. In the first place, whereas the Coptic church was boorish, the Nestorian church was academic. Most strikingly, it acquired one of the few non-monastic schools of theology in the Near East when the school of Edessa migrated to Nisibis,<sup>111</sup> and Nisibis in turn spawned a series of lesser schools; and it similarly acquired a school of medicine with the settlement of

prisoners of war in Gondeshapur.<sup>112</sup> In general the foundation of schools recurs again and again in the lives of Nestorian worthies, and few monasteries were without one.<sup>113</sup>

In the second place, whereas the Coptic church rejected Greek thought as morally pagan, the Nestorian church legitimised it as proleptically Christian. For it was not of course an Assyrian culture that was being taught in the Assyrian schools: the cultural impoverishment of Assyria had been hardly less thoroughgoing than that of Egypt, and just as the Egyptian heritage in Coptic literature is limited to motifs of popular stories, so the Assyrian heritage in Christian literature is limited to Ahiqar, the vizier of the Assyrian kings.<sup>114</sup> But unlike the Coptic peasants, the Nestorian elite could replace what it had lost with the universal truths of Greek philosophy. The philosophers were not only translated but also exalted,<sup>115</sup> and in due course the Nestorians became adept enough at philosophy to export it back to the west.<sup>116</sup>

*Source: HAGARISM, The Making of the Islamic World, by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, 1977.*

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## **HAGARISM – *The Making of the Islamic World***

*by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook*

The book sets out a new theory of the origins of Islam and a novel analysis of the formation of Islamic civilization.

The theory of Islamic origins advanced in Part One is based on the use of contemporary non-Muslim sources to reconstruct a phase in the history of the religion — ‘Hagarism’ — which the Islamic tradition itself has suppressed. Most strikingly, these sources point to a very intimate link between the earliest form of Islam and Jewish messianism.

Islamic civilization took shape when the bearers of this developing faith conquered a large part of the world of late antiquity. What was it about the conquerors that enabled them to bring about the formation of a new civilization? And what was it about the conquered that disposed them to collaborate in this venture? Parts Two and Three set out to answer these questions, and to show what the answers have meant for the character of Islamic civilization.

This challenging book will be of interest to all those concerned with the study of Islamic history and civilization, the history of Judaism and late antiquity, and the whole range of Near and Middle Eastern studies. It is also a major contribution to the history of religion and the history of ideas.

*Patricia Crone is Senior Research Fellow, The Warburg Institute, and Michael Cook is Lecturer in Economic History with reference to the Middle East at the School of Oriental and African Studies.*

# ISRAEL FALLS TO ASSYRIA IN 720 BCE: AN ALBUM REVIEW

Victory albums have gone out of fashion in Israel since 1967, but Tel Aviv University's Archeology Institute has now apparently come up with a new form of the genre - a Defeat Album. It records a major beating for Our Side. And to rub salt in the wound, the album's price is \$70.

But, *The Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib* by David Ussishkin recounts a chapter in biblical archeology so tremendous as to transcend partisan emotion.

The story includes one of the greatest and earliest examples extant of combat "photography." It was executed by an Assyrian artist accompanying his nation's army in an expedition against Judea 2,700 years ago. His sketches, translated into stone reliefs, provide the only portraits we have of Jews from the biblical period.

The story also includes one of the great adventures of archeology - the unearthing of Sennacherib's palace by a British aristocrat in the great tradition of inspired archeological amateurs, Austen Henry Layard, and the carrying off of its treasures, in the best colonial tradition, to the British Museum.

The story concludes with the current dig at Lachish, headed by the book's author, Dr. Ussishkin, which has determined the destruction layer marking Sennacherib's victory and uncovered one of the ramps used by Sennacherib's assault force.

The kingdom of Assyria, based in the area of today's Iraq, became the superpower of the Near East towards the end of the 8th century BCE. The powerful battering rams designed by its royal engineers toppled the walls of fortified cities that stood in the way of the growing empire. The last of the Kingdom of Israel, embracing 10 of the 12 Israelite tribes, fell to Assyria in 720.

Judah was one of the few states in the region that remained independent. In 701, Sennacherib set out to rectify that. There is a remarkable diversity of sources to tell us what happened. The Bible was the first, but the sculptings and texts uncovered by Layard in Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh giving the Assyrian version of events and the evidence found in Lachish itself by British and Israeli archeologists provide a rare perspective on a single historical event.

Judah was ruled by Hezekiah when the Assyrian hosts approached from Nineveh, almost 1,000 kilometres away. He had been king for 26 years and proved himself a vigorous and foresighted ruler. He had shored up Jerusalem as his capital spiritually by abolishing shrines outside the city. He strengthened it physically with stout walls and, as a hedge against siege, with the remarkable conduit - hewn through rock from the Gihon spring outside the city wall to a pool within the city.

Lachish was the most powerful city in the kingdom outside Jerusalem. Ussishkin notes that it

may have been a chariot city - equivalent of a modern armoured corps base. With the approach of Sennacherib, the battlements were augmented with galleries providing more space for soldiers, and archeologists were to find the main drainage channel blocked to prevent Assyrian infantry from penetrating beneath the walls.

Sennacherib headed first for the Phoenecian coast where he took Sidon and Acre. After sweeping through Philistine towns on the coastal plain and defeating an Egyptian expeditionary force, he headed inland and laid siege to Lachish.

It is clear to archeologists that the siege camp lay where today's Moshav Lachish lies, a fairly level hilltop attached by a topographic saddle to the mound on which the city was built. The fierce battle is witnessed today by the ashes and debris including arrowheads and slingstones.

The biblical version is terse. "In the 14th year of King Hezekiah (a dating that differs from the historians) did Sennacherib, King of Assyria, come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them." (Kings 18:13, Isaiah 36:1).

In the Assyrian archives, Sennacherib offers more details. After describing his earlier victories, he says, "But as for Hezekiah, the Jew, who did not bow in submission to my yoke, 46 of his strong walled towns and innumerable smaller villages in their neighbourhoods I besieged and conquered by stamping down earth ramps and then by bringing up battering rams, by the assault of foot soldiers, by breaches, tunneling and sapper operations. I made to come out from them 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, innumerable horses, mules, donkeys, camels, large and small cattle, and counted them as the spoils of war."

After its fall, the city was put to the torch and Sennacherib marched on Jerusalem to which he laid siege. "I shut (Hezekiah) up like a caged bird," says the Assyrian monarch's annals.

**The Bible recounts that the Assyrian siege camp was struck by a plague which forced Sennacherib to withdraw. The latter makes no mention of plague and tells us instead that Hezekiah "sent a personal messenger to deliver the tribute and make a slavish obsequance." The tribute included not only gold and other precious materials but the king's daughters, concubines, and male and female musicians. These were sent to Nineveh.**

In any event, the Assyrians did not enter the city, which survived intact until the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezer laid it waste 115 years later, destroying the First Temple.

Amateur archeologist Layard began digging in 1847 into a dusty tel on the Tigris River near Mosul in Iraq. His instincts told him a great Assyrian city had once stood there, even though previous excavations had uncovered nothing. He chose a corner of the high mound overlooking the river and within a few days began uncovering a series of chambers with

stone reliefs and cuneiform inscriptions, clearly part of a magnificent royal palace.

He returned two years later, by which time the cuneiform inscriptions had been deciphered, including the name Sennacherib. Pushing long tunnels into the mound, lit by vertical shafts from the surface, he quickly came to the main part of the palace. Leading off the central court were three chambers in a row, the entrance to each flanked by two huge bull colossi. The gates and colossi were progressively smaller - from six metres to four - to give an impression of depth. The innermost chamber, to which the eye was drawn by this impressive architectural arrangement, was lined by sculpted reliefs about 26 metres long depicting the conquest of Lachish. The setting made clear the importance Sennacherib attributed to that hard-fought victory.

The Lachish panels were the best preserved of the many lining the palace's rooms. Most of them - about 19 metres in all - were packed in cases and floated by raft down to the sea where they were placed aboard a British frigate.

It was another British archeologist, James Leslie Starkey, who in 1932 - 85 years after Layard's probe of Nineveh - began digging at Lachish itself. The tel had been identified as Lachish only three years before by W.F. Albright, a giant of biblical archeology, but not all experts agreed. Unlike Layard, Starkey was a trained archeologist, and he executed a controlled excavation, uncovering the layers of settlement from the top downwards. The second level from the top was clearly identified by pottery as the remains of the city destroyed by Nebuchadnezer in 586 BCE. However, there was considerable controversy about the level beneath, which showed massive signs of destruction by fire. Because of the close resemblance of the pottery found at this level - level 3 - with the pottery of level 2, Starkey concluded that very little time had passed between these two periods. He attributed the destruction of level 3 to Nebuchadnezer's campaign in 597, a decade before he destroyed Lachish - presumably a second time - and Jerusalem.

Starkey was shot dead by 1938 by an Arab as he drove from Lachish to Jerusalem to attend the opening of what is today known as the Rockefeller Museum. One of his assistants, Olga Tufnell, who was to continue working on the material from the six seasons of excavations, came to her own conclusion about level 3. Closer examination of the pottery convinced her that there was a marked difference between the material in levels 2 and 3 and that the latter had been manufactured well before the destruction of 586. She concluded that level 3 should be dated to the Assyrian destruction of 701 BCE.

Albright, Kathleen Kenyon and other major archeologists continued to support the 597 dating, but Israeli archeologists increasingly inclined to the 701 dating on the basis of their knowledge of pottery elsewhere in the country.

David Ussishkin began a major excavation at Lachish in 1973 on behalf of Tel Aviv University's Institute of Archeology, the Israel Exploration Society and other institutions. The excavations are in their ninth season. He has concluded that level 3 is clearly the remains of the city destroyed by Sennacherib.

Last week Tufnell, now in her 90's, flew over from England at Ussishkin's request and addressed the members of the expedition at the Lachish dig site on her reminiscences of the Starkey expedition half a century ago.

When the current dig began a decade ago, it was visited by Prof. Yigael Yadin, who suggested that stone heaps at one corner of the mound might be the remains of one of the Assyrian siege ramps. Starkey had believed that the stones were remnants of collapsed fortifications. Ussishkin cut a trench into the stone mass and concluded that the stones had not fallen randomly but were indeed part of a ramp whose upper layers were cemented by hard mortar.

In his book, Ussishkin says that if his supposition is correct, "then our siege ramp is the only Assyrian siege ramp so far archeologically attested. Moreover, it seems it is the most ancient siege ramp so far discovered in the Near East." The nearest dates from a century later in Smyrna.

Starkey had uncovered several caves on the mound's slope into which an estimated 1,500 bodies had been piled. There were indications of death by fire. Starkey had suggested - "quite convincingly," according to Ussishkin - that these were victims of the Assyrian attack whose bodies had been removed from the devastated city.

Remains of 695 skulls were brought to London where an expert found a close racial resemblance to the population of Egypt at that time. "The relationships found suggest that the population of the town in 700 BCE was entirely, or almost entirely, of Egyptian origin," principally Upper Egypt. "If so," writes Ussishkin, "this indeed is a conclusion of far-reaching implications."

Three of the skulls had been operated on and parts of the bone sawed away in what appear to have been emergency operations. Two appear to have died in the process but one skull shows signs of healing after the operation. "Could they perhaps represent desperate attempts to save the lives of people injured in battle?" asks Ussishkin.

Last year, the Institute of Archeology dispatched artist Judith Dekel to the British Museum to draw the Lachish reliefs to half their original size. The drawings, together with photographs of the reliefs by Avraham Hay and finds from the dig were recently displayed at Tel Aviv University.

The drawings, which are included in the book, permit a fascinating look at a live biblical scene as viewed by the eye of a talented contemporary artist. Ussishkin believes that the scene was sketched during the battle by the artist and then reproduced in stone

in Nineveh. From the perspective of the scene, it seems clear that the artist stood where Moshav Lachish's turkey runs now stand.

For the first time we are given an idea of what Jews of that period looked like, or at least how they dressed. Women, including little girls, seen emerging from the main gate into captivity wear shawls which cover their heads and which fall down their backs to the bottoms of their simple dresses. The men, who have short beards, wear scarves around their heads with the edges hanging down over their ears to their shoulders. "A thick horizontal line below the belt probably marks the bottom of a sleeveless shirt," says Ussishkin.

Judean warriors shown fighting from the battlements wear a variety of headgear, including conical helmets.

The Assyrian troops are understandably depicted with far greater detail. There are groups of variously clad archers, presumably from different contingents in the army. There are light auxiliary archers and heavily armoured archers and slingers with piles of slingstones at their feet. Some of the soldiers wear boots, some are barefoot.

From a military point of view the most intriguing part of the reliefs are the battering rams. There are seven of them pushed up to the city wall on ramps covered with logs to provide easier rolling for the ram's wheels. Five rams stand close together on the main ramp near the city's principle gateway, the ramp Ussishkin believes he has identified in the field.

The rams are advanced under heavy fire coming from the defenders in the form of rocks, arrows and burning torches. The reliefs indicate that the rams were assembled from a number of parts and held by securing pins. They resemble a baby carriage with the hood up, the hood protecting the soldiers inside. Protruding through the front is the metal ram head supported by a wooden shaft swinging on a rope like a pendulum. Inside the machine, crouching soldiers swing the shaft to the rear and let it race forward to strike the city wall. Under persistent pounding, the wall will presumably give way.

In his annals, Sennacherib mentions that his palace in Nineveh was built with the help of captives. Some of the reliefs found there portray the building of the palace with captives carrying large stones and pulling giant pieces of sculpture with ropes. One group is depicted identically with the defenders of Lachish. "Clearly these are the men of Judah, quite possibly the men of Lachish," writes Ussishkin.

Two decades after his victory at Lachish, Sennacherib was murdered. The Bible tells us he was killed by his sons while praying in a temple. The king's face was deliberately mutilated on the Lachish relief by an unknown hand, probably in the riots that followed his death.

Thus, while posterity still gazes at the human likenesses of his soldiers and his Jewish victims at Lachish, the great emperor himself has been left to us as a faceless roar of thunder.

*The Jerusalem Post*, International Edition, July 31-August 6, 1983.

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Assyrians have been accused of spilling oceans of blood; they did so — in their statistics. All historians know that statistics of enemy loss are enormously overestimated, even in these days of statistical associations and professors of statistics. Yet it has been the fashion of many Orientalists, not merely to accept Assyrian statistics at face value, but, if there was a choice of numbers, to take the higher!

