

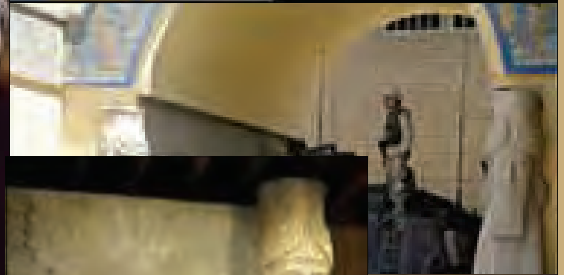
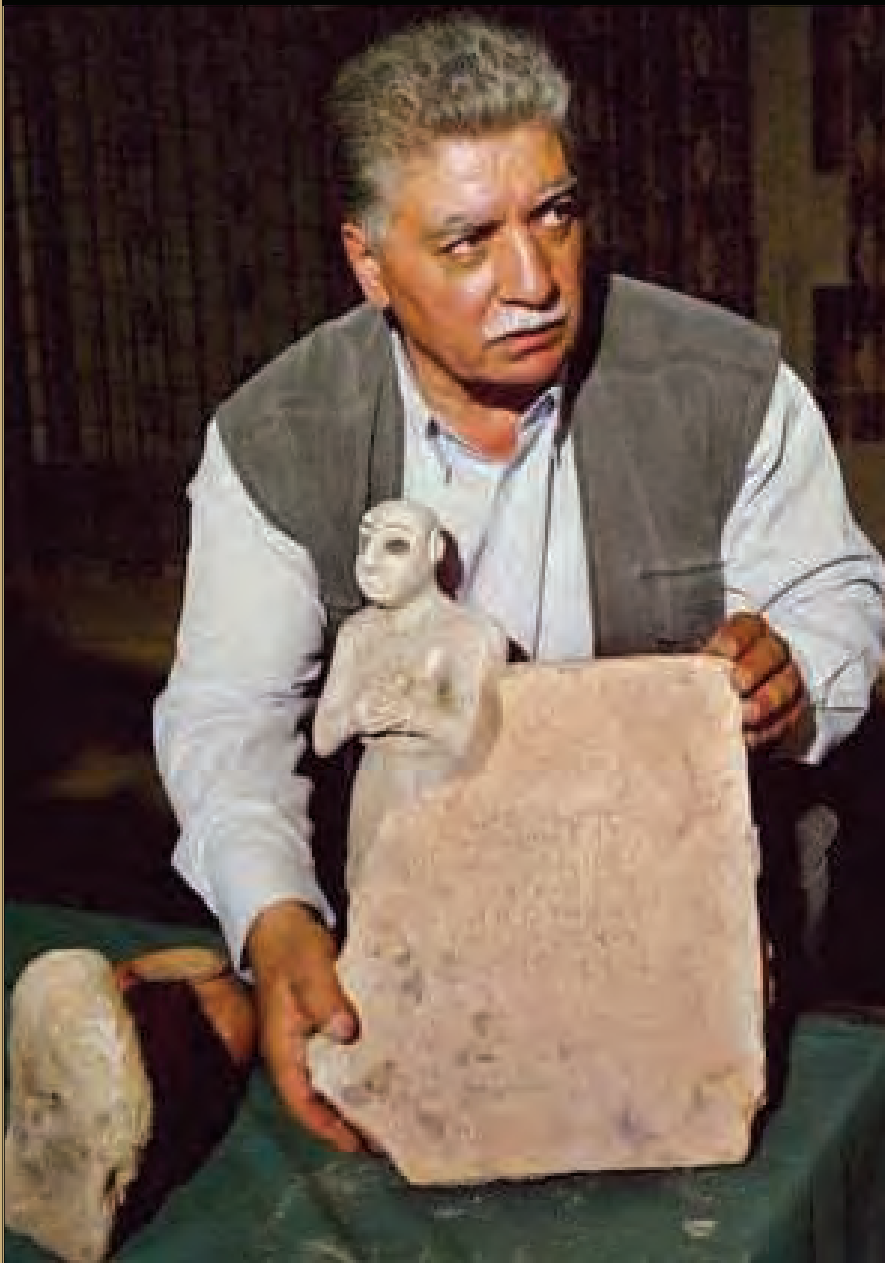


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“Assyrian is the sole national name that comprises all these denominations”

-Donny George Youkhanna

Chairman of the public committee for antiquities in the ministry of tourism and antiquities, Dr. Donny George, in an interview conducted by Raymond Shmoel.

Every people have their own history and civilization to take pride in; the Iraqi people have their own history and culture to be proud of. They are the sons and daughters of Mesopotamia, the Assyrian Empire, Ashur, Sargon, Hamurabi and Shamiram.

Writing began in this land spreading allover. The wheel was invented here to become the means for humanity's continuity. From this land the first law was legislated which protected every individual on this good land, even a tree had rights in Hamurabi's laws so what about humans? On this basis we met with Dr. Donny George.

Question: What happened to the museum following the allied forces advancement?

Dr. George: On April 08th, the American forces arrived in the vicinity of the museum, we were inside and I had slept there for three nights. We were awakened at five in the morning on the noise of huge explosions in the area, that's when we knew that the forces which were previously near the ministry of information were advancing towards the museum while planes were hovering over it.

The deadly mistake was that five people had remained at the museum, I, Dr. Jaber Khalil the committee's chairman at the time, an employee, a driver, and a watchman who was in the rear area of the museum. Later we noticed the former regime's militia "Saddam's commandos" in the museum's garden in sports wear with RBG7 firearms and they began to shoot at the American tanks turning the museum into a target. Dr. Jaber said that we were caught in the middle and as such we had to leave but we said that we would return later after the situation had calmed down. Thus, we moved to another building near Al-Rasafa. At three in the afternoon as we were heading back towards the museum we met some people who told us that we couldn't go back because the American forces were occupying the area and no one was allowed to move around.

Since we were unable to go back, each one of us headed to where he thought would be convenient. Later we heard that there were people at the museum but we didn't have any information even on April 09th.

The museum was unfortunately broken into and plundered on the 10th, 11th, and 12th of April, the looters had entered into the administrative building, the depots and halls.

Question: Do you think that this matter was intentional

and plotted to destroy the museum and did the allied forces have any role in looting the Iraqi museum?

Dr. George: We don't have a conclusive evidence that the allied forces had a prominent role in the situation but there's an important point that they didn't protect the

Iraqi museum, a proof of that is when one of the employees who lived nearby went to the nearest tank which was 60-70 meters away and through an interpreter from the Gulf asked the soldier to move the tank at the museum's entrance to protect it, because there were more than 300 people with hammers, iron chains, and machine-guns waiting to rob the museum. The soldier in charge made a call to some one and when that call ended he apologized saying that he didn't have any orders to protect the museum. Therefore, the museum was subjected to looting. As for your question if there was a previous planning of the whole operation?

From what we've seen at the museum and the investigation's proceedings, we think that three different groups had entered the premises. The first group which I personally describe as those who proceeded to the administrative area and stole all that they could of furniture, computers, copiers and any thing else which they could find, in this same manner all other government buildings were looted.

The second group as we think was the one intended to enter into the halls of the Iraqi museum, the proof is that they had broken a blocked window in a certain corner, which can't be seen from the main street. This window was covered with an iron fence like structure, the group had penetrated that structure into the museum, they had also glass cutters for the glass displays thus they were prepared for the whole operation. Later on we knew that they had knowledge of antiquities because they hadn't approached the halls with gypsum copies, the other thing is that this group had precise goals, they had entered some vaults and destroyed them when they were found empty (the antiquities committee had emptied the vaults).



Dr. Donny George Youkhanna,
Director of the Baghdad Museum and
Chairman of the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage in Iraq .

The third group had entered the storage areas but they didn't touch any thing until they had entered the section where there were little boxes containing small valuable pieces, this means that they had insider's information that's why at the time an administrative investigation was held.

An American commission also had held its own inquiry reaching the same conclusions like we did about the three groups, unfortunately there were some doors at the museum with unsecured locks that the administration hadn't paid attention to, these became the points of entry.

Question: As we know there were some antiquities which were hard to move even by the previous government, how then these groups were able to target and loot the museum?

Dr. George: There were 43 pieces of medium size which were stolen, the mistake was that these pieces were not moved like the others and unfortunately they were stolen but Thank God some of these pieces were recovered.

Question: There are international laws to return antiquities to their original home, what's your opinion about this subject and what are the procedures followed in this domain?

Dr. George: This is very important and Iraq had contributed at the time towards the introduction of this law and in order to implement it we have a department in the Iraqi museum dealing with the reclaiming of cultural property that is Iraqi antiquities which are found in museums around the world. We continuously endeavor to recover these antiquities through the United Nations or the Interpol and even through directly contacting these museums. There are pieces which have been out of Iraq on study loans for more than 30 to 40 years, and we have begun the process of reclaiming them. There were agreements to keep these pieces for five years but many of them have been kept over 20 years and it's time to recover them. There are however some problems facing us because some museums claim that during the Ottoman rule, the Ottoman governor had authorized giving away these pieces, they're implementing the proverb: "The Emir granted that which he didn't own". Hence, problems arise when we ask for every piece which was taken out of Iraq without proper documentation which we consider to be illegal, thus the United Nations and UNESCO resolutions are implemented in this case. The other prob-

lem is that some of these museums have Ottoman decrees for antiquities being granted to them.

The department of recovering cultural property is working at present on tracking through the internet and any public auction where Iraqi antiquities are being sold, that piece is documented in the Iraqi ministry of Interior and the information is sent to the Arab and international police as we have arrangements with the Interpol in this regard, we also have relations with international museums and specialists in the field of Iraqi antiquities. Thus whenever we find about a piece we mobilize in this direction, an example was when a Sumerian statue was about to be publicly auctioned in Paris, we mobilized along with the Foreign Affairs ministry, the Tourism and Antiquities ministry, and the permanent Iraqi mission in UNESCO, hence we were able to stop the auction, now the statue is with the French police. We were also able to acquire a decision from the French police the before selling any Iraqi monument in France it will be submitted for our approval through our UNESCO mission, thus if we don't agree then the piece would be returned to Iraq. This was one of the latest cases which we had worked on through the permanent UNESCO mission and the French police in Paris.



Question: Is it true that the former regime used to trade with antiquities?

Dr. George: We don't have enough information about the subject, but we know that the former president's body-guard Arshad Yassin used to trade in antiquities and recently we've been informed that he has a store in London selling antiquities but it's registered to other people and we can prove that. He also had relations with some stores in Baghdad where he used to smuggle antiquities outside of Iraq.

Question: Are there still areas which haven't been excavated?

Dr. George: At present our statistics show that we have more than 12,500 antiquity sites registered in Iraq. There's a huge project which will begin soon in agreement with some international organizations to have a complete antiquities survey through satellite images, and on foot groups to land-survey all of Iraq. We are training our youth for these operations, we also expect the number of antiquity sites in Iraq to rise to 100,000. We have long years of

work ahead and many generations to discover this incredible deposit of Iraq's civilization.

Question: When shall we see the Iraqi museum doors open to the public?

Dr. George: Truthfully it's anguish for us to see the Iraqi museum closed because it's an important civilization site found in Iraq and the world. It's one of the most famous and most important museums in the world. It's the only museum which has witnessed the civilized progression of humanity for over a half million years, that's why it's hard to see its doors closed at present but the security situation in the country has its requirements that's why we don't want to take the risk. However, we are continuously working so that when the time is convenient the museum will re-open its doors.

In what concerns the internal Assyrian affairs we asked Dr. Donny George: "Is the Assyrian situation nowadays at par with its history?"

Dr. George: Surely the situation isn't at par because the Assyrian civilization and its greatness were dominant in the ancient world. However, today the Assyrians are dispersed and scattered all over the world, this isn't in their interest also if only a few stay in Iraq then that doesn't serve them either. They're supposed to be here because they are the indigenous people of this land, they are its first owners, they're the wonderful leaven left from Iraq's ancient civilization and they still exist today.

Question: How can investing in history help in strengthening the Assyrian identity and increasing the national awareness within our Assyrian nation?

Dr. George: I have always said that if you want to work, looking towards the future, advancing yourself, your home, family and consequently your people then you should know in the process who you are and when you realize that you're the son or daughter of this great civilization then you will have this incredible momentum which will allow you to develop and feel that you can reconsider your ideas learning from the past and moving forward. I compare this state to that of an archer, whenever he wants to aim further or higher he has to stretch the bow further, thus the more you understand your history and civilization you will be able to advance and move forward.

Question: In your opinion as a specialist are the com-

pound and denominational names which are being given to our Assyrian nation suitable to its history?

Dr. George: These designations are religious and denominational, when I say denominational it means they're neither national nor related to nationalism because nationalism is one and that is Assyrian.

Nationalism is the human being's identity, one can't say I'm Assyrian today, tomorrow I will be American and the day after I will be English because if you're married to an Assyrian woman then your son will be Assyrian. If an individual says something else then that's his business but that would be a superficial and worldly matter.

However, reality and logic says that the Assyrian blood is the true one, unfortunately there may be many influences which would make some persons claim this or that, but these are denominational names and their origins are known as to when they began in the Assyrian history, but every one must know and I'm speaking as a

specialist when I say that Assyrian is the sole national name that comprises all these denominations.

A closing statement:

Dr. George: I would say that we have to be proud of being in Iraq because not every one who lives in Iraq becomes the owner of this deeply rooted civilization and not every person in Iraq is the inheritor of this great civilization and huge history of Iraq. When the Iraqi individual was at his peak during Hamurabi and Ashur's civilization, most of the world was in its early agricultural villages. When writing was invented in Iraq 3200 years B.C. Europe was still in its stone age and they were practicing agricultural methods which were invented and reached them from Mesopotamia. This is very important for the world and people to know and be proud of. Thank God we are very fortunate to be from this country, to gather, unite and return to this land for a brighter and prosperous future

<http://assyrianconference.com>
2006-1-24



TAMUZ GAMES '06

A crowd of over 6000 Assyrians attended the opening ceremonies of the 6th Annual Assyrian Tammuz Athletic games in Urmia, Iran on July 30th, 2006. Teams representing Assyrians from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Georgia, and Armenia took part in this year's competition.

In addition to the various Assyrian dignitaries, the opening ceremony was attended by Mr. Ali Abadi, the Assistant to the president of the Republic of Iraq along with Mr. Yonatan Bet-Kolia, the Assyrian representative in the Iranian Parliament.



Photos by Karam Haso, Nineveh



Assyrian Author Testifies Before The US House Committee on Condition of Assyrians in Iraq



Rosie Malek-Yonan, an Assyrian and author of [*The Crimson Field*](#), testified before the House Committee on International Relations today on the condition of Assyrians in Iraq.

My name is Rosie Malek-Yonan. I am not a politician. I am not a member of any political group or organization. I am an author. I am a Christian. I am an Assyrian. I am an American citizen. I am here to tell you about a 15 year old boy named Fadi Shamoon.

Fadi was happily riding the new bike his father had given him, when suddenly on that 5th day of October, 2004, he was yanked off his new bike and kidnapped by terrorist Islamist Kurds. His family went crazy wondering what had happened to little Fadi, until a neighbor found Fadi's body thrown out on the roadside like garbage. He was in pieces. His body was



barbarically mutilated and burned, and he was beheaded in a most horrific manner.

As unthinkable and unimaginable as this crime was, it wasn't the first that the residents of the Assyrian district of Ba'asheeqa had seen. Just prior to this, the Assyrians had mourned another son, 14 year old Julian Afram Yacoub when he was hit in the head with a concrete block and then burned. Killing innocent Christian children has become fashionable in Iraq, forcing many Christians to flee their homes and villages, money-less and helpless.

In my recently published historical epic novel, *The Crimson Field*, I have relayed the factual atrocities that were unleashed on my people in the span of four years from 1914 to 1918, which wiped out two-thirds of my Assyrian population totaling some 750,000.

I have lost great grand parents, great uncles, great aunts, and many others. My people were victimized at the hands of the Islamist Kurds and Turks 91 years ago for being Christian. My people are still being victimized at the hands of the Islamist Kurds today for being Christian.

My churches are being bombed. My elders are being killed. My young brothers are being assaulted and kidnapped. My fellow students are being harassed and beaten. My children and neighbors are being beheaded. If my sister refuses to wear a Muslim hijab, she is raped or tortured by having acid thrown in her face. And yes, the majority of these incidents have gone unreported in the western media. These atrocities are occurring right under the watchful eyes of my American government since the "liberation" of Iraq.

