

# The history of the street & association sign in Bethlehem and Jerusalem

(English version)

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A while ago the editorial board of the Assyrian-Sweden web-based magazine *Hujada* (*Huyodo*) published two articles named "[Fullbordad historieförfalskning i Jerusalem](#)" (*Completed history forgery in Jerusalem*) and "[Revisionister avslöjade i Betlehem](#)" (*Revisionist unveiled in Bethlehem*). Both these are more or less connected to each other. And in them representatives of the Aramean-Syriac movement are described as "*Historyforgers*" and "*revisionists*".

Their arguments are only based on the fact that the contents of the signs were changed from something that the Assyrian nationalist movement had "sown" at first, into something that was corrected later on by representatives of the Aramean-Syriac movement.

The articles are depicting the Aramean-Syriac movement as the "bad guys" to this sign-correction and at the same time depicts the Assyrian movement as the "hero" or the "good guys" only because they had their own signs before the Aramean-Syriac ones before this correction took place. This is some sort of a turf or territorial mentality of course.

The sign(s) in the Holy Land have also been used in one article by the Assyrianist William Warda. In his pan-Assyrian apologetic article called "[The Assyrian heritage of the Syriac Orthodox Church](#)" (This article can in fact be debunked in the future)

**The truth is not in the hands on who did what first in this case chronologically. Instead one should ask the question as to why they were changed or rather corrected to begin with?**

The answer is: to get rid of the influence of the Assyrian movement and what it had sown in the Holy Land to begin with in both Jerusalem as well as in Bethlehem. It's not as if the Israeli or Palestinian authorities wrote what was written on the "original signs" all by themselves. No, what had been written on those "original signs" was a result of the direct or indirect influential impact in this area by the Assyrian nationalist movement.

Without their impact, it would never have existed any signs where it said "Assyrian Club" and "Assyrian Convent Road" in English and its Hebrew equivalent "rehov manzar ha-Ashurim" to begin with. Neither would there have been any Ashur symbol with the ancient Assyrian pagan primary deity of Ashur depicted, just like those ancient Assyrian reliefs in museums all over the world.

It's very possible that the pan-assyrianist *malfono* Yuhanon Qashisho and maybe members of his own family were behind the entire thing and also some likeminded Assyrianists. I am saying this because his father was a Syriac Orthodox priest in Bethlehem. And this gave him an opportunity to propagate Assyrian propaganda and ideology there.

Yuhanon Qashisho was born in Esfes outside Azekh (Hazakh, also known as Beth Zabday) in Tur Abdin in 1918, during the fall of the Turkish Ottoman Empire during World War I, during the *Seyfo* (Genocide) period. They later on fled to Palestine of those days with his family in 1940 (Israel was reestablished first in 1948). Later on Yuhanon emigrated to Södertälje in Sweden where he eventually died in 2001.



*Yuhanon Qashisho (1918-2001)*

One can find information about him on the Internet in pan-assyrianist websites as well as on Wikipedia:

*"In 1940, [Yuhanon] Qashisho's family moved to Palestine where his father was serving as the priest of the Parish of Bethlehem" His father was actively serving refugees of our people back then. "In 1948, he returned to Syria and spent most of his time teaching, writing and journalism. During his time in Syria, he wrote numerous poems published in many of the famous magazines including Assyria [Othur], The Syriac Pamphlet of Aleppo, The Assyrian Star [kawko d-Othur] and Union [Huyodo]. His most famous poem being "O Rehmat l-'Idtan". He also wrote the popular Assyrian nationalistic anthem "Ho 'Ohdinan"*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuhanon\\_Qashisho](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuhanon_Qashisho)

<http://www.bethsuryoyo.com/currentevents/qashisho/GabrielAfram/SwedishInterview.htm>

<http://www.bethsuryoyo.com/currentevents/qashisho/GabrielAfram/EnglishInterview.htm>

Even though the Assyrian nationalist movement was founded before the Aramean-Syriac nationalist movement in an institutionalized form, the difference between the two is that the Aramean-Syriac movement was founded on an ethnic continuous foundation. A foundation which is based on an ethnic Aramean-Syriac self-awareness that started long before the waves or streams of modern 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalism.

This awareness can be traced back throughout our entire corpus of inherited literature in our own Edessan Aramaic (classical Syriac) language from the first centuries of the Christian area until modern times. One can find the terms *oromoyo* and *suryoyo* as interchangeable synonyms over and over again. Regardless of religious Syriac Christian denomination, (Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Syriac

Maronite, Melkite Orthodox aka Antiochian Orthodox, Church of the East aka East Syrian Church or polemically as Nestorian Church and Chaldean Catholics etc)

Later on the term *oromoyo* fell in the shadow of *suryoyo* and in due time *suryoyo* became primary while *oromoyo* became secondary, but never fell out of use. I must also add that the term *othuroyo* meaning Assyrian in Aramaic does not fulfill the same criteria in our own corpus of literature. It was never used over and over again synonymously with *suryoyo* from one generation to the next.

One can also find evidence from the Seleucid and Ptolomaic era of the 2nd century BC until the Roman empire was founded and was active, that sources in Greek also confirms that the people whom the Greeks called *Surioi/Syrioi* and *Suros/Syros* called themselves *Aramaioi* (Greek for Arameans, see Poseidonius of Apamea, Strabo, and the Septuagint i.e the oldest translation of the Old Testament Hebrew Bible from Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic into Greek).