A. T. Olmstead  
*History of Assyria*  
The University of Chicago Press, 1923

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# Assyrian Studies

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## JUDAH IN THE REIGN OF MANASSEH AS EVIDENCED IN TEXTS DURING THE NEO-ASSYRIAN PERIOD AND IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE IRON AGE

Order No. 8115534

BULBACH, STANLEY WALTER, Ph.D. *New York University*, 1981. 210pp.  
Adviser: Professor Baruch Levine

Relatively little information is available on the West's historical and religious heritage as it existed in the Near East during the Neo-Assyrian Period in the 7th Century, B.C.E. The biblical materials do not detail much information about classical Hebrew prophecy during the decades after the Neo-Assyrian advance into Judah in 701 and before Jeremiah. Although the 7th Century, B.C.E. in Judah prior to the reign of Josiah is traditionally seen as a "Dark Age" of devastation, paganism, and wickedness, we know it was an age of increasing urbanization and growing commerce and industry throughout the rest of the Near East; and while the prophets were telling of a universal God of world events, the Neo-Assyrian Empire itself was enacting "world history" for the first time.

In Judah, the first half of the 7th Century was dominated by the little known king, Manasseh, who was, ironically, the longest reigning king of the Judahite monarchy. Because his reign has been obscure, it has not been possible to explore the relationship between the simultaneous developments of internationalism and universal monotheism.

This thesis researches fundamental information about this king's reign: his vital dates, his domain's boundaries, and the general conditions of his kingdom during his years; and this work looks for new areas of information that reveal more about this age.

This research reviews the biblical and Assyrian records, last investigated exhaustively for this topic over half a century ago. Recently, much archaeological evidence has come to light for the general period (Iron Age II-C, 800-587 B.C.E.) in which Manasseh ruled. Gathered from various Judahite sites by different teams of researchers, it is reviewed in this thesis first to text consistency of methods, criteria, and interpretation, across the field. Then any information which can be seen to maintain a consensus of opinion without serious inherent contradiction is compared with the texts to test fundamental determinations about the reign of Manasseh.

The results reveal a serious problem of archaeological interpretation of the period's evidence. Difficulties are found where the Bible has been used to explain that evidence, which is then used to explain or verify the Bible. The material context of the period, to which archaeology may best testify, is seen to be neglected, if not obfuscated by this confusion. Nonetheless, the evidence from the material context which can be developed is then compared to the textual evidence. It indicates that Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in 701 resulted in a relatively minor change to Judah's borders and that Manasseh's reign is seen to begin in 698 as a result of standard Neo-Assyrian policy of stabilizing a vassal state. Furthermore, evidence is found of considerable economic activity and technological developments throughout the period.

It is concluded that the tradition of Judah's suffering through a long dark age after Sennacherib's invasion can no longer stand without support of solid evidence: that evidence cannot be found. This work argues that it is necessary for archaeologists to reconsider many of the interpretations they based upon that tradition. It is noted that it is not yet possible to prove conclusively that Judah shared in all of the uniquely great wealth and rapid developments that the international Assyrian Empire brought to Judah's neighbors in the 7th Century B.C.E., but it is determined that Manasseh's kingdom did participate in at least some of these benefits and innovations from early on in the century, so that we may now proceed to begin to consider some of the biblical history of the period in terms of Judah's exposure to the international market of materials and ideas.

## THE REPRESENTATION OF THE HUMAN FIGURE ON THE ASSYRIAN WALL RELIEFS

(Order No. 69-17,571)

Pauline Albenda, Ph.D.  
Columbia University, 1969

This dissertation attempts to investigate the artistic achievements of the late Assyrian Empire, extending from the ninth to the seventh centuries B.C., as demonstrated by the monumental wall reliefs of that period. The study is confined to one aspect of the reliefs, namely the representation of the human form — man. This motif stands out as the principal feature of the wall reliefs.

The organization of the dissertation commences with a chapter that discusses the materials, techniques, and workshops of the artist in Western Asia, in order to gain a better understanding of the artist's contribution in relation to the monumental works of Assyrian art. The royal workshops of the Assyrian kings were under the supervision of master artists, whose position may have been important. Underlying such a supposed status are earlier literary traditions that distinguish two separate aspects of craftsmanship. One is imaginary and describes the works of divinities, the other is factual and concerns the role of kings, as well as artisans, in the creation of works of art.

The stones used for the Assyrian palace reliefs were quarried from the mountains and most probably transported with the use of river boats, flat barges, and specially constructed sledges for land travel. Mechanical contrivances and a variety of iron tools were the means by which the stones were prepared and sculptured. Several stages were required for the completion of the bas-reliefs. Finally, the bas-reliefs were painted, partially or fully.

The second chapter deals with a detailed study of the human figure, defining its characteristics according to pose and type of action. The categories of actions that are explored are as follows: (1) the schematic or standard pose, (2) the observed pose, that is, a pose that may reflect visual reality, (3) the action pose, a pose stressing momentary movement. In the first category are discussed the standing figure, back and profile views, half-kneeling figures, seated figures, nude figures. The second category is concerned with more naturally disposed figure-type poses. These include twisted figures, turned figures, bent figures, prostrate figures, and activities of a singular character. Actions of stability and instability are studied in the category of poses stressing movements related to a continuous activity. Balanced actions are shown when a person ascends or descends a hilly terrain, climbs a ladder, rides an animal, or swims. Three major phases in which a human figure no longer retained a sense of stability are discernible. These are the pose of losing one's balance, the fall through space, the fall upon the ground.

The central character of the Assyrian reliefs remains the king. Chapter III is therefore devoted entirely to the representation of that personage. The image of the Assyrian ruler in which he is portrayed as a personage attired in the full regalia of kingship is seen particularly on the carved stela. These stela served as the means for placing on view the official royal portrait. The presence of divine emblems in the field above the king on the stela may symbolize the divine sanction of kingship. Attributes of kingship include the scepter (mace), sword, and crown. The staff, when held in the hand of the Assyrian ruler, may reflect the importance of making royal decisions.

No scene depicting the Assyrian ruler in an act of worship before a deity can be found among the wall reliefs. In the reliefs the only obviously ritual activity shown, involving the king, occurs after his successful hunt of wild bulls or lions. Associated with the scenes of the king pouring a libation over dead animals are scenes which picture him hunting these creatures.

An important theme shown on the bas-reliefs illustrates the military campaigns undertaken by the Assyrian rulers. The heroic character of the king is indicated by his direct participation in the military exploits. After the period of Sargon II, however, the military might of the king is alluded to in scenes after battle.

The fourth chapter provides a catalogue of important figure-types, within each of which is given a listing of supplementary action poses.

331 pages.

# God and the new physics

The emergent science of cosmology does not and cannot deny the existence of God. But it does suggest that theology needs a new vocabulary

Paul Davies

**T**RADITIONAL RELIGION is in decline, but ordinary men and women continue to search for a deeper meaning behind existence. The old religious framework that gave man a definite place in the cosmos has been demolished by science. But though science may have displaced religion in explaining the workings of nature, can it provide the rich metaphysical and mystical foundation for existence that has traditionally been the prerogative of religion?

There is a growing feeling that the new physics and the new cosmology not only have a compulsive mystical element to them, but that they address deep questions which leave the traditional religions out of their depth: How did the physical Universe come into being and how will it end? What is matter and how did it come to exist? How did the energy that powers the cosmos arise and how did it organise itself into the physical structures we now observe? Is the order we perceive the result of random forces or the product of special initial conditions?

I came to be interested in the religious dimension of science when I found myself working on topics in modern physics and cosmology, such as the big bang, the arrow of time and the nature of matter, that seemed to invade areas of human enquiry that for centuries have preoccupied theologians and philosophers. What excited me was the prospect that some of the age-old mysteries of the Universe might actually be on the verge of solution by scientific means. Did this then mean, I wondered, that physical science was about to displace God entirely from the physical Universe?

The issue of genesis is at the heart of all religions. The Bible begins, appropriately enough, with an account of the creation. In recent years, cosmologists have made enormous advances in understanding the scientific version of the creation—the so-called big bang, from which all existing things sprang. The deep mystery of what triggered this awesome event prompts us to re-examine a longstanding theological debate known as “the cosmological argument”.

The cosmological argument reached its most developed form with Wilhelm Leibniz and Samuel Clarke in the 18th century. Everything, it was reasoned, has a cause that precedes it; nothing can occur uncaused. We can trace a chain of cause and effect back into the mists of time, but the chain, it was said, could not continue for ever. There must have been a first cause of everything, and this cause we call God. God is the ultimate creator of all existing things.

A related argument appeals not to causation as such, but to “contingency”. Everything must have an explanation outside itself; nothing can provide an explanation for its own existence. Therefore the explanation for the entire physical Universe must lie outside that Universe, and that explanation is God.

Impressive though these arguments may seem at first sight, they were savagely attacked by philosophers such as David Hume long before modern science had anything to say on the matter. What the philosophers objected to was the contradictory reasoning: the arguments first assume that *everything* must have a cause or explanation, but then go on to postulate God, who does not have a cause or explanation. If you can have an uncaused God, why not an uncaused Universe?

This classic debate recurs again and again. “Something must have created the Universe—made the big bang go bang”, one hears. “But who created God?” comes the retort. The

hard-nosed sceptic is unimpressed by arcane answers about God being a “necessary” being whose explanation is to be found within Himself.

What do the new physics and the new cosmology have to say on the matter? There is general agreement that some sort of creation *did* occur. Although no logical reason is known why the Universe cannot be infinitely old, there is persuasive evidence, both from theory and observation, that the entire



physical Universe, including space and time, erupted into existence in a gigantic flash of heat about 18 billion years ago. But the issue of what *caused* this big bang is not as simple as Leibniz and Clarke imagined.

## A singularity event

According to the general theory of relativity, the big bang started from a condition of infinite compression at which spacetime was infinitely warped, a situation known to mathematicians as a singularity. A singularity is like an edge or boundary to spacetime, and it is meaningless to consider extending the physical Universe through it. In particular, concepts like “before” or “causation” make no sense when applied to the big bang singularity, for there was no “before”. Time itself began there.

This twist rekindles a long-running dispute among Christian theologians concerning God’s relation to time. Is God in time or outside time? As long ago as the 6th century, St Augustine of Hippo wrote that “the world was created with time and not in time”—a remarkably prophetic pronouncement. Today’s physicist also regards time as part and parcel of the physical world. It is linked inextricably to space and matter. Time can be warped by gravity and

motion, even in the laboratory, and it obeys physical laws in the same way as does matter. Physicists can manipulate time, as they manipulate matter. Indeed, the very recent attempts to unify gravity with the other forces of nature involve treating spacetime on the same footing as matter, as merely another field. If, then, we insist that God is responsible for all the physical Universe, then He must also be the explanation of time, and hence must exist outside of time.

The trouble is that a timeless God bears little relation to the traditional image of a Deity—a thinking, acting, communicating being—for thought, action and communication are all temporal concepts. What does it mean to say that God planned the Universe timelessly, or answers prayer timelessly, or sits in judgement timelessly? Yet if God did not come into being until after the big bang (that is after the beginning of time), how can He be regarded as the Creator? Worse still, if the Universe is eventually obliterated at a big crunch and time then ceases, is that to be the end of God too?



Kate Charlesworth

Further problems with the cosmological argument arise from a study of quantum mechanics. A central plank in the argument is that all existing material things must have causes. (Though perhaps not all things. Numbers and the rules of arithmetic surely exist. Yet many would argue that they too exist timelessly and uncaused; that they are "there" independently of the Universe and are discovered, not created, by humans.) Quantum mechanics, on the other hand, tells us that the world is inherently indeterministic. Heisenberg's uncertainty principle maintains that the microworld is rebellious and chaotic, so that events may occur without well-defined causes. For example, the precise moment of the radioactive decay of an atomic nucleus is totally unpredictable, even with complete knowledge of the nuclear state.

Recently, intense effort has been devoted to the application of quantum physics to the Universe as a whole. Though the theory remains tentative and difficult to interpret, it does open up an astonishing possibility—that the entire physical world, including spacetime, could have come into existence spontaneously and uncaused as a sort of quantum "fluctuation". We are familiar with the abrupt and uncaused appearance of particles in quantum physics. Why not spacetime also? A spate of mathematical papers has recently

appeared addressing this profound question of a self-creating Universe which somehow bootstraps itself into existence using quantum indeterminism as the straps.

Calculations suggest that the newly-appeared quantum cosmos would be merely a transient phenomenon, minute in both size and duration, and not a big bang of cosmic proportions. What, then, made this cosmic "seed" blossom forth into a full-blown Universe? Here a bold new theory called the inflationary universe scenario can provide a natural explanation. According to the scenario, the primeval mini-universe was overwhelmed by a force that may picturesquely be described as antigravity, and which is related to the grand unified force currently being sought by high energy physicists. Under the impact of this antigravitational repulsion, the mini-universe literally exploded, and swelled in an instant to something like the present size. The colossal energy generated by this explosion went on to power the cosmos, and provided all the matter, radiation and activity that we see today.

The importance of this new cosmological scenario, based on quantum high-energy physics, is not so much in the details but in the fact that, for the first time, a comprehensive scientific account of all of existence can be provided. In the old big bang theory, nearly all the physical structures we observe in the Universe, from quarks to quasars, had to be "put in by hand". That is, they were postulated to be the result of mysterious initial conditions beyond the scope of science. The new quantum cosmology attempts to explain all physical structures—even space and time—as an automatic consequence of the laws of physics. The initial state of the Universe is regarded as irrelevant to its present condition: the inflationary phase wipes out all information about the prior state, and ensures that the cosmos which emerges inevitably resembles something like our own.

Such developments make us wary about attributing the structure and organisation of the physical world to the activities of a Deity in the remote past. They suggest that the true explanation of existence lies not in the way things began, but in the laws of physics which underpin the processes such as inflation. Given these laws, the Universe, it seems, can look after itself.

### Beautiful laws of physics

Few scientists who have worked in fundamental physics can fail to have been moved and inspired by the subtle beauty and simplicity of the law of physics. Take particle physics, for example. Each new discovery exposes a rich and elaborate structure of closely interlocking symmetries of a profound mathematical nature. The ultimate building blocks of matter which are gradually being revealed inhabit a world of astonishing order and harmony. The laws of physics dovetail together with such exquisite consistency and coherence that the impression of *design* is overwhelming.

In bygone centuries, theologians frequently appealed to evidence for design as an argument for the existence of God. William Paley (1743-1805) directed attention to the complex structures that occur in both astronomy and biology, and argued that they cannot be the result of blind chance. Today, we can see the fallacy of Paley's reasoning. Scientists recognise many systems in which order and complex activity arise spontaneously in physics and chemistry, while Darwinian evolution explains how biological organisms have achieved such remarkable adaptation to their environment. Even in cosmology there is no real mystery about how the ordered Universe we observe today has emerged from the chaos of the primeval fire.

The existence of complex systems, however, is only one sort of order—what we might call the order of complexity. There is another sort of order in the Universe which cannot be so easily explained: the order of simplicity. Perhaps the most striking example concerns what might be called the day-to-day running of the Universe. We do not doubt that each day the Sun will rise on schedule, or that when we drop

an apple it will fall, or that like poles of a magnet will continue to repel each other. The steady ticking of a watch or the rhythmic motions of the planets testify to the dependability of nature. Such regularities of behaviour are not logically necessary. We can envisage a capricious world, full of random processes and haphazard concatenations of events, a world where matter and energy go berserk.