March 16, 1918: "One hundred fifty souls perished that black day [at the hands of the Kurds]. One hundred fifty souls that were accounted for. One hundred fifty souls that were loved by fathers and mothers. By sons and daughters. By sisters and brothers. By wives

(Continued on page 20)

The Assyrian Heritage DNA Project

By Joel Elias and Mary Yonan

People have always been interested in their ancestry. Where did I come from? Who were my ancestors before there were any civilizations? How far back can I trace my ancestry? Where did they live? Can I ever know? For a long time the methods of history, archeology, study of languages, anthropology, etc, have been used to try to answer some of these questions. However, there have been great gaps in our knowledge. But now, in the last twenty years or so, there has come along a powerful new tool that is providing some astounding results – the direct analysis of our DNA is providing new insights into our ancient ancestry. You, as an individual, can trace back your own mother's line of mothers to an ancestral mother who may have lived 10,000 or 15,000 years ago. Similarly for your father's line of fathers. Furthermore, the DNA studies can tell you the region of the planet where they lived. And, incredibly, all this information is contained in every cell in your body, but it's written in a code that we only recently have been able to decipher. Countless scientific laboratories throughout the world are actively carrying out research using DNA methods to answer these very questions and the information is pouring out into scientific journals.

National Geographic is in the first year of a five year program, called the Genographic Project, to assemble the world's largest collection of DNA samples from people throughout the world to establish the ancestry of the whole human race and trace the migration of humanity as they spread over the entire earth. When this monumental work is published it will become the universal reference for human origins, relationships, and migrations. It is imperative that Assyrians be represented in the Genographic database so that the place of Assyrians in the world community will be recognized. This is what motivated us to establish the **Assyrian Heritage DNA Project**. All Assyrians will have the chance to contribute their DNA and not only learn about their own individual ancestry but, along with other Assyrians, define for the world who Assyrians are. How often is one given the opportunity to become a part of history?

"Everyone knows" that a mother and a father contribute genetic material (that is, DNA) equally to an embryo. Every characteristic that the new child has is the result of an interplay between the genes from both parents. In other words, the maternal and the paternal DNAs are mixed together at the time of conception. As a result, it is extremely difficult to trace back for long periods of time the line of descent of only the mother or only the father. But, while the above statements are generally true, do the mother and father contribute all forms of DNA equally to

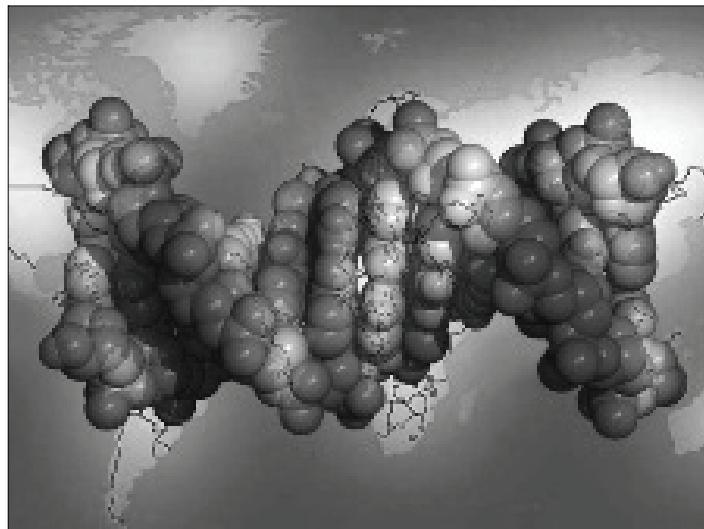


Image by Paul Thiessen, www.chemicalgraphics.com

DNA samples from people throughout the world will help to establish the ancestry of the whole human race and trace the migration of humanity as they spread over the entire earth.

the newborn? Is there a form of DNA passed to the next generation only by the mother without any contribution by the father? Similarly, is there another type passed to the next generation only by the father without any contribution by the mother? The answer in both cases is yes! That means that one type of DNA can be used to trace only your mother's line of mothers backward in time, and the other type can be used to trace only your father's line of fathers backward in time. This is all made possible by the fact that one parent passes a special type of DNA to the next generation without any interference from the other parent. Taking advantage of this unique situation, scientists have made enormous strides recently in the study of our paternal and maternal ancestors, who they were and where they were and when. We will be using the same scientific techniques in our Assyrian Heritage DNA Project that the research scientists use. Let's very briefly discuss in general terms these two special types of DNA and how they are used in ancestry research (those who wish to know more about certain technical details will find a discussion in the NOTES section at the end of the article).

The type of DNA that is passed to the next generation only by the mother is called mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA – think maternal DNA or mother's DNA). The mother gives it to all her children, both sons and daughters, but only her daughters can pass it on to the next generation (see NOTES section for explanation). Her son has his

mother's mtDNA but cannot pass it on to his children. Therefore, all human beings, both male and female, have their mtDNA given them by their mother. Brothers and sisters (of the same mother) have the same mtDNA.

Every ethnic or national group is made up of several different mtDNA groups. Differences in the mtDNA are brought about by mutations (a mutation is a change from normal at a specific location in the DNA). Mutations in the mtDNA occur slowly over a long period of time - think thousands and tens of thousands of years. The entire world's population can be divided into different mtDNA groups, each member of a particular group having specific mutations at specific points on the DNA. And, incredible as it may sound, all

the people living today that belong to a specific mtDNA group (that may contain millions of people) are all descendants of a single female who may have lived 10,000 or 20,000 years ago, or longer (see NOTES for method of dating). Mitochondrial DNA is a very powerful tool to clarify human ancestries. A very good example is seen in how it was used to solve the question of the ancestral origins of the people of Europe.

The advantages of farming were so great and obvious that it slowly spread from the Middle East across Europe,

Until about 10,000 years ago the people of Europe and the Middle East and adjacent areas obtained their food by hunting animals and

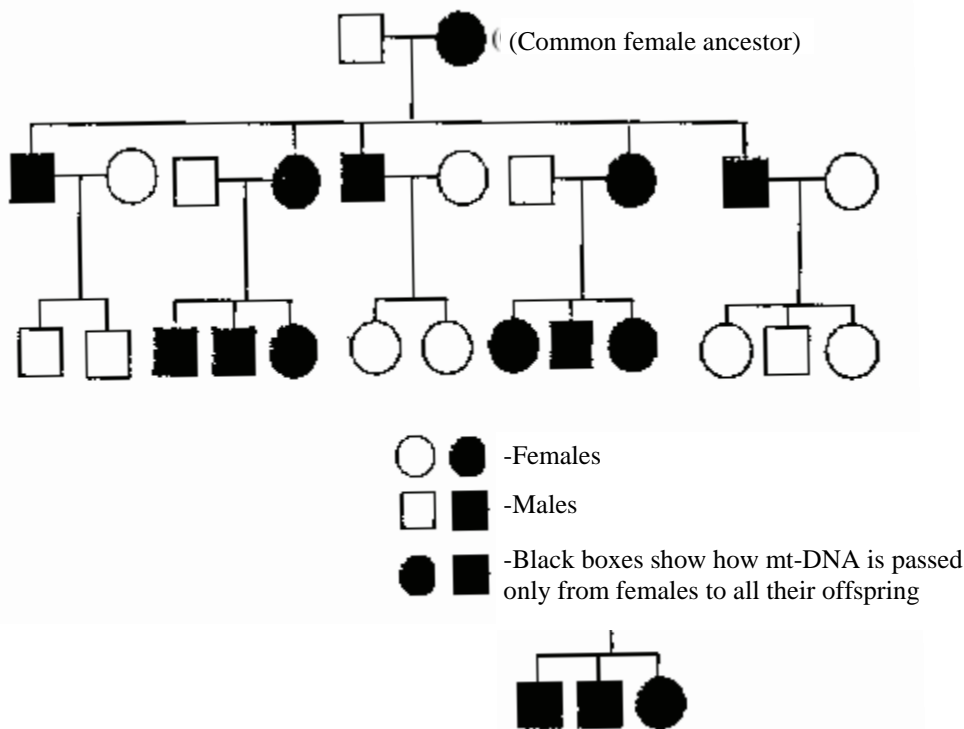
gathering foods like roots, berries, nuts, etc. They were hunter/gatherers. That meant they were at the mercy of the animal supplies and migrations and had to constantly

move with the food sources.

Then, about 10,000 years ago, there occurred in the Middle East, in the Fertile Crescent, one of the most significant events in all of human history, one that changed forever the course of history in Europe and the world – the invention of farming. The people of the Fertile Crescent learned how to grow crops such as barley and wheat and to domesticate animals. The advantages were enormous. For the first time humans gained full control of their food supply. They could now settle into stable communities around the farms and establish villages and towns. Food was more plentiful, so the population could increase. Also, not everyone had to farm – the supply of food for the community could be provided by some, and others could become artisans and develop crafts and even have the luxury of following the stars. It's not surprising that the first civilizations developed here.

The advantages of farming were so great and obvious that it slowly spread from the Middle East across Europe, and after a few thousand years had spread to all of Europe. The question that scholars argued about throughout most of the twentieth century was this: Did the farmers of the Middle East move with the farming and displace the native population

mt-DNA Inheritance (Maternal Line)



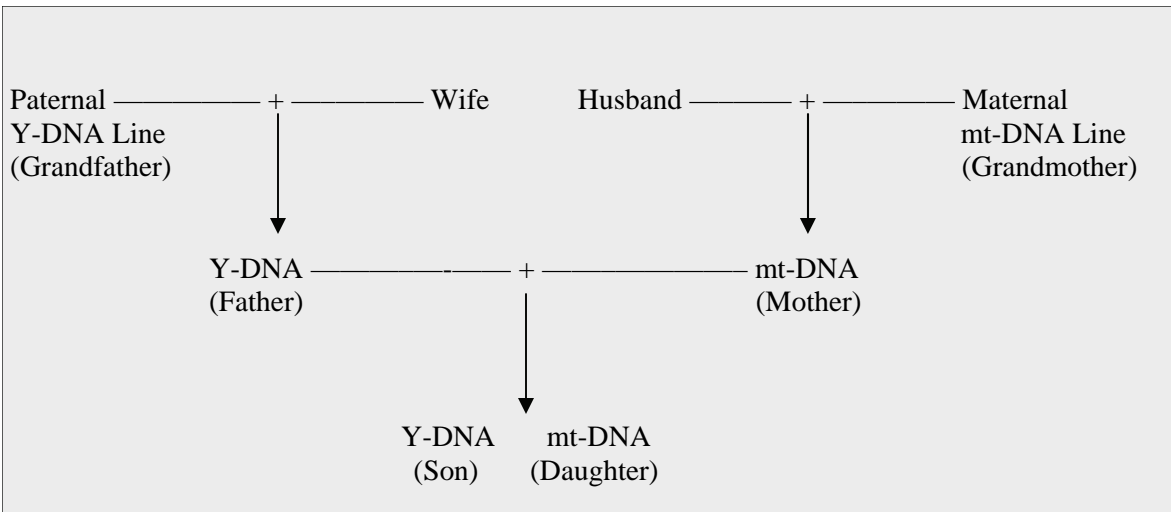
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<http://www.Kerchner.com>

How to read this mtDNA Inheritance Chart:

The top line represents the grandmother (Common Female Ancestor) of a family. The small vertical lines descending down from the horizontal bar attach to her sons and daughters in the middle line. Her sons are shown as solid black squares and her daughters are shown as solid black circles. As you will see, she has three married sons and two married daughters. The third line represents her grandchildren.

The chart illustrates that maternal DNA (mtDNA) is inherited by both the sons and daughters of the grandmother. However, ONLY her daughters are able to pass their mother's mtDNA on to the next generation.

Maternal DNA is passed down through the generations from mother to daughter virtually unchanged, making it possible for both men and women to trace the DNA of their mother's mother's mother back thousands of years through mtDNA testing.



Y-DNA and mtDNA Inheritance Chart

1. The Y-Chromosome test effectively traces the MALE line only. If the son took the Y-DNA test, then it would trace his paternal line through the left-outermost branch of the chart.
2. The mtDNA test on the other hand is tracking DNA that is passed only through the Mother's line and cannot be passed on through the male line. The son or the daughter can be tested for mtDNA (it makes no difference). However the maternal line is tracked is on the right-outermost branch of the chart.

This diagram is provided courtesy of Family Tree DNA

ian Empire had a very clever strategic program for reducing rebellion among conquered people and controlling them. As described by Professor Simo Parpola (Ref. 5a), the eminent Assyriologist of the University of Helsinki, the conquered people were moved en masse from their location, placed inside the Assyrian Empire and encouraged to “become Assyrians.” He describes how within a few generations they became assimilated as loyal Assyrians in the Empire. The result was that “the Neo-Assyrian Empire was a multi-

site - central Asia. The studies not only show which Y chromosome groups make up the Turkish population but the proportion of each.

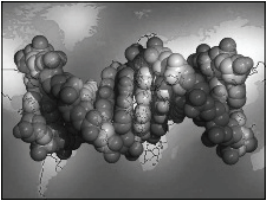
Another fascinating example of knowledge gained by Y chromosome studies was published in 2000 (Ref. 4). A team of scientists analyzed the Y chromosome characteristics of a number of Jewish groups as well as different peoples of the Middle East. Surprisingly, they found that Palestinians and Syrians were as close or closer to some of the Jewish groups as the Jewish groups were to each other. They concluded that: *The extremely close affinity of Jewish and non-Jewish Middle Eastern populations observed here supports the hypothesis of a common Middle Eastern origin. Of the Middle Eastern populations included in this study, only the Syrian and Palestinian samples mapped within the central cluster of Jewish populations.* The common Middle Eastern source population was estimated to have existed several thousand years ago, a time that would “predate the origin of Jewish populations.”

The studies described in the previous paragraphs emphasize an important point. Every national or ethnic group in the world is made up of multiple mtDNA and Y chromosome groups. Considering the migrations of people over the many thousands of years before any civilizations came into being and the number of DNA groups that developed and were carried by them, it becomes clear that the normal state of a national or ethnic group today is one of a population of individuals of different DNA groups. The Assyrian

ethnic state composed of many peoples and tribes of different origins.” “It was a unified whole, whose inhabitants were unhesitatingly identified as Assyrians regardless of their ethnic backgrounds.”

Over the thousands of years since the beginning of the Assyrian Empire many interactions with neighboring people must have taken place. Prof. Parpola shows that after the fall of the empire in 612 B. C. the Assyrians maintained their continuing identity in the Middle East even though the empire did not exist (Ref. 5b). In the last two thousand years the Christian Assyrians have lived in lands of the Middle East as an ethnic as well as a religious minority. Through all the persecutions, they have kept their religion and language and, with them, their identity. They did not melt into the majority cultures or other religions (Ref. 6). In the work by Cavalli-Sforza (Ref. 3, pages 242-244), he shows that the Assyrian population of the Middle East has a genetic makeup that, on the one hand, distinguishes it from the other populations of the Middle East and, on the other, shows the relationships of the different people in this area to each other. We are part of the Middle East and we also have a unique story to tell.

The questions that people all over the world are asking and trying to answer are the same ones that the **Assyrian Heritage DNA Project** is trying to answer. What is the makeup of modern Assyrians in terms of our mtDNA and Y chromosome groups? How many of these groups are found in today’s Assyrians and in what proportions?



(Continued from page 11)

What does that tell us about our ancient (pre-history) ancestors? Is there a characteristic formula that defines us? What other people do we most closely resemble? How do

we differ from other groups? We don't know what we'll find when we begin to uncover the hidden messages buried in our DNA. We have launched an adventure that seeks to bring light to what is now in darkness; we seek to know the truth about ourselves. Please join us on this great voyage of discovering our Assyrian roots. Contribute your DNA, find out who you are, make sure that Assyrians will have their important place "on the human map."

What Company Is Analyzing The DNA Results for the Assyrian Heritage DNA Project?

Until recently, ancestry work using DNA was done primarily in university and other scientific research laboratories. But there was so much interest among people in learning about their ancestry that the Family Tree DNA Company (FTDNA) was formed and in 2000 began offering DNA ancestry analysis to the public. FTDNA is the company that is analyzing the DNA samples for our DNA Project. The company is located in the United States, but they can mail their kits to any place in the world. The Arizona Research Labs located at the University of Arizona in Tucson perform the scientific analysis of the DNA samples for FTDNA using the most modern scientific methods. FTDNA continues to expand the database of DNA test results that will help participants to achieve the goals of our Assyrian Heritage DNA Project.