These sources prove that the ancient Arameans still existed and still called themselves Arameans long after the Aramean city-states were annexed by the ancient Assyrian Empire. They also prove that the ancient Arameans were not assimilated during and after the Neo-Assyrian imperial period, as is sometimes claimed by some assyrianists and the Finish assyriologist Simo Parpola. They think that since “*the Greeks called the Arameans by the name Syrians which can be traced back etymologically to Assyrians. That this proves that the Arameans were assyrianized*”, That is a bold and erroneous assumption and conclusion, because that is like saying, that just because the Native Americans were called Indians by their conquerors that they are the same as the Indians of India (based on the belief of Christopher Columbus thought he had sailed to India instead of the American continent Another such example is the people of Holland (Netherlands) who call themselves *Nederlander* in their own language, while they are called *Dutch* in English.

Can one assume that the *Nederlander* (called Dutch in English) are the same as the Germans of Germany, just because they call themselves *deutscher* and their country *Deutschland*? One cannot, since *Dutch* was an *exonym* for the *Nederlander* since it was used in English, while the Germans use *Deutscher* as their own *endonym* self-designation in their own German language (*deutsche sprache*). And the *Nederlander* didn't know that they were called *Dutch* in English until they came in contact with the English language.

Last but not least it's not we the Aramean-Syriacs who are the history forgers or revisionists in this case but rather the Assyrian movement. I can also show all the crusades against our Aramean-Syriac identity in poems, texts, song lyrics, perpetual agreements and signs etc. that have been distorted on everything from names of associations to churches by the Assyrian movement.



*"the original street sign"  
Outside the Syriac orthodox  
S:t Marks Monastery (convent) in Bethlehem*

**Hebrew:** rehov manzar ha-Ashurim **Arabic:** tariq al-deir es-siryan **English:** Assyrian convent road



The exact same street sign without changes in Hebrew and Arabic'

**Hebrew:** "Ashurim" and **Arabic:** "Siryani".

The two first letters in English "Assyrian" were painted over "[As]syrian"

During this period one had added a sign over the street signs "Syrian Orthodox Club (Hudro Suryoyo b-Urishlem) established 1922" with the Aramean-Syriac eagle.



These latest years they demanded new and corrected signs where both the Hebrew and English text were changed from "rehov manzar ha-ashurim" into "rehov manzar ha-siryani". And from "Assyrian convent road" to "Syriac Convent street"

The Arabic is still the same.

Note that in Hebrew there is no equivalent to suryoyo or the Arabic "Siryani/Suryan"

That's why it says "Siryani" with the Hebrew letters.

There is a name for Arameans in Hebrew which is "Aramim" and it should be taken into consideration



*A similar one as the one above, but in a different location on same the street.*



*This picture was taken in 1984 by the assyrianist Augin Kurt during his visit that year. In Aramaic it says "Knushyo Suryoyo Bethlehem" while the English says "Assyrian Club" (the result of the Assyrian movement's seed) .*

*The eagle in this picture doesn't resemble the Ashur symbol nor the Aramean-Syriac eagle but rather like a primitive variant of winged sundisk. Where it says "al-nadi al-suryani fi-Beyt Lahm 1949" in Arabic.*



*This one is also by Augin Kurt's visit in Bethlehem 1984 where it says "knushyo suryoyo Bethlhem" in Aramaic. This sign was already changed from "Assyrian Club" into "the Syrian Club" in 1984 if not earlier. But they forgot to remove the winged disk of Ashur where Ashur is depicted in the middle of it. It doesn't look anything like the Aramean-Syriac eagle. In Arabic it says "al-nadi al-suryani fi-Beyt Lahm 1949" Both Assyrian and Syrian in English don't fit in this context. As for Syrians, westerners could have mistakenly understood it as a club for Syrians as in Suriyin (inhabitants of Syria per se) even though paradoxically Syrian is the correct translation of Suryoyo into English. In theory Syrian Club could have meant Nadi as-Suri here even though the Arabic says Suryani and not Suri.*



*Here is the new sign with the Aramean-Syriac eagle one also changed from "knushyo suryoyo Bethlhem" into "Hudro suryoyo Bethlhem" (probably because "knushyo" or "khnushyo" rather means "meating" and it's feminin form "knushto" or "khnushto" = platform, meatingplace and also a jewish synagouge, while "hudro" means association. In this one in contrast to the old one says that it was founded in 1946 rather than in 1949*



*Syriac scouts (Boduqe Suryoye, Kashaf as-Suryan ) in Jerusalem Bethlehem, notice the beautiful Aramean-Syriac eagle on the belts and the shirts chest pocket*



*This is from the "The Syriac Orthodox Club" in Jerusalem. It says "Hudro suryoyo b-Urshlem" in Edessan Aramaic Estrangelo script.*



*The Syriac Orthodox archbishop of the Holy Land and Jordan, Mor Severios Malke Murad, a proud Aramean-Syriac.*



This means that whoever were members of the church association's board in Bethlehem before the signs was changed or corrected, must have had an Assyrian ideology or were supporters of pan-Assyrianism, otherwise the signs would not have looked like they did to begin with in order to fool their own people and the pilgrims of world who visit the Holy Land, into believing that our people are Assyrians on purely baseless politicized grounds.

We as Arameans-Syriacs must learn a lesson to be more alert and on our guard and aware about this type of power struggle and ethnic identity forgery. The signs were corrected according to the truth at the end.

For more information about the origin of the Aramean-Syriac eagle, read my article ["The origin of the Aramean eagle"](#)