The Last Inhabitant' Shown at Venice Film Festival

VENICE, Italy (Artsakhpress) — The film "The Last Inhabitant" was screened at the Venice Film Festival under the patronage of the governor of Venice Luca Zaia, upon the initiative of the Italian partner Blue Art Association, Pisch Art Cultural Foundation, in association with Orietta Trevisanato Zampieri.

The director of the film, Joan Avetisian, along with Lithuanian producer Keustits Drusdaukaus, American producer Adriohn Mirzayan, and actress Sandra Daukshitte Petrulene, were present at the festival earlier this month.

The exhibition was promising, as the main purpose was to spread word of the film in Italy and organize its distribution. The negotiations are continuing.

The showing of the film was paired with a cocktail party. The audience shared their impressions, and in general the opinions were very positive and full of praise and gratitude. In this regard, Joan Avetisian singled out a rumor that many Italians touched upon.

"The Venice Film Festival is one of the few unique ones that evaluates the horizons, highlights and accepts movies about human destinies, and it is not an accident that within the framework of the Italian film festival, under the high patronage of the governor of Venice Luca Zaia, 'The Last Inhabitant' had an overview."

Getting to the Heart of the Matter

By Alin K. Gregorian

Getting to the Heart of the Matter

SAN FRANCISCO — In a San Francisco lab, Dr. Yerem Yeghiazarians hopes to treat heart disease, stroke and a whole host of other serious illnesses with the pioneering use of stem cells and newly discovered technologies.

Yeghiazarians is the Director of the University of California, San Francisco, Translational Cardiac Stem Cell Program.

Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death in the world. There are about one million heart attacks and about half a million strokes yearly in the U.S. Estimated cost of care for cardiovascular diseases is staggering (more than $320 billion). Yeghiazarians' lab was the first to identify a specific protein secreted by stem cells that has the ability to protect heart muscle cells under low oxygen conditions that are created during a heart attack and the first to demonstrate that specific proteins secreted by stem cells have the ability to rescue dying brain cells during a stroke. The work is geared to treating patients who suffer a heart attack or stroke with novel therapies that decrease the damage to the heart and the brain respectively.

Health Ministry Declares No Import of Chickenpox Vaccine to Armenia Now

YERIVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) - The Armenian Health Ministry on September 19 said that no chickenpox vaccine will enter the Armenian market for now.

Earlier, Cadila Healthcare had said it entered into an exclusive agreement with Russia-based Pharm-Aid for the technology know-how for chickenpox vaccine production.

Through this agreement, Zydus would gain access to the public and private market segments in Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, Cadila Healthcare said in a statement.

Chickenpox vaccine, also called Varicella, is caused by the varicella-zoster virus, which leads to a highly contagious childhood disease.

Gayane Sahakyan, the National Immunization Program Manager at Armenia’s Health Ministry, said the country’s national vaccination schedule envisages no investments in chickenpox vaccines at least to 2020. “Our vaccination budget has been approved until 2020, and no such amendment is expected,” Sahakyan said.

“Armenia requires all the vaccines from the United Nation Children’s Fund and from pharmaceutical companies pre-qualified by the World Health Organization. The standards we apply to our pharmaceutical company with a one or two-year history cannot pass prequalification,” Sahakyan said that the newly-established company cannot consider Armenia as a potential market for the coming 10 years.

Military Hospitals in Armenia to Be Merged With Civic Ones

YERIVAN (Arka.am) – Military hospitals in Armenia will be integrated with civilian hospitals, Armenian Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan said at the 6th Armenia-Diaspora forum that started in Yerevan on September 17. Military hospitals are often better equipped and have more resources than district hospitals. Together with the ministry of health we will launch a pilot project to merge military and civic hospitals in Siun, Berd and Vardenis,” he said. He said the planned merger will allow Armenia, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, Cadila Healthcare said in a statement.

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Armenian Scientists Possess Knowledge Necessary to Make Nuclear Weapons

YEREVAN (News.am) – Some Armenian specialists possess the knowledge for nuclear weapon technology, Samuel Harutyunyan, President of the State Committee of Science, said on September 11 at the session of the National Assembly.

In his words, there are such scientists in Armenia and beyond, they are aware of this matter, and they can start the research. He also added that it is not hard to imagine that, unfortunately, Armenia has no such technical means yet," Harutyunyan added.

Armenia Imports Transportation Worth Over $105 Million in 2017

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Armenia imported vehicles for land, air and water transportation worth a total of $104.91 million in January-July 2017. The figure shows a 52.35 percent increase over the indicated period of the past year, according to the data released by the National Statistical Service (NSS) of Armenia.

The imports of the vehicles amounted to $82.1 million in January-July 2016. The released data also shows that in the same period Armenia imported machinery, equipment and mechanisms worth $22.16 million, growing by 34.9 percent compared to January-July 2016.

Henley & Partners: Armenia Improves Standing on Nationality Quality Index

JERSEY (PanARMENIAN.Net) - Armenia took the 97th spot in the annual Henley and Partners-Kochanov Quality of Nationality Index (https://www.nationalityindex.com/), improving its position due to new opportunities for living and working abroad.

In the 2015 edition of the report, Armenia was placed 110th. Compiled by Henley & Partners, the index provides an objective assessment of citizenship in different countries of the world. The experts ranked 155 citi- enships based on a number of indicators for the period between 2012 and 2016.

The improvement of Armenia's performance in 2016 was primarily due to the expansion of possibil- ities for living and working abroad, Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia have now become available for Armenians.

Germany leads the 2016 list, followed by France, Denmark, Iceland, Sweden and Norway. Azerbaijan claims the 107th position, while Georgia comes in 104th.

Armenian IT Firms' Direct Taxes Top Those Of Major Supermarket Chains

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – It turns out that Armenian IT companies pay more taxes than major supermarket chains that have multiple stores in Yerevan. According to Pan-Armenian.net's own calcula- tions, the 10 IT companies, which are the biggest retail- gers sector have paid direct taxes worth 3.4 billion drams (AMD) in 2016.

Major supermarket chains, on the contrary, have paid AMD 1.1 billion less in the reporting period. The list of 1000 major Armenian taxpayers, released by the tax service, includes Symphony Mentor Graphics, Oracle, Softline International, PicsArt, CQC, Monitri and a number of other com- panies that are operating in Armenia, which is the biggest company in terms of direct tax payments.

Garo Paylan in Armenia

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) - Garo Paylan, MP of the Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (PKP) of Turkey, arrived in Armenia on September 16 to participate in the September 18-20 Armenia-Diaspora: Mutual Confidence, Unity and Responsibility meetings. On September 19, the festive concert dedi- cated to the 100th anniversary of the ‘Armenians in Origin’ program scheduled within the framework of the conference.

Deputy Minister of Diaspora of Armenia Vahagn Melikyan, MP Shirak Teroyan, and writer of the program “Armenians in Origin” Manana Hakobyan met Garo Paylan at Zvartnots International Airport. At the National Armenia-Diaspora Conference in Yerevan, Paylan declared that “only democratic Turkey will open the borders with Armenia,” and said that Turkey will not manage to solve the Kurdish issue, nor establish democracy without facing the fact of the Armenian Genocide.

“The only path to success, declaring: “We have launched reforms in all parts of our country, in all spheres to ensure Armenia’s worthy place in the world. That is why our reforms are aimed at not only settling today’s problems, but also laying foundation to make Armenia competitive on the interna- tional arena.”

He expressed his belief in the abilities of Armenians to succeed, declaring: “We are proud of the fact that our nation, unlike many other nations, preserved its identity and managed to constantly develop and create. We have survived battles, persecutions, oppression, geno- cide and extermination attempts. Amid all the hardships, our nation has never lost its selfrespect and dignity, never abandoning the dream to build an inde- pendent Armenia. Our current difficul- ties are incomparable with the ones experienced by our ancestors. As a result, we are here today and have an independent Armenia. This is a supreme value. I am confident that the idea to build a modern, effective, logical and developing state built on good history traditions is an inspiring goal to strive around.”

For the support of Armenia’s Diaspora, Paylan declared: “Do not think that we can naively believe someone and just give something away. When saying ‘return’, I mean those ter- ritories the return of which would not threaten Artashat’s security and would not become a threat to the Karabakh conflict resolution.”

Paylan also noted that the position of the Armenian side on the settlement of the conflict did not change. It desired a peaceful solution. However, “in case of war, it is not possible to stop it imme- diately. Armenia will recognize the in- dependence of Artsakh, which will mean an end to the negotiations with the regime of Azerbaijan.”

Paylan also expressed his belief in the abilities of Armenians to succeed, declaring: “We have launched reforms in all parts of our country, in all spheres to ensure Armenia’s worthy place in the world. That is why our reforms are aimed at not only settling today’s problems, but also laying foundation to make Armenia competitive on the interna- tional arena.”

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Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian in a speech to the conference on that same day, September 19, declared that he could not rule out the return of some territories surrounding the borders of Artsakh. However, he explained, “Do not think that we can naively believe someone and just give something away. When saying ‘return’, I mean those ter- ritories the return of which would not threaten Artsakh’s security and would not become a threat to the Karabakh conflict resolution.”

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Armenian Businessman Urges Diaspora Armenians to Invest in Their Homeland

YEREVAN (news.am) – Armenian National Assembly Deputy Speaker, the Head of the National Assembly Friendship Group Armenia-USA Arpine Hovhannisyan, and the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Armenian National Assembly Standing Committees met with a delegation of the House of Representatives of the US Congress, which was comprised of members of Congressional Representatives Frank Pallone, Jackie Speier, Anna Eshoo, Tulsi Gabbard, James Sensenbrenner and David Valadao, Armenia’s presidential press service reported.

Arpine Hovhannisyan considered important the development of the relations of the House of Representatives and the implementation of cooperative programs. She highly assessed continuous American support aimed at the strengthening of the democratic institutes and civil society of Armenia, as well as the implementation of reforms and economic development.

The Deputy Speaker touched upon the steps taken in Armenia after the constitutional reforms, the works of harmonization with legislation and judiciary reforms, emphasizing the complementing of the Armenian-American legal systems in the legal-contractual field. Arpine Hovhannisyan deemed important the signing of an Agreement on Exclusion of Double Taxation between the Two Countries. During the meeting, the Deputy Speaker referred to the problem of Syria’s refugees and has noted that Armenia is one of the leading countries in Europe accepting refugees from Syria.