What DNA Tests Are Available and What Do They Cost?

FTDNA is offering, at reduced prices, a variety of tests to registered groups like our Assyrian Heritage DNA Project. The following is our recommendation of tests that would be most helpful to Assyrians who want to learn more about their ancestry.

Tests for a man to consider if he ONLY wants to test his Assyrian father's line: (Choose only one)

- (1) 25 Marker Y-DNA test which tests the paternal line ONLY--\$148 (US dollars)
- (2) 37 Marker Y-DNA test which tests the paternal line ONLY--\$189 (US dollars)
- (3) 12 Marker Y-DNA test for \$99 (US dollars) *{note: The 12 marker test will fulfill the requirements for the Genographic Project, but you will learn more about your paternal Assyrian heritage by ordering the 37 or 25 Marker test.}*

Combined Tests for a man to consider if he wants to test BOTH his Assyrian father's line and his Assyrian mother's line: (Choose only one)

- (1) Y37-marker + mtDNAPlus which includes BOTH the 37 marker paternal and the high resolution maternal line DNA tests--\$339 (US dollars)
- (2) 12 marker Y-DNA + the low resolution mtDNA test for \$199 (US dollars) *{note: The 12 marker Y-DNA + the low resolution mtDNA test will fulfill the requirements for the Genographic Project, but you will learn more than twice as much information about your paternal and maternal Assyrian heritage by ordering the Y37-marker + mtDNAPlus test.}*

Maternal Line Tests that a man or a woman can order to test his or her Assyrian mother's line ONLY: (Choose only one)

- (1) mtDNAPlus Test which analyzes the high resolution maternal line DNA --\$189 (US dollars)
- (2) Low resolution mtDNA - \$129 (US dollars) *{note: The Low resolution mtDNA test will fulfill the requirements for the Genographic Project, but the mtDNAPlus test will provide twice as much information about your maternal ancestry.}*

(Since women inherit ONLY their mother's mtDNA, this is the only test that a woman can order and it will test her maternal line DNA. Women do not inherit Y-DNA, so they would need to recruit a male relative of their father's line to take a Y-DNA test to analyze the paternal line DNA.)

To reduce costs, one brother can test both his maternal and paternal lines and his sisters (and brothers) can share the cost.

It is necessary to add \$2 shipping within the USA or \$4 international shipping cost to whichever DNA test you order.

Why Should I Join the Assyrian Heritage DNA Project?

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for you, as an Assyrian, to rise to the challenge of ordering a DNA test kit and expanding the Assyrian DNA database. By doing so, you will help to make sure that the genetic and historical past of Assyrians, which has been overlooked for too long, will begin to achieve its deserved recognition by the world. Participation in the Assyrian Heritage DNA Project by many Assyrians will raise our visibility as a significant Middle Eastern ethnic group that continues to thrive in the twenty-first century.

How Do I Join the Assyrian Heritage DNA Project?

You may join the Assyrian Heritage DNA Project in one

of these four ways:

(1) Fill out an online Join Form at:

http://www.familytreedna.com/surname_join.asp?code=U31042&special=True&projecttype=G

(Note: There is an underline_ between "surname" and "join" in the above URL.)

A participant will need to submit his/her name, mailing address, e-mail address, etc. to order a DNA sample kit to be mailed to him/her.

(2) You can order a kit by mail by writing a letter to FTDNA indicating the test you wish to order and include the payment for that test. Mail your letter to:

Family Tree DNA - Genealogy by Genetics, Ltd. World Headquarters
1919 North Loop West, Suite 110
Houston, Texas 77008, USA

(3) You can order by phone directly from FTDNA at: (713) 868-1438 | Fax: (832) 201-7147

If you choose options 2 or 3, be sure to say that you are a member of the **Assyrian Heritage DNA Project**. This will ensure that you receive the discounted price for your DNA test.

(4) You can send an e-mail to either of the co-administrators of the Assyrian Heritage DNA Project and ask for more information or for assistance in placing your order:

Joel Elias joandjoa@pacbell.net

Mary Yonan yanon@fgi.net

What Is Involved In Taking The Test?

A few days after ordering the test kit, you will receive a small package in the mail. It contains two small vials with preservative fluid, two "mini toothbrushes", and easy to follow instructions. You scrape the inside of the cheek with each brush, place them into the vial, and drop the package in the mail. It's that simple. No pain. No blood.

Included with your DNA Kit will be a **Release Form which you must sign** because it will give FTDNA permission to inform other participants in the DNA Project who may match your DNA scores and enable you to communicate with each other. The form will ask you to indicate your Paternal Ancestry's Country of Origin and your Maternal Ancestry's Country of Origin. These countries should be the country where your paternal and maternal ancestors came from. If you can trace the ancestry of your Assyrian parent(s) back to Urmia, enter "Iran"; if Hakkari Mountains, enter "Turkey"; if Nineveh Plain, enter "Iraq"; or if your earliest known Assyrian ancestors were from another country, give the name of that country. Your pa-

ternal and maternal countries of origin may be the same or they may be different.

What Do The Results Look Like?

The results are a series of numbers that indicate the composition of the DNA at a specific location (marker). When two participants compare their results with each other, the more numbers that match, the better the chance that the two participants have a common ancestor. The more markers tested, the more precise we can be in finding that ancestor.

Will I Receive Help Interpreting The Results?

Absolutely. Your results are important to us all. The more participants, the better we can understand how we are all related. **The project administrators will assist you in every step along the way in your new adventure.**

Joel Elias is Professor (Emeritus), University of California School of Medicine, San Francisco and is the co-administrator of the **Assyrian Heritage DNA Project**.

Mary Yonan is a genetic genealogist and started the **Assyrian Heritage DNA Project** in December, 2005. She is a retired professional librarian.

NOTES

Why is mitochondrial DNA passed to the next generation only by the mother and not the father? A cell consists of a nucleus surrounded by cytoplasm. The nucleus contains the genes (DNA) that carry the code for the structure and function of a human being. The egg cell in the human female is a very large cell because it contains a very large amount of cytoplasm. Mitochondria are tiny structures located in the cytoplasm of all cells (they supply the energy for the cell's activities) and the egg cell has very large numbers of them. The mitochondria possess their own DNA, which is the only DNA outside of the nucleus. The sperm cell is an extremely small cell. At the time of fertilization, only the nucleus of the sperm enters the egg cell. No mitochondria enter with the sperm. The sperm nucleus (DNA) fuses with the egg nucleus (DNA) and a new cell is created. Countless divisions of this cell result in the formation of a new individual. With each cell division the mitochondria also divide to maintain their numbers. But the mitochondria of every cell of this new individual are derived only from those that were originally present in the mother's egg cell cytoplasm.

The widely used method of dating when the ancestor of a specific mtDNA group or a specific Y-chromosome group originated may be called the "mutational clock" or the "molecular clock." Each of these DNA groups is defined

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Assyrian Participation at UN Indigenous Forum

By Shamiran Mako

Council for Assyrian Research and Development (CARD)



The Fifth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues commenced this year on May 15th 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The fourteen-day conference was attended by over 1200 individuals representing various indigenous peoples organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), affiliate United Nations offices and country representatives. Assyrians were represented by Mr. Michael Youash of the Iraq Sustainable Democracy Project (ISDP) and Ms. Shamiran Mako on behalf of the Assyrian Academic Society and the Council for Assyrian Research and Development.



UNPFII

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is an advisory to the Economic and Social Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues concerning economic and social development, the environment, healthcare, education and human rights. The first meeting of the Forum took place in 2002 for two weeks, and as a result of unprecedented success, has been holding annual meetings since with the following mandate:

- *Provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Economic and Social Council, as well as to programs, funds and agencies of the United Nations, through the Council;*
- *To raise awareness and promote integration and cooperation related to indigenous peoples within the UN system;*
- *And lastly, to prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues.*

The agenda of the annual sessions varies each year and is determined at the end of each session. The structure, however, remains the same. The meetings begin with an

opening ceremony and the following days are dedicated to covering statements submitted by non-governmental organizations, permanent experts of the Forum (there are 15 of them covering various geographical areas of interest) and affiliate UN organizations and offices. At the end of the session, reports are made based on the issues raised by indigenous peoples worldwide and official statements are posted online through a contracted NGO, doCip. Statements presented on behalf of the Assyrians in their homeland can be found at:

<http://www.docip.org/Permanent%20Forum/Statements.html>.

Our primary focus as first time participants was to familiarize the Forum, the Permanent Experts and fellow indigenous peoples about Assyrians and their plight in the respective homeland (Southeast Turkey, Northern Iraq, North-Western Iran and North-Eastern Syria). The key focus of our official statement was Kurdish oppression and terror toward the indigenous inhabitants (the Assyrians) residing within the boundaries of this geographical location. This has become more ubiquitous as the efforts for the creation of Kurdish homeland through secessionist Kurdish movements, illustrate a pattern of sustained efforts at homogenizing the region by colonizing and obliterating its indigenous inhabitants.

It is commonly assumed that the United Nations has the capacity to officially designate and recognize the indigeneity of a people or community. This is based on erroneous postulation that the UN has the aptitude and influence to formally attribute such status. The United Nations, in conjunction with various offices such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, can provide the forum whereby minority and indigenous groups have the ability to present their individual cases and build their profile through a consistent and perma-



ment participation. Thus, indigenous status is an *informally* recognized right of a people that promote and advocate their plight through the institutional structures of the United Nations system and offices.

A key factor is the dialogue that is created between the indigenous peoples organizations, their country-representative and various NGOs worldwide that advocate indigenous rights. The recommendations of the permanent experts of such forums and the UN as an advisory body have a tremendous impact and weigh heavily on the countries involved which often force countries to seek proactive solutions for their indigenous inhabitants.

Recognition is through consistent participation. Raising awareness of the plight of Assyrians in their homeland as an indigenous and ethno-religious minority will reinforce their indigeneity and will demonstrate to the respective governments of each country that violence against Assyrians will not go unreported. We hope with regular participation, Assyrians will become an integral part of both the UN system and the international arena as a whole.

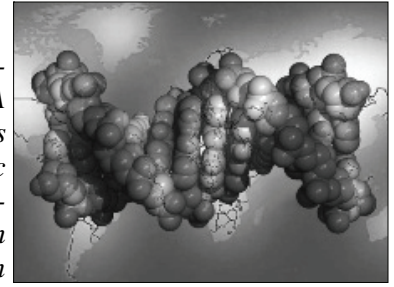
For further information on the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, please visit the official website at:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/about_us.html



(Continued from page 13)

by the number and specific location on the DNA molecule of the mutations or markers characteristic of that group. The approximate rate at which these mutations occur in different DNA groups can be estimated. Therefore, one can make an educated guess as to the approximate time of the origin of that ancestor. It is an approximation but, nevertheless, an educated approximation.



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Note:

This article will be posted at the Assyrian Foundation's web-site:

www.assyrianfoundation.org.

The Assyrian Flag and its Designer, George Bet Atanous



Editorial Note: Prior to 1975 when, another worthy Assyrian artist, Vladimir Bet David had designed a flag which was used to represent Assyrian organizations.

This article is an excerpt from a book titled *The Assyrian Flag*. It is in the form of an extensive interview that Mr. Homer Abramian, the chief editor of *Kirkha* (an Assyrian periodical published in Iran), had with the author and the designer of the Assyrian flag, Mr. George Bet Atanous (1919-2000).

The interview touches on many different topics including the history, mythology, and the art of ancient Assyrians as well as contemporary issues regarding the legal status of the Assyrian minority in the constitution of Iran in the post Islamic revolution era.

George Atanous published this interview in the form of a book to be distributed freely to friends and fellow Assyrians.

It should be noted that almost every page is adorned with ancient Assyrian art motifs and designs some of which he analyzes as to their symbolic significance in response to the questions from the interviewer. In that context he also tells the reason why he was prompted to design the present Assyrian national emblem, the flag, and how he chose the representational symbols for it.

The book is in Farsi, dedicated to the memory of his mother. The date of publication or the interview is not indicated. Since there is a confusion among the Assyrians as to who designed their national flag, and many are not aware of the meaning behind the different symbols and colors in it, upon request I have translated an excerpt from the book



to familiarize the Assyrian readers with their flag and its designer.

George Bet Atanous is known as a self-taught Assyrologist and a seismic engineer by profession. His prime interest was to learn about the ancient Assyrian history, mythology, literature and art.

He was elected as the Assyrian Man of the Year during the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) congress in San Francisco, USA in 1979. On that occasion he was also granted an honorary doctorate for his invaluable contributions in promoting appreciation for the historical, literary, and artistic legacy of ancient Assyrians, as well as for reviving and preserving the ancient lore and icons.

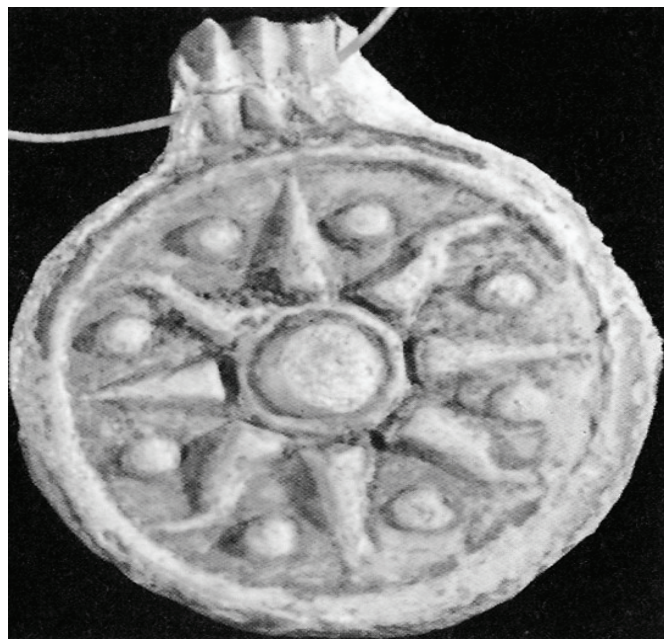
George Bet Atanous was born in Russia in 1919. His parents were originally from the town of Urmia. They had immigrated to Russia before WWI; but returned to Iran after the political upheavals in Russia in 1927.

His elementary education took place in a Russian school in Anzali Port (Gazian). He continued his high school education in Teheran, and after completing his military service, he enrolled in the University of Calcutta where he obtained his bachelor degree in Topography in 1951. Meanwhile in addition to his work as a topographer, he began to take advanced courses in design and syncopation of seismographic equipment. He received a Master's degree in Seismology in 1968 from the Department of Education in Hungary. George Bet Atanous passed away on October 10, 2000.

He was an active member of several Assyrian educational organizations. He had an in-depth knowledge of Assyrian epics and mythological figures, and believed that there was considerable resemblance between Assyrian cosmology and mythology and that of the Greeks and Romans. He collected ancient Assyrian art designs and studied their symbolic significance. Using motifs from engravings such as the Assyrian star or the human-headed winged bull or guardian spirits, he designed medals, coins, plaques, or jewelry in the form of cufflinks or tie pins in order to revive and preserve the ancient Assyrian motifs. His two favorite art objects were the human-headed winged bull and the Shamash disc (known as the Assyrian Star).

According to him the winged bull is the symbol of greatness, strength and stamina. Despite its colossal size, it is the finest example of artistic mastery in grace and refinement of lines. The human-headed winged bulls or winged lions are known as "Gateway figures" because they were placed at the entrance of palaces as guardian spirits on either side of the entrance sometimes face-to-face, sometimes side by side. The human-headed winged bull symbolizes several virtues:

- The body represents the strength and stamina of a bull.



- The human head is the symbol of higher intellect and wisdom.
- The wings represent speed.

Any person or nation with these three attributes: strength, wisdom, and speed is capable of maintaining its independence.

As to the symbol of the Assyrian Star, he believed that the symbol does not represent a star, but the god Shamash, the sun disc. The sun disc comes in two forms in the ancient Assyrian designs. The first has four points or horns surrounded by four sets of rays. Each set might be composed of one, two or three rays. The other type has eight horns or points with seven or eleven sets of rays.

