

Pashinyan Wins by Landslide in Low-Turnout Election

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – Armenia’s acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan won a convincing victory in the snap parliamentary election on Sunday, December 9, consolidating his authority.

His bloc won more than 70 percent of the vote, the country’s election commission said.

A journalist turned politician, Pashinyan spearheaded a peaceful revolution in April.

He now has a parliamentary majority to push through his program of tackling cor-



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan votes.

ruption and reforming the economy. Poll turnout was low, at about 49 percent.

Historically, Armenia’s elections have been marred by fraud and vote-buying.

However, international observers from the Organization for Security and Co-oper-



A little boy helps his father vote on December 9.

ation in Europe (OSCE) said the elections had respected fundamental freedoms and were characterized by genuine competition.

Final official results show that the centrist My Step Alliance, which includes Pashinyan’s Civil Contract Party, won 70.4 percent of the vote.

Its nearest rival, the moderate Prosperous Armenia party won just over 8 percent. Led by tycoon and arm-wrestling champion Gagik Tsarukyan, it was part of the ruling coalition in the outgoing parliament.

Bright Armenia, a liberal pro-Western party, won about 6 percent of the vote, the commission said.

Each party needed at least 5 percent of the vote to enter the 101-seat National Assembly.

Armenia’s constitution states that 30 percent of seats in parliament must go to opposition parties.

Analysts say the 43-year-old will aim to keep his promises while staying in the good books of Armenia’s key ally, Russia.

Pashinyan has said he hopes to “step up co-operation with the United States and European Union.”

The revolution led by Pashinyan ousted the country’s 10-year President Serzh see ELECTION, page 2

Another Pashinyan-Aliyev Conversation Reported

ST. PETERSBURG (RFE/RL) – Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan talked to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on Thursday, December 6, at a summit of ex-Soviet states held in the Russian city of Saint Petersburg, it emerged on Friday.

Pashinyan said that the conversation took place at a dinner hosted by Russian President Vladimir Putin for fellow leaders from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Aliyev’s chief foreign policy aide, Hikmet Hajiyev, confirmed that, saying that the two men discussed “the continuation of active negotiations” on resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. He told the Trend news agency that recent weeks’ decrease in ceasefire violations in the conflict zone is creating a “good background” for making major progress towards a peaceful settlement.

see TALKS, page 4

Eminent Armenologist Prof. Robert Hewsen Dies at 84

NEW YORK – The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) announced that on December 3, Prof. Robert Hewsen, a noted Armenologist, had died. He was 84.

see HEWSEN page 8



A famous photo taken immediately after the December 7, 1988 devastation in Spitak.

Armenia Marks 30th Anniversary Of Tragic Earthquake

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan chaired a special meeting of his cabinet in Gyumri on Friday, December 7, as Armenia marked the 30th anniversary of a catastrophic earthquake that killed more than 25,000 people and left hundreds of thousands of others homeless.

Pashinyan also led an official commemoration ceremony in Armenia’s second largest city, laying a wreath at a local memorial to the victims of the earthquake.

“The greatest damage caused by the disaster was probably the devastations that occurred in people’s souls,” he said at the ceremony. The recent regime change in the country and reforms promised by its new government should help to “restore the people’s hopes, confidence and optimism,” he added.

The magnitude 6.8 quake struck northwestern parts of what was then a Soviet republic of 3.5 million residents on the morning of December 7, 1988. Its epicenter was near Spitak, a small town razed to the ground. Gyumri (known as Leninakan then) was also hit hard.

see EARTHQUAKE, page 3



Armenian Mirror-Spectator’s Annual Winter Break

WATERTOWN – The last issue of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* before its annual winter break will be that of December 22. Publishing will recommence with the issue of January 5, 2019. The *Mirror-Spectator* offices will be closed starting December 24, and reopen on January 2.

Former President Kocharyan Arrested Again

YEREVAN (Tass) – Former President Robert Kocharyan has been placed under arrest again and is kept at a pre-trial facility in the building of Armenia’s National Security Service in Yerevan, the service’s head Artur Vanetsyan said on December 7.

On that day, the Court of Appeals upheld the first instance court’s ruling to arrest the former president, who is accused of overturning the constitutional system in 2008. On the same day, Kocharyan decided not to wait for the enforcement of the court order and appeared at the National Security Service’s detention facility in person.