The representatives of the Armenian National Assembly Standing Committees highlighted the further deepening of US-Armenia parliamentary cooperation, and touched upon the issues of cooperation in different spheres and the regional problems. They attached importance to the continuous efforts of the USA, as an OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair country, aimed at the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and the provision of peace and stability in the region.

In addition, President of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Bako Sahakyan met with several of the US Congress representatives at the UNHCR-Permanent Representation in Yerevan.

They discussed issues related to US-Artsakh relations, Azerbaijan-Karabakh conflict settlement and regional processes.

President Sahakyan considered such meetings important and noted that the development of relations with the US is of special importance for Artsakh. The head of state highly rated the work being carried out by the US lawmakers to reinforce and expand bilateral ties.

For substantial contribution to the process of recognition of the independence of the Artsakh Republic, President Sahakyan handed “Gratitude” medals to Representatives Frank Pallone, Anna Eshoo and Jackie Speier. Pallone told reporters after this meeting that “We’ll do our best to propel forward the process of Artsakh’s recognition. One of our colleagues has already been there [to Artsakh]. We will also visit.”

Armenian Businessman Urges Diaspora Armenians to Invest in Their Homeland

YEREVAN (Arka.am) – Businessman Arsen Ghazaryan, who is chairman of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Armenia, on September 19 urged today Diaspora-based Armenian entrepreneurs to invest in their homeland and win new markets across the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union, the European Union and the United States.

According to him, today a significant part of Armenian enterprises operate at 10 to 20 percent of their capacity. They badly need fresh investments to boost output. He said also that about half of agricultural land in the Ararat Valley is not cultivated, as farmers have no money for it. The reason we are trying to create agri-cultural cooperatives, to enlarge them and if we are able to attract substantial investments for the processing industry, we will be able to start any production - from tomato paste to caviar,” Ghazaryan said during the sixth Armenia-Diaspora forum.

In his words, these products will not have sale problems, since there are orders from the USA and Europe. The entrepreneur reminded that more than 1000 Armenian goods are entitled to the GSP + program in the US and EU countries.

“The Armenian market should not be viewed only as an opportunity to squeeze between the local oligarchs to trade in the local market. We should look more broadly: to produce in Armenia and sell to foreign markets – from Iran and Georgia to Europe and from Russia to Kazakhstan,” Ghazaryan said. On Armenia’s membership in the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), he said it coincided with tightening of international sanctions against Russia, the collapse of the Russian ruble, a reduction in the volume of transfers to Armenia by 60 percent, which was the main source of financing for the local consumer market. “Over the past year and a half, we were not able to export Armenian brandy to the Russian market because of the fluctuation of the rouble and the uncertainty with the contracts, but now we have overcome these difficulties,” Ghazaryan said.

According to him, it is Armenian membership in the EAEU that allows creating Diaspora businessmen to invest in Armenia.

Summer Camp in Armenia Helps Displaced Youth Settle In

By Anahit Hayrapetyan

LAKE SEVAN, Armenia (UNHCR.org) – The still waters and stunning landscape of Lake Sevan in Armenia make it a popular beach destination for tourists. But this year it also became a place for fun, learning and networking that helped 40 displaced young people from Syria, Iraq and Nagorno-Karabakh find confidence, opportunities and friends in their new home.

Set up by Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) NGO Vardenis to promote social and cultural integration, the two-week-long camp also worked to improve the emotional and psychological wellbeing of displaced and refugee youth. Activities included theatre, music, art, teambuilding and sports.

“I had never been to Lake Sevan before,” says Maral, a Syrian girl who attended the summer camp. “What I liked most was swimming in the lake with my new friends, and our leader Nareg who was protecting us from the waves. I feel at home in Armenia and I am honored to be part of my new homeland.”

Despite the trauma and difficulties that many participants had already experienced in their young lives, their resilience, optimism and determination shone through.

“I made many friends at camp,” says Aram, a boy displaced from the landlocked mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh, where conflict escalated in April 2016. “We were similar and different at the same time – similar with our stories of having lost our homes, and different with our language, traditions and culture.”

Varadar Hambardzumyan, director of YMCA Vardenis NGO, says the summer camp gave children like Maral and Aram crucial life-skills for the future. “These, she says, will “make a positive impact on the children, leading them to a dignified future with self-confidence, respect towards other and a sense of solidarity.”

UNHCR’s Representative in Armenia, Christoph Bieltz, was in the audience on the final day when the young campers gave an impressive performance of Armenian songs, traditional dances and pantomime.

“Seeing so many young people from different backgrounds and places of origin, young local Armenians and displaced youth from Syria, Iraq and Nagorno-Karabakh working, debating, relaxing and interacting together offers a sign of hope and shows that integration can work, if all are ready to engage,” he says.

At the end of the camp, the children received certificates of acknowledgement from UNHCR and awards for creativity and talent, intelligence and enthusiasm, mobilisation and leadership skills. But they are not the only ones to benefit.

“The time we spent at the YMCA camp will remain unforgettable,” says Nareg, a camp leader from Australia. “I heard the testimonies of the campers, and I am impressed by their spirit and strength. I am now full of empathy towards refugees in the world. I now feel different and think differently.”

US Congressmen Hold Meetings in Yerevan

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Pallone told reporters after this meeting that “We’ll do our best to propel forward the process of Artsakh’s recognition. One of our colleagues has already been there [to Artsakh]. We will also visit.”
On September 13, Hrant Dink Award presentation took place in Yerevan, Armenia. The award ceremony was hosted by the Chamber Music Association of the Hessian State Orchestra in Wiesbaden, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

What few people know is that the award ceremony is the first of the chamber music series to be held in Armenia. It was a celebration of the centenary of the Armenian genocide, which was officially recognized by the Turkish government in 2020.

The award ceremony was hosted by Ece Dinçler and the opening speech was made by President of Hrant Dink Foundation Reşat Dink. During her speech, Dinçler referred to the ones who got in jail for expressing their thoughts, and concluded her words by saying the human rights defenders who were detained and arrested on July 5.

The award ceremony started with Ece Dinçler's opening speech, followed by a presentation of the Hrant Dink Award. The award ceremony was followed by a musical performance by the Hessian State Orchestra, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

The concert was hosted by Ece Dinçler, who is the artistic director of the orchestra. The concert was followed by a presentation of the Hrant Dink Award, which was presented to Ece Dinçler.

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Celebrations of the 300th Anniversary of the Foundation Of the Mekhitarist Abbey of San Lazzaro in Venice

SAN LAZZARO, Venice – The Mekhitarist Congregation is delighted to announce the official inauguration of the ceremonies for the 300th Jubilee of the Foundation of the Mekhitarist Abbey of San Lazzaro in the Venetian Lagoon.

The official start of the jubilee year on September 8 was preceded by a series of events which included a performance by the world-renowned Talia Schollers. Their concert, which included two Armenian sacred works, was given on July 14 in the magnificent surroundings of St Mark’s Basilica and was attended by Patriarch of Venice Francesco Moraglia.

September 8 is a crucial day in the history of the Mekhitarist Congregation: it was on this day in the year 1700, that Mekhitar founded his Order in Constantinople; it was on September 8, 1715, that he arrived in Venice; and it was on September 8, 1717, that he established his Order’s permanent headquarters on the Island of San Lazzaro, after being granted permission to do so by the Serenissima, the Most Serene Republic of Venice.

Finally, it was on September 8, 1810, that an imperial decree issued by Napoleon granted the Mekhitarist monks leave to maintain their Congregation on the island of San Lazzaro, while all other religious congregations in Northern Italy were banned and their possessions confiscated.

On September 8, 2017, at 11:00 am, the solemn celebration of the Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of the Virgin Mary was officiated by the designated Prior of the Monastery.

In his speech Luryan presented the centuries-old heritage of Armenians, highlighted Armenian-Italian friendship, and the contributions of Venetian Armenians in Venice’s trade, culture, and politics. He noted that Luryan, in his turn, is making a great contribution to Armenian cinema, uniting Venetians and local Armenians around the Armenian people and their identity.

The filmmaker thanked the organizers for the warm reception and a gift exchange ceremony was held at the end of the celebration as a sign of respect and friendship. Luryan presented the gove with a rug made by Armenian women, but also includes the power, energy, dedication, the aspiration of victory, freedom and peace of Armenian women.

There is life in this carpet created by the work of these women,” said Luryan.

A press conference on the film “The Last Resident” was attended by the film crew, Ambassador Bagdasaryan, and Italian-Armenian writer Antonia Arslan, who is of Armenian origin. Arslan touched upon the artistic value of the film. Mirzayan spoke about filmmaking in the United States.

On the initiative of ARTsakh Arts and Cultural Foundation, “The Last Inhabitant” was scheduled to be shown at the Los Angeles Pacific Theaters on September 15.

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At a reception organized by Governor Zaja, first deputy governor Cristian Circazzani, Armenian ambassador to Italy Victoria Bagdasaryan and the chairman of the Union of Armenians of Italy Minas Luryan were present. In his speech Luryan presented the centuries-old heritage of Armenians, highlighted Armenian-Italian friendship and the contributions of Venetian Armenians in Venice’s trade, culture, and politics. He noted that Luryan, in his turn, is making a great contribution to Armenian cinema, uniting Venetians and local Armenians around the Armenian people and their identity.

The filmmaker thanked the organizers for the warm reception and a gift exchange ceremony was held at the end of the celebration as a sign of respect and friendship. Luryan presented the governor with a rug made by Armenian women, but also includes the power, energy, dedication, the aspiration of victory, freedom and peace of Armenian women.

There is life in this carpet created by the work of these women,” said Luryan.

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UN Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan to Receive Honor at International Day of Peace Celebration

NEW YORK — Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace within and among all nations and peoples. On September 22, the Association for Trauma Outreach & Prevention (ATOP) and Meaningfulworld will celebrate The International Day of Peace at the majestic Down Town Association located in trendy Tribeca.

This year’s theme is “Art for Peace” and the work of several accomplished artists will be available for sale through a silent auction. ATOP™/Meaningfulworld will recognize and honor several organizations and individuals whose work deserves special recognition for their efforts made to achieve peace locally and globally.

This year, Meaningfulworld is also celebrating its 20th anniversary of healing, peace-making, transforming pain and generational trauma, and establishing Peace and Forgiveness Gardens globally in over 46 countries and 20 states in the United States.