There is one unique version dating back to third millennium B.C. It is made of ceramic and glass and was used as a necklace. The design is in high relief. It has a single wide ray that starts at the center and radiates out to the four corners of the object. In between the rays there are eight bullets that may represent planets in the sky. Sean represents the moon and is the god of irrigation, and agriculture. Sean is also known as the night sun. At the same time Ish-tar is also referred to as the Sun god in the Assyrian tablets. The next bullet represents *Meeroodakh*, or Mars. Due to its red color, this planet was well known. The third is Bell or Saturn. The fourth is Nebu, or Mercury. The fifth is Yav or Jupiter. The sixth is Shamash or Sun and the two others are probably representations of Venus, which appears once every twenty-four hours; once in the morning, and once in the evening.

With respect to colors, a careful examination indicates that stone engravings representing the Sun god are left natural; but those etched on ceramic contain gold pigments to represent a fiery sun that endows the earth with life.

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The Rape of History The War on Civilization

by GARY LEUPP

"This is what the Americans wanted. They wanted Iraq to lose its history."

Donny George, Director for Research, Iraqi Ministry of Antiquities (quoted by Associated Press, April 16)

It doesn't speak well of me, but I confess I did not cry looking at the photos of the kids with amputated limbs, the little boy with half his head blown off, the cities in flames. I grew up during the Vietnam War, and I'm used to seeing such atrocities in the print media. These results of U.S. imperialism make me angry, of course, and more determined than ever to resist, but they don't evoke tears anymore. I'm too old, hardened and tired for that.

But the Museum. The Library. You kill these things and you kill what I do, what I'm all about. I'm an historian. I sit in archives in Japan in normal times and handle seventeenth century manuscripts, deciphering elegant official-style handwriting in cursive Chinese characters on durable mulberry paper. Maybe there is value in that sort of investigation. Or maybe it should all go up in flames, the texts and me and everything that makes sense to me.

My tears of rage are for the smashed cuneiform tablets, the Sumerian pottery, the priceless Qurans, and for the Iraqi people whose extraordinary cultural heritage has been viciously assaulted in these last few days. How many Americans tuning into CNN and Fox realize the magnitude of this outrage?

Rumsfeld smirks in response to reporters' inquiries, opining that "riots" happen in all societies. But there is a difference between soccer hooliganism, righteous anti-racist uprisings, and cultural rape and murder. The last few days have seen crimes exceeding the Taliban pulverization of the Buddhas of Bamiyan. The better analogy would be the destruction (by a Christian mob) of the Library in Alexandria in 415, or again by Arab invaders in 686. Civilization itself is under attack, and the assailants, whom the Iraqis properly compare to the Mongol invaders of the thirteenth century, wave the red-white-and-blue (until enraged crowds force them to temporarily pocket that bloody, globally hated emblem).

I don't know much about the above-quoted Donny George. I imagine he's a decent professional, expressing an informed opinion when he says, "This is what the Americans wanted." The word on the street is that U.S. commanders, irked by the lack of the expected exuberant



manifestations of appreciation from the "liberated" population, a shell-shocked population inclined to stony silence, and unwilling to go to the trouble of orchestrating more media events like the toppling of the 20 foot statue of Saddam in Baghdad's main square (in which, Paula Zahn told us, U.S. forces "helped" Iraqis achieve that project, even though the square was emptied of Iraqis at the time), encouraged those so inclined to get out in the streets and act happy. And what makes thugs happier than looting and burning? Saddam had emptied the prisons some time back, and there were lots of thugs available to exult and smile and help Iraq lose its history.

Thugs don't care about history. Knowing that the worst among them are in charge of this country, and smirking and grinning steering their troops down the road to Damascus (where there are more museums and libraries, sometimes with children innocently studying in them, like children should), I truly grieve.

Gary Leupp is an associate professor, Department of History, Tufts University and coordinator, Asian Studies Program.

He can be reached at: gleupp@tufts.edu

<http://www.counterpunch.org/leupp04192003.html>

Assyrian Foundation of America

41st Anniversary Dinner & Dance Party



Flora Kingsbury and her committee would like to thank all the members and guests who attended the celebration on Saturday November 5, 2005. It was an evening full of good friends, good music, good food, great conversation and entertainment. In addition, the raffle was a success and raised a significant amount for our causes. It has been Flora's great pleasure to serve the club as Social Director these past few years (too many to count) and she would like to once again express her sincere gratitude to all members who have made every meeting and party a job to attend.



Found on each table at the party was a centerpiece that represented the various Kings and Queens of the Assyrian Empire. These centerpieces became a focal point of the evening and encouraged discussion of our intriguing past.

There was also a timeline that listed all the major Kings and Queens beginning with Sargon I in 2334 BC and ending with Ashur-Uballit II in 612 BC.



Queen Shamiram 811-806: Shamshi-Adad's son, Adad-nirari III, was very young when his father died, and for four years the government of Assyria was in the hand of his mother, Sammu-ramat -the legendary Shamiram in Assyrian or Samiramis in Greek. This Assyrian queen ruled as regent for her young son; she clearly held some power, making dedication in her name, which was placed before that of her son.



Sargon II 721-705: When he came to rule Assyria, he made considerable additions to the empire, but he spent as much time stamping out revolutions, crushing the armies of their instigators and renewing former territories, including Babylon, as he did in making new conquests.

(Continued from page 7)

and lovers. One hundred fifty souls, each one of them with individual names, who were expected at dinner tables that evening. That night and every night, one hundred fifty chairs would remain unoccupied, each leaving an empty space in the hearts of a nation on the brink of total extinction. One hundred fifty candles flickered in the distance when angels swept the earth for their souls."



are caught up in the cross fires of extraordinary events. And yet we don't fight violence with violence. We don't retaliate. Because we just want to live. When our churches are bombed, we don't think of retribution. We walk away as Christians should.

Just this week, 7,000 Assyrians left Baghdad for Northern Iraq. The women and children have taken refuge in other Assyrian homes, while the men sleep in the cemeteries at night. I don't mean figuratively. I mean literally. They sleep in the cemeteries because they have no other shelter. These suffering Assyrians in Iraq depend on our courage in the western world to help them.

A few months ago, I met with Mar Gewargis Sliwa, the Assyrian Archbishop of Iraq from the Assyrian Catholic Church of the East. His account of the lives of Assyrian children in Iraq was appalling and heart-

breaking. He said to me, "We can't help our children anymore. They play in fields of blood. We are a poor nation. We need help. Help us."

That was an excerpt from my book, The Crimson Field. I could have very well been writing about the plight of today's Assyrians in Iraq. History is repeating itself and no one is taking notice; No one except my people.

“From 2004 to June 2006, 27 churches were attacked or bombed for the sole reason that they were houses of worship of Assyrian Christians.”

We Assyrians are a nation without boundaries. For thousands of years we have survived by sheer will power. Nearly a century ago, in the shadows of WWI, my grandparents struggled to survive to save future generations of Assyrians from extinction. Now that burden is mine to carry. Now my generation faces that same struggle to save my nation from total extinction in Iraq. We care about the preservation of the bald Eagle and strive to save it from extinction. We pass laws forbidding the hunting of a bald Eagle. Yet we allow the oldest nation in the world to become extinct. This is unforgivable.

Just days ago I spoke with His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, the Patriarch of the Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, who told me that the priests in Iraq can no longer wear their clerical robes in public. They have to dress as civilians otherwise they are targeted and attacked by Islamists.

Assyrians, like myself, living in Diaspora in our adopted countries, are doing what we can to bring awareness to the plight of our people. We're not soldiers. We can't take up arms and fight in the streets of Baghdad. But we write books and articles, hold lectures, and make documentary films. We hold vigils and debates. We march. We go on hunger strikes and peaceful demonstrations. We hold rallies. We speak.

Today's Iraq was once part of Assyria. Assyria was the first nation to accept Christianity. The Assyrian Church was founded in 33 A.D. Today, my Assyrian nation's future is in serious trouble. Iraq's Assyrian population of 1.4 million before the Iraq war has now dwindled down to nearly 800,000 with no one protecting their interests.

When you gain knowledge of atrocities occurring, you are in essence baring witness to those facts and as such, you inherit the absolute responsibility to testify to and alleviate those human miseries.

Though Assyrians are the indigenous people of Iraq, they are now either being victimized and killed, or being driven out of their homeland. Their practice of the Christian religion is not being tolerated or allowed by the terrorists and Islamist Kurds. Acts of violence and aggression towards the Assyrian Christians of Iraq are frequent occurrences. For example, Assyrian churches are prime targets of anti-Assyrian/anti-Christian campaigns, killing and injuring many

We Assyrians are not extraordinary people. But we

Assyrians. From 2004 to June 2006, 27 churches were attacked or bombed for the sole reason that they were houses of worship of Assyrian Christians. On one occasion, 6 churches were simultaneously bombed in Baghdad and Kirkuk, and on another occasion an additional 6 churches were simultaneously bombed in Baghdad and Mosul. Simultaneous church bombings is a recurring pattern.

Despite the push for Iraq to become a democratic country, the unthinkable brutality of Saddam Hussein has now shifted and is being unleashed onto the Assyrians by Islamic fundamentalists and the Kurdish power that is rapidly rising in Iraq since the new so-called "democratic" Iraq emerged. I say "so-called" because it is not democracy when election fraud and intimidation runs rampant.

For the first time in Iraq's history, Assyrians were able to take part in the January 2005 elections. But thousands of Assyrians of the Nineveh Plain did not get a chance to vote. In the Assyrian towns and villages, ballot boxes did not arrive and Kurdish officials in charge of the voting process never showed up. There are numerous accounts of ballot box thefts. Where Assyrians could vote, the armed Kurdish militia and secret police made their presence known near the polling stations, intimidating the already frightened women and elderly Assyrians. And in Assyrian provinces, Kurdish votes were generated in abundance in place of Assyrian votes. Today in war-torn Iraq, being denied their most basic human rights, these ancient and indigenous people continue to be the target of systematic oppression, murder, intimidation, kidnapping, and violence. Assyrians in Northern Iraq are marginalized by Kurds who have gained momentum and are exercising the same brand of violence they once complained of during Saddam's dictatorship.

Since the start of the Iraq war, various Eastern media

outlets have steadily reported some, but not all of the violent crimes perpetrated against Assyrians. I have a mere sampling of these crimes attached to my Statement, which you have before you. However, most of these crimes go undocumented and unreported in the Western media. The fact that such cases are falling through the cracks does not in any way diminish their validity and legitimacy. Reported or not, when basic human rights are violated, crimes against humanity have been committed. Other examples of Assyrians being marginalized can be found in the newly drafted Iraqi Constitution's Preamble. The Arabs, Kurds, and Turkomans are specifically mentioned, whereas Assyrians are omitted. Additionally, the Preamble cites atrocities against the Kurds but completely ignores those against the Assyrians during Saddam's regime as well as the 1933 Assyrian Massacre in Semele, Iraq.

“Under our watch, the largest Assyrian exodus is underway”



Iraq's "liberation" has become the "oppression" of Assyrians. The war in Iraq is silently taking its toll on the Assyrians particularly in the Northern regions of Kirkuk, Mosul and Baghdad where the Assyrian population is concentrated. In the Nineveh Plains and its surrounding regions, under the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), and through a dictatorship, Assyrian lands are being illegally confiscated.

And yet the Assyrians don't strike back. We remain peaceful and tolerant under intolerable conditions.

There is no aid or funding going to the Assyrian regions under our American watch. Basic medical need is non-existent for these Christians. A woman cannot have a c-section in her neighborhood. She has to drive miles away and risk her life and the life of her unborn child to receive medical care.

We, Assyrians, are not asking for anything beyond the aid that is already going to Iraq for redevelop-

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ment. But we are asking that Assyrians proportionally receive aid sent to the Assyrian regions.



In Northern Iraq, millions of dollars in funding by the United States are assigned to be overlooked by Kurdish political parties who are primarily using these monies for their own advantage instead of a fair and equitable distribution of much needed funds to the Assyrian leadership to be used to aid Assyrian communities that are in dire need.

Today Assyrians are one of the most vulnerable minorities in the world. Under our watch, the largest Assyrian exodus is underway. It is estimated that if things continue to proceed as they now are, within 10 years, the Assyrian population of Iraq will be eradicated because of the ethnic cleansing, the forced exodus, and migration.

The indigenous people of the United States, the American Indians, have their human rights secured in their homeland in America. The indigenous people of Iraq, the Assyrian Christians, are being driven out of their homeland.

The displacement of Assyrians has become a seriously overlooked issue. During the Gulf War thousands fled to Jordan. In 2003, during the early stages of the Iraq War, gripped by fear, 40,000 to 50,000 Assyrians fled to Syria. Since then, thousands have been leaving Iraq because of the threats they have received. Homeless and living on the streets of Syria and Jordan, Assyrians helplessly await assistance.

According to Statistics from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in October 2005 about 700,000 Iraqis fled to Syria. Between October 2003 and March 2005, 36% of these refugees were Christian Iraqi. That's 252,000 Assyrian Christian refugees. When the Iraq war started, Assyrians did not have a "safe region" to go to within Iraq so naturally they ran to neighboring countries like Syria and Jordan. But since Assyrians are not displaced in-

ternally in Iraq, they no longer qualify for the current "displacement" assistance program. These Assyrian refugees who once led productive lives in Iraq, have resorted to begging, slavery, prostitution, and selling organs just to survive and feed their families. This is happening under our watch in America. The flip side of this is that millions of displaced Kurds are returning with assistance to settle back into their own regions because they, unlike the Assyrians, had a "safe region" to run to within Iraq. We must balance this.

It is an undisputable fact that Mesopotamia is the cradle of civilization and that the Assyrian Christians are the indigenous people of Mesopotamia, present day Iraq. It is also undisputable that Assyrians are a part of the fabric of today's Iraq, enduring under the constraint of Shariia or Islamic law though an in-name-only democratic Iraq.

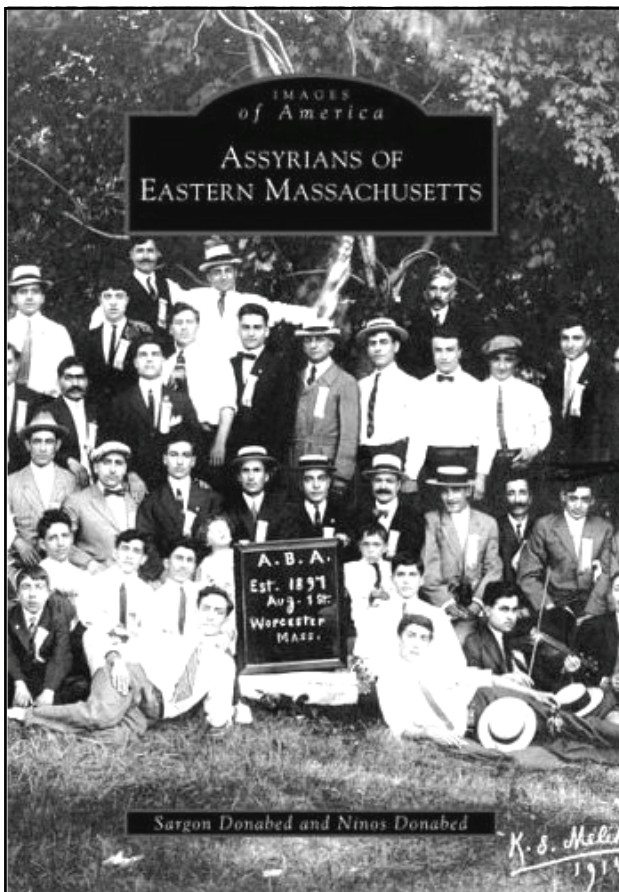
Article (2)b of the Iraqi Constitution states: "No law can be passed that contradicts the principles of democracy." Article (2)a of the Iraqi Constitution states: "No law can be passed that contradicts the undisputed rules of Islam." These two articles are in contradiction with each other.

“Today's Middle-East must become ethnically balanced. Just like there is a Jewish state, and an Arab state, there is a need for a Christian state.”

One of the rules of Islam, which can be found in the Koran at Chapter 3, line 19, states: "The only true faith in God's sight is Islam." In Chapter 3, line 86, the Koran states: "He that chooses a religion over Islam, it will not be accepted from him and in the world to come he will be one of the lost." Christians having chosen a religion over Islam are considered infidels and idolaters. In Chapter 2, lines 190 to 193, the Koran dictates to all Muslims to "Slay them wherever you find them. Drive them out of the places from which they drove you. Idolatry is worse than carnage." And so, Christian Churches are bombed and Christians are slain; Assyrian Christians.