On July 26, Armenia’s Special Investigative Service brought charges against former President Robert Kocharyan (1998-2008) on overturning the constitutional system by force in 2008, and turned to court to sanction his arrest. Kocharyan was questioned by investigators probing into the murders during opposition protests on March 1, 2008. The former president was placed in custody under a court order on the following day.

On August 13, Yerevan’s Court of Appeals ruled to release Kocharyan who enjoyed immunity under the national constitution. On November 15, Armenia’s Court of Cassation satisfied a request from the Prosecutor General’s Office and referred Kocharyan’s case back to the Court of Appeals.

Armenia Ready to Normalize Turkey Ties

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia announced its readiness to establish direct diplomatic relations with Turkey without preconditions, acting Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan said at a meeting this week with the representatives of foreign media.

“We hope Turkey will take the same stance”, Pashinyan said.

Pashinyan also mentioned the preconditions that can never be accepted, first of all Nagorno Karabakh issue. “Relations with Turkey are linked with Nagorno Karabakh issue and a 3rd country, I mean Azerbaijan,” he said.

INSIDE

Tales of the Revolution

Page 6

INDEX

Arts and Living	14
Armenia	2,3
Community News.	6
Editorial	18
International	4,5



ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Woman Arrested for Stabbing 17-Year-old

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — An 18-year-old woman was charged on December 11 with stabbing a 17-year-old boy in Yerevan, the investigative committee said.

The incident had taken place on the evening of December 3 in the pedestrian tunnel that leads to the Hrazdan Gorge from Saryan Street.

A hospital contacted police at 19:15 upon having received the young man with a stabbing wound to the chest. The victim is a resident of Yerevan.

Police were quick to identify the suspect, an 18-year-old woman also from Yerevan.

According to the investigative committee, the stabbing occurred during a brawl involving more than 10 people in the tunnel. The woman was together with her seven friends when a fight broke out with the victim and his three friends.

The woman has been charged and released on a signature bond pending further proceedings.

Police are looking for the people that were present at the incident.

Russian Soldier Arrested For Murder of Armenian Woman

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A Russian military serviceman has been arrested in connection with the death of a cleaning lady in Gyumri, general prosecution spokesperson Arevik Khachatryan said on December 11.

She did not specify if the serviceman is from the 102nd Russian military base stationed in the city.

“A Russian serviceman has been arrested in the woman’s [manslaughter] case,” Khachatryan said.

The criminal case was launched on aggravated assault leading to involuntary manslaughter.

Other details were not immediately available.

Anna Hakobyan to Visit Switzerland

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Anna Hakobyan, the wife of Armenia’s prime minister, chairwoman of the Board of Trustees of My Step and City of Smile Foundations, will pay a working visit to Switzerland on December 12-17.

During the visit Hakobyan will meet with the members of the Armenian-Swiss parliamentary friendship group, as well as a number of philanthropists. She will also visit the Frank Muller company, the Armenian Genocide Memorial, as well as will meet with the Armenian community representatives in the Armenian center in Geneva. During the visit Anna Hakobyan is also expected to attend the graduation ceremony of the students of Geneva’s Topalian College, as well as a concert dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Spitak earthquake.

Protest Held by Kocharyan Supporters

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A group of supporters of Robert Kocharyan demanded his release on December 11 in a demonstration in Republic Square.

The coordinator of the demonstration, chairman of Armenian National Alliance initiative, Armen Minasyan, emphasized that former president Kocharyan should be immediately released, since he has no connection with the bloody events of March 1, 2008. “He took actions in the limits of president’s power,” Minasyan said.

The participants headed to the General Prosecutor’s Office to continue the demonstration.

The Court of Appeal issued its verdict in former President Robert Kocharyan’s trial over his measure of restraint on December 7.

The court has rejected Kocharyan’s complaints.

“The first instance court ruling has been left unchanged,” Kocharyan’s lawyer Hayk Alimonyan said.

Earlier the first instance court had remanded Kocharyan into pre-trial detention.

Kocharyan was charged by the Special Investigative Service in July 2018 for breaching constitutional order during the March 1, 2008 unrest.