Along with the above listed distinguished guests will be honored with peace awards in recognition of their dedication and contributions to serving humanity and building peace. Distinguished peace award recipients include Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) of the Republic of Armenia; Ashley Tobias, the developer of an anti-bullying educational program; and the International Institute for Peace.

Born in Yerevan, Armenia, Mnatsakanyan is a graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and holds a Master’s Degree from Victoria University, UK, in Western European Politics.

Mnatsakanyan has been decorated with the Medal of Mikhail Gush of Armenia (2011) for distinguished service in diplomacy. He is an advocate of human rights and an educator on genocide. He has played a critical role in the ongoing implementation of parliamentary resolutions, laws and declarations, which have led to the acknowledgement and assertion of the Armenian Genocide.

On September 13, 2015, after years of persistent diplomatic efforts, the Republic of Armenia succeeded in having the UN General Assembly adopt by consensus a generic resolution to the General Assembly on the Prevention of this Crime.

Ambassador Mnatsakanyan spoke about his “sense of duty” while presenting the proposed resolution to the General Assembly on September 11. Paying tribute to Raphael Lemkin, who had coined the term genocide, Mnatsakanyan said: “For the victims of our past inaction, the International Day will lead to the acknowledgement and assertion of our past inaction, the International Day will lead to the acknowledgement and assertion of the International Day will lead to the acknowledgement and assertion of the Armenian Genocide.

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The mayor said: “There are over 60 languages spoken in Glendale. It is a family-oriented city. The way the city was formed in the beginning, the mentality of the forefathers of the city and my predecessors, is why there are good schools and good, safe neighborhoods. Culturally it is rich too. We Armenians are rich in culture.”

Glendale has an active role in Glendale public life for almost two decades. He left his native Tehran when 24 years old in 1986 to come to San Francisco. He went to Armenian school for nine years and then a Persian public high school in Tehran. He went to community college at the College of Marin, and then studied optometry at Concorde Career College from 1992 to 1993. Looking for a more concentrated Armenian community, he got married in Glendale and eventually moved there, in 1999. He got involved in the Ararat chapter of Homenetmen (Armenian General Athletic Union, a scouting and athletic organization affiliated with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation). He later served eight years as vice president of the board of the Davidian and Mararian Educational Foundation (DMEF), which promotes the teaching of Armenian language and culture in after school programs at Southern California schools.

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Glipartian began working in real estate, and now is a realtor and the chief executive officer of Glendale Commercial, Inc., a full service real estate and development company. He quickly became involved in the public sphere and in various nonprofit organizations based in Glendale. In 2004 he became a commissioner for 4 years of the city’s Design Review Board, served on the Parks, Recreation and Community Services commission from 2011-13, on the Historic Preservation Commission (2011-2013), and then became chair of the Housing Authority from April 2015 to April 2016.

In connection with this service, Glipartian said, “I am committed to preserving those of our properties that are worthy of being preserved.” and noted that there are seven historic districts now in Glendale, and over 108 historic properties registered on local, state and national levels. He developed an interest in preservation when he used to live in the San Francisco area, and restored over 35 homes there over a fifteen-year period as part of his business. In Glendale, however, he no longer has the time and primarily focuses on commercial real estate.

Glipartian also served on the Civic Advisory Board of the Glendale Adventist Medical Foundation, and the boards of the Glendale Police Foundation, the Glendale Historical Society, the Glendale Chamber of Commerce, and the Glendale Association of Realtors.

By Aram Arkun

Mayor Vartan Gharpertian of Glendale

Glendale’s Mayor

Glenfale Mayor

Vartan Gharpertian

Talks Politics

GLENDALE, Calif. - Glendale is a unique city for Armenians in the United States. With one of the largest concentrations of Armenians outside of the Republic of Armenia, four out of five of the members of the city council are now Armenian, as is the current mayor, Vartan Gharpertian. The mayor declared that there are many other exemplary aspects to his city. He said: “There are over 60 languages spoken in Glendale. It is a family-oriented city. The way the city was formed in the beginning, the mentality of the forefathers of the city and my predecessors, is why there are good schools and good, safe neighborhoods. Culturally it is rich too. We Armenians are rich in culture.”

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Giragosian, Yerjanian Ordained as Deacons in Pasadena

PASADENA, Calif. - On Sunday, September 10, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church Archbishop Hovhan Derelian celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church and ordained eleven altar servers. Akkian Giragosian and Arman Yerjanian were ordained into the Diaconate.

Shant Kurkian, Narek Kurkian, Johnathan Dergazarian and John Yagubian were ordained as sub-deacons. Alexander Moutsakianan, Andre Moutsakianan, Garen Matossian, Saro Matossian and Armen Matossian were granted four levels of acolyte.

Giragosian is from a very committed family of Armenian Democratic Liberal Party and Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) supporters. His grandfather, Deacon Varent Vetenekian, was one of the key people involved in the creation of the TCA Beshtagetarian Center in Altadena, California. He is in a recent graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law.

Arman Yerjanian is one of the leaders of the Armenian General Benevolent Union Armenian Youth Association Scouts in Pasadena and of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America in the Western Diocese. He has volunteered to help various Armenian organizations, and has helped the TCA office at the Beshtagetarian Center with its computer issues.

In his message to the altar servers, the Primate said: “Today’s ordination is most uplifting for us all. These young servants have shown the willingness to serve God and this holy sanctuary… In particular, I would like to extend my deep appreciation to Deacon Alex and Deacon Arman, who from an early age have continuously and relentlessly served St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church. They have given us hope for a brighter future. It is through this kind of celebration that anniversaries become meaningful.”
Glendale’s Mayor Vartan Gharpetian Talks Politics

MAJOR, from page 6

A Democrat, Gharpetian began to be involved in politics. He said, “This was a natural transi-
tion.” As a consequence, he said, “I know the zoning code by heart.”

Among the difficulties facing Glendale, Gharpetian explained, was affordable housing. He said, “Our seniors are in a tough position. Rents are rising while income plateaued.” The city was being overbuilt, and many new apart-
ment buildings were catering to the entrepre-
neurial class, primarily with one-bedroom apart-
ments. Gharpetian said, “My idea is to develop projects that serve everybody. We have to build projects that will serve families as well.” Entry
level housing thus is very important for him, he stated, and he is working to bring 4,500 units of available housing.

As a big soccer fan and coach, he said he was instrumental with his colleagues in allocating about $15,000 annually for soccer fields, and is working on getting a soccer stadium in town. He wants to increase the amount of open space in the city, such as through parks.

In order to bring new businesses to Glendale, Gharpetian said he is trying to make improve-
ments in the sales and property taxes. He wants to build a technology hub in Glendale, and cre-
ate incentives for manufacturing technology com-
panies. For example, Glendale said computer chips could be built in Glendale. The mayoralty is connecting the existing technol-
ogy companies through housing events, and also looking into making a cluster area for them.

Though Glendale is in general economically in good shape, with an unemployment rate (4.7 percent in December 2016), and an annual municipal budget of over $840,000,000 dollars accountable for the city, many other American cities grapple with how to support families in poverty. This year, with the changes that the new administration is making to federal spending, Gharpetian said that he fears that rental housing assistance for low income families will be cut. Helping the poor, Gharpetian lamented, that congressmen with low unemployment rates, of 1937, might be cut back, along with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. For example, Glendale said that they are cutting Urban Development.

According to the city website (http://www.glendaleca.gov/government/community-development/city-arts/city-clerk/board-and-commissions/community-development-block-grant/advisory-committee), each year the city receives approxi-
ately $3,400,000 in CDBG funds, and an advi-
sory committee of five members, four of whom this year are Armenian, participates in the preparation of a spending plan. A small portion of this money goes to Armenian organizations operating in Glendale like the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) and Homenetmen Glendale “Acarat” Chapter.

Gharpetian declared that over 45 percent of the population of Glendale, or around 90,000 people, is Armenian. It is this concentration of population that makes Glendale different for Armenians. He said, “Whenever you have a majority of the population from a certain race or ethnic group, it will have its programs, schools, churches, and festivals.” He said that in Glendale, as wherever else the Armenians have gone in the world, “first we build our churches, then we build our schools and then our organiza-
tions, and that old-fashioned lifestyle is con-
tinuing here.”

He made sure to stress that Armenian public officials in Glendale “are elected to serve the needs of the entire population.” For example, he said, the independence of the first of public of Armenia, May 28, was cele-
brated right outside of City Hall, and, he said, Glendale has a sister city program with both Chapan, from over 10 years ago, and Gyumri, starting 3 years ago. Gharpetian said that cul-
tural programs are shared between the cities and the countries.

Furthermore, the Glendale police depart-
ment has gone to Armenia to provide training and advice. Gharpetian said he wants to send a delegation from the Glendale Fire Department to show how training takes place here. He added, “I made a motion last year to send 12 of our fire trucks that are retired but in very good shape to Armenia. I am raising funds for the cost of the transfer. We also sent some ambulance to Armenia from Glendale.”

Glendale has an agreement with Adventist Health Glendale to send volunteers annually to border towns in Armenia and provide free clin-
ics and medical care. Private Armenian organi-
sations have gone to Armenia to provide training and advice. Gharpetian said he wants to send aid directly. For example, the Armenian Medical Society provides mobile clinics for Armenia and keep them there.

When asked about negative publicity about Armenians in the local media, Mayor Gharpetian said, “It is not just Armenians—it is against every nationality. It is a matter of get-
ing used to it.”

As a community, he said he feels that the population of Armenians, or around 90,000 people, is very low, maybe 8-to-12 percent. At other nationalities, their percentage [of reg-
istered Armenians] is very low, maybe 8-to-12 percent. Armenians are registered. He said, “If you look at other nationalities, their percent [(of reg-
istered Armenians)] is very low, maybe 8-to-12 percent. But because our overall numbers are smaller, we need a bigger percentage to make a differ-
ence. It is a challenge. We have to constantly educate people about the rights and privileges of voting, and keep registering people. Organizations like the AGBR, ANC, and the Armenian Society of LA, and the Armenian political parties, must do the registration. Local political parties do not have the capacity or the per-
tative effort to increase the numbers of voters.”

Gharpetian spoke briefly about his family. His daughter two close with Armenia. He said, “My uncle moved back to Armenia in 1947, and I have so many relatives, first cousins, second cousins, and third cousins, with whom we kept in touch. If not every year, every other year we visit Armenia and do what we can to help the community.”