Despite being the indigenous people of Mesopotamia, Assyrians are discriminated against and treated as unwanted guests in their own homeland as they face the threat of yet another modern-day ethnic cleansing by the Islamist Kurds that is reminiscent of the ethnic cleansing of nearly a century ago exercised by the

NEW BOOK



The widespread persecution of the Christian Assyrians by neighboring populations in the Ottoman Empire led to their immigration to the United States. Beginning at the end of the 19th century, with an influx during the Great War, Assyrians settled mostly in eastern Massachusetts, finding an abundance of work along its ports and among its large factory base. Concerned with the welfare of their community, these immigrants established a multitude of cultural, social, and political institutions to help promote awareness of Assyria. The establishment of St. Mary's Assyrian Apostolic Church, the first of its kind outside of the Middle East, prompted the solidarity of Assyrians in Massachusetts and became a model for later settlements of Assyrians in the United States. Through family portraits and documents from both religious and secular institutions, *Assyrians of Eastern Massachusetts* addresses the adjustment of this community in the United States.

Assyrians of Eastern Massachusetts covers the immigration of predominantly Christian Assyrians to Massachusetts from the Ottoman Empire beginning at the end of the 19th century. These immigrants established a multitude of cultural, social, and political institutions to help promote the awareness of Assyria. The book covers the establishment of St. Mary's Assyrian Apostolic Church, the first of its kind outside of the Middle East, which prompted the solidarity of Assyrians in Massachusetts and became a model for later settlements of Assyrians in the United States. Through family portraits and comment from both religious and secular institutions, *Assyrians of Eastern Massachusetts* addresses the adjustment off this community in the United States.

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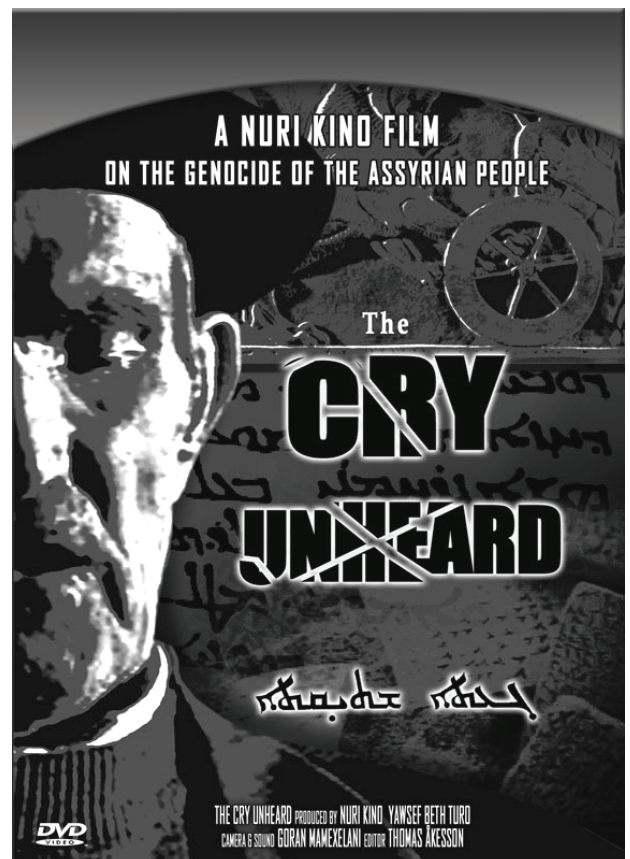
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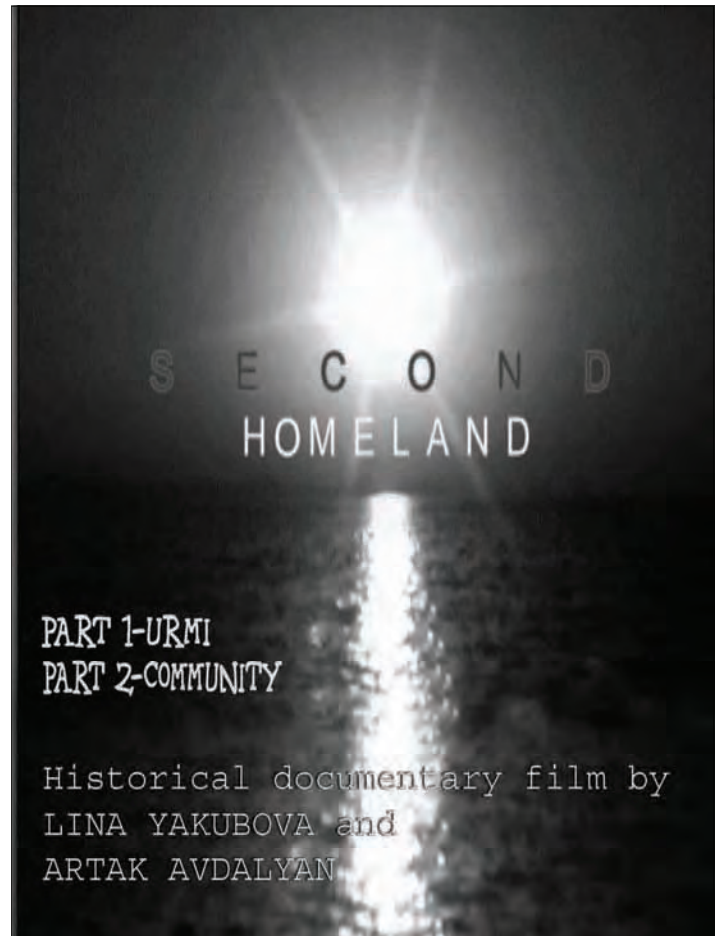
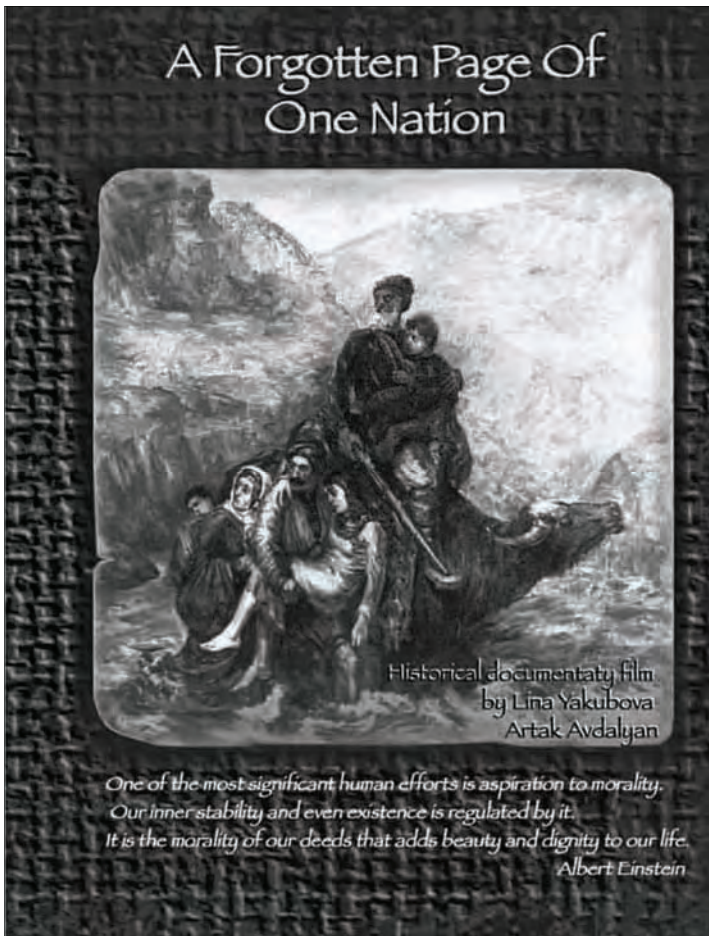
The Cry Unheard documents the suffering and attempted eradication of the Assyrian people (along with Armenians and Pontic Greeks) during WWI at the hands of the Ottoman authorities and the Kurds. This period, sometimes referred to as the Assyrian Genocide, is recounted through eyewitness accounts of this horrid campaign which ended the lives of approximately 2/3rds of the Assyrian people including men, women, and children. The background and analyses of this cataclysmic event are unraveled by scholars and specialists in this unique and gripping documentary film.

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In the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th centuries in the territory of the Ottoman Empire hundreds of thousands of Assyrians have been subjected to Genocide *A Forgotten Page of One Nation* is a historical documentary realized in 2005 in Armenia. It was dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the genocide .

This is one of the tragically pages of our long-suffering nation, which from time to time passes into oblivion or is remembered by a few people. This documentary was to show the history of a Christian nation, to bring a forgotten page to light and make it unforgettable.

Author and producer: Lina Yakubova
 Director: Artak Avdalian
 Photography: Karen Stepanian
 Music: Vahan Artsrouni

Second Homeland is a documentary film about the Assyrians living in Iran. It is quite a different story with its content and form for it's softer and lyrical. The film consists of 2 parts; the first part is called *Urmia* and the second one is *Community*. The first part tells the history of Assyrian villages in Urmia, their traditions, customs, churches, missionary activities. The second part shows today's Iranian Assyrians way of life, the activities of their communities and churches.

Author and producer: Lina Yakubova
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The Legendary Voice of Malfono Gabriel Afram

By: Ninos Maraha,
Sweden

Malfono Gabriel Afram has always been a myth whom I have heard innumerable stories about. He was a strong and dynamic leader of the Assyrian movement during the 70's in Sweden and played a central role in creating the Assyrian Association of Sodertalje, Assyrian National Federation in Sweden and *Hujada* Magazine. After that he stepped back from the political arena. However, his voice continued to echo among the Assyrian people through the radio program *Qolo* (*voice* in western Assyrian), which is broadcast nation-wide in Sweden and also world wide through the internet. Parallel with his profession as journalist at the Swedish Radio, he has been working on his biggest project ever the last 15 years. That is, the production of a Swedish-Assyrian dictionary with the aim to secure the survival of the Assyrian language.

I am standing outside the reception of the Swedish Radio, which is the public service radio broadcaster in Sweden and employs 2500 people. One of them is the Assyrian journalist Gabriel Afram, born in the village of Enhil in Turabdin and brought up at the monastery of Zafaran, where he studied the Assyrian language until the age of 14.

Malfono (*Malpana* or *Rabi* in eastern Assyrian) Gabriel moved to Sweden in 1967 when he was 17 years old. As one of the first Assyrians in Sweden he arrived in a time when concepts like *multiethnicity* and *integration policy* were not yet in use in the Swedish vocabulary. That would be changed in 1975, when large numbers of Assyrian refugees arrived in Sweden. At that time malfono Gabriel was active in the Assyrian Association in Sodertalje and in the newly established Syriac-orthodox church. At the same time he was involved in the issues concerning the Assyrian refugees. During this period he was also recruited into the ADO (Assyrian Democratic Organization) by Arsan Arsan and Ilyas Sahin, and together they organized the first ADO section in Sweden. Malfono Gabriel was comfortable as a political leader but less comfortable with the political game that followed:

I do not fit in the political game, because there are many intrigues that do not fit my nature. I want to be clear, open and honest with the people I work with, and I want them to know where I stand. I believe that people are more satisfied with those kinds of people, who do not hide behind big words. The view that people have of me is based on my honest standpoint towards them.

Malfono Gabriel has stayed out of Assyrian politics for the latest twenty years. Instead he has put his energy in the

radio program *Qolo* at the Swedish Radio. With a beautiful voice and classic Western Assyrian dialect he reaches Assyrian radio listeners not only in Sweden but also all over the world through internet consignments. It almost sounds divine when he reads the news; as if a part of him was still in the monastery of Zafaran.

This was the first time that I actually faced malfono Gabriel and had a conversation with him, and it struck me how young he was. It was almost disappointing to see, bearing in mind that he was one of the founders of the Assyrian movement in Sweden; one of the 'old-timers' However, many times people forget that he was less than 30 years old when he led the Assyrian movement in Sweden.

It has happened before that people who have only heard about me are surprised when they see me. Like you, they expect someone more grey and grizzled, says Gabriel Afram with a soft voice.



Wearing blue jeans and a comfortable sweater, malfono Gabriel radiates humility and a joy for life. Maybe you do that when you've just finished a Swedish-Assyrian dictionary, as thick as the Bible, with the aim to secure the survival of the Assyrian language:

We live in a time when there are not enough textbooks and teaching aids for the Assyrian language. Today's youth are well integrated in the Swedish society and speak the Swedish language well, and, there-

fore, they now have big possibilities to learn the Assyrian language with the help of this dictionary.

The introduction of the dictionary has been successful and malfono Gabriel has given interviews in both the national Swedish television and radio. The Swedish school minister, the Assyrian Ibrahim Baylan, opened the release ceremony of the dictionary in the Assyrian Association of Sodertalje. I was one of 600 Assyrians who came to honor malfono Gabriel Afram and witness this historical moment.

It was a wonderful feeling. I did not expect so many people to come and, in particular, not so many young Assyrians. It was very gratifying to see the youth embrace their dictionaries while they waited for me to sign them.

For every Swedish word in the dictionary there are a dozen Assyrian synonyms, which is a result of malfono Gabriel's perfectionism or as he modestly express it "it is not every day that I produce a Swedish-Assyrian dictionary":

I feel persecuted by this language. Where ever I am and what ever I do, I constantly invent new words and phrases. The day after the dictionary was printed I invented another synonym for the word "throw-in", sunworo.

Have you also thought about producing an Assyrian-Swedish dictionary?

I feel great love for the Assyrian language but everything depends on how much time I can put into this project. For me the immediate need has been the youth and therefore I have focused on a Swedish-Assyrian dictionary in the first place.

Now that you have done the hard work it seems like a logical next step to produce an English-Assyrian dictionary?

You are right and I believe that it will happen. At the same time I also believe that the driving force behind such a project must be a love for the Assyrian language almost to the point of insanity, says Gabriel Afram with a twinkle in his eye.

Have you ever considered using another term for your dictionary than *Assyrian*?

I have never thought about using another term, although I am very conscious about the name conflict among our people. This term has come from my strong conviction. I know that our language is called Syriac

in universities and other institutions in the Western world. What I want to say is that if we can call our language Syriac then we can also call it Assyrian, because it is known in the world that the term Syriac is derived from Assyrian. If it is wrong to call the language Assyrian, then it is also wrong to call it Syriac,

Regarding the lack of knowledge in reading and writing in Assyrian among our people, do you not see the danger that they may buy the dictionary only for the prestige of having it?

When we printed Touma Audo's Assyrian dictionary in 1979 we sold many copies. It is possible that it reached people who had a greater love for the Assyrian language than me. However, I think that I made the biggest profit from it, in the sense that it became my guide. It has not left my hands since the day we printed it. I do not believe that we can force the language on those who do not want to learn. It is always up to the individual who is interested in learning the language to seek the dictionary.

Gabriel Afram takes a short break before he continues:

I have taken a big step and filled a great need, and often we see that success breeds success. My hope is that we will see a positive chain reaction that will lead to a further development of the Assyrian language.



During the interview malfono Gabriel calls attention to the Assyrian youth several times. Therefore I wondered how he felt when he received the distinction "The Assyrian of the year" from the Assyrian Youth Federation in Sweden:

(Continued on page 41)

Assyrian-Dutch Politician Visits

Assyrians in Northern Iraq

Two years after his first visit to Assyria, Ms Attiya Gamri returned to Iraq to inspect the situation of the Assyrians after the end of the Baathist reign of Saddam Hussein. Gamri was also interested to learn more about what the regional parliament of Kurdistan has done after the recent elections and to hear from the Assyrians about their human rights in the region where the KDP hold political power.

Ms. Gamri, a member of the provincial parliament of Holland, visited the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM) offices and a few NGOs in the Nineveh Province. She also visited the Assyrian schools in Bakhdede, Bartille and Ankawa.



Ms Gamri was surprised to find the books and classroom instructions in the Assyrian language, where the children read and write Assyrian in the western and eastern languages. A speaker of the western dialect, she spoke to the children in the eastern dialect.

Ms. Gamri visited the Monastery of Mor Matay (St. Matthew) and spoke with the Bishop of the Syriac Orthodox Church, Mor Musa Bahzan. The church is protected by the ADM guards. The bishop told Gamri that he and his parishioners have received many threats, messages like: "Leave this country or we will kill you".

Gamri told Bishop Bahzan that "after a decade a new generation of Assyrians will be able to speak both dialects of the Assyrian language, thanks to the efforts of the Assyrian schools established and maintained by the Assyrian Aid Society and the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM)."