Pashinyan Wins by Landslide In Low-Turnout Election

ELECTION, from page 1

Sargsyan, a member of the Republic Party. He was accused of clinging to power after taking on the newly-enhanced role of prime minister when his term ended.

Now senior Republican Party figures have accused Pashinyan of trying to turn Armenia into 1930s Germany, and of becoming a Hitler figure.

His critics say his “cult of personality” will weaken multi-party democracy.

Armen Ashotyan, vice-president of the Republican Party, complained before the election that “all political parties were deprived of time to prepare well.”

A total of 1,260,000 citizens, or 48.63 percent of the population, participated in the early parliamentary elections of Armenia, Central Election Commission (CEC) chairman Tigran Mukuchyan informed.

Former President Serzh Sarkisian’s Republican Party (HHK) and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF/Dashnaksutyun) essentially accepted on Monday official election results showing that they will no longer have seats in the country’s parliament.

According to the preliminary results released by the CEC, the Republican Party won 4.7 percent of the vote in Sunday’s general elections, falling short of the 5 percent threshold to enter the National Assembly. The ARF got 3.9 percent and will also not be represented in the parliament.

The setback is particularly severe for the HHK which won the previous parliamentary elections held as recently as in April 2017.

“These elections were democratic in form but not in substance,” the HHK said in a statement.

The statement accused Pashinyan of abusing his administrative resources and whipping up “intolerance towards dissent” during the election campaign. It also alleged government harassment of Republican local government officials and other party activists.

Still, the former ruling party indicated that it will not challenge the official vote results in court or otherwise. “We wish the forces elected to the parliament and the government to be formed by them success because the security and devel-

also tried to put a brave face on its electoral performance. “This is a defeat but not of our voters,” it said, describing the latter as principled individuals who voted for a party program, rather than a popular individual.

A much larger number of other voters, a Dashnaksutyun statement complained, looked for an “internal enemy” and “shockingly” ignored grave chal-

“Election day proceeded calmly and peacefully with all stages assessed positively by almost all [mission] observers, indicating general adherence to the procedures,” read the statement.

“The vote count was assessed positively in all but two polling stations observed, indicating that the counting process was conducted without significant procedural violations,” it added.



An election poster

enges facing their country.

Pashinyan’s bloc will have a two-thirds majority in the new parliament, putting it in a position to not only push through government bills but also amend some articles of the Armenian constitution.

Shortly after the more than 2,000 polling stations across Armenia opened early in the morning Pashinyan urged voters to brave a rainy and snowy weather and turn out in large numbers. In a live Facebook address aired a few hours later, he expressed concern at early signs that turnout is lower than it was in the last legislative elections held in 2017.

European Observers Praise Armenia’s ‘Democratic’ Elections

Observers representing the leading pan-European organizations on Monday described the weekend parliamentary elections in Armenia as democratic, saying that they witnessed virtually no serious irregularities.

The more than 300 observers mostly

“I congratulate the Armenian people,” Aleksander Pociej, the head of a delegation of the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) that was part of the monitoring mission.

“[Armenia’s] 2018 peaceful ‘velvet’ revolution, in conjunction with the political will of the current authorities, enabled the holding of democratic elections,” Pociej told a joint news conference with the other mission chiefs.

“Democracy cannot proceed without trust, so I am pleased that broad public trust was the central characteristic of this election,” said Peter Osusky, who led 250 or so short-term observers deployed by the OSCE. Heidi Hautala, a European Parliament member, likewise stated that there were “minimum irregularities” in Sunday’s vote, unlike in the previous Armenian parliamentary elections that were held in April 2017 and also monitored by her.

A similar OSCE-led mission cited at the time “credible information about vote-buying and pressure on civil servants and employees of private companies.” The then ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) was widely accused of resorting to the illegal practices.

“Positively, electoral stakeholders did not report any systematic efforts of vote-buying and other electoral malfeasance,” the European observers said this time around.

In their preliminary findings, they also praised Armenian media coverage of the parliamentary race. They said local broadcasters, who remain the main source of information for voters, “made a visible effort to cover all electoral contestants.”

“The public television provided a reasonably balanced coverage,” said their statement. “Positively, a number of media, including the public television, organized genuine debates, bringing together candidates from all the contestants.”

The HHK claimed throughout the election campaign that its activists across the country are summoned by police officials and warned against telling people to vote for the former ruling party. Urszula Gacek, the head of the European monitoring mission, said her observers were aware of the alleged harassment but found no evidence of it.