He exclaimed, “I have a great family. My wife Arina is a dentist, and is a member of the Glendale Board of Education. And President until this April. I have three daughters. My oldest is 19, named Naael, is attending Woodbury University in Burbank. Naya, is in ninth grade, while our 10-year-old Nein, is in elementary school.”

Re Gharpetian promised to attend every event in Glendale. The children go to public schools, and the adults go to Armenian and Armenian summer camps. The major himself pursues several hobbies, including collecting Armenian art and learning to play the cello.

Gharpetian promises to stay in municipal gov-
ernment for at least several terms. He said, “I need to be here a certain amount of time to achieve my goals and deliver my promises. After that I must see where my family, life and health are, before I make a decision to run for another position.”
OBITUARY

Dr. Robert A. Aslanian (1943-2017)

GREENWICH, Conn. - Dr. Robert A. Aslanian, oral surgeon, mentor, and artist, passed away peacefully on September 11, 2017, surrounded by his loving family. He was 74 years old. A medical professional in the Greenwich community for over 45 years, Bob was known for his high level of professionalism, integrity, compassion and gentle nature. He was cherished and loved by his family, friends and patients.

Born in New York City on February 6, 1943 to a prominent Armenian family and community, Bob was the son of the late Mary and Arsen Aslanian. His father served in World War II and did not return until Bob was three years old. Bob received his undergraduate degree from New York University (Hebrew Union College) and his medical degree from the New York College of Dental Surgery from the NYU College of Dentistry in 1968, where he went on to postgraduate training in oral surgery at Hartford Hospital (University of Connecticut Health Center), after which he opened his oral surgery practice, currently Infinity Oral Surgery, at The Medical Building, 49 Lake Ave., in 1971.

Bob served on the attending staff as an Oral Surgeon and Chief of the Section of Dental and Oral Surgery at Greenwich Hospital from 1982 until his retirement. Bob was also a Consultant in Dentistry and Oral Surgery at Dental Care of Stamford and at Community Health of Greenwich. In addition to his extensive involvement in the Greenwich dental community, Bob was Assistant Clinical Professor at New York Medical College in Valhalla, New York. Bob was a Diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and held dental licenses from New York and Connecticut. He was a Life Fellow of the American Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and a Life Member of the American Dental Association, the Connecticut Dental Society, which he served as President and the Connecticut Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

Bob was the President of the American-Eastern Armenian Dental Association (AAEPAO) of the Tri-State Area. He served on the attending staff as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, and was a member of the Men's Club at Saint James Presbyterian Church.

Bob was a Fellow of the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and was a Diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. He was a member of the AAEPAO, where he presented explicitly illustrated lectures about how smoking and chewing tobacco can cause cancerous lesions in the mouth and throat. His frankness made a strong impression on students. The Greenwich Health Association presented Bob with the Outstanding Volunteer Health Care Professional Award for his dedicated and continuous service to youth in anti-smoking education programs throughout the town. Bob lectured on dental health issues to the Greenwich Men's Club.

Bob served as a deacon and usher at The First Presbyterian Church in Greenwich and was a member of the Men's Club at Saint Gregory's the Enlightener Armenian Church in White Plains. Bob was an accomplished landscape painter who firmly believed in using pure oils as his medium. Bob expressed a deep love for art. He inherited this talent and passion from his father, with whom he exhibited in father-son shows throughout the area. These paintings were displayed in Bob's dental office, and his seven-feet high painting of Noah's Ark was presented to the First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich.

Bob's dental drawings were featured in many publications. Bob met his future wife and childhood neighbor, Gloria Koomruian, when he was five years old. He became extended family to the Koomruian's: Charles, Claire, Grace and Gloria. Bob married the love of his life, Gloria, in 1967. They have accomplished today. He continued his continuous service to youth in anti-smoking education programs throughout the town. Bob lectured on dental health issues to the Greenwich Men's Club.

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Bob and his wife Gloria, were members of local and national Puppetry Guilds and attended puppet festivals throughout the United States. He was especially admired by members of the Puppetry Guilds for carving detailed facial and hand features using dental tools. Together, Bob and Gloria volunteered for an after-school marionette class at The Edison School in Port Chester, New York. Marionettes made by Fourth and Fifth Grade students were incorporated into their gauze arts enrichment studies and resulted in a fully-staged production from the “Puppetry” series by Henry Nef. Bob loved working with the students, and they were thrilled to have him share his talents with them.

Combining his professional skills and artistic talents, Bob's dental drawings were featured in many publications. Bob met his future wife and childhood neighbor, Gloria Koomruian, when he was five years old. He became extended family to the Koomruian's: Charles, Claire, Grace and Gloria. Bob married the love of his life, Gloria, in 1967. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary earlier this year. He is survived by his wife Gloria; their two children, Grace Aslanian and Dr. Harry Aslanian; his daughter-in-law, Dr. Meg Byrdel and three grandchildren, Elise, John and Annska Aslanian. He also leaves behind his loving brother Richard Aslanian; his sister-in-law Lynn Aslanian; nephew Brian Aslanian and nieces Lily and Liz Aslanian; his sisters-in-law Claire Davidson, Reverend Doctor Grace Koomruian and Sylvia Koomruian; his nieces Karen Davidson and Ruth Elia and nephew Charles Koomruian and extended family member Luke Bentley.

All are welcome to a memorial service, conducted by clergy from The First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich and Saint Gregory the Enlightener, at the First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich (1 West Putnam Ave. at Lafayette Place) on Sunday, September 24, 2017 at 2:30 p.m., and to the reception that follows in Fellowship Hall at Church. To leave an online condolence, please visit www.cas-tiglonefh.com.
Nicole Babikian Hajjar Leads Mirror 85th Anniversary Gala Benefit

Nicole has chaired numerous fundraisers for various Armenian organizations including the Armenia Tree Project, Project SWAY, Archives and Hamazkinyan, in addition to her many years of service to St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary School in Watertown and to the New England Chapter of the Worldwide Alumni Association of her alma mater AUB. “To sum it up, I call myself a professional volunteer,” she says jokingly.

Nicole has passed this deep commitment to service to her children. Her daughters Serena and Araigh both interned at the Mirror prior to their high school senior years and found the experience rewarding, informative and enriching. They enjoyed working in a fun environment and being exposed to the wealth and diversity of opportunity within the Armenian community.

Citing the many innovations currently in the works at the Mirror, Nicole mentioned the release of a new mobile-friendly and interactive website, “The Mirror needs to stay relevant in the new media landscape. We also need to meet young readers where they are and how they consume the news.” Commenting on the recent increase in the paper output from 16 to 20 pages, she noted: “This expansion in scope and subjects calls for the hiring of additional reporters and correspondents throughout the world.” She adds: “And with 85 years of print material in store, the digitization of past issues is imperative to allow researchers and future generations to tap into this invaluable source of content.”

Nicole likes to recall what a fellow committee member said at one of their very first meetings: “If the Mirror were to shut down, I would feel left in the dark.”

“Let’s do our part to not only keep the lights on, but to make sure they shine wider and brighter into the future,” she concludes.

All readers and supporters of the Mirror are invited to attend the symposium and the gala benefit in celebration of the Mirror’s 85th Anniversary. For reservations and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Aram Artian at (917) 743-9015 or tcadirector@aol.com.

Getting to the Heart of the Matter

HEART, from page 1

This will result in smaller heart attacks and lessen the chances of developing congestive heart failure after an event and also lessen the neurologic side effects from a devastating stroke.

According to Yeghiazarians, the factors secreted by the stem cells are the key in how stem cells improve the cardiac function. In fact, injecting the stem-cell-secreted proteins, even in the absence of live stem cells, improves cardiac function, decreases the scar size, and results in fewer dying heart muscle cells from a heart attack. This has led to the possibility of developing an off-the-shelf medication as a novel therapy.

The drug is in the development phase, which is expected to be completed within the next few years. In addition to these exciting discoveries, Yeghiazarians’ lab has also developed a proprietary technology to assess the stress level of a cell and has automated the system. Using this technology, it has been able to perform high throughput testing of drugs to discover new therapies for a host of diseases including Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, muscular dystrophies and diabetes.

Yeghiazarians was born in Iran and came to the United States in the wake of the Iranian Revolution at the age of 15 with his family, who settled in the Boston area. He received his undergraduate degree in biology and biochemistry from Brandeis University and later attended the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore. He received his internal medicine and cardiology trainings and his chief residency at the Harvard-MGH School affiliated Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston before coming to San Francisco in 2003.

In addition to his duties at the lab, he is Professor of Medicine and holder of the Leone-Perkins Family Endowed Chair in Cardiology at UCSF. And also, he is Director of the Translational Cardiac Stem Cell Program, co-Director of the Adult Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory and Director of the Peripheral Interventional Cardiology Program.

He is the immediate past president of the San Francisco Board of the American Heart Association.

The lab is now in the midst of a major fundraising drive with the goal of raising at least $10 million.

To find out more about the work of the lab, visit: https://stemmed.ucsf.edu/cardiovascular-research/
BENEFIT gala

Celebrating 85 Years
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Friday November 3
2017

2017 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Robert Fisk
Journalist, Middle East Correspondent for The Independent
Seven-Time Recipient of British Press Awards’ Reporter of the Year

2017 EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS
David Barsamian
Writer, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio

Amberin Zaman
Columnist for Diken and Al Monitor
Former Turkey Correspondent for The Economist

Reception, Meet the Awardees
6:30 P.M.

Dinner and Program
7:30 P.M.

Mistress of Ceremonies
Anaide Nahikian
Leader, Advanced Training Program
on Humanitarian Action at Harvard
Humanitarian Initiative

Entertainment
Black Sea Salsa

For reservations please call Aram Arkun (917) 743-9005 (cell) Email: tcadirector@aol.com
Tellalian Speaks in Washington on Armenian Heritage Park of Boston

WASHINGTON – Donald J. Tellalian, the principal architect of Boston’s Armenian Heritage Park, spoke on September 12 at St. Mary Armenian Church Cultural Hall with more than fifty community members in attendance.

In her introduction, the master of ceremonies, Mrs. Leda Zenian, said, “The Boston Armenian community, led by the Boston chapters of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, accomplished an extraordinary project under the leadership of our guest, Donald Tellalian. They built a genocide memorial in the heart of Boston, diplomatically called “Armenian Heritage Park,” which was officially opened in 2012 by the foreign minister of the Republic of Armenia and the governor of Massachusetts. The whole project cost 6.5 million dollars. All Armenian organizations—namely more than 35 of them—worked together and raised the funds under the guidance of Barbara Chrakian Tellalian, the wife of our guest speaker, who is also present here with us.”