Attiya Gamri met with Mr George Mansour, director of Ishtar TV and discussed the political role of Ishtar TV. She asked Mr. Mansour about Ishtar TV's lack of interest in the political situation of the Assyrians. According to Ms Gamri, the Kurdistan Democratic Party officers did not allow Assyrians on April 2 to

enter Arbil, without any reasons other than stating that they were "Christians".

Ms. Gamri explains that there is much discrimination against the Assyrians in north Iraq, yet nothing about this discrimination is shown on Ishtar TV.

Mr. George Mansour promised Ms Gamri that in the future they will work on these issues and told her that Ishtar TV has only been on air for 3 months and needs

more time. When visiting Ashur TV, Ms. Gamri inquired about the threats the staff had received after the publication of the Prophet Mohammed's cartoon in a Danish newspaper. The staff at Ashur TV told Gamri that they were receiving 4 to 8 threatening phone calls every week. In Al Qosh Ms. Gamri attended the Kha b'Nisan celebration (Assyrian New Year), where more than 15, 000 Assyrians attended this festival. The security was provided by the American soldiers, helicopters and tanks together with the ADM guards.

All schools were closed on this day, recognized as an official holiday in the Assyrian calendar. Most political parties from the region attended the festival, and showed their respect for this national holiday.

At the end of her trip, Ms. Gamri visited Mr. Fuad M. Hussein,



(Continued on page 42)

The Last Assyrians

Sonia Nettin Film Review:



Thursday, 5 January 2006

“The Last Assyrians” (Les Derniers Assyriens) is an amazing documentary about the history of the Aramaic-speaking Christians from ancient Mesopotamia until their present-day existence in the Middle East.

For six years Director Robert Alaux researched and wrote this historic documentary. It is the first film that tells the complete history of the Assyrian Chaldean Syriac people. History overlooks how they suffered from massacres, hunger and starvation during the 1915 genocide; and the international community has not protected these people in their homeland after decades of mass exodus. Despite their pain and suffering this indigenous Christian community, including the Diaspora seek justice, peace, prosperity, security, and solidarity in the Middle East.

Through archival footage, maps animations and interviews with religious leaders, academic scholars and famous singers, the director brings the history of this Christian population in the Middle East and in the Chaldo-Assyrian-Syriac Diaspora alive. Some of the people interviewed are: Patriarch of Babylon for the Chaldeans since 2003, Emmanuel III Delly; Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East Mar Dinkha IV; Mar Raphael I Bid Awid, Chaldean Catholic Patriarch (from 1989 until 2003); Dr. Sebastian Brock, Oxford University; Linda George, famous singer; Juliana Jendo, famous singer; and Dr. Joseph Yacoub, Lyon University.

In 53 minutes the film explains how various Mesopotamian ethnic groups came together through culture, language, land, and religion only to be taken over by other ethnic groups through the centuries.

More than 3,000 years ago during the time of Ur, the Sumerians had invented mathematics, writing and the wheel. The two reigning cities were Babylon on the Euphrates River and Nineveh on the Tigris River. At the time Aramaeans were like Arab Bedouins that roamed the land,

but they established their kingdoms eventually and cultivated the lands. They had cultural contact with Phoenicians (present-day Lebanon). Although the Akkadian language (Assyrian cuneiform characters) was in use, more people spoke and wrote Aramaic over time because the language consisted of only 22 letters.

In 612 B.C. the Chaldeans crushed the Assyrian Empire, seized Jerusalem and expelled the Jews to Babylon. The Aramaic language spread to Palestine. Christianity began in Palestine and spread through the oral and written traditions of the Aramaic language – the language Jesus spoke. In Persia the official language was Aramaic.



Even though the Nestorians split from the Roman Christian Church and began the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Syriac Church became independent also all of these people spoke the Aramaic language.

In 630 A.D. Muslim Arabs invaded the Middle East and the indigenous Christian community welcomed them. There were churches across Arabia so Christians and Muslims lived together in peace for decades. In Damascus, the Christians created Muslim monuments and shared their church. In 705 A.D. the church became the Umayyad Mosque. Over time the Arabic language and Islam became dominant so when people spoke Aramaic they identified themselves as Christians.

In the seventh century Nestorian monks spread Christianity to India, Mongolia and China to approximately 60 million people after three centuries. Ancient Aramaic scripts were found in these regions by Jesuit missionaries centuries later. In 1258 A.D. the Mongols invaded Baghdad and massacred the Muslims. Initially the Mongol invaders showed obedience to the Patriarch of Baghdad. But later the Mongols chose Islam and slaughtered Christians. The descendents of the Aramaic-speaking people survived only in mountainous areas.

For the most part the people were left undisturbed throughout the Ottoman Empire. They created more monasteries, safeguarded ancient Syriac scripts and lived simple, rustic lives close to nature. Eventually the Pope wanted to bring these people back into Rome’s fold. People who accepted his authority were called Chaldeans of the Chaldean Catholic Church. Even though Chaldeans,

(Continued on page 35)

Genocide 1915

Hypocrisy as a Cornerstone of the Kurdish Narrative

Abdulmesih BarAbraham,
Germany



I much appreciated Nuri Kino's guest editorial appearing in the May 6, 2006 issue of Zinda Magazine, and his perceptive comments about Kurdish selective amnesia. Nuri draws from personal encounters in Sweden (where he currently lives), and other exchanges in the course of his travels to Hasno Kifo (Hasankeyf, in Tur Abdin) the home of his ancestors.

One could view these fleeting portrayals as interesting anecdotes to be relegated to the filing drawer. But to do so would be a mistake. Mr. Kino's observations, illustrated by the comments of Kurdish figures (both in Sweden and in eastern Turkey), are a sad reminder of the centuries-long intransigent mindset of many Kurds towards their neighbors, such as the Assyrians (also known as Syrians or Chaldeans).

Assyrians in Hasno Kifo were indeed among the first wave to be annihilated in the Western region of Tur Abdin during the 1915 Genocide. Before the sword fell on them, they witnessed the horror of the killings of the Christians in Diyarbekir and other cities of the region. Gallo Shabo, whose report is soon to be published among other eyewitness reports by Jan Beth Sawoce of Nsibin Publishing, was a prominent Assyrian figure and fighter during 1915 in Tur Abdin. He relays us the following first-hand account obtained from eyewitnesses:

"While we were sitting on the banks of the river Tigris, we witnessed how groups of respectable figures were transported by small boats. One of the guards accompanying the groups was seen taking the gold, the money and even the clothes of the doomed men before he and the others shot them dead. The guard was called 'Amar [Omar] son to 'Ali Rammo [Kurdish tribe leader] and Perikhane [his mother]. This ignoble guard did not have any scruples whatsoever robbing and killing the Christians."

"The corpses were disposed of in the river Tigris. The Christians in Hasno Kefo [Hasankeyf] saw the corpses floating on the surface of the river and began to fear for their safety. In spite of all these atrocities the Christians could not believe that genocide would occur on that large scale. There was a kind of tacit belief that these atrocities were directed to some categories of Christians. But the renewed killings indicated that the Turks were aiming at getting rid of all the Christians. The Kurds were a willing ally to the Turks in their despicable pursuits."

Other reports indicate that after the Kurds killed the Christians of Hasno Kifo in 1915 – apparently including

among them the relatives of Nuri Kino - the Mukhtar of the village and his men lusted for still more Christian blood. Led by the Mukhtar, they answered further Jihad calls and moved on to participate in the siege of 'Iwardo near Midyat a few months later. From an elevated position the Mukhtar was able to shoot at and kill more Christians, until a commando of three Assyrian men went after him and killed him. One of the three men was Musa Qashro (Abraham) – the Grandfather of my mother.

Nuri Kino's description of Baksi Kurdo seems to fit the stereotype of many Kurdish intellectuals. In Sweden, his current home, Mr. Kurdo seems to present himself as someone highly committed to Western-style democracy, and one who treasures human rights. But on closer scrutiny, his comments offer a different picture. One has to conclude that Mr. Kurdo is either an uneducated person or, more likely, someone hopelessly afflicted with the virus of extreme nationalism. Nuri Kino's essay is well-presented, but the facts he recounts are by no means unique. I believe that many Assyrians in Europe and elsewhere can attest to similar encounters such as those Mr. Kino has shared with us. In over three decades of activism representing and speaking for Assyrian organizations in Central Europe, personally I had the sad opportunity of many such encounters.

In October 2005 the Institute of Oriental Studies of the University of Potznan/Poland organized an international academic conference on "Non-Moslem Minorities of Iraq: History, Culture, Problems of Survival". Some of the scholarly presentations during this two-day conference concerned the ChaldoAssyrians. In one presentation, a PhD student from the University referred to the role of the Kurds in the Semile Massacre of August 1933. Another speaker addressed current human right violations by Kurds in eastern Turkey and Iraq. I spoke myself on the current situation of ChaldoAssyrians ("ChaldoAssyrians in Post-Saddam Iraq – Between Hope and Fear"), making it a point to discuss the fraudulent actions of Kurds in the recent elections in Iraq, while pointing to the problem of the occupied Assyrian villages in North Iraq.

The reaction of some of the Kurdish attendees at the conference was regrettable, though not surprising. The bill of particulars aimed at Kurdish mistreatment of minorities in their midst certainly raise doubt on the general image of the Kurds as innocent angels who have done no harm to others, and who invoke a virtual monopoly on the role of the most victimized people in the Middle East. While

showing no sign of apology or remorse, these Kurdish attendees started attacking the speakers and the organizers of the conference, questioning sources of the presenters in an aggressive partisan style rather than in a scholarly dispute.

Extreme nationalism undermines the very pluralism and the diversity that ought to be prized at all strata of Middle Eastern society – whether cities, communities, or states. The ills of extreme nationalism exist today in various corners of the globe, but they certainly exist in extreme form in Turkey and Iraq. In both of these countries, the Kurds are not only victims, but they are also a serious part of the problem. According to Rolf Ekeus, the former High Commissioner of OSCE, “extreme nationalism arises when the ‘fetish’ of nation overtakes all other considerations...such nationalistic narcissism too often spawns chauvinistic policies that provoke fear and hatred in others”.

It is apparent that Kurdish nationalism became more virulent in the face of extreme Turkish chauvinism which, until recent times, denied the very existence of non-Turkish people in Anatolia (for example, referring to Kurds as “mountain Turks”). In more ways than one, we see Kurdish nationalism adapting characteristics similar to those of the monster it was combating (for example, referring to them as Christians only or even ‘Kurdish Christians’). It can even be argued that unlike the Turks, Kurdish society appears more receptive to intolerant Islamic concepts. The emergence of Kurdish nationalism has negatively impacted the Assyrians in a similar way as Kurds felt under Turks and Arabs. In other words, the existence of Assyrians is threatened, their basic rights are trivialized or denied, their land is grabbed or occupied, and their history is falsified.

Kurdish intellectuals consciously or unconsciously repeat misstatements for which they were criticizing Turkish, Iraqi, and Persian intellectuals since the 1970s. The latter were very internationalist, though ignorant of the minorities in their backyard. From an Assyrian perspective Kurdish intellectuals behave in the same way today. Manifestation of chauvinism among the Kurdish intelligentsia (particularly in Turkey) is very much linked to the problem of denial of the Kurds’ role in the Genocide of 1915, side by side with the Ottoman State. The Kurds lament Turkey’s failure to acknowledge the Genocide, while at the same time the Kurds themselves are consistent deniers of the Kurdish role in the same bloodshed. In other words, a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black.

The Kurds should stop denying their role in the perpetration of the 1915 genocide. Moreover, today’s Kurdish intellectuals reveal appalling insensitivity concerning the continued discrimination towards minorities such as Assyrians, repeated violations of minority rights in Kurdish populated areas of Turkey and Iraq. We can only hope that one day soon they will confront their conscience.

(Continued from page 17)

George Atanous, being an athlete, participated in the Olympic games held in Berlin, Germany. With envy he observed the different teams each carrying its own national flag with pride, except for the Assyrians. The establishment of AUA in 1968 presented an opportunity for him to participate in the bid to design a flag for the Assyrians of today. He presented his design to the Executive Board of AUA during its 6th Annual Convention in Yonkers, USA. His design was unanimously accepted. The reason for the enthusiastic approval of his design was that George Atanous had not created a new design, but had chosen the existing motifs and icons found in the ancient Assyrian symbols. He had extracted and reassembled those motifs in such a way that the design would be pleasing to the eye, and at the same time establish the Assyrian national continuity and reawaken a sense of pride in being an Assyrian.

The choice of the colors for the flag was also based on ancient Assyrian artistic tradition.

The center image which is the Shamash disc (sun) is golden to represent fire as the source of life.

Among the four wings, the middle or principal one is sky blue; symbol of happiness.

The three points that are in between the wings and branch out to four directions represent either rays of light or rivers. The artist’s choice went for the rivers, which he extends to four directions. The imagery mirrors the condition of the Assyrians of today, scattered in the four corners of the world, and the hope of finding their way back by the same route.



The four rivers are Tigres, Euphrates, Greater and Lesser Zab. Euphrates is colored blue to symbolize plenty. The middle one is white to represent peace; the third is red to represent blood or pride. Above the Shamash disc is the god Ashur in war gear with original colors in engravings found in the British Museum.

At the head of the flagpole is the Standard of Sargon II, which was originally in gold and was always held above the king’s head so that the generals could immediately locate the king in the battlefield.

Euphrates in Akkadian is *Prat*, which means plenty. This river was surrounded by agricultural fields that it irrigated and sustained the people.

George Bet Atanous also designed various coins, plaques and medals for AUA and other Assyrian organizations to be used as trophies or awards of appreciation for worthy Assyrians who have served their nation well. XXX



**RECTOR
ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY**

1 December 2005

Habib Eftam
B.P. 90045 Jdeide
Beirut-Lebanon

Dear Mr. Eftam,

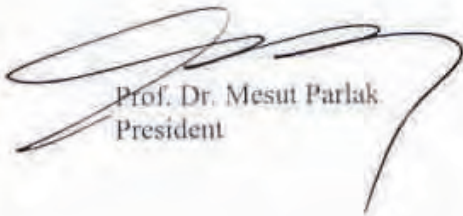
Istanbul University is organizing an international conference entitled "New Approaches to Turkish-Armenian Relations" on March 15-16-17, 2006.

The purpose of the Conference is to evaluate, with scientific objectivity, a historical event and its contemporary repercussions by examining its different aspects and various approaches to it. During the Conference, this subject will not only be analysed historically, but also with regard to its cultural, political, military and legal aspects.

Istanbul University, which is renowned for its scientific contributions in many fields and which has been the alma mater of innumerable scientists up to now, has a past of more than 550 years. As the President of the University, I will be honoured if you would participate in this Conference and present a paper on one of the topics mentioned in the enclosed.

I sincerely believe that your contribution will not only throw light on a historical event, but also play a very significant role in shaping a future approach to the subject which focuses on the objective truth and on humanitarian priorities.

Yours faithfully,



Prof. Dr. Mesut Parlak
President

Istanbul University, President's Office, Beyazit, Istanbul-Turkey
Tel: +90.212.440 00 40, Fax: +90.212.440 00 10, E-mail: rektor@istanbul.edu.tr

On the Path to Reconciliation

Presentation by Habib Afram, President
of the Syriac League
Delivered on Friday 17 March 2006
at University of Istanbul

*To stand up
I need, like a tree, the deepness of
roots and the vastness of the sky.*

(Paul Claudel 1868-1955)

Mr. Chairman, distinguished participants, dear guests from Mesopotamian Cultural Association in Istanbul:

Let me start by presenting to the University of Istanbul a book on our living cultural heritage entitled *Turabdin*.

This is an Assyrian approach to events and issues.

Sometimes, yesterday is very far away. And sometimes history is present in the heart and in the veins, and you find yourself beholding ninety years, crystal clear, without the dust of time or the noise of events to obscure it.

Is it because it has been written in blood, and blood is the weapon of the innocent?

Here I am in Turkey, as if returning to the womb that has given birth to me and to the land that has displaced me. Above my head, in my office in Beirut, is a picture of my family tree that dates back to 1650 in the village of Aynwardo in Turabdin, in the southeast Turkey of today. And, at home are rocks from my village, which I feel are my yesterdays, and soil from the cemetery of the sacred Zafaron Monastery, I feel are my always.