(Reports from Armenpress, the BBC and Radio Liberty were used to compile this coverage.)



Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II casts his ballot.

opment prospects of our country depend on that,” it said.

The statement also said that the HHK will continue to challenge Pashinyan’s government as an “extraparlimentary force.” Appealing to party supporters, it added: “Rest assured that we will do everything in our power to ensure that the noise of populism does not suppress your voice.”

Dashnaksutyun, which has been represented in the parliament since 1999,

deployed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) gave the most positive assessment ever by a Western-led monitoring mission of major elections held in the South Caucasus nation.

In a joint statement, they said the snap polls won by Pashinyan’s My Step alliances enjoyed “broad public trust” and were marked by a “general absence of electoral malfeasance, including of vote buying and pressure on voters.”



ARMENIA

Armenia Marks 30th Anniversary of Tragic Earthquake

EARTHQUAKE, from page 1

The huge death toll was widely blamed on substandard construction exposed by the calamity. It turned out that many apartment blocks and houses in what many Armenians still refer to as a “disaster zone” were built in violation of seismic safety standards.

International aid poured into Soviet Armenia immediately after the earthquake. The Soviet government also allowed Western rescue teams and other relief workers into the earthquake zone. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev cut short a visit to New York to tour devastated towns and villages.

Moscow launched a large-scale housing reconstruction program in the area in the following months. The rebuilding efforts stalled, however, with the collapse of the Soviet Union followed by a sharp decline of the Armenian economy. Tens of thousands of families continued to huddle in the 1990s in metal or wooden

quake anniversary. Avetik Eloyan, head of the government’s Urban Development Committee, told ministers that more than 4,800 families that lost their homes in 1988 received new houses or apartments from the state from 2008 through 2017.

Eloyan said that almost 500 other families other in Gyumri and other affected communities remain on a government waiting list of persons eligible for free housing. The government is committed to providing them with new homes by the end of 2020 at a combined cost of around 3.5 billion drams (\$7.2 million), he said.

The official cautioned, though, that the figure needs to be reevaluated. “There are people who are really homeless but there are also those who received apartments but retained their shacks,” he explained. “So there are many issues that need to be ascertained.”

Gyumri Mayor Samvel Balasanyan, who also

now empty, added Balasanyan.

Pashinyan responded by telling the government to form a task force that will look into the housing situation and submit a detailed report to him within two months.

“We know that the consequences of the December 1988 earthquake have still not been eliminated but we don’t know the scale of work that is needed for [completing the reconstruction,]” said the prime minister. “Therefore, the task force should try to find the answer to this question as soon as possible.”

Stamp Created

A stamp that is dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Spitak Earthquake was canceled on December 7 in Gyumri.

The cancellation ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Transport, Communication and Information Technology Minister Hakob Arshakyan, Emergency Minister Feliks Tsovakyan.

Samvel Balasanyan, the city mayor, and Juan Pablo Gechidjian, HayPost Trust Management CEO, were present at the ceremony as well.

The stamp, with the face value of 230 drams, was printed by France’s Cartor printing house. The stamp author is Vahagn Mkrtchyan, a designer at HayPost.

Destroyed buildings, rescue efforts and the clock on the Independence Square, which shows the time of the first tremor, are depicted on the stamp.

Global Aid to Armenia

Immediately after the earthquake Armenians all over the world united and offered comprehensive support to the Motherland. “SOS Armenia,” “Aznavour for Armenia” and tens of other organizations were created. Many Diaspora Armenians rushed to Armenia, bringing food, clothes and medicine.

Many of them – doctors, psychologists, constructors, architects – stayed in Armenia and personally participated in the rescue works.

A number of countries of the world continued to support Armenia years after the earthquake.

The Italians built a whole dwelling district in Spitak, while the Norwegians built a hospital, named for humanitarian Fridtjof Nansen.

The Armenian Church announced on December 6 it would donate 10 apartments to vulnerable families in Gyumri and Spitak.

From Kansas to Armenia

Armenians remember what they have lost and Armenians dream of the world that will honor those they lost, Kansas Governor Jeff Colyer said while delivering remarks in Gyumri.