These felicitous regularities are, of course, a manifestation of the *laws* of nature, and physicists have found elegant mathematical expressions for them: "God is a mathematician" is an oft-repeated proclamation. This prompts many questions: did God *create* mathematics, or does it exist outside of even God, its properties indubitably determined by the rules of logic? Then, if God had at His disposal all of mathematics (whatever that is), did He have any choice in the mathematical form of the laws of physics, and if so, why did He choose the laws to be what they are? Why, in fact, are there any laws at all? In my view it is here that we come closest to the issue of meaning and purpose in the Universe.

### Nature's constants

In the last few years more and more scientists have been struck by what they regard as a string of improbable "accidents" or "coincidences" that are built into the laws of physics to enable the universe to produce the familiar systems we see—galaxies, stars, atoms and, most significant of all, us. These laws include certain "constants of nature", such as the masses of elementary particles, the strengths of the coupling between different fields and matter, and so on. Slight changes in the numerical values of these constants would lead to the most drastic alteration in the cosmic arrangement, and would



probably rule out life and consciousness. If the inverse square law of gravity went even very slightly awry, cosmic catastrophe would ensue. The most minute change in the relative strengths of gravitational and electromagnetic forces would turn stars like the Sun into blue giants or red dwarfs. All around us, we seem to see evidence that nature got it just right.

The central question then follows: are these fundamental laws the product of a designing Mind? It may seem impossible to make any progress at all on this question. Nevertheless, some scientists have attempted to demonstrate that the laws of physics are, in some sense, inevitable. They reason that the dictates of logic may place such constraints on the possible form of any mathematical laws that nature was virtually determined in advance. We live in the only possible Universe. Of course, this raises the deep issue of whether the rules of logic are themselves absolute, or properties of the Universe.

The attempt to reduce physics to logic has never made much headway, and for most of us the laws of physics are approached with a sense of wonderment and awe. Many scientists see in them evidence of a planning Mind. The fact that, according to science, the universe runs as a self-regulating machine, *without* the need for external interference from a Deity could, if anything, be taken as further evidence for a carefully designed masterplan. I have never liked the idea that God needs to keep tinkering with the cosmic machine because it was somehow imperfect in the first place.

The new physics thus projects God outside matter, space and time, into the abstract world of logic, mathematics and physical law. It has no need of a Creator in the traditional sense, but it seems to demand *some* guiding influence located, as it were, *above* nature, sustaining all of existence.

One of the lessons of the new physics is that everyday concepts of space, time and matter are badly misconceived. The theory of relativity swept aside the absolute space and time of Newton while the apparently concrete matter perceived by our crude senses dissolved away on deeper inspection into ghostly patterns of vibrating quantum energy. Field and particle, spacetime and force, mind and matter, have become interwoven in paradoxical forms utterly alien in normal experience.

Many of the weird and abstract concepts thrown up by the new physics have struck deep chords with those of a mystical persuasion. Much to the bewilderment of the profession, cults have sprung up around quantum physics, black holes and the theory of relativity. Esoteric concepts such as Bell's inequality and non-locality in quantum measurement have become the focus of quasi-religious adulation.

While most practising physicists tend to dismiss this trend as at best embarrassing and at worst crackpot, there is no doubting the compulsive mystical appeal of fundamental physics and cosmology. The far-reaching philosophical implications of the new physics should not be ignored by the physics community. Nor should it be ignored by the traditional religious communities. The old ways of looking at the world are being undermined by the onslaught of physical science. Images of a God on high commanding a clockwork universe, which unfolds in a rigid arena of absolute space and time according to His preordained plan, make little sense in the world of timewarps and quantum cosmology. The new physics has room for a meaning to existence, but the language of this ultimate reality is not to be found in the familiar world of daily discourse. □

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Paul Davies is professor of theoretical physics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. His latest book, *God and the New Physics*, has just been published by J. M. Dent and Sons at £8.95.

# CONFERENCE ON MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

## CHICAGO

The Center for Middle East studies held its 17th Annual Meeting under the sponsorship of the University of Chicago on November 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1983, in Chicago. The lobby of the fabulous Hotel Continental on Chicago's magnificent mile for four days looked like the central lobby of the United Nations in New York. Hundreds of representatives of the Middle East countries and professors from many universities and from abroad mingled, exchanged ideas and attended lectures, panel discussions and displays having to do with the Middle East.

The AUA Foundation was asked by the Center to inform the Assyrian community of a scholarly panel discussion to be held on the afternoon of Friday, November 4, 1983, entitled "ASSYRIAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST: SEARCH FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY".

The individuals chosen to head the panel were Associate Professor, Dr. John Amos, Department of the Navy, Monterey, California; his wife, Jeannine Ushana, attorney (an Assyrian); Dr. Richard Frye and his wife, Dr. Eden Naby (an Assyrian), both of Harvard University; Dr. John Joseph (an Assyrian from the Middle East) of Franklin & Marshall College and William Beeman of Boston University as the moderator.

Dr. Eden Naby spoke on the ties that bind all Assyrians together wherever they are. She pointed out the political activism of Assyrians all over the world regarding the future of their Nation. She also talked about the new awakening among our people, including a new trend in recognizing certain days of relevance such as the Assyrian New Year, April 1 (Kha Bneesan) and the Assyrian Martyr's Day, August 7 (shawa Btabakh).

Dr. Richard Frye spoke on the name controversy of Syrian and Assyrian. He pointed out that the Fertile Crescent (the area embracing Asia Minor and the Middle East) had Aramaic as its official language and how the change-over to the name Assyrian came about. He also explained why many people called the language of the Assyrian Syriac. He added, however, that the Assyrian Scholar of the 19th Century, Hormuzd Rassam (1826-1910), called us Assyrians.

Dr. John Amos of the Department of the Navy spoke on "THE ASSYRIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS OF NATIONALISM." He pointed out the reasons for the process of Assyrian social mobilization. Dr. Amos explained how the physical and psychological uprooting of the Assyrians from a traditional communal society and from its values and its beliefs produced a loss of individual and collective identity. He spoke at length on the repeated massacres and the forced migration

and their results. He also mentioned the assimilation problem, both in the Middle East and now in the West which the Assyrians are facing and its results. In his notes, Dr. Amos used as his source of information these publications: The Assyrian Star; The Assyrian Sentinel; The Assyrian Quest and Bet Nahrain. He also relied on the following individuals: His Holiness the late Mar Eshai Shimun; His Holiness Mar Khnania Dinkha IV; David Perley; Youel Warda; William Daniel; Fred Tamini; George Lamsa; Eden Naby; John Joseph and Petros DeBaz. The Assyrian Universal Alliance was also used as a source.

Miss Jeannine M. Ushana, an Assyrian Attorney, geared her paper on "THE PROBLEM OF STANDING IN RESPECT TO NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS: THE CASE OF THE ASSYRIANS." Her paper dealt with examining the possible legal theories upon which a claim to Mosul Province (Northern Iraq), as a national homeland for the Assyrians may be established. In reference to the word "Standing", it indicates the requirements imposed by international law on any entity claiming rights under the law, and the reason why nationalist movements, such as the Assyrians, need to garner international recognition to complete their claims.

Miss Ushana very knowledgeably spoke on the entire history of the war against the Assyrians from 1914 on (in Mesopotamia) reaching into Assyrian Urmia, and the policy of the British in the Middle East which brought about the loss of a homeland for the Assyrian Nation and the resulting massacres and mass migrations. Miss Ushana also spoke on the legality of the Assyrian claim and their inability in achieving their rights in the face of insurmountable legal trapholes.

Dr. John Joseph of Franklin & Marshall College, an Assyrian born in the Middle East, summarized the discussions. In the process, he made several negative remarks relative to the Assyrian issue. There was considerable reaction to some of his points and he was challenged by many members of the audience (see the ASSYRIAN STAR rebuttal elsewhere in this issue).

Because so many Assyrians had turned out for this panel, the room selected for this event was changed to accommodate the larger crowd. We understand that Duke University Press, North Carolina, has expressed an interest in publishing a work on contemporary Assyrians. It is expected that the above panel presentations will form the nucleus of the book.

**Sarah Sayad Paz**  
Special Reporter to the Star

**Assyrian Star**

**Sept-Oct. 1983**

# Arab Nationalism: Is It Obsolete?

BY MALCOLM KERR

In the days of Gamal Abdul Nasser the system of beliefs known as Arab nationalism played a vitally important social role. It promoted a sense of unity between the westernized elite and the traditional masses, and it provided a coherent way for the elite to relate to the west under difficult circumstances—fighting the west politically, while pressing for the spread of western culture within the Arab world.

The performance of this role was a great achievement for the Arab nationalist movement, and yet today the ideological formulas it advocated have lost their force. Arab society has become increasingly polarized in recent years. On the one hand, we see a strong popular reaction, in the form of religious revivalism, against a process of westernization that is believed to have gone out of control. On the other hand, at the elite level there has been a certain process of depoliticization, prompted both by the growth of technocracy in the state and industrial apparatus and by the commercial explosion accompanying the oil boom. And given the depth of the currents of events that led to this polarization, there is no ready solution in sight.

Arab nationalism promoted social unity because its message reinforced the religious and cultural values of the common people, assuring them of the worth of their heritage, their brotherhood, and their destiny as a community in the face of foreign domination. It assured them that the process of modernization taking place in their society did not constitute a threat to the things that they cherished: on the contrary, it supported them, and it depended on the masses for their support.

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*Malcolm Kerr, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), author of Arab Cold War and other works, is editor of the forthcoming Rich and Poor States in the Middle East (Westview Press)*

At the same time Arab nationalism offered an equally important message to the privileged classes, with their western education, their contacts with westerners, and their taste for western living, Arab nationalism asserted that westernization did not need to conflict with their fundamental identity as Arabs, provided they kept in close touch with their own society and sought to bring progress to all its members. More than this, it taught them that the political conflict with the west which it was their duty to lead was quite compatible with the acquisition of western culture, for the Arabs' struggle was with western governments, not with western peoples or ways of life.

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In these respects we may consider the Arab nationalist movement as a direct successor to the Islamic Salafiya movement that preceded it. The simple difference is that the nationalists have proceeded from a secular starting point to reach out to traditional society, whereas the Salafiya proceeded in an opposite direction; but both sought to bridge the gap. Preaching that the best things offered by the west, such as modern science, constitutional politics, and liberal culture, are rooted in the

original principles of Islam, the Salafiya sought a symbiosis of organic integration of the secular and spiritual, of the elite and the mass culture, much as the Arab nationalists have done.

All of this message was strengthened by a certain political belief, shared between Arab nationalists and western liberals, that the political conflicts—over Palestine, imperialism, revolution, and the rest—were merely manifestations of a temporary and unnecessary historical phase resulting from the shortsightedness or arrogance of certain

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***The foreigners coming to the Arab world these days are a different lot than before. They come with less interest in the country and its people, with less desire to stay, and with a greater interest in making quick money. The encounters of such people with the local population can only reinforce the conviction of many of those who meet them that traditional social standards must be protected at all costs from barbarous western influences.***

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western statesmen, not from a clash of real interests. In due time it would be reasonable to hope that western governments would come to see the validity of Arab aspirations, and would adjust to them. This meant that in the meanwhile it was all the more important for the Arab elites to keep in touch with their western counterparts, both politicians and intellectuals, in order to persuade them of the need for a change in policy. For the Arab elites were overwhelmingly interested in politics and in carrying on a political dialog in the west. And if the effort at political persuasion should fail, there remained the consideration that cultural (and commercial) contact with the west should continue by itself, even without a supportive political atmosphere.

It would be almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of this last idea. Several generations of Arab intellectuals have been raised on it. They maintained close contact with Europe and the United States throughout a long era of intense political

frustration, from the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 to the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. Tens of thousands of Arab students attended universities in the west; institutions within the Arab world, such as the American University of Beirut, St. Joseph University, and the state universities of Cairo and Alexandria were built upon a belief in American or European curricula and teaching methods, plus an instructional content combining western and Arab or Islamic history, literature, and civilization. The universal harmony of culture was the implicit belief shared by Arab nationalists and western liberals. It was thanks to the Arab nationalist movement that something of this belief was absorbed also at the mass level, so that the masses, who themselves shared very little of the experience of the educated classes, generally accepted the evolution of those classes and their secular life-styles quite smoothly.

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In recent years the social and ideological atmosphere in the Arab world has undergone a palpable shift. The masses with their traditional attitudes, and the elites with their secular education and careers, have each moved away from their common meeting ground. The symbiosis favored by the liberal reformers, the faith in the essential oneness of human cultural values, no longer commands broad support. Instead there appears to be a growing assumption that the Islamic and secular ways of life are not really compatible.

This assumption takes several alternative forms. In its mildest version, a primordial attachment to religion is said to be the only meaningful basis of social identity available to the masses, while the upper classes with their secular education tend to have more in common with foreigners than they do with their own fellow citizens. According to this view (readily shared by the typical westerner who arrives in the Arab world for the first time), the two cultures need not be in any direct conflict; they can coexist very peacefully and fruitfully by respecting certain practical principles of segregation, as is done for example in the conservative oil states. But a symbiosis is out of the question.

A more extreme view is the one expressed by some spokesmen of militant Islamic

movements, to the effect that Islam is the sole legitimate source of identity not only for the masses, but for the elite as well; that the secularizing influences on the elite are insidious forces of alienation; and that the very presence of western cultural norms constitutes an ominous danger to the health of Arab society, no less than military, political, or economic domination would do. This view amounts not to a call for segregation but for a cultural declaration of war, against the west but more particularly against the Arab secular elite.

No doubt this more extreme view is far from being dominant in any Arab country today. Yet, with the revolution in Iran as an example standing before us, we must take it seriously. Whether the milder or the more extreme view is the more important one, both represent movement in a similar direction away from the integrative cultural assumptions of yesterday. It is not difficult to discern a number of reasons for them, in terms of changes taking place within Arab society and in its relationship with the west.

Certainly the current of Islamic resurgence sweeping the Middle East has much to do with the crisis that uncontrolled social and economic change has imposed on the daily lives of millions of ordinary people. Most often than not, rapid "development" has brought with it inflation, shortages of housing and transport, conspicuous consumption, corruption, crime, the presence of large numbers of foreigners, and police repression.

The foreigners coming to the Arab world these days are a different lot than before. They come with less interest in the country and its people, with less desire to stay, and with a greater interest in making quick money. Many of them are working-class people with rough manners who know or care nothing about local standards of female modesty or the consumption of alcohol. The encounters of such people with the local population bear more resemblance to highway collisions than to social introductions, and can only reinforce the conviction of many of those who meet them that traditional social standards must be protected at all costs from barbarous western influences.