Donald J. Tellalian, (MA), recently retired, was the founding principal of Tellalian Associates Architects & Planners, LLC, a Boston based firm whose projects include several preeminent cultural, educational and historic institutions. Among his many projects are the Museum of National Heritage, Lexington, Mass.; Harvard’s cultural, educational and historic institutions; Design of Environments for Art, A Study of Museums and Exhibit throughout Italy; the technical aspect of building the Armenian Heritage Park, which he took the audience back in time to 2002, and shared with a slide show presentation the history, the politics, and the technical aspect of building the Armenian Heritage Park in an affluent and strategic location in Boston. Tearing down the Route 93 elevated highway and building under it the tunnel called “the Big Dig” gave ample space for beautification of downtown Boston, which became called The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. All major communities, including the Greeks, Jews, Italians and Arabs, wanted to build cultural centers on that land, but all failed. Only the Armenian community succeeded. Two Armenian legislators at the Massachusetts State Legislature, Peter Koutoujian and Rachel Kaprielian, helped pass legislation granting the Armenian community a parcel of land to commemorate the Armenian Genocide. Then, through multiple layers of collaboration among governmental personnel as well as Armenian organizations, the Heritage Park became a reality.

The Armenian Heritage Park contains an abstract sculpture, a split dodecahedron, which changes configuration every April, for 25 years. The sculpture is seated on a reflecting pool consisting of the representation of the nine lost “vilayets” or provinces of Western Armenia, with water pouring as tears from them. Those tears then reemerge as a single jet of water in the adjacent Labyrinth. The Park Foundation has many endowed funds, the principal being the K. George and Dr. Carolann S. Najarian Endowed Fund Lecture on Human Rights at Faneuil Hall in memory of Dr. Najarian’s father, Avedis Abrahamian.

Fr. Hovsep Karapetyan, pastor of St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church of Washington, D.C. in his closing remarks congratulated Tellalian for his historic achievement and wished that the Armenian community of Greater Washington can one day be able to construct such a historical monument. The evening ended with a reception where guests were able to enjoy Mr. and Mrs. Tellalian’s presence.
Halide Adivar Edib on Komitas

By Meliné Karakashian, PhD

Halide Adivar Edib on Komitas

EXHIBITION DEDICATED TO AYVAZOVSKY’S 200TH ANNIVERSARY OPENS AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ARMENIA

VAREN (Panorama.am) - An exhibition entitled “Hovhannes Aivazovsky Creation” opened at the National Gallery of Armenia (NGA) on September 14, depicting the great Armenian painter’s artistic path based on the works preserved in the NGAs painting and graphic collections and in various archives.

The opening ceremony was attended by Minister of Culture Arman Apyan, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, Minister of Science and Education Levon Mertchyan, Ambassador Mikhail Shvidkoy, the Russian Federation (RF) President’s special representative on cultural cooperation and RF Foreign Ministry special envoy, and other high-ranking officials.

The exhibition for the first time displays the prominent painting “Chaos Creation” of the World from the collection of the Melkstatar Congregation in Venice. The exhibition will continue until January 18, 2018.

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of the worldfamous seascape painter Aivazovsky. The anniversary is included in UNESCO’s list of memorable dates in 2017.

Apart from the exhibition, an international conference “Borders of Marine Art” dedicated to this anniversary was held in the fresco hall of the National Gallery of Armenia on September 15-16.

Director of the State Russian Museum Vladimir Gusev declared there that “It is a great honor and privilege to participate at this conference, considering the fact that Aivazovsky is your. The State Russian Museum is updating its website, collateral, program and gallery design.

Museum is updating its website, collateral, program and gallery design. The exhibition, curated by Jennifer Liston-Munson, includes excerpts from a film by Nubar Alexanian and photographs by Nubar Alexanian. Scars of Silence chronicles an Armenian-American father and daughter as they embark on a journey to their ancestral homeland as a powerful act of reparative resistance. The work reveals the legacy of the Armenian Genocide (1915-1923), bringing to the surface the profound consequences of Turkish denial—psychological and political—that have contributed to the subconscious suppression of loss for three generations, and offers a timely and provocative personal account of what it means to be Armenian.

The Armenian Museum’s newly appointed director of exhibitions and creative services, Jennifer Liston Munson (also an artist and designer at the MFA) came upon the project while viewing photos at Project SAVE, Armenian Photograph Archives (also based in Watertown). When Nubar and Jennifer met, a dynamic collaboration began as they connected conceptually and aesthetically with a shared vision to link the legacy of the past to the present. Houses of identity, loss, and reclamation reveal only a deeply personal narrative to create an intimate exhibition that allows the viewer to linger and contemplate notions of assessment and belonging.

“WATERTOWN – The Armenian Museum of America has announced a new special exhibition, titled Scars of Silence, to open this fall in the Adele and Haig Der Manuelian gallery on the third floor of the museum.

The Armenian Museum is launching a new branding campaign with the opening of this exhibition under the leadership of Michele Kolligian, president of the board of trustees, the museum is upgrading its website, collateral, program and gallery design.

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“We hope to invite new audiences to the Museum as well as those who haven’t visited in a while to share this important work with Armenian Americans as well as others touched by loss and renewal,” said Munson.

Nubar Alexanian is an acclaimed photojournalist and filmmaker who for the past 40 years has worked for magazines in the US and Europe, including Life Magazine, The New York Times Magazine, Fortune, Geo, Time, Newsweek, and National Geographic. His production company, Walker Creek Media LLC, was created in 2006 and produces short documentary films for nonprofit organizations.

Abby Alexanian is a nonprofit social impact consultant in Boston and recently received an MBA and Master in Public Policy from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.

Jennifer Liston Munson is an artist and designer whose work is held in many private and corporate collections. She is the senior exhibition graphic designer at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and is the director of exhibitions and creative services at the Armenian Museum of America. Since 2001, she has collaborated with museums and galleries to create over 70 world-class special exhibitions and permanent galleries for museums, galleries, and private collections.

The Armenian Museum of America houses and preserves objects of art and culture collected from Armenian families and donors from see MUSEUM, page 13

Armenian Museum of America Presents New Exhibition, Launches New Brand and Identity

ARTS & LIVING

Halide Adivar Edib on Komitas

By Meliné Karakashian, PhD


I read Edib’s Memoirs again in my research for a project on Armenian women writers. Edib was a prominent Armenian-Turkish woman writer, with 21 novels, four short story collections, two dramas, one collection of poems, and four scholarly works and a two-volume autobiography. Halide Edib was the daughter of Sultan Abdul Hamid’s secretary, Edibe Bey. She attended a Christian Greek school and was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciating tolerance, according to the introduction to her Memoirs. Halide Edib was raised appreciate
Halide Adivar Edib on Komitas

**KOMITAS, from page 12**

Armenian youth and was considered a great leader among the Armenians.”

Edib is correct in that Komitas knew Turkish well; however, she is incorrect in stating that Komitas had collected his music in Constantinople. By the time Komitas moved to Constantinople in 1910, he had already collected ed rustic songs in Armenia and Western Armenia or Anatolia. Edib continues: “As he appeared in the long black coat of the priest, his dark face as naïve as any simple Anatolian’s, and his eyes full of the pathos and longing which his voice expressed in its pure strong notes, I felt him an embodiment of Anatolian folklore and music.”

“The airs were the ones I had often heard our servants from Kemah and Erzeroum sing. He had simply turned the words into Armenian. I did not pay any attention to the language; I had simply turned the words into Armenian. Servants from Kemah and Erzeroum sing.”

Komitas, in his autobiography dated June 24, 1908 states clearly: “I was born on September 23, 1915, at the Ojak, at the conclusion of Komitas’s performance, the audience composed of Turkish and non-Turkish music-loving society had sighed; some had shouted, “May God protect him from the evil eye.” [Karakashian, p. 93].”

The speaker of the day had stressed that the child of Anatolya, the Armenian priest, through his dedication and hard work had given wings to Armenian music, presenting the folk songs he collected as Armenian national heritage, while Turkish cler-
gym had not done that.

Komitas continued his work until his imprison-ment on April 23, 1915.

Edib wrote further: “Goumitas came from Kutahia and was of very poor parents. They had never done a great harm to the Turk by him. Youssouf Akchura also came, prompted interested in his personality and came to hear his music and songs.”

As a man and as an artist Goumitas was of a pure and beautiful simplicity with which he taught the Armenians, might well have been imitated by other nationalists. His way of expressing Anatolia both in song and in feeling was profoundly worth hearing.

And referring to an encounter after his exile, in 1915, Edib writes: “Goumitas one day sang an Ave Maria in Armenian which belonged to the sixth century, a thing of rare mystical beauty; and the utter ecstasy and religious emotion of the air so fascinated me that I asked him if he had set any of the Psalms to music.”

“Yes,” he said, “the one-hundred-and-first.”

“At the first note of the Ave Maria… I felt that the air had none of the sacred and humble beauty of the Ave Maria… I was moved and made me feel strange. I instinctively took the Bible from the bookcase near me and found the last stanzas of Psalm 1010, ‘I will early destroy all the wicked of the land: that I may cut off all the wicked doers from the city of the Lord.’”

It was the cry of the hatred and vengeance of his soul for my people… In 1915 the Ojak generously used its influence to have him spared from deportation, but in 1916 he had a serious disturbance in his mind, which gave way under the strain of those horrible times. Dr. Adrian Beglari Takas Hairi allowed him to go to Paris for a cure, and this was accorded to him in an asylum.”

My book, of course, presents the events differently as we know through research.

**Armenian Museum of America Presents New Exhibition, Launches New Brand and Identity**

MUSEUM, from page 12 around the world. The Museum holds its collection in trust for future generations as objects of witness and survival to serve as a record of Armenian creativity, ingenuity, and wisdom for those who are familiar with Armenian history and culture, as well as for those to whom these objects, manuscripts, and ephemera are a new experience.

The Armenian Museum is launching a new branding campaign with the opening of this exhibition. Under the new leadership of Michele Kolligian, president of the museum’s board of trustees, the museum is updating its website, collateral, programming, and gallery displays.