And my mind, as the third generation in the line of my grandfather, Habib the first, my Armenian grandmother, Takohe, my mind is crowded by his tales from what we call the "leftovers of the sword" and from adventures of how he, reached Lebanon with companions.

And my conscience, as the son of suffering and bitter experiences, my conscience is haunted by the free Christian presence in the East now threatened with disappearance. Having witnessed the dispersion of our people in all corners of the globe as they acquired new identities and various affiliations, I have come to realize that we have turned into the people of Diaspora.

And here I am in the University of Istanbul, proud to be its guest at this attempt to seek the truth and unveil what has happened, although late.

History is full of injustice, wars, even genocide. This is man's odd destiny, to elevate humanity through the discovery of space and the atom, and to devalue him into a

fierce wolf preying on his brother in the name of religion, ethnicity, self-interest, ideology, or simply for authority or power. But the harshest is best described in the words of the Turkish poet Bachar Kamal who said: "Separating a person from his land is like ripping someone's heart out of his chest." So here is what I have to say.



First:

What we call "Seyfo" is genuine history in time and place. And we have been both its witnesses and its victims, in our bodies, relatives' stories, books, poetry, art, songs, tears, our flesh and our blood, in names, pictures, families, and remnants there that still hold the scent of our ancestors. No one can deny it or erase it. No one can wash their hands innocent of it, or neglect it or bury it. But especially, we cannot accept the claims that it did not take place or that it is some sort of myth. Memory cannot be obliterated our memory is neither fictitious nor invented, even if some academics, historians and thinkers have ignored it. But most of all, this memory is not for revenge, it is a memory for tomorrow.

Second:

What happened has affected people, ethnicities, and a variety of religious groups from Armenians, Syriacs and Chaldeans to Assyrians and Greeks of Asia Minor. True that the largest number of victims were Armenians who have come to call the event the "Armenian Genocide." All struggle in their own way to revive it. The majority of inflicted people were Christians who have fallen victims to killing, massacre, uprooting, hunger, disease displacement and relocation.

Third:

The subject does not revolve around figures and amounts, and it is surely not a proposition of numbers. And it is better not wish that Turkey will continue its path of democracy and freedom, and become a part of Europe in order to bridge East and West to mention that there weren't in Turkey fifty thousand Syriacs, Chaldeans, Assyrians, despite The memoir of Patriarch Afram Barsoum I, which is well-kept in the archives of the British Foreign Ministry, and which assures that 90,313 of our people were killed in 336 villages, and that the number of fami-

(Continued from page 33)

lies that have been exterminated was 13,360, while 160 churches, and monasteries were destroyed, and 154 priests were murdered. These people were killed although they were unarmed and unresisting. Only three villages mounted armed resistance, Azakh, Aynwardo, and Bisirniya.

Fourth:

We are not at all against Turkey, its government, people, or regime. We have no animosity towards it. Turkey is at the heart of our history. There are great names in our churches, books, and monasteries from Turkey's constituency. Not to mention that a number of our people still live here in dignity and with fidelity to the state. We . But as we preserve our contact with Turkey, we call for its reconciliation with its history, without any intention of marring its image or tarnishing its reputation.

Fifth:

We urge Turkey to admit what has happened sincerely, clearly and transparently, so that the remains of our ancestors may rest in peace at last. We do not invest our ancestor's blood except in the fields of honor and freedom. We do not open wounds and drag out sorrows, we do not seek revenge, nor do we hold any rancor. We just remember, not for the purpose maybe of retrieving land or financial restitution, but for the truth. And we welcome this conference that seeks to unveil the bare truth.

Sixth:

History is written by those who are grand. Turkey will be more powerful and immune if it acts with nobility. Who could believe that *previously* unaccepted and impossible discussion has become a reality? So why don't we fully open the doors of dialogue and take courageous positions. The late Pontiff, Pope John Paul II, asked forgiveness for the crusades and the tragedies they caused. He also asked the Jews for pardon for any acts of neglect that may have led to the holocaust, and there is Germany admitting that the holocaust took place *with regret* but without *hesitation*. South Africa has formed committees for national truth and reconciliation, and Morocco will make amends to all those who have been subjected to torture and unjust detainment.

Seventh:

We scream out of our pain, in a loud voice, but we are definitely against murder, war, terrorism, and violence. We do not accept making use of painful events to sow rancor and hatred, but to strengthen our societies and *our common Eastern civilization*. And what we have rejected for our ancestors we reject for every other people, and we condemn it, no matter where it may happen in the world.

Eighth:

Co-existence is at the heart of our message and mind. We have lived here since the dawn of humanity, since *before* the beginning of Christianity, then with Muslims, sharing worries, concerns and days. True, that this history bears fearful and harsh memories, but it also shines with victories, bliss, and benevolence. We *stand* against the clash of civilizations, and not only do we call for dialogue, but for co-existence. We refuse attacks on any religion, and we respect and appreciate Islam, all while believing that in every Eastern Christian there is a spirit of Islam just as in every Eastern Muslim there is something of Christianity.



Ninth:

The world cannot shut its eyes and pretend that it does not know, hear or see. Wars cannot be a television series, and victims cannot turn into numbers without a flinch. Man cannot be neglectful towards any victim at any time in any continent for any reason. Silence is an accomplice *to evil*, and global conscience must remain alert to the rights of every human being. Right does not necessarily belong to force, so until when will the world shut its ears to the calls of innocence and follow its self-interests?

Tenth:

Our people refused to die, and they prove everyday that they are worthy of life and they look at history with a challenging eye. True that Diaspora is about to uproot this people from the land of the East, because we have become the guardians of stone in Turabdin. But a genuine resurgence in our parties, organizations, institutions, and media, as well as a return to the roots, language, and affiliation, coupled with the benefits of technology and communication would make us one people, vital with the sense of identity, adamant on our right to carry the message of distinction in a world that *is nearly erasing* every culture. We will remain a beautiful color in a world entitled variety.

Eleventh:

We ask Turkey to initiate a fresh page of reconciliation with itself and its history. Many of our people would like to return to their villages, despite everything, and they must be given the guarantees and even the benefits of security and legal rights concerning their property, their language and their churches. I was in Diyarbakir last summer attending a ceremony for the restoration of a historic church, the Mariam Ana. This is a symbolic step, but it is

not enough if the come back means the return to a regime of second class citizens. It is essential that our organizations and parties be allowed transparent action.

What if Turkey reinforced such historical religious sites such as the Mar Gabriel monastery in Mediyat, or literary and cultural sites such as the homes of Naoum Fayek in Diyarbakir, or of Sanharib Bali, both of whom represent foremost figures in our political thought.

Twelfth:

We want Turkey to play a dynamic role in demonstrating the flourishing ethnic and cultural groups within it. We want Turkey, as the heiress of the Ottoman empire, to become a laboratory for dialogue and a free, respectful life to all its citizens without the denial and rejection of identities, the prohibition on speaking about them and preserving them. We want this out of intrinsic conviction, and not because of Western or European pressures.

Professor Ekmaledin Ehsanoglou, the *respected Turkish* secretary general of the Organization of Islamic States which comprises 57 organizations, said in Mekka in December of 2005: (Quote) "We have to struggle to make the Islamic World as a whole and the Middle East in particular a land of security, peace and prosperity. We live in a region where the three religions of Abraham started and developed calling for peace and human equilibrium. We have to continue our duty in supporting justice in the world." (End of Quote)

Thirteen:

I hope that this historic meeting will become an entrance to a political dialogue whose banner I am willing to bear, with all our parties, institutions, figures, leaders, churches and the state of Turkey. It is a journey which must begin.

I come from Lebanon, where we, as Syriacs, have been molded by destiny and choice to believe that it is an oasis and exemplar despite all our mistakes as Lebanese. Lebanon is the role and the message, not just the fort and the shelter. We knew our hell too. We fought and we were a battlefield, we went through our nightmares and massacres. As the world watched, we slaughtered each other and reconciled, we know, maybe more than others, that there can be no solutions except through dialogue, understanding, agreement, reconciliation and strength over the wounds. The love of truth has taught me to see the beauty of compromise.

We are here crying for the massacre not to happen again, to reconcile, all of us, as a single humanity that makes an effort towards perfection, and strives for a new East and a new dawn.

Thank you all.

(Continued from page 29)

Nestorians and Syriacs differed on religious details they spoke Aramaic and they shared their Christianity and ethnic identity.

During the 19th century ethnic groups began to identify strongly with the concept of nationalism, so Arabs, Chaldo-Assyrians, Kurds, Turks and Persians became more separated communities. During WW I the Turks massacred over one million Armenians, and hundreds of thousands of Chaldo-Assyrians and Syriacs. This tragic moment in history is more hurtful to these communities because past and current governments dispute what happened and do not want to acknowledge that an ethnic and a religious genocide took place. This pain and suffering carries from generation to generation in the collective memory of the people.

When Saddam came to power he required submission from all Chaldo-Assyrians. He considered them Christian Arabs. In 1979 the Assyrian Democratic Movement was created. In 1991 the Assyrian Aid Society raised money for the reconstruction of Christian villages destroyed by Saddam who was fighting the Kurds, and to build Syriac-speaking schools. With the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003 Islamic extremists threatened the Christians in Iraq who have been seeking refuge in neighboring Arab countries and abroad by the thousands. With regards to the current population, estimates range from 300,000 to 1,000,000.

"They threaten our women and our children in the streets," one religious clergyman said.

Now they worry about the stability of the country and their future in it.

"We will stay 'till the end and the Lord will help us, circumstances or war or other difficulties will not dissuade us," Emmanuel Delly said.

When I asked the director why he did not explore the reality on the ground with regards to the violence and the kidnappings he said: "Even if they suffer a lot, something very important happened in the North of Iraq: for the first time they did not say 'we are poor victims and we try to resist,' but we are proud and we want to affirm our culture (Syriac schools, big meetings and festivals...)."

Anyone who sees this film will come away with a good understanding of the Chaldean Assyrian Syriac peoples, along with their past and present struggles from a humanistic view. The film is an excellent, educational opportunity that maintains viewer interest through scenes of their daily life, the natural landscape of Iraq, Turkey, Syria and the archaeological and religious sites of the Middle East. It shows the Diaspora in the USA and Europe also.

When asked why he made a film about the Aramaean Christians, Robert Alaux said: "I respect them a lot and I admire them for their courage."

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- *Nineveh*: Subscriptions and donations to *Nineveh Magazine*.
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In Memoriam

Shawil Gewargis: 1904-2005

Yet another link with *Athra* was lost with the passing away of Shawil Gewargis, at fair-field, Sydney, Aus-tralia. The late Shawil died on Assyrian Mar-tyrs Day, 7th August 2005, at the ripe old age of 101. His funeral ser-vice was conducted at Rabban Hurmizd Cathe-dral of the Assyrian Church of the East in Fairfield and he was buried in the Assyrian section of Pinegrove Memorial Park.

The late Shawil was born in 1904 to Ge-wargis Shimon and Khoshebo Tamraz, both of the village of Jar-mah which is located on the river of Barandoz in Targavar region of Persia. After his father died at the outbreak of World War One he was looked after by his uncles for a few years. But at the early age of 13 he joined the Assyrian commandos under the leadership of Avimalk (Awoo), Shmoel Khan whose main task was to protect the Assyrian masses from the brutal and indiscriminate attacks by the Turkish army and their Kurdish and Persian allies.

Gewargis was among the 1918 mass exodus of the Assyrian people from Urmia in Persia and was one of the lucky ones to survive the long treacherously perilous trek to the refugee camps in Baquba, Mesopotamia. About two years later he and thousand of young Assyrian men joined a special Assyrian force formed under the leadership of General Agha Patros for the specific purpose of returning to Hakkari and reclaiming all Assyrian lands and villages. But the autumn attempt was ill-fated and failed mainly due to the cold season, lack of provisions and support and because of internal bickering.

In 1921, when all hope of being granted a national home and autonomy by the British authorities, as promised by some of their responsible officials, faded for the Assyrians, Shawil joined the Assyrian Levy Force assembled following the disbandment of Mandan refugee camps near Mosul in summer of 1921.

Not long after that, the late Shawil married Sulteh, the daughter of Shmael Warda of Mawana, and God blessed them with three sons, Zaia, Isho and Gewargis, and three daughters, Wardia, Lodiya and Maria. (Zaia was a famous Iraqi international soccer player in the late 1950s and early 1960s.)

After the establishment of RAF Station of Habbaniya in the late 1930s, the family settled there. As an Assyrian Levy soldier, Shawel took part in the events of 1941 in defending the Habbaniya airbase from the pro-German Iraqi forces.



In 1965, the late Shawil moved with his family to Daura in Baghdad and lived there until 1977 when the family left for Sydney, arriving on 13th March 1977. Being a senior citizen, he spent his time attending church and visiting friends and relatives.

I had the privilege of spending a few hours with the late Shawil not long before his death and recorded his thoughts and feelings on tape. Whilst it was ob-vious that his memory was fading yet his memories of the sufferings our Assyrian people endured from 1914 through 1918 were still burning in his mind and heart, and his yearning for some kind of miraculous salvation for our nation was as strong as that he must have felt when fighting alongside his heroes, Awoo Shmoel Khan D'Mawana and Agha Patros of Baz.

---Compiled by Philimon Darmo.
Sydney, Australia.

Remembering my grandmother.

Younia D. Oshana

I'm writing to share with you what an amazing woman she was, and I don't have to have a certain date to remember; I pray for and bless her soul all the time.

She was truly one of a kind, someone who never stopped loving and protecting her family; unconditionally.

She took care of everyone throughout her life, always putting everyone else before herself. And what made her most happy was seeing us happy.

She was one person I would go to if I wanted to hear the truth, always spoke her mind, always gave advise to help, just wanted everyone whom she loved to have a good life.

She was a blessing to us from God; sent to us to teach us so many lessons, show us the right paths and give us wisdom.

I know now I truly have an angel looking after me, she is still going to do what she always did, and that is looking after us all of us. Loving us and protecting us from any harm.

Nana, I miss you, I miss your smile, I miss your laugh and your hugs; but, I know you are resting in a beautiful place where you can see all of us and smile at us from above. I love you.

Your grandson,
Ash Barkho

And, all of Younia D. Oshana's family.

She passed away on 9 September, 2005, at age 77.



In Memoriam:

Michael Aivazov, son of Emmanuel Aivazov and Maria Sarkisova , passed on to eternal life on Saturday, May 27, 2006 at home. He was a grand-son of Shamasha Inviya Bet-Aivaz, who left Iran in 1914 with his wife Victoria and their five children, among them his father Emmanuel. The start of a new life in Tiflis, Georgia, was very difficult. Fate was, from the very beginning, hard and unfair to Michael. His father was killed in the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) as Michael was just three months old. His mother, Maria, worked day and night to bring him and his brother Tengiz up with dignity and respect. With hard work and God's help she had not only provided her children with their basic needs, but also with higher education.

After military service in the Soviet Army, Michael entered the State Polytechnical Institute in 1963. During his studies he was notable for his remarkable logical thinking and intellect. The death of his father left an indelible trace in his heart, influenced the forming of his strong character. As a student he wrote and published many poems in the *Red Star* magazine dedicated to the soviet soldier, who took an oath to protect his motherland and nation and did his sacred duty.

In 1970, Michael graduated from the Institute and worked as engineer for industrial and civil building. He was a superintendent in 1975 in Russia. Among his works is the beautiful Olympic Complex in Kislovodsk (Russia) and many others .

In 1977, he moved to Tbilisi and started to work at the designed-planning administration, then, in 1980, at the road-building administration as a superintendent. During his work he was rewarded with certificates of good work and conduct for his talent and diligence many times.

In 1975 he married a young Assyrian doctor, Elena, and created a beautiful Assyrian family. God blessed him with three daughters: Maria (1976), philologist of Russian language and literatur, Viktoria (1978), a medical doctor and Liana (1991) -an excellent pupil. Every second of his life he was thinking about his children, about their education. Even as he was very sick, shortly before his death, suffering from terrible pain, he was asking God to prolong his life till he sees his little daughter Liana, who finishes school in a year, as a student of the Medical University. He put much energy and efforts not only into the education of his own children but also into the education of many other Assyrian children who came to him for advice and help. He did his best in order to encourage and support them.

As he was a member of the Assyrian National Congress of Georgia, he initiated and intellectually supported the celebration of children's New Year party for Assyrian children on 26 of December 2000 in Gorky-Club in Tbilisi. About 200 children from assyrian families celebrated this holiday together. In spite of his intellectual



contribution, he stayed unnoticed, but his heart was full of joy and pride for this possibility to present a little bit more hapiness to Assyrian children.