While the man in the street undergoes this process of alienation from secular culture, his fellow citizen of higher social status is moving in an opposite direction. High govern-

ment officials, businessmen, and professionals are increasingly preoccupied with the technicalities of making business deals with western firms, or of putting western equipment to use. The non-political technocrat is replacing yesterday's passionately nationalist intellectual as the predominant representative of the priorities of Arab governments, while within the Arab world the role-model for educated youth is no longer the revolutionary army officer or the crusading journalist but the well-dressed businessman with his briefcase, boarding a

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*If the polarization so far is not acute in most Arab states, it may yet grow more severe.*

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jet bound for Kuwait or Jeddah in search of a deal. Both to the technocrat and to the businessman, carrying on political arguments with the West appears as a sheer waste of time. And of course they are joined in this view by the westerners they meet in Kuwait and Jeddah who have come for similar purposes. The oil revolution, in fact, has stimulated the rise of a large new cosmopolitan class of Arab, western, and Japanese experts and entrepreneurs bound together by the same ultra-modern technological and commercial culture: the same ambitions, the same skills, the same language, the same instrumental ethics, and the same impatience with ideology and politics.

On both sides of the new polarized Arab society—the radicalized masses, the commercialized elites—the driving pressures are deep-seated and long-term. If the polarization so far is not acute in most Arab states, it may yet grow more severe. The ideas of nationalism are still very much alive in intellectual circles, but those circles are isolated and as an integrative force in Arab society the future of the ideas is doubtful. This is a dangerous situation, since it implies that the future ability of the best-educated citizens of each Arab country to relate to the mass of the population is also doubtful. If the problem is to be overcome, it may be because a new and more dynamic set of ideas—a new "political religion"—has risen to the surface, to take the place of the old. But this will take time, and the shape it will assume cannot be foretold.

# Iraqi Christians Languish in Rome

By Richard Bautch

WASHINGTON- A group of Iraqi Christians has recently been forced to flee to Rome because of their religious faith.

Iraq's Moslem government pressured them to abandon their homeland. The Christian's schools, jobs, and right of worship were trampled in the ruling Ba'ath Party's efforts to unite a citizenry by erasing its ethnic differences. These Christians, 850 strong, are refugees.

At least that's what Father Jude Winkler argued to State Department officials here earlier this month. An American Franciscan studying Rome, Winkler told how Christian Assyrians, Chaldeans and Armenians have met persecution in Iraq and despair in Rome. Winkler, who ministers to these people, pleaded for the United States to issue them residence visas.

Shortly before visiting the State Department Aug. 18, Winkler spoke with the Register about Christian persecution in Iraq.

**The Ba'ath Party discriminates through schools and jobs, the Franciscan explained. Christian schools have been closed and all children must study the Koran at state-run schools. Students are "urged" to join Ba'ath youth groups.**

Similarly, Christian adults are pressured to join Moslem trade unions or the Ba'ath Party itself. Refusing the former "often results in dismissal from work," he said. "Sometimes refusal to join the Party automatically presumes disloyalty to the government and results in imprisonment."

Christian celebrations are forbidden in Iraq, but everyone must publicly observe Moslem festivals. Any Christian, for example, found breaking the month-long Ramadan fast - which forbids eating or drinking during daylight - faces jail.

**These and other persecutions began when the Ba'ath Party took power in 1968. Previously, Christians were considered second-class but allowed to live their faith freely in what Winkler described as "a ghetto existence."**

In Rome, they have returned to the ghetto. Italy was to be a stopover for these people, who left Iraq for the United States when President Jimmy Carter acknowledged their plight in the late 1970s.

However, a global recession coupled with a new administration reversed this policy. So the Christians remain in Italy, tourists are denied public housing, state medical care and legal employment.

As a result, several families share dilapidated private apartments formerly occupied by Russian Jews in flight. The apartments rent for illegally exorbitant fees.

When an Iraqi Christian takes ill, he visits an apartment that doubles as the community's medical center. Run by volunteer doctors, the center is open three times a week and, thanks to donations, provides

free medicine and testing.

Meanwhile, organizations such as the World Council of Churches are lobbying countries, principally the United States and Canada, to grant these Christians permanent residence.

Despite this help, many needs go unattended. One concerns the Christians' spirituality. The Chaldeans are Roman Catholics who practice the little-known Chaldean rite. In all of Rome there is one Chaldean priest, and he says Mass for the Iraqis each week. But when his university studies end, so will the Masses.

The Assyrians, members of the Iran-based Assyrian Apostolic Church of the East, and the Armenians, whose Armenian Apostolic Church is located in what is now the Soviet Union, have no one to meet their faith needs.

Understandably, these people despair at times. Homelessness, and seeming hopelessness, overcomes them. "There's no place for them to go," Winkler observed, "to be free to do what they want".

**Those wishing to help Rome's community of Iraqi Christians can write Father Jude Winkler, Viale Guido Baccelli 56, 00153, Roma, Italia.**

Catholic Register August 28, 1983

*La Mission*  
*au service des Chrétiens d'Orient*  
B.P. 90 675 BEYROUTH - LEBANON

Dear Friends:

The Christians of the Middle East need your thoughts, prayers and support more than at any other time. The rise in non-Christian fundamentalism in that part of the world has made it difficult for Christians to exercise their basic human and social rights. The demographic, economic and political pressures and trends in the Middle East are endangering Christian presence in every part of that area.

Your support and encouragement are needed. Everyone can help save the fate of the Christians in the Middle East in one form or another. If you are interested in further information about our Institute and our activities in that part of the world, please write or call:

c/o Elaine Joseph  
Lebanese Information and Research Center  
1926 Eye Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 347-5810

Tax deductible gifts may be made through the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, 1011 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

Thank you and God be with you.

Sincerely,



Lyna Elias  
President

# The Second Anniversary of Massacring the Christians in Egypt

## - Collaboration Between The Muslim Fundamentalists and The Egyptian Government -

On June 17, 18, and 19, 1981, The Muslim Fundamentalists Massacred 100 Christians in Cairo, Egypt. The Egyptian Police Force, on the instruction of President Sadat and the Minister of Interior, watched families burned alive, children thrown out of balconies, beheading a priest, and burning the shops, property and churches of the Christians without intervention in a district of Cairo one mile away from the seat of the government. The government sealed off the area from all western correspondents. The only information that the western reporters received was first filtered by the Minister of Interior who assumed that it was a dispute between Muslims and Christians to take position of a government property. The Egyptian Government wanted to punish the Christians who resisted by force the take over of a Coptic Church site by the Muslim Fundamentalists to build a mosque on it. Such an incident was repeated in many cities in Egypt. In one village, the police disarmed the Christians and gave arms and reinforcement to the Muslims to murder the Christians.

Until now, the criminals have not been brought to justice.

When the Christian leadership protested, the Egyptian Government put Pope Shenouda, the head of the Church, and eight bishops under house arrest, banned their magazines, and prevented 23 priests from conducting services.

The Muslim Fundamentalists have identified the Christian homes all over the country for a potential genocide of Egypt's Christian by the different Muslim Fundamentalists Chapters and members. They are planning a genocide similar to that of the Armenians in Turkey in 1915.

The Egyptian Government is in the process of adopting Islamic principles for the civic laws which will either enslave the Christians or convert them by force to Islam.

The State Department is trying to camouflage the problem facing Egypt's Christians for its relationship with the Egyptian Government.

We ask for justice: 1) bringing the criminals and the former Minister of Interior, Nabawi Ismail to trial; 2) release of religious leaders; 3) establish religious freedom, equality, and protection for Egypt's Christians.

Please, write to the President, your two Senators and Congressman and ask for their help to prevent a potential holocaust against Egypt's Christians similar to the Armenian and Jewish holocausts.



The American and Canadian Coptic Associations arranged a demonstration in front of the White House on August 5, 1981 on the occasion of President Sadat's visit to Washington, D.C. to protest murdering Christians in Egypt without protection from the police.

Release of The Aramaic New Testament

The Way International has just released its first publication of the Aramaic Computer Project. The Aramaic New Testament in Estrangelo script is available through The Way International Bookstore (Box 328, New Knoxville, Ohio 45871). The second volume will be the concordance which is being programmed for publication within the next year. The third volume, an Aramaic-English Interlinear, is in process for publication shortly after the concordance. The lexicon and critical edition of the New Testament are still a few years away. The publication of the first volume is the reward of over ten years of planning and work. With the release of this book, the anticipation of the companion volumes has grown considerably among the research staff.

For more information on the project write:

Mrs. Bernita Jess  
The Way International  
Box 328  
New Knoxville OH 45871

Why Aramaic?

The Aramaic Computer Project is being made available by The Way International, a nondenominational, nonsectarian Biblical research, teaching, and fellowship ministry. The research efforts of The Way International have extended into text and language study as well as areas of practical theology. One focal area of concern has been to produce materials for the study of the New Testament in Aramaic. Over 600 Aramaic manuscripts have been catalogued by The Way International. Selected manuscripts were used in the preparation of this text and corresponding lexical aids. There have been editions of the New Testament printed in Jacobite and Nestorian; however, the present work is the first printed edition of the New Testament produced in Estrangelo script. The oldest existing Aramaic manuscripts of the New Testament were done in Estrangelo script. The Nestorian and Jacobite scripts were not used until the fifth century A.D.

The word "Aramaic" is the name given to the Semitic language which was one of the most important and widespread in the ancient world. Its use can be traced back to the times of Genesis. Throughout history many dialects of Aramaic developed in various cultures of the East. Jesus Christ and his followers spoke the dialect commonly used in Galilee in the first century.

"Syriac" is a name commonly given to a dialect of Aramaic used in Edessa and western Mesopotamia in the early centuries after Christ. Syriac is also referred to as "Christian Aramaic" or "Eastern Aramaic." This dialect is similar to, but not identical with, the dialect of Palestine used in the first century. Word meanings, spelling; and grammar vary in each dialect. In our references to texts and manuscripts in Aramaic and any of its various dialects or scripts, we normally use the more inclusive term, "Aramaic."

Modern scholars have for years held to the thesis that the original Gospels and other parts of the New Testament were first written in Greek. However, a number of serious Biblical scholars would dispute that theory and claim that significant portions, if not all, of the New Testament were originally written in Aramaic. Regardless of which view one may accept, the Aramaic language is an important factor and it is unquestionably true that no meticulous researcher of God's Word can study the Word of Truth without considering the extant Aramaic manuscripts of the New Testament.

### The Design of the Aramaic Computer Project

The objective of The Aramaic (Syriac) Computer Project is to build a database that will generate research tools for publication and facilitate grammatical studies and comparative work with other languages of the New Testament.

Manuscripts were collected, coded, and entered as the base text. Each word form was then assigned a root (or roots), a dictionary form (forms), and its possible parsings. This data is stored in two files: the text file and the parsing file. The computer uses this information to set up the concordance by root order. The dictionary forms organize the entries within each root. The parsing file is designed to aid in parsing any future coded texts. With some adaptations, this text could also aid the parsing of other dialects of Aramaic.

The next step in our project is to build a dictionary file which assigns an English meaning to each Aramaic word. At the same time, the Aramaic text will be divided into "fields of meaning," i.e., combinations of Aramaic words. With this file, the computer can recognize certain combinations of Aramaic words and apply an assigned English equivalent. This will allow a more complete study of Aramaic idioms and grammar. The publication of these two files will be in the form of an Aramaic-English interlinear. Sigla will designate fields of meaning and special constructions.

The parsing, dictionary, and "field of meaning" files in combination allow us to generate a word form lexicon. This lexicon will give the word form in its alphabetical order and its parsing data, including its root. Under the root will be given the English meanings and special clauses that have been assigned to it.

All printing of publications is being done on a digitized phototypesetter. The Estrangelo characters were developed in a joint effort by The Way International and Autologic, Inc., of California. A digitized typefont with a resolution of over 500,000 pixels per square inch was developed. This digitized typefont was then installed at Computer Composition Corporation in Michigan. There, our data is formatted to our specifications on an IBM Series I Computer. This formatted data is then typeset at 900 lines per minute on an APS-5 phototypesetter manufactured by Autologic.

The Way International is a nondenominational, nonsectarian Biblical research, teaching, and fellowship ministry. The research team of The Way International for many years has been involved with researching the Bible in order to understand its application for Christian believers in the 20th century. As a part of this research, they have been pioneering in the effort to more fully understand the Aramaic language, to study the Aramaic manuscripts, and to make available aids to those studying this field.

In addition to their pioneering efforts in Aramaic, they have realized the importance of understanding figures of speech used in the Bible which often lie undetected to Western readers. A number of works from the previous centuries constitute the extant material on the subject. Efforts at reviving this knowledge are of concern to The Way International Research Department.

Another area of concern is Biblical customs. Understanding Eastern culture is a necessary link to clarification of idioms and customs in the Bible. A team of researchers engage in full-time work on these and related Biblical research projects at The Way International.

## CHRISTIANITY IN ASSYRIA

J. M. Fiey: *Assyrie chrétienne: contribution à l'étude de l'histoire et de la géographie ecclésiastiques et monastiques du nord de l'Iraq*. (Recherches publiées sous la direction de l'Institut de Lettres Orientales de Beyrouth, Tom. XXII-XXIII.) 2 vols.: 324 pp. + corrigenda sheet, plate, 3 maps; [v], 321 [sic]-890 pp., 6 plates, 3 maps. Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, [1965].

The area studied by Father Fiey in this substantial contribution to our knowledge of the Eastern Churches comprises a large portion of the ancient Assyrian empire, notably the district round about Nineveh and the modern Mosul, and the valleys of the Great and Little Zab. It is an area of cardinal importance in the history of early Christianity. The region's nearness to Edessa gave it direct access to the traditions of the Church of Abgar; it served from the third century of our era as a channel through which the Christian message and teachings flowed into Armenia and Persia, and later, far into Central Asia and even as far as China. Today, many of the old Assyrian communities, the so-called Chaldaeans, are in communion with Rome; the Patriarch of the independent Nestorian Church, on the other hand, resides in Chicago. Of the many cloisters visited and described by Father Fiey while compiling this remarkable guide, there remain in the north of Iraq today only one Jacobite and three Chaldaean monasteries still functioning as such. The author has combed virtually every square kilometre of the area under review in his search for vanished monasteries, convents, hermitages, and churches, and assembled from archaeological remains, local traditions, and written sources a revealing picture of the Church of northern Iraq in ancient, medieval, and modern times. This is a genuine labor of love, and fully maintains the high standard set by other volumes in the Beirut Oriental series.

D. M. Lang

Source: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XXX, 1967.

### THE OLD SOCIAL CLASSES AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS OF IRAQ

A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers

Hanna Batatu

This comparative study analyzes the traditional elite of Iraq and their successors—the Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers—in terms of social and economic relationships in each area of the country. The author draws on secret government documents and interviews with key figures, both in power and in prison, to produce an engrossing story of political struggle and change.