“We were inspired by the circular Armenian symbol of eternity to create our new logo and we hope our new fresh look will help to engage visitors of all cultures to explore our collection of precious objects and special exhibitions,” read a part of a statement released by the museum, to the Armenian-museum.org or call 617 926-2562 ext. 4.
Matenadaran Publishes New Volume of Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts

YEPEVAN — Yerevan’s Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (the Matenadaran) published volume IX of The General Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of the Mashtots Matenadaran. The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) sponsored the publication of this volume, as part of its mission to preserve and promote Armenian heritage and culture.

This volume is comprised of overviews of 300 manuscripts from the 11th to 19th centuries, No. 2701-3000, mainly from the well-known New Collection. All manuscripts are of a particular scholarly and artistic value. Over 20 manuscripts that include correspondence of Catholicoi of All Armenians, Primates of Dioceses and prominent clergymen from the 18th to 19th centuries serve as primary sources of Armenian history of the same period. It is a major publication for scholars of Armenian and the Middle Eastern studies as well as related fields.

Acting Director of the Matenadaran Vahan Ter-Ghevondyan; editor of Volume IV Karen Matevosyan and Deputy Director of AGBU Armenia Hovig Eordekian delivered welcome speeches during the catalogue presentation in July 2017. “We are delighted to support the publication of this monumental catalogue for the benefit of academic circles, philologists and the ones interested in our manuscripts to study their historical and cultural values,” said Eordekian.

The Matenadaran houses around 300,000 documents, over 100,000 books and 17,000 manuscripts. Researchers and tourists travel from all over the world to see its national treasures, including the Gospel of Lazarus and Hakob Meghapat’s Parzatumar, one of the first Armenian books ever printed.

This initiative is one of many ways AGBU has supported the Matenadaran over the years. AGBU also financed the publication of volume III of The General Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of the Mashtots Matenadaran and Herald of the Matenadaran (Honor Matenadaran) an academic periodical. Acknowledging the need to advance Armenian Studies, AGBU also provides scholarships to doctoral students working in the Matenadaran.

Son of Vladimir Putin’s Billionaire Pal Ties Knot with His Glamorous Bride in ‘Magical’ Wedding Ceremony in Moscow

By Zoey McDougall

MOSCOW (mirror.co.uk) – The son of Vladimir Putin’s billionaire pal has tied the knot with his very glamorous bride at a lavish wedding ceremony in Moscow. The ceremony and reception saw groom Karen Karapetyan wed his bride named only as Lilit with over 200 guests watching.

Unfortunately, the president of Russia did not make it to the “magical” day, but other guests enjoyed food, drinks and dancing at one of Moscow’s most prestigious venues.

Karen is the son of Samvel Karapetyan, 52, believed to be the world’s richest Armenian, though he now runs businesses mainly in Russia. The owner of the Tashir Group property company, Karapetyan Senior is believed to be worth 2.9 billion pounds, according to Forbes.

His son’s wedding was at Moscow’s Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Armenian Apostolic Church before a reception at the Safos banquet hall. The party, attended by around 200 guests, was decorated with flowers, candles and threads of dangling glass beads sparkling under the lights.

Notable guests included Russian President Vladimir Putin’s spin doctor Dmitry Peskov, 49, his wife the Olympic ice dance gold medalist Tatiana Navka, 42, and starlet Vera Brezhneva, 35, once named as Russia’s Sexiest Woman. Putin’s goddaughter Ksenia Sobchak hosted the evening, also attended by President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan, 63.

Bride Lilit had two dresses for the day, picking one with a rich skirt for the ceremony and a simpler one for the cake-cutting and dancing. The wedding cake was immense and decorated with fresh flowers.

If the aim was to impress, the wedding had the right effect on social media users. One said: “This is so cool! Pikniks of rich guys are so lucky, she got such a magical wedding.”

Another, known as Solie, wrote: “This gorgeous wedding gown. I am blown away.” And a third added: “This was such a fantastic wedding. The bride is so pretty, her dress is a ‘killer’. Wishing you a lifetime of happiness.”

Recipe Corner

Fresh Mint and Parsley Salad

**INGREDIENTS**

- 3 cups coarsely chopped fresh mint
- 2 cups chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 2 medium tomatoes, seeded and diced or 10-12 cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 3-4 Persian cucumbers, cut into chunks
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 medium red or white onion, sliced thinly
- 1 medium green or red bell pepper, sliced thinly
- 1 bunch scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced (white and light green parts)
- 1/2 cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- Kosher or sea salt and coarse black pepper, dash of paprika, sumac or cayenne pepper
- Olive oil, fresh lemon juice, red wine or balsamic vinegar
- Chopped pistachios or sliced almonds as garnish
- Crumbled feta cheese as garnish

**PREPARATION:**

In a medium bowl, combine the mint, parsley, tomatoes, cucumbers, garlic, onions, bell pepper, scallions, and olives, and toss. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt, pepper, spices, and lemon juice or choice of red wine or balsamic vinegar, and toss again.

Sprinkle with pistachios, almonds or crumbled feta cheese, if desired, and serve. This salad may be made a day ahead of time, covered and chilled. Serves 4.

*Christine’s recipes have been published in the Fresno Bee newspaper, Sunset magazine, Cooking Light magazine, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>*
US-Funded Areni Cave Preservation Project Completed

ARENİ, Armenia (Panorama.am) – On September 19, US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills, Jr. and Minister of Culture Armen Amiryan attended a ceremony celebrating the completion of the Areni Cave preservation project funded by the US State Department’s Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP). The American grant funded installation of a protective fence, lighting, and pathways to protect the important finds while supporting tourism and continuing conservation of the site.

“We as humans share a common story. Armenians, Americans, no matter where you are from, it is ancient cultural sites, like the Areni Cave, that help us understand our intertwined history. That is why the US government’s Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation supports efforts like the preservation work here in Areni,” said Mills.

As the US Embassy had previously reported, the recent discoveries at Areni had led to more tourists visiting the site. This flock of tourists eventually came to endanger any unfound objects and potentially interfered with ongoing archeology. Therefore, the US government stepped in with its $52,870 grant, awarded in 2013.

Mills declared at the ceremony: “We are not only protecting the finds that will be made here tomorrow. We are also building Armenia’s future, allowing sustainable and protective tourist visits to the site, and helping to stimulate Armenia’s economy by strengthening options available for tourists. With the paths and lighting installed now, thanks to the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, visitors can see the home of these unique artifacts without trampling on tomorrow’s discoveries.”

Ambassador Mills and the Minister of Culture Armen Amiryan were joined at Areni Cave by the Embassy’s Armenian partners who worked on the preservation, including Boris Gasparyan and experts from the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography, led by Director Pavel Avetisyan.

The US Embassy stated that since 2015, ten sites in Armenia have been funded through the AFCP, totaling $923,000. These include grants to create a climate controlled storage space for the Armenian National Film and Photo Archive, preservation of khachkars at the Noratus Medieval Cemetery, the reinforcement of a medieval bridge in the Garni Gorge, and the moving and renovation of two murals in Gyumri, one by Rafael Atoyan and another by Hakob Hakobyan. A major restoration of the St. Hovhannes Church in Meghri, with its amazing medieval frescos, is also ongoing thanks to the AFCP.

“The fact that so many projects in Armenia are funded by the highly competitive U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation speaks to two facts. First, it shows Armenia has a valued place in our shared human history. And second, it speaks well to the close partnership and support we find here with our Armenian partners,” Ambassador Mills said.

While in Areni, Ambassador Mills announced the latest project to be funded by the AFCP, a $143,000 grant to continue restoration and preservation work at the Dashtadem fortress. Building on a grant awarded in 2013, the latest funding will allow archaeological excavations and restoration of the inner surrounding wall of the fortress.
OCTOBER 26 — Annual Fall Dinner and Drawing sponsored by the Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club. 6:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. All are invited, and you must be a member of the 1000 Club to join us for a delicious lish kebab and pilaf dinner; $9.99 per person; tickets on sale at the door. Deadline for tickets is October 19th. For more info, call Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632, or email church.office@holytrinitychurch.org.


NOVEMBER 3 — 85th Anniversary Benefit Gala of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator. The first English-language Armenian newspaper in the United States. Boston Marriott Hotel, 2345 Commonwealth Ave, Newton, MA. Reception, Meet the Awardees at 6:30 PM; Dinner and Program, 7:30 PM. 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award to Robert Fisk, Journalist, Middle East correspondent for The Independent newspaper in London. Reception at 6:30 PM; Dinner and Program at 7:30 PM. 2017 Excellence Awards to David Barnasian, founder and director of Alternative Radio in Beirut, Lebanon, and Amberin Zaman, columnist for Diken and Al Monitor, former Turkey correspondent for The Financial Times of London.

NOVEMBER 10 — Benefit dinner for Armenian Tree Project and the Kanayan family. Armenian Tree Project’s 100th anniversary living memorial to General Dro and the Battle of Bash Aparan, presented by the Armenian Tree Project and the Kanayan family. Armenian Social Club, 333 Amory St., Somerville. Tickets are $30, $40 and $50 with discounted rates available for cash and prizes. For more info, visit www.hye-pointe.com/sibil or call 617-926-0171.

NOVEMBER 12 — From Armenia to Boston for the first time. Beloved singer RUBEN SASUNIAN, live in concert with the Saat Nova Dance Company, to celebrate Armenia’s Independence Day, with its 30th anniversary production of “The Journey continues...” At Centennial Hall of Haverford School, 450 Lancaster Ave., Haverford. Saturday, 7 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are going fast so please reserve your seats ASAP. For tickets, call Ana Torosian at 610.659.7839, Alina Ashjian at 617.852.1816 or email sayatnovadancecompany@gmail.com. Tickets are $30, $40 and $50 with discounted rates available for groups of 20 or more.
It is ironic that thus far, it has been easier to mobilize that force against Armenia rather than for it. The drop in the amounts raised during various telethons benefitting the country is a testament to that adverse fact. Unfortunately, the church in Armenia and in the Diaspora cannot be counted on as a political actor, like it is in Russia and Georgia. The Armenian presence in Europe and especially in France is more visible politically. The fact that almost all presidents in France – from François Mitterand to Jacques Chirac, Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande – have appealed to the Armenian community for votes is a testimony to that power. One of the more active groups in Europe is the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy, headed by Hilda Chobanian. Effective advocacy is carried out by this group in Brussels and in other European centers.