“We are humbled to represent the people of Kansas who by a twist of fate shared a relationship with the amazing people of Armenia,” he said, adding that he had never dreamed that he would return to the city of Gyumri as a Kansas governor, and would share this special day of resilience for Armenians.

“December 7 changed me forever. When I went to State Department to work and heard the news about the disaster, that morning we saw the photos of Gyumri, and how the buildings collapsed, and thousands of people were killed. I should never forget this,” he said.

Jeff Colyer recalled that they called President-elect Bush and described what happened.

“Bush said we should help. Although the Soviet Union has never accepted international assistance before, he felt it was important to help Armenia that time,” Colyer emphasized.

Seventy Americans headed to Armenia, and what they saw in the city was a scene that was difficult to imagine.

“It is one that I cannot describe but we saw something special: we met the most fantastic spirit in Armenia, the spirit of love, kindness and heroism. We met Armenians who were longing to overcome the tremendous disaster that came their way,” the governor noted. “Today when I meet Armenians around the world, I meet them as very special people with culture, science business and dignity. And here is the great lesson of 1988. When we arrived in Armenia, many of us thought that the best days were behind, and today we know that Armenia’s best days are ahead of us, and here is why. Memory may be fading from many people but Armenians remember, that is why you are special.

Armenia has touched me, my family my state and my country in a very special way. No matter what, Kansas and America will remain your friend.”

(Stories from News.am, Arka and Radio Liberty were used to compile this report.)



A crumbling church in Gyumri

shacks, commonly known as “domiks,” lacking basic amenities.

The protracted reconstruction of the economically depressed area was the main focus of Friday’s cabinet meeting dedicated to the earth-

attended the cabinet meeting, said in this regard that there are currently 2,856 “domiks” in the city and that many of their residents migrated to Gyumri after the earthquake. And 456 of these supposedly temporary shelters are

President Sarkissian Speaks at Global Genocide Conference

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – Armenian President Armen Sarkissian participated on December 10 at the Third Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide which is dedicated to the issues of prevention through education.

In his welcoming remarks, after wishing the participants of the international forum “bari lyus” in Armenian, Sarkissian noted that in Armenian, “bari lyus” means not only “good morning” but also “good” or “kind light.”

The full text of the president’s speech released by the presidential office runs as follows:

“The fight between light and darkness is happening even today. This Forum is meant to fight against that very darkness and evil. There are multiple components which the evil manifests itself through: the way we treat our beloved home, our planet Earth, rights of the people of different race, sexual orientation, or religion. Unfortunately, evil is not always defeated.

In the 21st century, in the epicenter of very rapidly changing events, everything that is taking place on this planet, whether good or bad, spreads instantly, forms roots, and acquires followers. I will not call it revolution, industrial revolution. Now we are entering other era which is rather a rapid evolution. The greatest evil of that era is the crime of genocide which, unfortunately, also finds a

breeding ground. Obviously, it will not cease to exist if don’t fight against it.

Before turning to the lighter side, I would like to talk about this Forum. Probably, there are two or three places in the world where such a forum can be held. Regrettably, Armenia is one of them because Armenians, as a nation, suffered the pain of genocide.

There are two places in Armenia which sym-

103 YEARS AFTER THE GENOCIDE, WE HAVE PROVED TO THE WORLD THAT LIGHT AND GOOD WILL PREVAIL

—PRESIDENT ARMEN SARKISSIAN

bolize those events: The first is the Genocide Memorial and Museum, the second is this very place, the Matenadaran. When I compare these two sites, they come out as two temples – one as a memorial to the martyrs, the other – the Matenadaran, symbolized light, the place where we assert – never again. The Matenadaran proves that light eventually conquers pain and darkness. I am confident that light and good will prevail. This is also a place where the memories of the Genocide are profound.

Genocide is not only an organized crime which is meant to annihilate a nation, an ethnic group, people who are different. This is an act against tolerance meant to eliminate history, culture, arts, and knowledge. Thus, it’s a much greater calamity, a greater and a much more vicious crime than just a murder of the people. At the same time, the Matenadaran is the place which states “do whatever you want,

you will not erase.” It is special also from the human history point of view.

There are thousands of stories about the Armenian women who fleeing from the Genocide had taken with them the most precious thing – the Book. My grandmother too, who was from a prosperous family in the Ottoman Empire, fleeing from the Genocide had not taken anything, even clothing or jewelry, but took the most precious things – her son and the Bible.