In January 2000, Michael, as a perishioner of the Catholic temple of Holy Virgin Mary, was among the group of pilgrims from Georgia which made a tour to Italy in order to take part at the consecration of bishop Juseppe Pasotto. He always dreamt to see the resurrection of a new Assyria with the peaceful sky above it's descendents; he prayed God to give health and friendship, love and charity, mutual understanding and unity to our people. He was a great patriot, strong and handsome man, very hospitable host and kindhearted person.

The terrible illness -prostate cancer- destroyed his health in a year inspite of therapy, but his mind stayed clear till the very last second of his life. The last months were full of suffering and unbearable pain.

As he couldn't walk and could hardly move only his left hand, an Assyrian priest, Qashisha Benjamin Bet-Yadegar, brought him the Eucharist (communion) (Paġra dMaran Isho Mshikha) from Assyrian Liturgy dedicated to the Easter-Holiday. It was as the second birth for Michael. He did everything in his power to stretch his only one moving hand to Rev. Benjamin and to thank him for his self-sacrificing enormous work he does for our people in Georgia.

Michael passed away at the age of 65; he had so many unrealized plans, so many thoughts and projects for his nation and family. How happy he was if he could land a helping hand to somebody or to be of benefit to his family and nation. Merciless death stopped his life. He was a dedicated husband, a loving son and a wonderful father, kindhearted, generous and respected person.

Person of ready sympathy, great Assyrian patriot and a wonderful father; he will stay in our memory forever. He will always live in our hearts and prayers.

(Continued on page 40)

(Continued from page 39)

May his soul rest in peace. Amen !

To our dear father

How suddenly eclipsed the sun,
How desert became all around,
You passed away, dear father, great son,
God released you from pain and torment.

As a sharp dagger wounds the hearts
Grief of relatives, crying of your dears,
You passed away forever, our charming,
You're released from earthly suffering,

Oh dear God, please open the blessed door
And let him in your heaven's house,
Guard, defend and warm him with your love,
And surround with your peace and quiet.

Dear father, you were a sacred incarnation
Of the boundless paternal love,
You were burning as a candle every second
To make the dreams come true for us.

You were ready to sacrifice your life,
To go through fire and water,
But why are you now deprived
Of us, of your loving three daughters?

What must we do without you, our dear,
Whom can we ask for advice,
Who will support us in sorrow,
With whom shall we share our funs?

You were the torch of will-power,
The honour's and nobility's face,
You were strongwilled, kindhearted,
Everybody was admired with your grace!

You were an irreproachable neighbour,
A gentle and loving son,
You were a careful brother,
You were wonderful to everyone!

The Assyrian blood in your body
Was warming your nation with hope,
The heart was beating for dear Homeland,
For Assyria and for our God!

The death can't separate you from your dears,
It can't eclips your sacred look,
Every second and instant through years
You will live in our prayers to God!

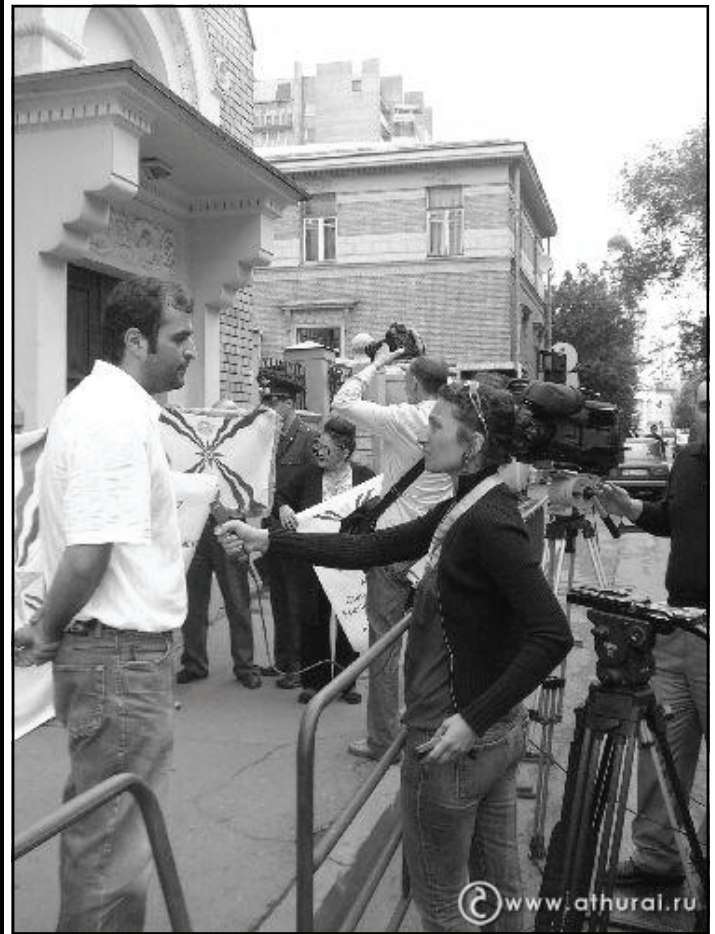
V. Aivazova M.D

Assyrians in Moscow Protest Arrest



Aug. 8, 2006—Members of Assyrian Diaspora have carried out a public protest in front of the building of Georgian embassy in Moscow today. The protestors demanded the immediate release of an Assyrian prominent figure in the community, Mr. Boris Ivanov. According to the protestors, the former high-ranking policeman had no political links with Emzar Kvitsiani and did not support rebels.

The demonstration participants demanded that the Georgian president release the innocent civilian or else they threatened to take further action in front of the building of embassy.



(Continued from page 27)

I felt and I still feel especially proud because it was the Assyrian Youth Federation that gave me this distinction. It was them I had in my mind when I first started working on my dictionary. I could never have expected a better appreciation.

Along with the distinction he was also awarded 10 000 Swedish crowns (1400 dollars), which he chose to give to the Assyrian premier league soccer team in Sweden, Assyriska FF.

Malfono Gabriel's 15 years long project has resulted in a revolutionary masterpiece and is a big step toward the survival of the Assyrian language. However, the most urgent issue the Assyrian people face today is how to secure the Assyrian identity. The language is no doubt essential for the ethnic identity. Yet, today the Assyrian people are constantly suffering in their homelands and as a result of that more and more are leaving their roots. In the light of malfono Gabriel's great involvement in the Assyrian movement it was therefore interesting to hear about his opinions concerning this burning issue:

We often say that our identity runs the risk of obliteration in Diaspora and, of course, there is such a risk. However, since we could not prevent the events that caused the emigration of Assyrians, we need to look for new solutions for our people's problems. We should not see the Diaspora only as something negative. Here, we have rights and are able to give the new generation the opportunity for education. In Turkey, Syria, and Iraq our rights were limited and we were exposed to these countries' fascistic policies. In many ways the emigration to Diaspora saved our culture from dying.

According to research on ethnicity, it takes only three generations for an ethnic group to assimilate in a new country. What do you think about that?

If we take the Jewish people as an example, they have survived in Europe for almost two thousand years. I see many similarities between the Assyrians and the Jews. As an ethnic group we have as good chances to develop ourselves. First, we have at least as rich a culture as them. Second, the Jews have been exposed to a genocide in Germany and have been persecuted in Russia. Thank God, this is something that we have been able to avoid in Diaspora, however not in our homelands. Third, the world is getting smaller and the national borders are getting erased. Today, we can see ourselves as world citizens, much thanks to the technology that brings the distant corners of the earth closer to each other. Our radio consignments through internet and Suroyo TV are examples on how we can spread our language all around the world and create a sense of Assyrian identity.

What are the prospects for the Assyrian radio program **Qolo**?

The hope is that Qolo will continue, as we do not want it to die with us. For that we need fresh blood, and the technology of today gives me hope for radio Qolo's further development.

Malfono Gabriel gives a hint that his career as journalist in radio **Qolo** will, sooner or later, be over:

The journalism profession is very interesting but many times in life you need to choose what you want to give priority to. When I was your age, I thought I was immortal and that I would live forever. Now, I have reached a certain age and I see the years go by. Nowadays I feel that I have to do something toward achieving the aims I have before it is too late.

Malfono Gabriel might be a myth, with his voice as a trademark, but his myth lives on and his voice echoes stronger than ever before. With his Swedish-Assyrian dictionary he has taken a big step toward the survival of the Assyrian language. Who knows? Just as Touma Audo's dictionary inspired malfono Gabriel to produce a Swedish-Assyrian dictionary, his dictionary may, in turn, inspire others to learn and master our language and contribute toward its further development.

Please, visit Malfono Gabriel Afram's web-site to order your copies.

www.gabrielafram.com

Nineveh Magazine
Subscription
 Makes a great gift for that
 Bright young Assyrian with
 so many questions!
Ninevehmagazine@aas.net

(Continued from page 28)



Chief of Staff in the office of the President of *Kurdistan* in Arbil, and described what she had observed and heard from the Assyrians. A few of the issues Ms Gamri discussed with Mr. Hussein included:

- Illegal and seizure in Sarsang, Dohuk and Arbil
- Forced membership in the KDP
- Lack of freedom of expression for Assyrians
- The Administrative rights of the Assyrians
- Treatment of the Assyrians during the elections and the results of the elections
- The emergence of a new Saddam, namely Mr. Massoud Barzani and a new Tariq Aziz, namely Sargis Aghajan.

Ms Gamri asked Mr. Fuad Hussein, whom she has known from the Netherlands, where he too was a member of the political party PvdA, what were his plans to resolve these issues. Mr. Hussein promised Attiya Gamri that he will take serious look at these issues and will discuss them with President Barzani and asked her to visit Mr Sargis Aghajan to learn about the positive developments.

Ms Gamri attended a meeting with 21 NGOs in the Province of Nineveh, and asked each to collect facts about the human rights of the Assyrians in the province. "I need a report from every Assyrian village in the Nineveh province, on their counts, where, why and whom has been discriminated, and we need this every year" she noted to the NGO staff. As Ms Attiya Gamri said on Ishtar and Ashur TVs, every Assyrian should visit Assyria during



Kha b'Nisan to show solidarity with the Assyrians and give a signal to the Kurds and Arabs that the Assyrians in the Diaspora are the voices of the Assyrian men and women in Assyria.

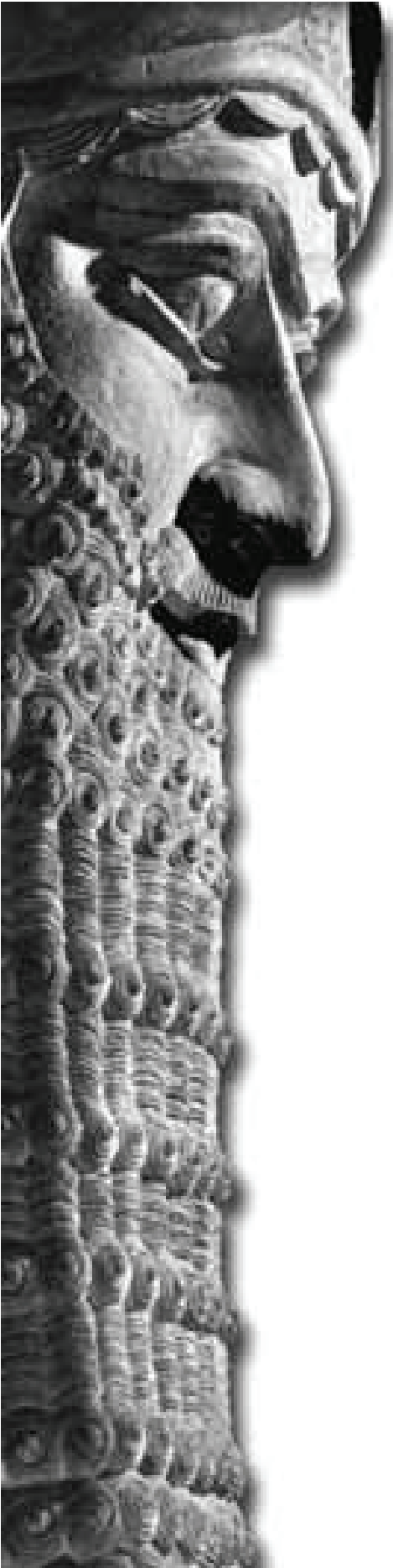
Ms Gamri's delegation included 3 Assyrians from USA and 1 from Canada. The Dutch journalist M. Vrij accompanied Ms. Gamri on her travels and has written reports about the human right situation of the Chaldo-Assyrians in the Nineveh province for the Dutch media.

Ms Gamri spoke with two PvdA and CDA parliamentarians in the EU last week about the aggravated situation of the Chaldo-Assyrians. They promised to use her information for the resolution on Iraq. She will visit the European Parliament on 18 and 19 April, and will put forward the issue about the money the EU sends to Iraq, and how much of this money reaches Assyrians.

During this unstable situation in Iraq the Assyrian delegation was protected by the ADM soldiers, Ms Attiya Gamri told journalists that she was shocked to witness the human rights conditions of the Assyrians in north Iraq. She also noted that she had hoped that their condition would improve after two years, but in fact it had deteriorated. She explained that there should be more political pressure from the EU and USA on the Iraqi authorities to resolve this issue."After two years the right of Assyrians to have political autonomy, to practice their own religion and culture, and give education in their own language should be respected," said Ms. Gamri.

Gamri continued: " If the human rights situation for the Assyrians was a measurement for the development of democracy in Iraq, the future looks bleak. If the discrimination and suppression of the Christian Assyrians by the Kurdish authorities continues, we must be prepared to see the last Christians in Iraq revolting en mass. The discontent is great, and the Assyrian youth doesn't have much patience left."





מלמך לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ

חַבֵּי מַמְסָה*



מְלֻמְ לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ חַבֵּי מַמְסָה וְאִתְּהוּ
מְלֻמְ לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ מַמְסָה מַמְסָה וְאִתְּהוּ
מְלֻמְ לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ מַמְסָה וְאִתְּהוּ מַמְסָה
מְלֻמְ לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ אִלּוּ חַבֵּי מַמְסָה וְאִתְּהוּ

מְלֻמְ לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ מַמְסָה וְאִתְּהוּ
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מְלֻמְ לַבֵּן בֵּנֵהוּ מַמְסָה וְאִתְּהוּ

سَدَّ فِدْكَتَا دِهْ كِنْدَا

سَدَّ فِدْكَتَا . دِهْ كِنْدَا

1

دِي كِنْدَا سَدَّ دِهْ بِي سَدَّ دِهْ
هَقْدَا سَدَّ لَدِي سَدَّ دِهْ
سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ

2

دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
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3

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دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ

4

دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
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دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ

5

دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ
دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ سَدَّ دِهْ

جَبَدَا

جَبَدَا : دَبِيذًا يَتَّبِعُ ، هَذَا ، هَذَا

1

مَا خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ دَبِيذًا وَخَلَقَ
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا
وَالْجِبَدَا دَبِيذًا كَمَا قَتَلَ عِبَادَ
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا .

2

لَمَّا سَأَلَ عَنْ جَبَدَا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
دَبِيذًا خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ كَمَا دَبِيذًا سَبَدَا
فَدَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا لِيَكُونَ جَبَدَا
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا .

3

يَلْبَسُ الْخَلْقَ دَبِيذًا وَجَبَدَا دَبِيذًا
عَلَى جَسَدِهِ يَلْبَسُ لَعْنَةً دَبِيذًا لَمَّا
يَلْبَسُ لَبِيذًا وَجَبَدَا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا .

4

أَنَّ لَبِيذًا يَلْبَسُ دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
لَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا لَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا لَبِيذًا
يَلْبَسُ دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا لَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا .

5

تَلْمِذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
يَلْبَسُ دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
يَلْبَسُ دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا .

6

مَا خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
لَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا دَبِيذًا
الْمَلَائِكَةَ دَبِيذًا لِلتَّبَعِ دَبِيذًا .





ਸਲਾਕ

ਸਲਾਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ

1964 ਵਿੱਚ

ਮੁੱਲ: 29 ਪੈਸੇ; 1-2: ਚੋਟੀ ਸਥਾਨ - ਅੰਕ 6755



ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਖਮਈ ਸੰਬੰਧ 6756
ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਖਮਈ ਸੰਬੰਧ

ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ - ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ - ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