Armenian political groups almost always operate independent of other similar groups if not in direct competition with each other. In France, that trend has been tamed and opposing Armenian groups work under the umbrella of the Coordination Committee of Organizations in France (CCAF), headed by Ara Toranian and Mourad Papian.

More recently, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) launched an advocacy program for human rights in Europe headed by Nadia Gortzounian and Nicolas Davidian. Other individual groups and parties have also been in the lobbying business elsewhere in Europe – in Switzerland, Germany, Greece and the Scandinavian countries. The coordination of the activities of these groups with Armenia’s foreign policy establishment is questionable. Most of the times, Armenia’s embassies in those countries fail to perform coordinating roles.

Turkey and Azerbaijan

Turkey and Azerbaijan have laid a blockade around Armenia and they represent an existential threat to the latter. Armenia has no other choice but to use frontal diplomacy with these two countries. Azerbaijan is a multi-ethnic society comprising Kurds, Turks, Kurds and other minorities which have been oppressed and many of their leaders languished in jail. There is no policy in place in Armenia to speak in defense of those persecuted minorities which could become political assets eventually.

Turkey’s case is different. Ongoing enemies of the Armenians, the Kurds have become allies through necessity. Sooner or later, a Kurdish state will emerge within Turkey’s current borders either as an independent country or an autonomous region. Kurdistan claims cover part of historic Armenia. Armenians may not be entitled to share a piece of those Kurdish lands but according to the ANA and other similar groups if not in direct competition with each other. The ANA derives its strength from its regional branches and as its headquarters.

Since 1970, the Armenian Assembly of America has also emerged as a strong advocacy group. At this time, its leadership is comprised of lawyers, namely Aram Harootunian and Van Krikorian, with Bryan Ardouny serving as executive director. Seldom do these groups seem to cooperate; instead most of the time they seem to be competitors, trying to score points against each other.

With the influx of immigrants from Armenia to the US, a potential for political action has been created, especially in Southern California. It is a potential which is being used by individual politicians and local councils. This potential still remains mostly untapped. It represents a challenge for the traditional political parties and advocacy groups to energize and politicize that massive immigrant population.
New Stalinist Cult in Armenia?

By Hayk Demoyan

It seems that a pro-Stalinist flavor is seeping through Armenian official policy, and recent public discussion on television and social networks on the renaming of Armenia’s capital city Tbilisi and the closure of the “Eclipse” exhibition hosted by the Home/Museum of Hojahvans Tumanyan in Yerevan, indicates dangerous developments in cultural and memory policies in Armenia. Shortly after halting the exhibition, Deputy Minister of Culture Anahit Amoyan said in a formal statement, saying that such an exhibition on Stalinist purges is “a little bit political.” What exactly does it mean to be “a little bit political” in the case of a museum exhibition, or what should be reviewed to allow it to be opened again? She did not specify. Instead, no clear and sound explanations were given as to why three weeks after its opening the ministry suddenly decided to stop it.

Those examples are not a simple illustration of the new identity crisis Armenia faces. This is not even a usual example of censors taking over Armenia since its formal independence. It is rather bold evidence of mixed signals on Armenia’s future internal and external political preferences and the disastrous consequences to be expected.

My experience with neo-Stalinist initiatives are in part known and unknown over the last three years. Many remember the episode of 2016, when with the fall of the Mikoyan’s statue in downtown Yerevan. In 2013, being a member of the Yerevan city council (magarag), I voted against such a decision, though, it was finally implemented unanimously. Under heavy pressure from the public and descendants of the victims of Stalinist crimes, the implementation of this decision however was halted, and the Mikoyan decision was put in one of the central squares of Yerevan mysteriously disappeared.

Another example was in December 2016, when with the help of the Ministry of Culture rather than to engage in verbal gymnastics in Yerevan, I made a suggestion to the Ministry of Communication and Transport of the Republic of Armenia and Haypost to issue a special postal stamp for 2017 in memory of victims of Stalinist crimes. My offer was accepted and put on the list of stamps confirmed to be issued this year. However, Aysel Tugluk, the former chairman of the board due to corruption concerning Haypost (the private Armenian national postal company), I found out that my offer was simply removed from the list, and replaced in 2017.

I assume that the decision of stopping the exhibition connoting Stalin period purges certainly was made on the high-level of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia. However, the Ministry of Culture rather than to engage in verbal gymnastics, instead, it is a chief editor of the International Journal of Armenian Studies. His opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author. This is the first in an ongoing series of opinion pieces in Armenian governmental relations. It is not Armenia’s enemies, Turkey and Azerbaijan, knowing full well that their exercises are directed against Armenia.

By Raffi Bedrosyan

Just when one thinks of the level of hatred and intolerance in Turkey toward minorities cannot get any worse, something that happens: something surpasses even the worst incidents of the past.

Ayad Tajkung, formerly a human rights activist, is a member of parliament for the province of Van in Turkey from the pro-Kurdish People’s Democratic Party (HDK). Along with the two co-presidents of the party, other fellow politicians, he was arrested and kept in jail, without trial, until after May 30, 2016, based on charges of “supporting a terror organization,” although there is no evidence of any links to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). Tajkung was sentenced to four years to life in prison, including Euro-Turkish American official relations. It is not Armenia’s enemies, Turkey and Azerbaijan, knowing full well that their exercises are directed against Armenia.

Georgian Challenge

Armenia has very special and sensitive relations with Georgia, with the other Christian nation in the region. But the Georgians always side with Armenia’s enemies. Turkey and Azerbaijan, knowing full well that their exercises are directed against Armenia.

 Diaspora: A Function of Armenia’s Foreign Policy

Diaspora, from page 18

Upur Lars cousins’ gate, the only passage from Armenia to Russia, is a cul-de-sac, or isolated extreme, one of Russia’s most troubled regions.

Javakhk Armenians are persecuted by the Azerbaijanis, as well as government-sanctioned plunderers and attackers. The fanatics who attacked Hatur Tagkung’s grave, shouting “This is not an Armenian cemetery,” obviously do not remember that the entire Turkish lands had become a graveyard for the Armenians one hundred years ago. Unknown Armenians grow little have long disappeared, and the known ones are still deliberately being destroyed, such as the one in Lake Van where toilets and changing cabins were recently installed over the Armenian cemetery.

Nothing toward ‘The Other’ in Turkey

Hunting for treasures in Armenian graveyards is still rampant, with even treasures created during the Armenian alphabet and signs for potentially rich findings in the area.

After eliminating the main “Others,” the Georgians, in the Pontic and Aegean regions in the early 1920s, it was the turn of the Istanbul “Greeks.” “Others” lived in 1955 to be attacked, again on a September night. Ultra-nationalists mowed those houses, shops and churches of the Greek minority in Istanbul’s Küçükçekmece district, the Acatip’s house museum in Thessaloniki, Greece. All 73 Greek churches in Istanbul were burnt, more than 5000 Greeks fleeing from hundreds of Greeks murdered, several hundred Greek women raped, and two Greek priests forcibly circumcision. Greek cemeteries were also attacked and newly buried bodies removed in search of gold teeth.

Years later, it was revealed that it was Turkish government intelligence forces who planted the bomb at Kemal Atatürk’s house, for five days terror and humiliation, the attacking mobs in trucks, as well as supplied them with wooden clubs, all one standard size. The majority of the Greek “Others” just left Turkey after this incident.

So, now the main “Others” in Turkey are the Kurds and the Alevi. However, one hundred years of brainwashing, indoctrination in schools and mosques still keeps hatred alive against the Armenians. Therefore, attacks or insults on Kurds and Alevi must also include the sworn enemies of the “Turkey for Turks” party. When the core of this movement was formed and expressed through ultra-nationalist groups it was still called “Turkey for Turks.” However, Hatun Tajkung from Dersim did have Armenian roots, perhaps not. But that is not the issue, as long as they still attempt to deny the Armenian identity to include all the remaining “Others.”

For a few years, until two years ago, the Turkish government allowed the construction of mosques, Turkish rights, tolerance and equality for minorities and all “Others,” promoting peace and ending the war with the Kurds. The term “Turkey for Turks” was replaced with “Turkey for all citizens” for a few short years. But now, Turkey can be defined as “Turkey for all citizens,” but to remove her mother’s coffin from the grave, and decided to have her body’s body travelled to Dersim, Aysel went back into jail.

The level of intolerance and hatred displayed during this incident is in part due to the fact that the living person defined as “the Other,” that is non-Turk, non-Sunni Moslem, will be subjected to discrimination, insults and even physical attacks. This incident indicates that the dosage of attacks has now reached dead people. There is no question that the attack was organized and planned, with the mob arriving just in time equipped with a tractor and prepared with all kinds of instruments, and obviously condoning by the state or deep state. The governor of Ankara minimized the incident as a question of removing a few drunken persons. The Minister of Interior posed with one of the attackers, both smiling, after the incident. All attackers were released after questioning.

In 1915, the main “Others” were the Armenians, who were almost wiped out with the genocide, resulting in huge transfer of wealth, land, property to the government, as well as government-sanctioned plunderers and attackers. The fanatics who attacked Hatur Tajkung’s grave, shouting “This is not an Armenian cemetery,” obviously do not remember that the entire Turkish lands had become a graveyard for the Armenians one hundred years ago. Unknown Armenians grow little have long disappeared, and the known ones are still deliberately being destroyed, such as the one in Lake Van where toilets and changing cabins were recently installed over the Armenian cemetery.

Turkey can be defined as “Turkey for Turks,” President Erdogan.” Hrant Dink once said: “Yes, we have our eyes on these lands, but not to take them away. We want these lands so that we can be buried under them.” It seems that even what cannot be tolerated by the Turks for the Others’.

(Raffi Bedrosyan is a civil engineer and concert pianist, living in Toronto, Canada. He has donated concert and CD proceedings to infrastructure projects in Armenia and Karabakh, in which he has also participated as an engineer. He helped organize the commemoration of Surp Gregos Diyarbakir/Dokhanian Church and the first Armenian church of church properties in Anatolia since 1915. He gave the first piano concert in the church since 1915.)
By Harut Sassounian

Americana Executives and ANCA Meet to Resolve a Contentious Relationship

Representatives of the Armenian National Committee of America and senior executives of the Americana shopping mall in Glendale met on September 5 and agreed to put their future relationship on a more positive footing.