Painfully, she had lost her son on the way

to Echmiadzin but managed to bring the Holy Bible with her. It exists even today and contains not only 450 years of history but also the memories of the child lost, the child who never grew up, never came to age, never brought his talent to arts, culture, business, politics, never had children and grandchildren. It’s a living memory and a temple of light. The Armenian Genocide started 103 years ago, and today we remember all those who had lost their lives, homes, friends, families, children.

One hundred three years later we proved to the entire world that light and good prevail, and the Republic of Armenia, the Armenian people is the proof of it. We are a small people but a global nation. The whole world knows Armenians as hardworking, honest, very patriotic people, who live in different countries and are good citizens of that countries, work for success of that countries. Deep inside they nurture that pain but, at the same time, they have dignity and pride – we can defeat the evil. This building is a proof of it, it safeguards important assets, assets which were meant to be destroyed, which were targeted but survived – history, culture, legacy, love, religion, God, and humanity.

Armenia is with you, and all over the world Armenians are fighting against evil in the name of light.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Former President's Nephew Arrested

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Narek Sargsyan, the fugitive nephew of Armenia's former President Serzh Sargsyan, was apprehended on December 6 in Prague, Czech Republic. He is the son of Alexander Sargsyan, the brother of ex-president Serzh Sargsyan.

He has not yet been extradited to Armenia.

"He hasn't yet been transported to Armenia," Armenia's Police Chief Valery Osipyan told reporters.

"What matters is that he has been arrested. He is detained in Prague, later he will be extradited to Armenia," he said, adding that the prosecution is currently dealing with the paperwork.

He said the arrest is a result of successful cooperation with international police structures.

Sargsyan was wanted since July 24, 2018 for illegal possession and acquisition of firearms and explosives and drug trafficking.

Police earlier said that at the time of his arrest Sargsyan produced a fake Guatemalan passport by the name of Franklin Gonzales.

Moscow Sites Scouted For Aznavour Statue

MOSCOW (Armenpress) — The issue of selecting a place for Charles Aznavour's monument is currently being discussed in Moscow, according to Moskovskij Komsomolets newspaper.

It is possible that the legendary singer's songs may be performed at Moscow International House of Music in Zamoskvorechye, if the monument is erected on the terrace of the building.

The municipal authorities are still conducting a survey among the citizens to find out the best place for the monument.

Chairman of Javahk Diaspora in Russia, Aghasi Arabyan, told the periodical that the Moscow City Duma has approved the idea of raising the monument in the city center, but for deciding the shape of the monument it is first necessary to find the appropriate place.

"The monument will be bronze. The statue will be funded by the Armenian community. Aznavour spent his entire childhood in a Russian atmosphere. His parents spoke in Russian and he loved to visit Moscow. This monument will become the symbol of Russian-French, Russian-Armenian and in general, multi-national friendship," Arabyan said.

Ambassador to Thailand Presents Credentials

BANGKOK, Thailand (Armenpress) — Ambassador of Armenia to Thailand Sergey Manasaryan presented his credentials to the King of Thailand Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun on December 11.

The ambassador is scheduled to meet with the Princess of Thailand, as well as the representatives of the foreign ministry of the country in the upcoming two days.

Yerevan Street Named For Raphael Lemkin

YEREVAN — A street was renamed for Raphael Lemkin here on December 11.

Deputy Mayor of Yerevan Sergey Harutyunyan said that Lemkin left a considerable legacy in the world history. Lemkin is the author of the term "genocide." Being a lawyer, he studied the Armenian Genocide and lobbied for its recognition.

The term "genocide" got an international legal status after the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was adopted in December, 1948.

"He devoted his life to the struggle, and achieved victory. The name of Raphael Lemkin is immortal," Harutyunyan said.

Adama Dieng, the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, noted Lemkin's role in the development of the Convention. He thanked the municipality of Yerevan for the decision to rename the street.

Indifference to Sexual Violence Eats Away at Us All, Say Nobel Pair

OSLO, Norway (*The Guardian*) — The Nobel laureates Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad have called on the world to protect victims of wartime sexual violence as they angrily criticized indifference to the plight of women and children in conflict in their peace prize acceptance speeches.