*Princeton Studies on the Near East*

1,328 pages. 16 pages of illus. LCC 78-51157

P: ISBN 02198-8 \$27.50

C: ISBN 05241-7 \$100.00

PHILLIP J. BARAM. *The Department of State in the Middle East, 1919-1945*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1978. Pp. xxiv, 343. \$27.50.

A welcome addition to the growing body of literature on American relations with the Middle East is Phillip J. Baram's *The Department of State in the Middle East, 1919-1945*. Using recently opened materials in the National Archives, interviews with participants, and the papers of key officials, Baram extends the pioneering work of John DeNovo into the years 1939-45. Baram's study, copiously researched, clearly argued, and straightforwardly written, describes the state department's remarkably consistent affinity for Sunni Arabs. It comes as no surprise in the wake of recent books by Arthur Morse, Henry Feingold, and Saul Friedman that the department also consistently opposed Zionist aspirations.

Baram finds constant the department's hope that support for Sunni Arab nationalists committed to gradual reform would best serve American interests in the Arabic-speaking Middle East (Egypt, Arabia, and the fertile crescent). He identifies American interests as (1) the enhancement of American influence generally and (2) an open door for American businessmen, especially oil operators. The department thus encouraged bourgeois nationalism in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Egypt while supporting the monarchy in Saudi Arabia. In Palestine the department worked to thwart Zionist aspirations, as it discouraged assertions of minority rights by such other groups as Kurds, Assyrians, or Maronites. The author thus fits the state department's negative response to Zionism into a general regional framework.

World War II, to which Baram devotes the most attention, created a fluid situation that the department exploited. Convinced that French colonialism failed to respond to Syrian or Lebanese nationalism and bolstered in its Francophobia by the French capitulation in 1940, the department worked successfully to end French rule in Syria and Lebanon. Since British colonialism seemed more benevolent, as evidenced in their voluntary termination of the Iraqi mandate, since joint war plans assigned operational responsibility for the Middle East to the British, and since Palestine in particular could become explosive, the department acquiesced in continued British control over Palestine, Egypt, and Iraq. After the war, however, the department expected to diminish British influence and expand American influence in these areas as well. In Saudi Arabia, where British and American interests in oil and geopolitical position clashed most directly, the state department succeeded in establishing American hegemony.

Baram effectively delineates the state department's attitudes and policies toward the Arab world and thus aids our understanding of subsequent events. Because the department assumed the future lay with bourgeois nationalism under benevolent American leadership, and because it so blithely dismissed Zionism as "chimerical" (p. 246), it was blind to the realities of the postwar world, when Israel would become a nation supported by the United States, and revolutionary Arab nationalist would sweep away tradition in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.

RICHARD PFAU  
Dickinson College



From the author's "bottom line" conclusion:

In the context of the Middle East, it opposed the political-territorial aspirations of Jews, Maronite Christians, Kurds, and Assyrians for fears of "balkanizing," creating power vacuums, and alienating the Sunni Arabs, the putative majority. It thus preferred to conceive of the Middle East as a monolithic "Arab Moslem world," realities to the contrary notwithstanding.

1978

*Philip J. Baram*

*The Department of State in the Middle East  
1919-1945*

## What is Your Identity?

For some, the question of identity doesn't even arise. For me, the question has arisen and continues to be raised. How did I conceive my identity when I was growing up? How has that sense of identity changed as I've become older? And, most importantly, why do I feel it is necessary for the question of identity to even be raised?

Put simply, when I was growing up, I tended to identify with being an American. **Pressure from the dominant American society for me to assimilate and become part of American society had resulted in exactly that—at the expense of my identity as an Assyrian.**

This pressure came from several different channels, which school was the main one through which my socialization and assimilation took place. Both the learning I did in the classroom and on the playground only served as reinforcements for that tendency toward accepting an American identity.

For example, in a history class, all I learned about the Assyrian history was that in ancient times, Assyrians established a powerful empire in the Middle East; and the Assyrians were brutal warriors. Then this "brutality" I was told, was finally checked by God.

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*Identification: n. a psychological orientation of the self in regard to something, (as a person or group), with a resulting feeling of close emotional association — Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.*

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This biased perspective of Assyrian history conjures up a negative image, which has estranged most Assyrians from their ancient heritage.

**Thus, my education helped drive me more towards identifying myself as an American, away and from a sense of even wanting to identify myself as an Assyrian—self-denial became an agonizing part of my personality.** This pressure to assimilate was reinforced even at home.

For example, out of their concern that I "fit in" with the other kids at school and not have an accent, my parents chose not to teach me how to speak their dialect, but instead, spoke to me in English.

It should be noted that my parents did pass on other aspects of Assyrian culture, like eating Assyrian dishes at home and raising me very strictly. Nevertheless, as a result of the educational system and the contact I had had with people who were mainly Americans, the pressure for me to assimilate was stronger and won out.

This sense of identifying myself more as an American continued until I went to college. It wasn't until I began to involve myself in doing work for Arab groups and other third world people that I started to question my basic values and my own national identity.

This questioning has led me to some discoveries and a new perspective. One discovery I've made pertains to the history lesson cited above. While it is true that Assyria was a powerful empire, but it was never more brutal than other empires in history or the present day Superpowers. It is also true that Assyria contributed much to the Foundation of Western and Eastern civilizations; and Assyrians continue today to contribute their skills and talents wherever they are in the world. The history of Assyria and Assyrians is one that All Assyrians should be proud of.

What has my desire to learn more about myself led me to? It's led me to learn more about my heritage—Assyria and the Assyrian people— from a more accurate perspective. It also led me to learn more about the conditions of the Assyrians in the United States, in Diaspora, in their usurped homeland and their struggle to survive as a national entity among nations.

Everyone of us must raise the question of IDENTITY because it is the foundation of our character and human creativity.

F. Yono  
Detroit, MI



*President Giani Zail Singh of India and His Holiness Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of Malabar and India.*

TRICHUR, KERALA, INDIA — His Holiness Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan of Malabar and India met President Giani Zail Singh of India, who visited the State of Kerala last October.

President Singh took a lively interest in the historical and cultural background of the Church of the East; and His Holiness presented him a copy of "A Church on Fire" that describes the glorious past of the Church of the East. The President was very pleased with this meeting and gave his best wishes to the church and its work in India.

In his meeting with President Singh on October 25, His Holiness was accompanied by core Episcopa Raphael, Rev. A. C. Anthony, Rev. M. I. David and Mr. Jose T. Mookken. This group was ushered in by one of the loyal members of the church, Mr. Anthony T. Chakkola, the police Commissioner of the city, to the office of the President who stayed at Ernakulam Government House.

**Thank You For Your  
Contributions**

### THE FORGOTTEN GLORY

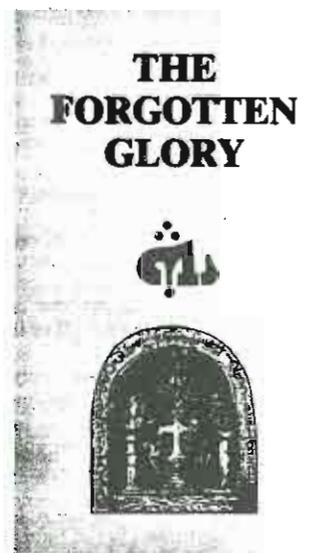
Whole peoples with their rulers had become Christians and it seems certain that there were few places in the whole Asia that were not reached at some time or other as the outcome of the marvelous activity of that wonderful church which extended from China to Jerusalem and Cyprus, and in the eleventh century is said to have outnumbered the Greek and Roman churches combined.

—JOHN STEWART  
A Church on Fire

**THE FORGOTTEN GLORY:** It is time to hear from our long-forgotten past the thrilling story of our past missionary enterprise during the early centuries of the Christian era.

**THE FORGOTTEN GLORY** is an introduction to the history and faith of the Assyrian Church of the East.

**ORDER YOUR COPY NOW!** Send \$3 donation to VOICE FROM THE EAST Magazine.



## Visit of the Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church

On June 18, 1982, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV of the Assyrian Orthodox Apostolic Church of the East\*, accompanied by his secretary, Deacon Aziz Shammas, arrived in Moscow (see *JMP*, 1982, No. 10, p. 4).

His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV came to the USSR to participate in the consultation of the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development of the World Council of Churches: "Just Development for Fullness of Life Orthodox Approach", which was held in Kiev on June 22-30, 1982.

In the Sheremetievo Airport, the distinguished guest was met by Archbishop Platon of Sverdlovsk and Kurgan, Deputy Head of the Department of External Church Relations, and Archpriest Leonid Kuzminov, Rector of St. Nicholas Church in Moscow.

On Saturday, June 19, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV was received by the Head of the DECR, Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Byelorussia, Patriarchal Exarch to Western Europe. During their conversation, the distinguished guest described the life of the Assyrian Church whose flock is dispersed in many countries. Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV expressed his desire to establish beneficial contacts between the Assyrian Orthodox Apostolic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church, he spoke also about the aspiration of the Church for the unity of Churches and peace throughout the world.

The Assyrian Catholicos-Patriarch thanked the Soviet Government and His Holiness Patriarch Pimen for the opportunity to visit the USSR.

Metropolitan Filaret gave a dinner in honour of His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV of the Assyrian Church, at his residence in Serebryany Bor.

The next day, Sunday, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV attended the Divine Liturgy in the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany. The Liturgy was celebrated by His Holiness Patriarch Pimen and was attended by a great number of Orthodox Assyrians\*\*. After the Liturgy the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church greeted the Primate of the Assyrian Church. His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV spoke in reply.

On June 21, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Deacon Aziz Shammas, together with other participants in the CCPD consultation, left for Kiev.

After their return from Kiev, on July 1, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Deacon Aziz Shammas visited the Trinity-St. Sergiy Lavra. The guests were escorted by Archbishop Vladimir of Krasnodar and Kuban.

The eminent guests visited the Moscow theological schools where Archpriest Vladimir Kucheryavy gave them a detailed account of the

life of the academy and seminary. In his turn, His Holiness the Catholicos-Patriarch told them about his Church. They also touched upon doctrinal, liturgical, and canonical questions. The Assyrian Church has no theological schools. The young receive religious education mainly at home. Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV expressed his desire to send their candidates for the priesthood to study at the Moscow Theological Seminary.

On July 2, His Holiness Patriarch Pimen received His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Archbishop Vladimir of Krasnodar and Kuban—co-chairmen of the CCPD consultation in Kiev, at his Moscow residence. Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Byelorussia and Prof. N. A. Zabolotsky (CCPD) were also present. His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, as the co-chairman of the consultation, informed His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of its proceedings and results.



His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV of the Assyrian Orthodox Apostolic Church

That same day, on behalf of Metropolitan Filaret, Archbishop Platon of Sverdlovsk and Kurgan, Deputy Head of the DECR, gave a reception in honour of the participants in the CCPD consultation. In the evening they were received by Archbishop Pitirim of Volokolamsk, Head of the Publishing Department.

On Sunday, July 4, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV celebrated Liturgy according to the ancient rite of his Church in the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Sign" in Pereyaslavskaya Slobooda, Moscow. The Liturgy was celebrated before the specially prepared altar, on the ambo by the Holy Doors. The Liturgy was attended by many Assyrians, most of them received Holy Communion. After the Liturgy, the Assyrian Patriarch delivered a sermon in his native language. Then

That same day, in the restaurant of the Sovetskaya Hotel, the Assyrian community gave a reception in honour of His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. Archbishop Vladimir of Krasnodar and Kuban delivered greetings on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church. In his response, Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV stressed the love of his people for the Russian Church, and wished the Assyrians living in the Soviet Union, to be worthy citizens of their Motherland.

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## From the Wisdom of Ahikar

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His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and the rector of the church, Archpriest Vladimir Rozhkov, exchanged greetings. The Assyrians, present in the church, cordially thanked His Holiness Patriarch Pimen for the opportunity to pray together with the Assyrian Patriarch. (The Head of the Assyrian Church conducted a divine service also in Kiev, for the Assyrians residing in the city.)

On July 5, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Deacon Aziz Shammis were received by V. V. Fitsev, Vice-Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs of the USSR Council of Ministers.

On July 6, His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and Deacon Aziz Shammis left Moscow. The guests were seen off by Archbishop Platon of Sverdlovsk and Kurgan, Archpriest Leonid Kuzminov, and representatives of the Assyrian community.

Saying farewell, His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV asked that his cordial gratitude for the brotherly reception and Russian hospitality be conveyed to His Holiness Patriarch Pimen and the Supreme Authority of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Archpriest LEONID KUZMINOV

*The Journal of Moscow Patriarchate*, No. 3, 1982.

\* On the Syro-Chaldean Church See: N. Muraviyov, JMP, 1956, No. 4, p. 66; M. Dobrynin, JMP, No. 12, p. 68.

\*\* The Syro-Chaldeans consider themselves descendants of Asshur, the second son of Shem (Gen. 10. 22).

*"A small fortune is better than a scattered fortune."*

*"A poor man who does right is better than a rich man who is dead in sins."*

*"Keep a word in thy heart, and it shall be much to thee, and beware lest thou reveal the secret of thy friend."*

*"Hate not thy first friend, for the second one may not last."*

*"Visit the poor in his affliction, and speak of him in the Sultan's presence, and do thy diligence to save him from the mough of the lion."*

*"If thou desire to be wise, restrain thy tongue from lying, and thy hand from stealing, and thine eyes from beholding evil; then thou wilt be called wise."*

*"Make a friend of a man whose hand is satisfied and filled, and make no friend of the man whose hand is closed and hungry."*

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**THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST IN HASSEKA, KHABOUR**

### **NEEDS YOUR HELP**

**DONATIONS ARE NEEDED FOR THE PURCHASE OF LAND AND CONSTRUCTION OF A CHURCH AND BISHOPRIC IN THE CITY OF HASSEKA, KHABOUR, SYRIA.**

**THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT NEED FOR OUR ASSYRIAN CHURCH IN SYRIA.**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WISHES OF HIS HOLINESS, THE PATRIARCH, WE ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO THIS NOBLE CAUSE AND FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. MAY GOD'S BLESSINGS BE UPON YOU.**

**ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST, CENTRAL COMMITTEE,  
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**



# Congratulations

## Best Wishes for a Happy Future



### San Francisco

Our congratulations go to Mona Hermes of Daly City and Jacob Malekzadeh of San Francisco on the occasion of their marriage on November 26, 1983. Mona is the daughter of Shamiram and Sargon Hermes of Baghdad, Iraq; presently residing in Daly City. The beautiful wedding ceremony, conducted by Archdeacon Nenos Michael, was held at Mar Narsai Parish of the Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, San Francisco. Peggie Hernandez was the Matron of Honor and Martin Jacob the Best Man. Over 200 guests were present at the church ceremony. The dinner reception, held at the Holiday Inn in San Francisco, was attended by 350 relatives and friends of Mona and Jacob. The first song, "Welcome to My World," sung by Carlos Hernandez, was dedicated to the bride and the groom. The Assyrian music and songs were provided by Roland Band, and Shamiram of Seattle, Washington and George Marogoluf of San Francisco.