This was the first meeting in more than a dozen years between the two groups, precipitated by the refusal of Americana to give a paid advertising space on its billboard for "Architects of Denial," an Armenian Genocide documentary. The producers of the documentary were told by Americana that the subject was "too political." This was a puzzling and irritating response since Americana had seen neither the documentary nor the text of the display ad that was being rejected simply because it was about the Armenian Genocide.

After several attempts asking Americana officials to explain the true reason for rejecting the display ad, they became even more adamant in their refusal. The most insinuating sentence in one of their emails to the documentary producers was that Americana had received comments on this controversy "ranging from the Armenian community to the Turkish Consulate." This highly offensive statement was equating the voices of descendants of the Armenian Genocide to that of a Turkish diplomat who represents a denialist autocratic regime the predecessors of which had committed the Genocide!

To make matters worse, this was not the first time that Americana had taken a negative position on an Armenian Genocide-related issue. Three years ago, Americana officials had refused to allow three young Armenians who had leased a kiosk from Americana to sell T-shirts that carried texts related to the Armenian Genocide. After an outcry from the local Armenian community, Americana reversed its decision allowing the sale of the T-shirts. They called their initial decision "a misunderstanding."

In a similar development last month, shortly before the Glendale Chapter of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) had called a press conference in the public portion of Americana grounds to support a boycott, Americana officials reversed themselves, not only allowing the display ad for the documentary, but showcasing it "at no cost to the producers."

This was a positive first step. Americana's owner, Rick Caruso, agreed to meet with the Armenian National Committee of America to discuss how to improve relations between the local community and the shopping mall.

Mr. Caruso attended the September 5 meeting along with Americana's Executive Vice President of Operations Jackie Levy, Executive Vice President of Communications Nancy Murray, Senior Vice President of Community Relations Rick Lemme and Senior Vice President of Planning, Government and Community Relations Sharin Beyer. The Armenian delegation consisted of ANCA-Glendale Chair Artin Manoukian, ANCA Western Regional Director Elen Asatryan, ANCA Glendale Community Outreach Director Margarita Baghadyan.

The September 5 meeting proceeded in a cordial atmosphere. Mr. Caruso agreed to take concrete steps to improve the shopping mall's relationship with the local Armenian community. Americana promised to form a special community relations team to focus exclusively on its partnership with Armenians.

"We are pleased that Mr. Caruso has agreed to work on initiatives to improve relations with the Armenian American community and regain our trust and confidence," stated ANCA-Glendale Chairman Artin Manoukian.

In turn, Jackie Levy, Americana's Executive Vice President of Operations announced, "We value the very productive meeting with the ANCA-Glendale leadership and look forward to strengthening our relationship, which includes continuing to celebrate our deep appreciation for the Armenian community. Establishing this new community relations team will ensure that our partnership will continue in a very meaningful way."

Thus, a longstanding contentious relationship between Americana and the Glendale Armenian community is in the process of being resolved amicably. Mr. Caruso, the owner of Americana, was very gracious in his remarks at the meeting and spoke very positively about Armenians. In the coming months, there will be more contacts between the two sides to come up with plans to strengthen their cooperation so that the disputes are resolved through friendly discussions rather than resorting to protests and boycotts.

More than two dozen Armenians and non-Armenians appeared at the Glendale City Council meeting to complain about Americana's initial rejection of the display ad. To their surprise, the five member City Council members, led by Mayor Vartan Charapetian, supported the community's demands and were present during ANCA's press conference at Americana. Also supporting the Armenian community was California State Senator Anthony Portantino who played a major role in helping to resolve the controversy and attend the ANCA press conference.

The resolution of this controversial issue indicates the importance of community participation and activism in matters that affect Armenian Americans.

Turks Deny All Evidence of Genocide; Azeris Deny Any Evidence of Corruption

reported that the Azeri government had used its influence to prevent any advertising space on its billboard for "Architects of Denial," an Armenian Genocide documentary. The producers of the documentary were told by Americana that the subject was "too political." This was a puzzling and irritating response since Americana had seen neither the documentary nor the text of the display ad that was being rejected simply because it was about the Armenian Genocide.

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For over a century, no matter what evidence is presented to the Turkish government about their guilt as perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide, they always claim it is fake and deny the facts.

Similarly, despite all evidence presented to Azeri leaders about their misuse of billions of dollars for bribery and corrupt practices, they always deny the facts and blame Armenians, other countries, and certain individuals who are supposed to be against them.

Last week was no exception. The Guardian and dozens of newspapers worldwide reported that the Azeri government had paid around $3 billion in bribery to many individuals and institutions throughout Europe from 2012 to 2014. The Guardian reported that there were more than 16,000 such transactions. In this major scandal, not only the Azeri government is guilty of corruption but also all those European officials who took the bribe to carry out illegal favors for the Azeri regime.

What the Guardian describes as the "Azerbaijan Launderdom" involves "a scheme to curry influence, pay lobbyists, and buy support from the Armenian diaspora and the international media. "Azerbaijan's president," said the stories by the Guardian and other media partners were a smear. Hasanov said the regime was the victim of a "scandalous campaign" organized by British intelligence, the Armenian diaspora and the USA, according to the Guardian. Hasanov blamed certain circles who are "controlled by the funds of the Armenian diaspora in the West, in particular the US." Furthermore, the Azeri government blocked access to the website of the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCORP), which had published the details of the "Azerbaijan Launderdom," following a leak of data to the Danish newspaper Berlingske.

UK Prime Minister Theresa May announced last week that the National Crime Agency will investigate the leak to the Danish newspaper Berlingske. The Guardian commented that the report proves that the Azeri regime falsified "its claims that the EU companies linked to Armenian Americans are involved in corruption and that they do not know about the original source of the funds."

By Harut Sassounian

Scottish limited partnerships, Hilox Services and Polux Management, overseen by agents in the British Virgin Islands. Who are some of the beneficiaries of these illegally transferred funds? According to the Guardian, "one of them is Luca Volonte, the Italian former chair of the Center-Right People's party's group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Volonte was among PACE delegates who controversially voted against a 2013 report criticizing Azerbaijan's human rights record. The leaked data shows he received more than $2 million. He has been indicted in Italy for money laundering and corruption amid an investigation of what has been dubbed 'caviar diplomacy.' He denies any wrongdoing."

Another high-profile beneficiary, according to the Guardian, is "Edward Lintner, a former German Member of Parliament with the Christian Social Union... Between 2012 and 2014, when he was no longer an MP, his foundation received €189,000. The cash included €61,000 payment made two weeks after Lintner sentenced Azerbaijan as an election observer. He praised the poll as up to German standards. He says the payments were for legitimate work, and that he did not personally benefit from the money or know about the original source of the funds."
We write on behalf of the Workshop for Armenian-Turkish Scholarship and the Lepsiushaus Potsdam to express our deep concern about recent efforts by Turkish authorities to prevent scholars based in that country from participating in a conference in Berlin entitled “Past in the Present: European Approaches to the Armenian Genocide.” We consider such actions to be an attack on free speech and academic freedom, indeed, to extend such intellectual repression beyond the borders of Turkey. We share the concern of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) of North America that such actions seriously and scandalously damage scholarship and the free exchange of knowledge.

The Workshop on Armenian-Turkish Scholarship (WATS) is a series of international academic workshops, founded at the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan in 2000 as the “first forum where Turkish, Armenian, and other scholars could create a community of Turkish, Kurdish, Armenian, and other scholars to conduct an informed debate” relating issues surrounding the fate of Ottoman Armenians, an event generally accepted as the Armenian Genocide. Despite the efforts of Turkish nationalists who deny the established facts of history, the latest workshop, the tenth in the series, took place on 15-18 September at the European Academy Berlin, co-organized by the University of Michigan, USC Dornsife Institute of Armenian Studies, and Lepsiushaus Potsdam, under the auspices of Dr. Martina Munch, Minister for Science, Research, and Culture of the State of Brandenburg.

The conference has come under sustained attack by Turkish ultra-nationalist political circles in Turkey and Germany. Long-time deniers of the Armenian Genocide in the international arena declared that the conference will “serve imperialism and the interests of Kurdistan” and framed the Kurdish issue as forming “the second Israel,” clearly an anti-Semitic slur.

We consider that a democratic society requires a free exchange of ideas, and such pressure on academics in Turkey has already had a chilling effect on university scholars, who have in the last decades helped to build up a high level of academic professionalism and achievement. Turkey has been hurt by the current atmosphere of intimidation and threats as evidenced in the treatment of the scholars who wished to attend the WATS conference in Berlin.

We will be vigilant from this moment on in our efforts to protect the rights and freedoms of all academics and call on the Turkish government to restore the academic freedoms that have been and are being violated in Turkey. We demand as well that the Turkish state desist from interfering in intellectual exchange and expression outside of Turkey. There is no substitution for independent research and the presentation of research findings in academic settings and in scholarly meetings. These exchanges are fundamental to academic freedom. Such interference infringes on the democratic order in Turkey and in hosting countries.

The events surrounding the WATS conference in Berlin demonstrate one more instance of the Turkish state’s refusal to respect basic human rights’ protections both under Turkish law and Turkey’s clear international obligations.

WATS Organizing Committee
Lepsiushaus Potsdam
Berlin, September 17, 2017

Armenia’s Erna Mirzoyan: A Winner of New Wave 2017 Song Contest, Receives 2 Million Rubles

SOCHI, Russia (Panorama.am) – The three singers who took the first spot at the New Wave 2017 international music contest of young pop singers have shared the prize money amounting to 6 million rubles at the finale of the song festival, RIA Novosti reports.

Representative of Armenia Erna Mirzoyan (Erna Mir) led the song contest with 362 points after the summing up of the results of the first three days of the contest. Mirzoyan, known in Armenia as part of the Voices of Artsakh music ensemble, shared the first spot with representatives of Uzbekistan and Moldova.

During the closing ceremony of the contest, the announcers said that this is a unique incident in the history of the New Wave contest when three participants claim the first place.

The other representative of Armenia, Syuzanna Melkonyan, who finished third in the Armenian national selection in 2017 Eurovision song contest, came the second with 357 points.

The contest has been organized annually since 2002 by Russian composer Igor Krutoy and Latvian composer Raimonds Pauls. Young singers between the ages of 16 and 30 are eligible to compete in the festival. This year the festival was attended by 14 participants from 9 countries. The festival was held in Russia’s Sochi from September 8-14.