



MĀLIK, NIṢṬŌRĪS GĪWARGĪS

MĀLIK, Qaššīšā' **NIṢṬŌRĪS GĪWARGĪS** (Nestorius George Malech), *Assyrian* priest, educator, and writer (1864-1927; [Figure 1](#)). Qaššīšā' (priest) Niṣṭōrīs was born in the village of Sipūrḡān (Per. [Sopurḡān](#)) in the Urmia plain, *Azərbayjan*. He was the younger son of Šamāšā' (deacon) [Gīwargīs Dāwīd Mālik](#). Niṣṭōrīs graduated from Urmia College in 1888 and traveled to Norway to pursue theological studies in a Lutheran seminary. He succeeded in persuading Norwegian Lutherans to sponsor missionary work among the Assyrians of Urmia aimed at supporting, rather than converting, the Church of the East (Malech, 1910, pp. 378-81). He returned to Urmia and established primary schools for girls and boys in the villages of Sopurḡān, Delgusha, Sangar, Mushava, Mar Sargis, Balav, and Koragos (Malech, pp. 390-95). In 1895 he traveled to Europe and the United States to raise funds among Lutheran churches to continue these educational efforts.

In 1898 Niṣṭōrīs was ordained an archdeacon in the Church of the East by the Metropolitan Mār 'Ishāq Ḥnanišō'. In 1900, he co-founded the Patriarchal Church Committee ([Figure 2](#)), which worked to preserve the Church of the East in Urmia in the face of the recent success of the Russian Orthodox Mission, which had attracted the majority of the Assyrians from all denominations. The work of the committee continued to support schools and attempted to reclaim church property that had been confiscated by the Russians (Malech, pp. 351-73; Coakley, 1992, pp. 283-87).

In 1906, during a visit to the United States, Niṣṭōrīs organized a non-denominational group among the growing Assyrian community of Chicago



under the name of the Persian Christian Benevolent Society. The society sponsored religious activities and organized assistance for new immigrants in finding jobs and places to live as well as financial aid for needy members of the community (Malech, pp. 402-3). In 1909 Niṣṭōrīs returned to the United States and organized the English translation and publication of his father's *Tāš'tā' d-'ēdtā' d-madenḥā'* (History of the Church of the East) under the title of *History of the Syrian Nation and the Old Evangelical-Apostolic Church of the East* (Macuch, 1976, p. 211).

Niṣṭōrīs survived the genocide of the Assyrians of 1915-18 (which is most thoroughly described for 1915-16; see Gaunt 2006, Yonan 1996), which took the lives of many of his family members, including his wife and children. He remarried and spent the years of 1919-24 as a refugee in the Middle East and Europe, where he organized relief for Assyrian refugees in Marseilles (Coakley, p. 347). He made his way to the United States in 1924, where he served as a priest of the Church of the East in Chicago and later in Turlock, California. He left behind an unpublished manuscript in modern Assyrian entitled *Tā'tā' d-spar rdūpyē' wad-maḥwātē' d-'ūmtā' 'Āšōraytā' wad-plāšōh dimānē' w-mārē' d-'ājibūtā' d-'bēdlāh l-darqūl dižminē' l-gēbā' d-barqyāmtā' b-šā(n)tā' 1914-1918* (The history of the persecutions and calamities that befell the Assyrian nation and the bloody and miraculous battles that she fought against her enemies on the side of the Allies between 1914 and 1918).

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