مصر القبطية، تستقبل المسيح والعذراء بالفرح والتهليل، وتقدم للعائلة المقدسة مفتاح الحياة، مفتاح مصر.

المسيحية ما في ذلك شك، وقد كانت مصر المسيحية من أقوى العوامل في نشرها ما في ذلك شك أيضاً، وقد كان علماءها وما وضعوه من مؤلفات وكتب وأبحاث في الجدل اللاهوتي من أكبر المؤلفات وأكثرها شيوعاً في الشرق وأوربا في ذلك الوقت، من أكبر العوامل على حفظ تقاليدها وطقوسها... وتدل مراجع التاريخ على أن مصر أرسلت مبعوثيها الدينيين إلى مختلف أقطار العالم.

### Middle East Studies Guide Published

A Directory of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs and Courses in Middle East Studies in the United States, Canada and Abroad has been published by the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA). The directory is the most comprehensive collection of information available on institutions, courses and faculty members in Middle East Studies in all parts of the world.

The directory sells for \$5 to MESA members (\$10 to nonmembers) and may be obtained by writing to Middle East Studies Association of North America, Department of Oriental Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721.

BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY REVIEW

JULY/AUGUST 1983



Discover Your Suppressed Heritage

عهد أنطونيوس حوالي عام ١٢٨ بعد الميلاد أقوى العوامل على نشر المسيحية في أرجاء المعمورة، فقد تخرج فيها الكثير من علماء الأدب المسيحي الذين تعمقوا في دراسة أسس المسيحية، وجادلوا فيها وعقدوا المؤتمرات للبحث العلمي الديني، ومنها انتشرت تلك الحضارة المسيحية والأبحاث المسيحية والمؤلفات التي دونها كبار فلاسفة علم اللاهوت في الإسكندرية إلى جميع أنحاء العالم، وساحت منها عبر شواطئ البحر الأبيض المتوسط حتى تغلفت في قلب أوربا وفي إيطاليا.

ليس هذا فحسب بل اشترك علماء المصريين في المجامع الدينية التي ورد تاريخها في الكتاب المقدس وفي غير الكتاب المقدس، فقد جاء في الإصحاح السادس من أعمال الرسل أنهم اختاروا سبعة من المشهود لهم بالحكمة ومملوئين بالروح القدس، وأقاموهم على كلمة الرب، وذلك في المجمع الذي عقد في أورشليم، ويستمر الكتاب المقدس في العدد السادس من هذا الإصحاح فيقول: «الذين أقاموهم أمام الرسل فصلوا ووضعوا عليهم الأيدي، وكان في هذا المجمع عدد لا بأس به من الإسكندرانيين وأهل القيروان»، ويقول في العدد التاسع: «هنهنا قوم من المجمع الذي يقال له الليبرتيين والقيروانيين والإسكندرانيين يحاورون استفانوس»، وهذا دليل قاطع على ما وصل إليه أهل مصر في الجدل اللاهوتي والدراسة المسيحية.

ويذكر الكتاب المقدس علماء مصر وخاصة علماء الإسكندرية ويصفهم بأنهم فصحاء ومقصدرون في الكتب إذ يقول في أعمال الرسل في الإصحاح ١٨ والعدد ٢٨ ثم أقبل إلى أفسس يهودي اسمه ابليس إسكندري الجنس، رجل فصيح مقدر في الكتب وكان هذا جيداً في طريق الرب وكان وهو حار بالروح يتكلم ويعلم بتدقيق.

وهذه آيات بينات على ما وصلت إليه المسيحية في مصر في العصر القبطي، وعلى ما وصل إليه علماء المسيحية أيضاً في ذلك العصر، فقد كان مرقس الرسول من أكبر عمد

# تراث الحضارات المشرقية الأقباط

بملم الدكتور صابر جبره

هذه الأمة القبطية التي يقاس تاريخها بالقرون والأحقاب، وليس بالأيام والأيام، إنما هي خليفة بدراسة تاريخها من جميع نواحيه، وأر ينشر للملا ما أقامه للشعب القبطي من حضارة هي تراث الألف من السنين، فقد ورث هذا الشعب القبطي المجد والحضارة والثقافة عن أمجد الأباء، وقد ورث الدين عن خير الأديان، فهو شعب عريق تتصل فيه بذور الحضارة، وهو شعب أوسع صدره للمسيحية السمحاء فرحبت به مصر وخلد فيها هذا الدين، رغم ما توالى عليه من حدثان الزمن وعصور الاستعمار الفاشم والاضطهاد الذميم، وسيخلد بأذن الله في مصر ما بقي في النيل قطرة من مائة، وما بقي في مصري صميم قطرة من دم أبائه الفراعين الأمجاد، ولا توجد مدينة لو قطر من أقطار العالم تأثر بهذا الدين السمع السماوي الجديد أعرق عما تأثرت به مصر وعاصمتها الاسكندرية في ذاك الوقت مهد العلم والعرفان ورافعة لواء الثقافة والحضارة.

وقد لعب الشعب المصري أو القبطي الصميم في تلك الأزمان دوراً خطيراً في نشر المعارف والعلوم وفي نشر مبادئ المسيحية أيضاً ودراستها ومناقشتها والجدل فيها، وأوجد الكثير من النظم المسيحية المستحدثة كالرهبنة والطقوس الكنسية.

وان تاريخ المسيحية في مصر هو تاريخ الأقباط وهو تاريخ خالد امتلات صفحاته بأسماء من نار ونور لهؤلاء الأبطال الذين خلدوا وأبلا وجاهدوا... هذا التاريخ المسيحي صيغ مصر من أقصاه الى أقصاهما بصيغة خاصة تطلقت في صميم الدم المصري الخالص، حتى لم تقدر ولن تقدر، عوامل الزمن القاسية أن تنتزعها منه ولو انتزعت

الأرواح من أجسادها ولنا في حوادث التاريخ وعبر الشهداء أقوى وأصدق البراهين، حتى أصبح لهذا العصر طابع خاص هو الطابع «القبطي».

وهذه الصفات المميزة لهذا الشعب الفريق أجبرت التاريخ والمؤرخين أن ينعثوا فترة من الزمن يصفة خاصة له، فسموا هذه الفترة بالعصر القبطي، وهو عصر يجب أن يدرس تاريخه جميع المصريين على مختلف نحلهم ومذاهبهم وأديانهم، وأن يدرس فضله على الحضارة جميع أبناء الشعب المصري، وأن يعرف هذا الشعب كسف أثرت حضارة العصر القبطي المنحدرة من حضارة الفراعين الأمجلاً... كيف أثرت هذه الحضارة في شعوب العالم عامة. وفي شعوب الشرق خاصة، وهذه الحقبة من الزمن هي قطعة من صميم التاريخ المصري من أهمها فقد أهمل تاريخ أمته، وجعل جزءاً كبيراً من تاريخ الأمة المصرية وتاريخ الشرق الذي تزعمته في تلك الأزمان.

وفي هذا البحث إنما الجأ إلى الحقائق والوقائع التاريخية التي لا ينكرها إنسان، وأتعرض لتاريخ شعب عريق أصيل تجرى في دمه أرقى وأروع عوامل المجد والعلم والحضارة والدين... وله من تراث الماضي المجيد ما يجعله أرفع الشعوب أخلاقاً وأقومها ديناً وأصلبها في الحق عوداً... شعب لم تثن ولن تثن قناته لاهواء السياسات المختلفة ولا لاهواء الشعوب المختلفة، فظل عشرات المثات من السنين يحتفظ بطابعه الخاص دون أن يمنعه ذلك من أن يسير مع المدنية في ركبها، وأن يخطومع الحضارة في مدارجها، فيهضم منها ما ساغ له وطاب ويلفظ منها ما تتنافر مع أصله ومثبته.

وقد مرت على شعب مصر القبطي حضارات مختلفة من عصور الاستعمار، ورغم هذه التيارات الاستعمارية والسياسية وعوامل الدين المختلفة، ظل الشعب القبطي يحتفظ بكرامته ودينه وشخصيته، وقست بعض عهود الاستعمار قوة لا رحمة فيها ولا انسانية ولا دين، وظل الشعب القبطي صنو الهرم وأبي الهول لا يزحزحه عن مكانته أعنف الظلم ولا أهول الشدة، حتى حفظه التاريخ عهداً بل عهداً من التضحية قدم فيها روحه وماله في سبيل مبدئه وفي سبيل كرامته ووطنه. والعالم كله يذكر لهذا الشعب الجريء عصر الشهداء يوم أن كان أفرادهم يقدمون راضين فرحين رؤوسهم للمقصلة وأجسادهم طعاماً للنار والزيت...

وإذا ما ذكر العالم عصر الشهداء فانما يذكر شعباً من أرقى شعوب العالم ومن أصلبهم عوداً... تلك العهود البريرية التي مزت بالشعب القبطي لم تزده إلا إيماناً بالله وبالوطن، وصلابة في الحق ومثانة في الخلق، وبذلك ضرب المثل رقيقاً للعالم أجمع.

وفوق هذا جميعه فقد نال هذا الشعب القبطي المجيد بركة الميلاد المجيد، وكان أول الشعوب التي تباركت بزيارة الطفل الإلهي رب المجد السيد المسيح، فقد دخل مصر لا فاتحاً ولا محارباً، بل طفلاً وديعاً مقدساً، فملا قلوب أهلها إيماناً وترك في أديم أرضها تراثاً مقدساً تعزز به مصر.

وتدل المراجع التاريخية على أن الأقباط كانوا غالبية ساحقة في الديار المصرية حتى القرن الخامس عشر.

## العصر القبطي والمسيحية

جاء مارمرقس الرسول إلى مصر في تاريخ اختلف فيه العلماء، ويقدرونه حوالي عام ٤٥ م وتقول مدام بوتشر (Butcher) في الفصل الأول من كتابها عن قصة الكنيسة المصرية أن مصر نعمت في القرن الأول للميلاد بثلاثة من أكره الزائرين وذلك بين العام الثلاثين والعام الستين للميلاد، وقد شهدت مصر دخول قيصر فاتحاً ثم مجيء السيد المسيح له المجد ثم مجيء مار مرقس الرسول.

ويعتبر مار مرقس الرسول رأس الكنيسة المصرية ومؤسسها، وتقول الاساطير المصرية المتداولة انه احب ابناء المدن الخمس بنتابوليس (Pentapolis) وهذه المقاطعة كانت تضم القيروان وبرقة وغرب افريقي وظلت مقاطعة مصرية خلال جميع العصور المسيحية في مصر ولا زالت الكرازة المرقسية تحتفظ بأسمه حتى الآن.

وقد نشأ مرقس من عائلة مز علية القوم وكان أبوه أرسطوبولس عما لبرقبا، وقد هاجر الى اورشليم وفيها تربي على المبادئ المسيحية إلى أن جاء إلى مصر ليبشر بها في الاسكندرية، وتقول الاساطير المصرية أن أول من آمن بالمسيحية على يد مار مرقس الرسول هو انيانوس بعد أن شفى على يد مرقس... ويعددها دخل المصريون المسيحية أفواجا حتى أصبحت اصداء ترانيم الكتاب المقدس ترن في أرجاء الوادي من أقصاه الى أقصاه، وأصبح المصريون جميعاً عن بكرة أبيهم مسيحيين لا يحد السيف ولا بحرب ونضال ولا برهبة القوة والسلطان، ولكن بمبادئ المسيحية السمحاء وبالمحبة المتفجرة من بين سطورها وقلوب أبنائها، وبالجدل المسيحي الشريف السمع. وقد كانت جامعة الاسكندرية أو كلية اللاهوت بها في

الامر أن يرفعوا ايديهم عن قداسته ويطلقوا يديه  
ولسانه لعمل الرب وخدمته ولمجد اسمه القدوس ، فإن  
الام المتقدمة والشعوب المتحررة تفتخر وتعتر وتديه  
اعجابا بأن يكون لها امثال قداسته البابا شنوده علما  
واخلاقا وياغا واسعا وثقافة وهداية فهو حجة في  
الدين ومرجع حكيم في امور الدنيا .

أعيدوا ذلك البلبل الصداح ليزم في الكنيسة  
تهليل الحمد ، ارجعوا الراعي الامين الى رعيته  
التي تسمع صوته ويحميها من الذئاب ويحنو عليها  
ويوسعها بلمس العزاء والمحبة .

ان قداسته الحبر الاعظم مار اغناطيوس زكا الاول  
عيواص لم ولن يأل جهدا على جميع المستويات  
والمجالات والمخاطبات الاعلامية من صحافة وتلفزة  
ومؤتمرات ان يطلق صرخاته المدوية ليعود بطول  
الاورثوذكسية الى كرسي مار مرقس ليكمل دوره في  
الجهاد الروحي وهذا شعور جميع احوار الكنيسة  
السريانية الاورثوذكسية في كل مكان الذين يضمون  
اصواتهم مع كل اصوات الذين يحبون الحقيق  
( أن ارفعوا ايديكم عن قداسته ، أعيدوا الهزار  
الصداح الى مركزه اللائق ليدوى أبدا بصوته الصارخ  
كلمة الحق كلمة المسيح ) ونعمة الرب لجميعنا آمين .

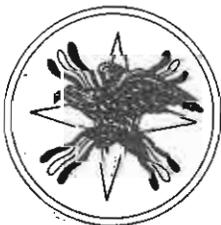
بطريركا على الكرسي الانطاكي باسم بولس الثاني وكان  
هذا مصريا في الوقت الذي كان فيه البابا دوميانس  
الاسكندري سريانيا جنسا . وفي سنة ٦٤٩ تقلد  
البطريركية الانطاكية مارثيودور وكان مصريا وفي سنة  
٦٨٩ رسم للكرسي الاسكندري البابا سيمون وفي سنة  
٩٢٦ رسم له البابا ابرام او افرام المعروف بابن زرة  
وفي سنة ١١٦٦ رسم له البابا مرقس الثالث المعروف هو  
الاخر بابن زرة وكان هو الاباوات الثلاثة سرياني  
النحلة كما أثبت التاريخ . وهكذا نرى أن التاريخ  
يعلمنا ان الكيستين هما كيسة واحدة تجمعهما  
المحبة والعقيدة الواحدة والجهاد الواحد والرسالة  
الواحدة والايمان الواحد والمسيح الواحد الساكن  
فيهما .

