

## Introduction

The lead article in JAAS vol. 14, no.2, is “Perpetuated in Tradition. The Role of Wheat Products in the Narratives of the Contemporary Assyrians,” by Michael Abdalla Ph.D. Though absent for the past three years Dr. Abdulla is not an unknown name to JAAS readers. He has contributed at least five other original articles to this Journal. In his current article, as its title suggests, he discusses the use of wheat products as metaphors in proverbs and expressions in the colloquial speech of the Western Assyrians.

We welcome, yet another enlightening article from Stephen Andrew Missick. His previous article in JAAS vol. 13 No.2, “The Assyrian Church in the Mongolian Empire,” was received with great interest from our readers and has been reprinted in a number of Assyrian publications due to its great demand. His present article is titled: “Mar Thoma: The Apostolic Foundation of the Assyrian Church and The Christians of Saint Thomas in India.” This compelling work explores the history of the Assyrian Church and its role in the expansion and maintainance of Christianity in India.

Dr. Zomaya Soloman is well known by our readers for his many insightful articles that explore the Assyrian Aramaic grammatical structure. The present article, “Inflection of Weak Verbs in Assyrian Aramaic, Part II: The Derived Conjugations” is the fourteenth part of a series of his articles on the aforementioned subject. We would like to thank him for his continuing literary contributions and editorial support to the success of this Journal.

Mr. George Yana reviews and discusses relevant aspects of Assyrian contributions to the pre-Islamic Iranian civilization, based on a book, written by a Muslim Cleric and Scholar. This book represents a milestone in Persian tradition. It is the first written admission regarding the positive contributions of the Assyrians, specifically the Syriac language, to the Persian and Islamic civilization, since the early Twentieth Century.

Edward Odisho, Ph.D., has submitted a brief account of his academic participation in the Syriac Symposium held in Sydney, Australia. The *Symposium Syriacum* is one of the largest and most important international forums dealing with studies and research on different aspects of the history, religion, culture and the language of Syriac speakers.

Dr. Sharukin Yelda presents the first book review “*From the Holy Mountain,*” in this issue. Dr. Yelda was born and reared in Iran, after the completion of medical school, he had his residency training in Orthopedic Surgery from George Washington University, in Washington D.C. He started his practice in Chicago, in the early 1970s. Despite his demanding medical practice and schedule, he continued his passion for his studies in history, literature and languages. He has only recently retired from his medical practice, but not in his pursuit of knowledge. Moreover, since inception of JAAS, Dr. Yelda has been a key supporter, both morally and financially to this journal.

The Next book "Not Even My Name," is reviewed by Ms. Gladys Warda who previously has presented a number of book reviews.

The "*Yestadays's Children: Growing up in Persia*," review is presented by Carolyn Karam Barclay. A native of Iran Ms. Barkley is daughter of the late Macolm Karam, a prominent Assyrian in Chicago community and past president of Assyrian American National Federation and her mother Agnes was the author's sister.

Each of the three books reviewed relates its own story, but all three address a common theme. That theme is the nightmare experience of mass injustice, and some of the consequences this reaps.

William Dalrymple's book, *From the Holy Mountain*, is a broad-brush study which graphically illustrates the physical devastation wrought everywhere in the Near East by massacres and depredation visited on the Christians in recent centuries. The reviewer, recounts Dalrymple's observations, which are juxtaposed to the observations of a traveler more than 14 centuries earlier. Change is to be expected over such a span of time, but the marginalization of Christians has been quite dramatic in every aspect of life in the lands where once they lived in peace and security. Dalrymple offers a sympathetic account of the besieged Christians and their institutions; Dr. Yalda captures this well.

Thea Halo's late father Abraham was Assyrian, but virtually nothing is known of his ordeal in the times of the massacres. *Not Even My Name* is not about Abraham; it is the story of Thea's mother, a Pontic Greek. Along with the other Christians in Turkey the Armenians, the Assyrians the Pontics were uprooted and massacred. The birth name of Thea's mother was "Themia", but after she was orphaned, she was arbitrarily renamed "Sano". Ironically, this ultimate assault on her identity was dictated by one of her guardians, a most unsympathetic Assyrian woman. A good part of "*Not Even My Name*," and certainly its most gripping part, recalls the hardships of deracination, forced marches, extreme deprivation, and utter humiliation. A secondary aspect of this story is that it teaches us about the Pontic Greeks, a proud people in their own right, but heretofore unknown to most of us. The reviewer, whose father was an Assyrian from Baz, capably addresses several threads of the story of special interest to Assyrians.

In "*Yesterday's Children*," Elizabeth Yoel Campbell provides us a highly personal account of her childhood, and especially of her parents. This story does not follow the traditional structure of a beginning, a middle and an end, instead, it consists of a collection of vignettes. Yoel Yoseph, the author's father, was born in Baz, received his early education in missionary schools, and was then sent to the U.S. where he realized his dream of becoming a medical doctor. He returned to his homeland to serve his people. The author's mother, Shushan, was herself well-educated in missionary schools, and quite accomplished for her time. The author is the second of six children born in her family. As a matter of interest to our readers, the fourth child in the family, Agnes, became the wife of Malcom Karam. Carolyn Karam Barkley reviews this book with special feeling. It is the story of her grandparents as recalled by her aunt.