The gold medals were presented to Mukwege, a Congolese gynecologist who has spent his career treating tens of thousands of rape survivors, and Murad, a Yazidi woman from Iraq who was kidnapped and kept as a slave by an Isis judge, raped and beaten every day, before she escaped and became a human rights campaigner.

Both laureates said on Monday, December 10, the reason atrocities such as those they had witnessed still occurred in the 21st century was because perpetrators were not brought to justice.

Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have been prey to systematic rape since 1998, perpetrated mainly by the rebel groups that have kept the east in a permanent state of instability.

After Mukwege was named the joint winner of the prize in October, he called on the DRC's "illegal and illegitimate" government to quit, accusing it of perpetuating the violence and failing to protect women. Elections are set to be held later this month.

In his acceptance speech, Mukwege emphasized that the continuing violence was caused by "the absence of the rule of law, the collapse of traditional values and the reign of impunity, particularly for those in power," all of which were linked to "gross mis-

terrible human cost.

"Turning a blind eye to this tragedy is being complicit. It's not just perpetrators of violence who are responsible for their crimes, it is also those who choose to look the other way."

It is not just consumers, rebels and



Nadia Murad and Dr. Denis Mukwege

management" by the government.

"My country is being systematically looted with the complicity of people claiming to be our leaders," he said. "Looted for their power, their wealth and their glory. Looted at the expense of millions of innocent men, women and children abandoned in extreme poverty. While the profits from our minerals end up in the pockets of a predatory oligarchy."

He spoke of the "indifference which is eating away at our societies," pointing out that the root cause of violence, war and poverty in the DRC is because of its natural wealth and calling on consumers to insist that their smartphones, jewelry, cars and gadgets, often made with Congolese minerals, were not made at a

Congolese officials who bear responsibility for the situation, he said. "The Congolese people have been humiliated, abused and massacred for more than two decades in plain sight of the international community."

Murad, too, condemned the inaction of the international community, which she said did nothing to deter or stop the genocide that Islamic State has committed against Yazidis in Syria and Iraq.

"So far, the perpetrators of the crimes which led to this genocide have not been brought to justice. I do not seek more sympathy; I want to translate those feelings into actions on the ground," she said. "The international community must be committed to providing asylum and immigration opportunities to those who have become victims of this genocide."

More than 6,500 Yazidi women and girls have been kidnapped, raped, bought and sold, and Murad pointed out that the fate of 3,000 women and children was still unknown.

She added: "Thank you very much for this honor, but the fact remains that the only prize in the world that can restore our dignity is justice and the prosecution of criminals."



Norway's Crown Princess Mette-Marit, seated with her husband, Crown Prince Haakon, wipes away tears as she listens to Nadia Murad speak at the ceremony.

Another Pashinyan-Aliyev Conversation Reported

TALKS, from page 1

Aliyev and Pashinyan, who came to power in May, spoke with each other for the first time at the previous CIS summit held in Tajikistan in September.

Pashinyan said he discussed with Aliyev in Saint Petersburg "previous episodes of the negotiation process" and a possible exchange of prisoners of war and other captives held by the two parties.

"We did not reach an agreement [on the exchange] but will continue discussions," he told reporters. "As you know, they proposed an all-for-all formula but we have a problem with that. We also need to discuss that with the Karabakh authorities."

Two Armenian civilians and a Karabakh Armenian soldier are currently held in Azerbaijani captivity. Three Azerbaijani men are held in detention in Karabakh. One of them

is a soldier.

The two others, Dilgam Askerov and Shahbaz Quliyev, were caught shortly after crossing, together with another Azerbaijani, Hasan Hasanov, into the Kelbajar district sandwiched between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh in 2014. Hasanov was gunned down after reportedly killing an Armenian army officer and gravely wounding a civilian woman.

The shootings were reported four days before a 17-year-old Karabakh Armenian resident of Kelbajar was found dead near his family's farm. The Karabakh authorities believe that he was kidnapped and killed by the Azerbaijani "saboteurs."

A Karabakh court subsequently sentenced Askerov and Quliyev to life imprisonment and 22 years in prison respectively. The Azerbaijani government denounced the trial as illegal and demanded the release of both

men.