لذا فالكنيسة السريانية الاورثوذكسية تبتهج  
هذا اليوم الاغر والمجمل وتتقدم بالتهاني الصادقة  
من شقيقتها الكنيسة القبطية الاورثوذكسية - كيسة  
الكرازة المرقسية - بمناسبة ذكرى تصيب رئيسها الهمام  
قداسته البابا شنوده الثالث ، كما انها تتوجه نحو  
قداسته بآيات الاعجاب والاكبار مهنته ومثنيته له  
عمرا طويلا وتوفيقا جزيليا في رعاية كيسة الله التي  
اقتاها بدمه ، بل وطالبة باصرار وعناد ممن يهملهم

هذا ومن الجدير بالذكر ان هذا الاحتفال الديني ، كان قد دعا اليه مجلس كهنة الكنيسة  
القبطية في المهجر ، واقام في كنيسة مار مرقس القبطية في تروي ، وقد القيت في هذا  
المهرجان عددة كلمات للعديد من الطوائف المسيحية ، برئاسة المطران انطونيوس أسقف  
الخدمات العامة في ( نابروبي - كينيا ) .

الذي يصدر عن اوضاعنا في  
البلاد . وسعره ٨٦ كروناسويديا  
يمكن شراؤه من المكتبات  
الموجودة في جميع انحاء السويد .

Hujādā



ان اطلع على الكثير من الوثائق  
والمجلات والنشرات التي  
اصدرتها موعسلتنا في مختلف  
انحاء العالم المصاعب التي يمر  
بها شعبنا في البلاد السويدية  
والمشاكل التي واجهته خلال  
الاعوام السبعة المنصرمة .

ويقع الكتاب في ١٦٥ صفحة  
من القطع المتوسط وهو اول  
كتاب من نوعه بهذا المحتوى

### كتاب جديد عن الاشوريين

اصدر الصحفي السويدي  
ستيفان اندرشون في الشهر  
المنصرم كتابا باللغة السويدية  
بعنوان "الاشوريون" وهويتناول  
الفترة الاخيرة من اوضاعنا  
خلال وجودنا في البلاد .

وقد استعرض المؤلف بعدد

تألب كيد العتاة والحساد وهم يرووا الالوف تحددق الى محياه البهي وطلعت المقدسة ، ينشرد دره الغوالي فتسقط بردا وسلاما على القلوب الاليمية ، لكه صد - ولازال - وصبر وصا برزم ما ألم به من صنوف المكاره الموجعة مؤمنا ان صبره لا يبد ان يتكلل يوما بالظفر . . . . . ويزكزي المقام عندما سئل بطل الارثوذكسية في القرن الرابع البطريرك اثناسيوس الكبير بعد ان الت به الملتم وداهمته الكوارث والاذيات ، قيل له آنذاك : ألا ترى يا اثناسيوس ان العالم بأسره ضدك ؟ فأجاب بثقة عالية : بلى ، وأنا أيضا ضد العالم بأسره . . . . . ولقد لاح لذاك البطريرك القديس فجر الفلاح وتحقق ما كان يصبو اليه بأيمانه وصموده وصبره ، أما خصومه فأسقط بأيديهم والتحفوا بخزي مبين وباؤوا بالفشل الذريع .

وتاريخ كيستنا القبطية حافل بجهاد آباءها الغر الميامين الذين عملوا فأفلقوا وقدما على مذبج المسيحية بطولات دينية فذة والتي تميز بها الريوات من أولئك الشهداء السعداء الذين هشوا لقضاء الموت وشوا فاحتلوا الفعذاب مروع ألم ، بل كانت كيستنا هذه مدرسة دينية بحد ذاتها انجبت جهابذة من اللاهوتيين بل أبظالا صناديد مثل بنتينوس ، وألكيمينضوس ، و أوريجانوس العلامة وغيرهم من فرسان الكلمة وأقطاب الزمان فكانوا دعائم متينة منيعة لبيعة الله الجامعة ، ونجوما متألقة لامعة في سماه الارثوذكسية ويخورا عطرا فاحت روائحه الطيبة في أرجاء المحافل الدولية الاجتماعية منها والدينية .

انه لخليق بنا ان نطرب ونهلل ونسبح بحمد أبي الانوار الذي أعطى للكنيسة في هذه الايام الرهيبه حيث فتك الشربكل مكان أعطاها البابا القديس شنوده حبيب المسيح وجوهرة في تاج

الارثوذكسية وفعل ايمان الكنيسة في الربع الاخير من القرن العشرين . أجل المؤمن القديس المتكسب عن كل امرردئ والذي، التضحية ديدنه ، وحب الكنيسة والوطن شعاره وتقوى الله دثاره ، كانت هذه صفاته منذ نعومة اظفاره حيث ترسم خطى القديس مارانطونيوس أبي الرهبان بنسكه وعبادته الصادقة وحبه الذي لا يوصف للام الكنيسة المقدسة ، وتمرس بفضائل العفة والطاعة والفقر الاختياري بل تجرر في العلم البيعية وروض نفسه على الصالحات الباقيات ، وطوق العلم بنفائس القلائد بينما العالم يتسم منه شذى الطهر والنقا ، عاملا على صيانة جوهرة الايمان القويم وتدعيم القيم الروحية والمشمل العليا ، بل حمل وكالة خطيرة عن شعبه ليوجه المؤمنين في النهج السوي ويهدى الضالين سواء السبيل ، بل ليخدم الجميع منظما حالة نفوسهم ومقوما اعوجاجها ومجددا قدمها وذلك بما نال من المواهب كما يليق بالوكلاء الحكماء الصالحين على نعمة الله المتنوعة كقول الرسول بطرس .

أجل ، لازال يحمل هذه الوكالة ليكون ريانا حكيما يقود سفينة المسيح رسالة الكنيسة القبطية أس الارثوذكسية في خضم هذا العالم المتلاطم الى الهدف الاسمى الى الخلاص ، بل شفيعا في شعبه لدى الحضرة الالهية كالنبي موسى ، وصخرة عبيدة للمسيحية وخاصة منها الارثوذكسية يفرغ اليه المؤمنون واثقين ، وقائدا مثلا فذا في خدمة الوطن والمجتمع ، مسرنا نصب عينيه آية الله القائل : (( كن أمينا الى الموت فسأعطيك أكليل الحياة )) .

ان كيستنا السريانية الارثوذكسية لاتقل فخرا واعتزازا على شقيقتها القبطية بأن يكون على رأسها عظيم احبار جليل كالبابا شنوده ، فان كيستينا السريانية والقبطية - كما يحدثنا التاريخ - تبادلتا البطاركة من الكيستين على كرسيهما الرسولي ففي سنة ٥٥٠ مثلا رسم مار يعقوب سكرتير مار ثيود وسيوس

# الجالية القبطية المصرية تحتفل بالذكرى الثانية عشرة لانتصاب قداسة البابا شنودة

بالرغم من الصرخة المدوية التي كان قد اطلقها قداسة البابا شنودة الثالث لكافة الطوائف المسيحية ، كذلك قداسة البابا يوحنا بولس الثالث ، للوحدة الحقيقية والانصهار الكلي في جسم مسيحي واحد ، وبالرغم من ان الكنيسة القبطية دعت سائر الطوائف الشرقية ، ومن ضمنها كنيستنا الكلدانية ، للاشتراك في هذا المهرجان الديني ، لم نجد سوى الاب عبد الاحد شارا ، راعي كنيسة السريان الارثوذكس في مشكن ، يحضر هذا المهرجان نصره للاشقاء الاقباط ، وتغيب الاشقاء الشرقيين الذين يدعون حرمهم على الوحدة المسيحية والعمل على تحقيقها . هذا فقد القى الاب شارا كلمة في الحضور اليكم نصها .

سيادة الاحبار الاجلاء

الاخوة الاباء الافاضل

أيها الحفل الكرم ...

انه لشرف بانذخ لنا ، أن نسهم باسم كيستنا السريانية الاورثوذكسية في هذا المهرجان السيف الذي أقامته كيستنا بل شقيقتنا الحبيبة كيسة ماس مرقس كيسة الاسكدرية تكريما لقطب من أقطاب بيعة الله المعاصرين ، بل إمام من أئمة الفضيلة وحجة في الحق . الحبيب الى ربه والسلوى الى شعبه البابا المعظم شنوده أطل الله عمره الذي نأج عرف قدسه في الوري . وذهبت له في الوري شهرة مستغيزة ، وطبق في الخافقين عناده في الايمان والثبات في الدين ، لانتهم مخالف الدنيا بأنواعها .

كان ولا يزال وسيبقى أبدا راسخا في عقيدته السمحاء . رسوخ المراسم مستمسكا من صحتها بالعمرة الوثقى . لم يقنط . ولم يتسرب اليأس الى نفسه رغم



# أم آثورية و جلامش على اشرطة فيديو ملونة



بالألوان الزاهية الجميلة وعلى شريط ممتاز. تحكي لنا قصة بطل وشعب ينشدان الحرية والتحرر من تأثيرات واوهام الآلهة. وتعتبر المسرحية بالفعل قطعة جميلة وتمثيلية وتاريخية وتعبيرية رائعة جداً لا يستغني عنها أي بيت لما تحويه من عبر وتوجيهات ومواقف تاريخية تعيد للذهان حياة شعبنا في أرضه التاريخية قبل خمسة آلاف سنة.

## ملاحظة

لما كان العدد من المسرحيتين الشهيرتين محدوداً فيطلب ممن يرغبون في الحصول على اشرطتهم بمسرة ارسال شيكا:

وبمبلغ / 300 / كرونا سويديا لمسرحية كلكامش

وبمبلغ / 250 / كرونا سويديا لمسرحية إمو وثوريتو

وعلى العنوان التالي :

Postadress:

HUJÅDÄ

Box 6019

151 06 SÖDERTÄLJE/SWEDEN

Tel: 0755 - 105 81

Postgironr. 432 23 92 - 4

انتبهزوا الفرصة واقبلوا على شراء  
الاشرطة قبل نفاذها



اصدرت اللجنة المركزية للاتحاد الآثوري في السويد شريطي فيديو لمسرحيتي " كلكامش " و " إمو وثوريتو " والمسرحيتان من تمثيل فرقة نيسون للمسرح الآثوري في السويد ومن اخراج عزيز سعيد .

## أم آثورية

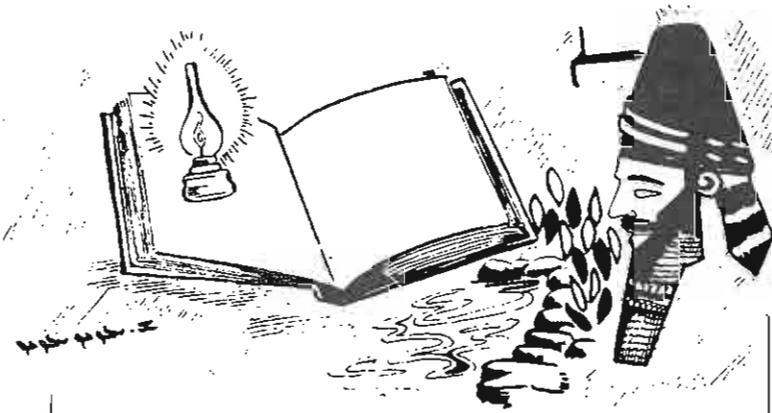
● وهي مسرحية لمؤلفها ومخرجها عزيز سعيد. يدور موضوعها حول واقع شعبنا المشتت في جميع انحاء العالم بشخص ام آثورية فقدت زوجها بسبب العظالم والهجرات. يرفض اولادها هذا الواقع المرير ويعملون جاهدين لتحويله الى الافضل.

ويستغرق عرض المسرحية مدة ساعتين. وبالطبع على شريط ممتاز وبالألوان الزاهية وثنه ( 250 ) كرونا سويديا .

## جلامش

● تعتبر مسرحية كلكامش من بين اعظم واشهر المسرحيات في التاريخ، وقعت احداثها في ما بين النهرين في مدينة اوروك لصاحبها الملك والبطل كلكامش. وهي من اعداد واخراج المخرج المسرحي المعروف عزيز سعيد وتمثيل اعضاء فرقة نيسون للمسرح الآثوري. ويستغرق عرضها ساعتين ونصف الساعة

# و. عام جديد!



وفي عيد رأس السنة هذه ستجلس العائلات حول الموائد ليس بكامل افرادها، فممنهم في هذا البلد ومنهم في البلد الاخر، وتبقى الفرحة ناقصة وتبقى الحلقة غير مُغلقة وتبقى مشكلة الالتقاء فالاجتماع فالعيش في بلد واحد مشكلة المشاكل.

ومن وراء هجراتنا الاضطرارية اسباب قاهرة تجبر ابناء وبنات الاقليات بشكل خاص والمواطنين بشكل عام للنزوح عن بلدانهم والابتعاد عن منازلهم والتخلي عن لغاتهم وتقاليدهم، وكل ذلك ناجم عن عدم الشعور بالمساواة في الحقوق والواجبات، وكبت الحريات المشروعة للاقليات القومية وعدم الاعتراف بوجودها ومد يد المساعدة لتطويرها، وبالتالي القلق الدائم تجاه التقلبات السياسية وانعدام توفير وسائل العيش على اساس برمجة اقتصادية تمكن الجميع من الحصول على العمل حسب الكفاءات. والى ان تتحقق جميع هذه الشروط في جو من التأخي بين جميع المواطنين بشعور عام مشترك تجاه مصائر الوطن المشترك، فان الهجرة لن تتوقف وانها ستزداد من سنة لاخرى، وعلى اساسها ستزداد الالام والحرمانات ويتمزق شمل العائلات اكثر فاكثرو يصبح المستقبل مجهول النتائج.

الاقليات القومية غير المعترف بوجودها اصيلا للفتيش عن مخرج لها، اي عن ارض اخرى ووطن آخر لعلها تستقر فيه وتبدأ بحياة جديدة. ولا يمر طويل وقت وسرمان ما تكتشف بعد هجرتها بان حساباتها قبل هذه الهجرة لم تكن حسابات دقيقة في الارض الجديدة الموعودة، وان جمع شمل العائلة لم يكن سوى حلمما ذهب مع الريح، فاصبح الرضوخ للواقع على هذا الاساس امرا لا مفر منه.

فالزيادة المطردة للبطالة عن العمل واخلاقيات المجتمع الجديد بكل ما فيها من غرائب بعيدة عن مفاهيمه، وبدء الكراهية تجاه الاجنبي المهاجر اخذت تقلق باله وتطرح امامه اسئلة جديدة لم تكن في حساباته، ويكون بذلك قد دخل دوامة جديدة من الحيرة والقلق.

والواقع لمثل هذه الاوضاع المؤسفة قد يستغرق وقتا طويلا، فان حلولها ليست بايدينا، فالتقلبات السياسية في ارض المهاجر التاريخية تخضع من حيث الاساس لاتجاهات فكرية اجتماعية هي جزئ لا يتجزأ من العراك التاريخي المطروح في اوقاتنا الراهنة على الساحة العالمية. والاقليات القومية على هذا المسرح تصبح الضحية الاولى على الدوام فسي اوطانها المرتبطة احداثها بمجمل التطورات الدولية، فالى ان يتحقق الحق ويبطل الباطل فان الهجرة ستستمر والالام ستزداد والتشرد سيمتدع ولا حق للضعيف.

# وخواطر

# هجرة



في هذا اليم الاول من عام 1984 نكون قد استقبلنا عاما جديدا يُضاف الى مئات الأعوام السابقة من القهر والانقسامات والتشرد، ففي كل عام يمر تسجيل هجرتنا من الاراضي التاريخية للخارج رقما قياسيا جديدا للعدد الكبير من بقايا هذه الامة العظيمة التاريخية والحضارية الذين يهيمون على وجوههم الى اقرب وابعد الاماكن شرقا وغربا، ولا نعرف متى وكيف تتوقف هذه الهجرة.

ومثل هذه الهجرات قد زعزعت وهزت كيان العائلة والشعب هزا عنيفا، كاد ان يفقد همتا مسكهما لا بل وحدتهما التاريخية السياسية والاجتماعية. فللاكثرية المطلقة من الاف العائلات المهاجرة اشخاص من الرجال والنساء والاطفال لم يتمكنوا من الالتحاق ببقية افراد اسرهم وكل منهم يتحسر على مشاهدة الآخر، ويموت الاب هنا وتموت الام هناك، ولا يعرف بوفاتهما لا الابناء ولا البنات فكل منهم في مكان، وكل منهم يبعد عن الآخر الاف الكيلومترات، اوضاع مأسوية تدعو الى الرثاء.

فلا المهاجرون الى مختلف انحاء العالم قد استقروا نهائيا وبدأوا بحياتهم الجديدة بحزن وقناعة ولا اولئك الذين ظلوا في ارض الوطن قد وضعوا الاسس الراسخة للبقاء والتطور والنظر الى المستقبل نظرة الواثق المطمئن من عيشه ومستقبله. فالمهاجر ينظر الى بقية افراد اسرته في الوطن عن بعد بعيد وهم بالمقابل ينظرون اليه وينتظرون اخباره على احتر من الجمر. فلا هذا يفكر بالعودة لوطنه لاسباب كثيرة بعد ان بدأ بتعلم اللغة الجديدة والعادات والتقاليد الجديدة واخلاقيات المجتمع الجديد على اساس طاحون الاقتصاد الآلي، ولا المقيمون في البلد الام قادرون على الالتحاق بذويهم في المهاجر وكان كابوسا رهيبا يحتم على صدورهم لامل لهم في التخلص منه بسهولة.

ومن ييم لآخر تزداد هجرتنا من الشرقيين الاوسط والادنى، لاسباب سياسية وما يرافقها من قلق وعدم الشعور بالاطمئنان والمساواة مما يدفع بنا فسرار

و عملی که این تز برای طراحی‌اش در بر دارد. بهر حال رابطه این تز با مردم بسیار پر ارزش و سودمند میباشد. بعبارتی دیگر این بنفع امر ملی میباشد که بی معیاری فعلی بسود از بین رفتن مرزهای مخدوش با تعرض با اصطلاح فرهنگی این قشر از میان برداشته میشود و پیرو سه قطبی شدن به جامعه ما آشوریان نیز راه می‌گشاید و دانش از گاه جدا میگردد. منافع این قشر بالاخره ویرا مجبور نمودند که پیش از پیش خواسته‌های خود را در رابطه با ملی‌گرایی و توضیح بیشتری مطرح نماید و عملاً دیگر ادعای سرکردگی جنبش مردم را بکناری بگذارد.

تز دو فرهنگ در تحلیل نهائی، یعنی از طرف طراحان آن، پذیرفتن ضمنی تقسیم آشوریت حداقل بدو قطب - اگر بعد از چند صباحی فرهنگهای آمریکا و استرالیا را نیز باین تز اضافه نمایند - و رشد متفاوت این قطبها. میبینیم که عملاً این تز با تمام خواسته‌ها و کوششهای وحدت افکنی متغایر است. این قشر با وضوح تمام م میگوید که ما جهت حفظ و بسط موقعیت اقتصادی خود در کشورهای مختلف خود را تابع و دنباله رو زورمندان مینمائیم و از نمایندگی مسائل ملی آشوریت بدان طریقی که تاریخ رسالت آنرا بعهده ما گذارده شانه خالی مینمائیم و آن آشوری هوادار بعث نیز حرفی جز این ندارد. آشوریت را وجه معامله قرار میدهد و طی یک دگردیسی عجیب و غریب بیکباره کامل فرهنگمان را نفی مینماید و عرب میشود.

آی آدمها که بر ساحل بساط دلگشا دارید!

نان به سفره، جامه‌تان بر تن،

یک نفر در آب می خواند شما را.

موج سنگین را به دست خسته می‌کوبد

باز می‌دارد دهان با چشم از وحشت دریده

سایه‌ها تن را ز راه دور دیده

آب را بلعیده در گود کیود و هر زمان،

بی تابیش افزون

می‌کند زین آبها بیرون

گاه سر، گه پاه.

آی آدمها!

از راه دور، این کهنه جهان را باز می‌پاید.

می‌زند فریاد و امید کمک دارد

«ای آدمها که روی ساحل آرام در کار تماشا کنید!»

موج می‌کوبد به روی ساحل خاموش

پخش می‌گردد چنان مستی بجای افتاده، پس مدهوش،

می‌رود نعره زنان. وین بانگ باز از دور می‌آید

«آی آدمها!»

و صدای باد هر دم دلگزارتر،

در صدای باد بانگ او زهاتر،

از میان آبهای دور و نزدیک

باز در گوش این نداها.

«ای آدمها!»

نیما یوشیج

آی آدمها!

آی آدمها که در ساحل نشسته شاد و خندانید!

یک نفر در آب دارد می‌سپارد جان.

یک نفر دارد که دست و پای دائم می‌زند

روی این دریای تند و تیره که می‌دانید!

آن زمان که مست هستید از خیال دست یابیدن به دشمن،

آن زمان که پیش خود بیهوده پندارید

که گرفتید دست ناتوان را!

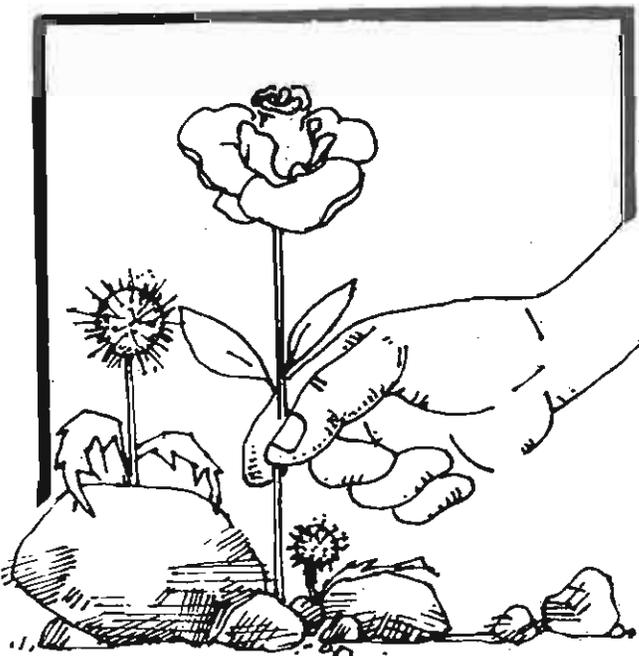
ناتوانائی بهتر را پدید آرید.

آن زمان که تنگ می‌بینید

بر کمرهاتان کمر بند،

در چه هنگامی بگویم من!

یک نفر در آب دارد میکند بیهوده جان قربان.



## سخنی در باره نظریه دو فرهنگ

چندبست که در این گوشه از جهان، در دنیای کوچک ما آشوریان مقیم کالیفرنیا، نظریاتی پیدا شده و بغلت هوادارانی نیز پیدا نموده‌اند که اگر در ابتدا و وهله اول هر آشوری دلسوز و نگران آینده ملت را به حیرت وامی‌دارند ولی خیلی زود و با کمی تعمق و دقت می‌توان به نیکی ماهیت انگیزه ایراکه در پی این نظریات نهفته باز شناخت و هسته اصلی این طرز تفکر را عیان نمود.

نظریه بسیار ساده است، درست به همان آسانی که فالهای گردو را از همدیگر می‌توان سوا نمود نظریه را نیز مطرح مینمایند و مدعی می‌باشند که ما آشوریان از ایران برخاسته آنچنان فرهنگمان با فرهنگ آشوریانیکه از کشورهای عربی می‌آیند متفاوت می‌باشد که کمتر بعلمت این اختلاف فرهنگی قادریم که با همدیگر اتفاق نظر و همبستگی داشته باشیم.

بگذارید که در همین ابتدا با ارائه تعریفی مختصر و کوتاه از فرهنگ بحث را آغاز بنمایم. معمول است که فرهنگ جامعه ایرا اینگونه تعریف مینمایند که کلیه دستاوردهای مادی و معنوی یک جامعه را در طول سیر تکاملش می‌باید که با احتساب فرهنگ آن جامعه قرار داد.

منظور از سیر تکامل مادی شاخصهائی می‌باشند که درجه رشد جامعه را در پهنه تولید و تکنیک تعیین مینمایند. بعلمت فقدان یک زندگی اقتصادی مشترک ما آشوریان بالاچاره راسا فاقد این قسمت از تعریف می‌باشیم. میماند قسمت دوم تعریف که حتما نیز منظور هواداران نظریه از اختلاف فرهنگی، اختلافی می‌باشد که در فرهنگ معنوی کاشف شده‌اند.

قسمت دوم تعریف یعنی فرهنگ روحی و یا معنوی را کمی بیشتر می‌شکافم تا بهتر متوجه منظور طراحان نظریه بشویم. منظور از فرهنگ معنوی یک جامعه مجموع دستاوردهای آن جامعه در رشته‌های مختلف نظیر اخلاق، هنر، زندگی، علم و فلسفه، اندیشه‌های سیاسی، زبان، تفکر، منطق و فرهنگ احساسات و... می‌باشد.

از تعریف پیداست که فرهنگ معنوی می‌بایست که ساختمانی بس بفرنج داشته باشد و اجزای ترکیب کننده آن موزائیک وار در کنار همدیگر جور میشوند تا تصویر نهائی آنرا ارائه دهند. این بسیار طبیعی می‌باشد که بدلیل همین بفرنجی، فرهنگ ما نیز چون فرهنگ سایر ملل یکدست نیست و نمی‌باید هم که باشد.

کوه نشینان بخاطر زندگی و تولید در کوه فرهنگش دارای ویژه گیهای مخصوص کوه نشینان می‌باشد. زارع و شهر نشینان نیز هر کدام و بنویه خود فرهنگی را خلق نموده و چه‌ره غالب فرهنگمان را تعیین نموده‌اند و تازه در پویائی خستگی ناپذیر خود امدام فرهنگمان با تغییراتی که در نحوه زندگی‌مان اتفاق می‌افتند، طبق قوانین داخلی و مختص بخود نوعی تکامل و انبساط نیز طی مینمایند.

از آنجا که هیچ عقیده و نظریه‌ای نیست، آنهم وقتی که پای مسائل حیاتی ملتی بمیان کشیده شوند، که بدون منطق و حکمت باشد - حال چه طراحان این تز تعمدی در کارشان بوده باشد و یا خیر - زمانیکه این سؤال را از خودمان مطرح مینمائیم که چه اتفاق دگرگون کننده‌ای رخ داده که بی‌کاره صاحب دو فرهنگ گشته‌ایم؟ و مردمی که تا دیروز، تا همین قبیل از جنگ جهانی اول، چون تنی واحد از کوه نشین گرفته تا ده و شهر نشین، از نسطوری گرفته تا کاتولیک و یعقوبی، در غم و شادی، در مصائب ناشی از آشوری بودن، با همدیگر شریک بودند و وارث و حافظ یک میراث فرهنگی اینک اینطور نسبت به همدیگر غریبه شده‌اند. سؤال و زمانی می‌توانیم بنحوی قانع کنننده پاسخ بدهیم که بطور جدی تحلیل و بررسی هر آنچه هم که کوتاه، از علل و ریشه‌های تز بنمائیم.

جامعه ما آشوریان پس از جنگ جهانی اول از یکسو تحت تأثیر تغییرات عمیقی که جوامع خاور میانه را در بر گرفته بود و از سوی دیگر تحت آنچه که اصطلاحا به فرار از ده بسوی شهر موسوم است دستخوش تغییرات شگرفی شد. زمانیکه ما را از زمینهای مزروعی مان تاراندند زمانیکه اجبار داشتیم در پی معاش و امنیت بیشتر بشهرها روی بیاوریم. بعلمت در اقلیت ملی و مذهبی بودنمان تنها در نوع مشاغل آزاد بر رویمان باز بود. این مشاغل در جامعه‌ای نظیر جامعه ایران که از سیالیت بخصوصی برخوردار بود از لحاظ اقتصادی برای قشری اندک از جامعه ما نوعی موقعیت مرفه به‌مراه آورد. البته این قشر هیچگاه قادر نگشت که موضعی مشابه به مواقع جوامع یهودیان و یا ارمنه ایران کسب نماید. بهر حال بخشی از جامعه ما مواضعی اقتصادی کسب نمود که نمودار تغیر و تحولاتی بودند که در عرصه اقتصادی برای این قشر اتفاق می‌افتادند.

این هستی اجتماعی جدید بعلمت اینکه در پایه‌های اقتصادی تغییرات عمده‌ای پیش آمده بود، دیگر نمیتوانست به فرهنگ سنتی اکتفا نماید. خلعت عمده فرهنگ سنتی ما آشوریان خلعتی محافظ است - از تولید خرده مالکانه منشاء می‌گیرد و البته آمیختگیهای چشمگیری نیز با فرهنگ فئودال کوه نشینان دارد. خصوصیت غالب فرهنگ سنتی جنبه‌های حفاظتی آن می‌باشند زیرا بعلمت تاریخی تنها ارزشهای حافظ این فرهنگ از عهده تأمین بقای جامعه ما بر می‌آمدند.

از سوی دیگر موقعیت اقتصادی این قشر بسوی اجازه آنرا نمیدادند که طراح جنبشی باشد که از بطن آن فرهنگی جدید، فرهنگی مبارز، تبلور نماید که رهنمود آینده کل آشوریت باشد.

این قشر با شم قوی خود متوجه این کمبود گشت و کلیه توان خود را جهت رفع آن به کمک گرفت. امر ملی چه بسا از جانب این قشر چون نردبانی برای ترقی و عرضه خود نزد زورمندان مسورد سوء استفاده قرار گرفت و هنوز هم قرار می‌گیرد. امروز تز دو فرهنگ را می‌باید در دو مرحله بررسی نمود. مرحله اول که در ضمن مهمترین این دو می‌باشد جنبه‌ها و نکات آموزنده ابستکه این تز برای مردم در بر دارد و مردم از این تز چه نتایج می‌گیرند و دیگری بررسی نتایج منطقی



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

The above addresses are from HJADA. Sep. 1, 1983

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