Hajiyev confirmed that Baku wants Askerov and Quliyev to be part of the proposed prisoner exchange. The Karabakh Armenian leadership rejected such an option last month, saying that the two jailed men had committed grave crimes.

Aliyev and Pashinyan spoke the day after their foreign ministers held fresh talks in Milan in the presence of the U.S., Russian and French mediators co-chairing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group.

In a joint statement issued after the talks, the co-chairs expressed hope that "an intensive results-oriented high-level dialogue between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia" will resume "in the near future." They said the two ministers will try to "facilitate high-level talks" when they meet again early next year.



INTERNATIONAL

30 Years Ago, Charles Aznavour for Armenia

By Jean Eckian

PARIS — That day, Wednesday, December 7, 1988, it was 11:41 in Armenia (8:41 in France - and December 6: 23:41 in Los Angeles), when a terrible roar will spring from the bowels of the earth on the surface of the cities of Gyumri (Leninakan), Spitak and Kirovakan (Vanadzor), announcing of the deadliest earthquake ever known in Armenia. 25,000 victims, nearly 20,000 wounded, thousands of orphans, entire cities to rebuild.

In Los Angeles, Georges Garvarentz was still in the studio, attentive to the recording of a film score, he knows nothing of the catastrophe that

has just struck Armenia, but Aïda, his wife, heard the terrible news in a televised flash. Upset, she decides not to tell him anything so as not to disturb him in his work. It is the next day, aboard the flight Los Angeles-Paris, that he will learn from the mouth of the sister of Charles Aznavour, what the ancestral land had just undergone. Now, Georges Garvarentz, the famous composer of many successes of the French song, already thought to write a piece of music. He first wanted to see Aznavour who agreed to write the lyrics. The result was the song *Ils Sont Tombés* (They fell).

Lévon Sayan, Aznavour's manager, got on a plane to Paris from New York on December 7, 1988. After landing in Paris, Sayan heard the news that an earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale had just hit Armenia.

In Paris, for Charles Aznavour, it was just stupor.

Everything happened very fast. Lévon Sayan rushed to the phone. At the other end of the line, Charles Aznavour. Ideas fuse. Should we organize a concert? Create an association? An association was created, named "Aznavour for Armenia." To create it, Sayan got help from Armenian friends, including Nora and Daniel Artinian, Alain Barsikian, Dominique Adjian, and his wife Anne-Marie Sayan.



Charles Aznavour and George Garvarentz

Helping Germans Discover Armenia

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Germans are known for their love of travel and an increasing number of them are discovering Armenia. Since the Bundestag (Parliament) passed a resolution in 2016 recog-

attractions and advantages that the Republic of Armenia offers. His book is a guide not only to historical monuments but also an invitation to get to know the people, learn about daily life and Armenian culture.

For Weiler, president of the German-Armenian Forum, such a new publication was long overdue. In his view, the oldest Christian nation in the world has a great deal to offer



Weiler presenting his book. opening the event

nizing the genocide, interest in Armenia has grown and visits to the country have been facilitated by the recent introduction of direct Berlin-to-Yerevan flights. Now a new tourist guide has appeared, which should further promote tourism.

The new guide book was presented on November 27 at the Bundestag, by the German-Armenian Forum and the Verlag DuMont, which published it. Albert Weiler, a member of the Bundestag from the CDU, was the founder of the new Forum, which is dedicated to expanding relations between Armenia and Germany on all levels. Along with Weiler and the publishers was the book's author, Torsten Flaig, who has studied art history at the Tübingen University and has traveled extensively throughout Armenia. In presenting the new volume, he reported on various tourist

tourists and is well presented in this new book. He quoted from the cover of the book, with its lengthy title: *Armenia. A Journey of Discovery in the Land of the Khachkars: From the Capital Yerevan through the Ancient Land of Culture to Lake Sevan and the Small Cloisters in the Impressive Mountains of the Southern Caucasus*. Weiler, who has travelled to Armenia many times, spoke of the variety of landscapes and experiences in the country and remarked, "Nowhere have I met so many people who are so proud of their country, its history and culture, and who have passed on to the younger generation a well-founded culture of memory." The Chairman of the Bundestag's Tourism Committee Sebastian Münzenmaier could only second what Weiler had said. Ambassador Ashot Smbatyan expressed his gratitude for the successful collaboration with the publisher.

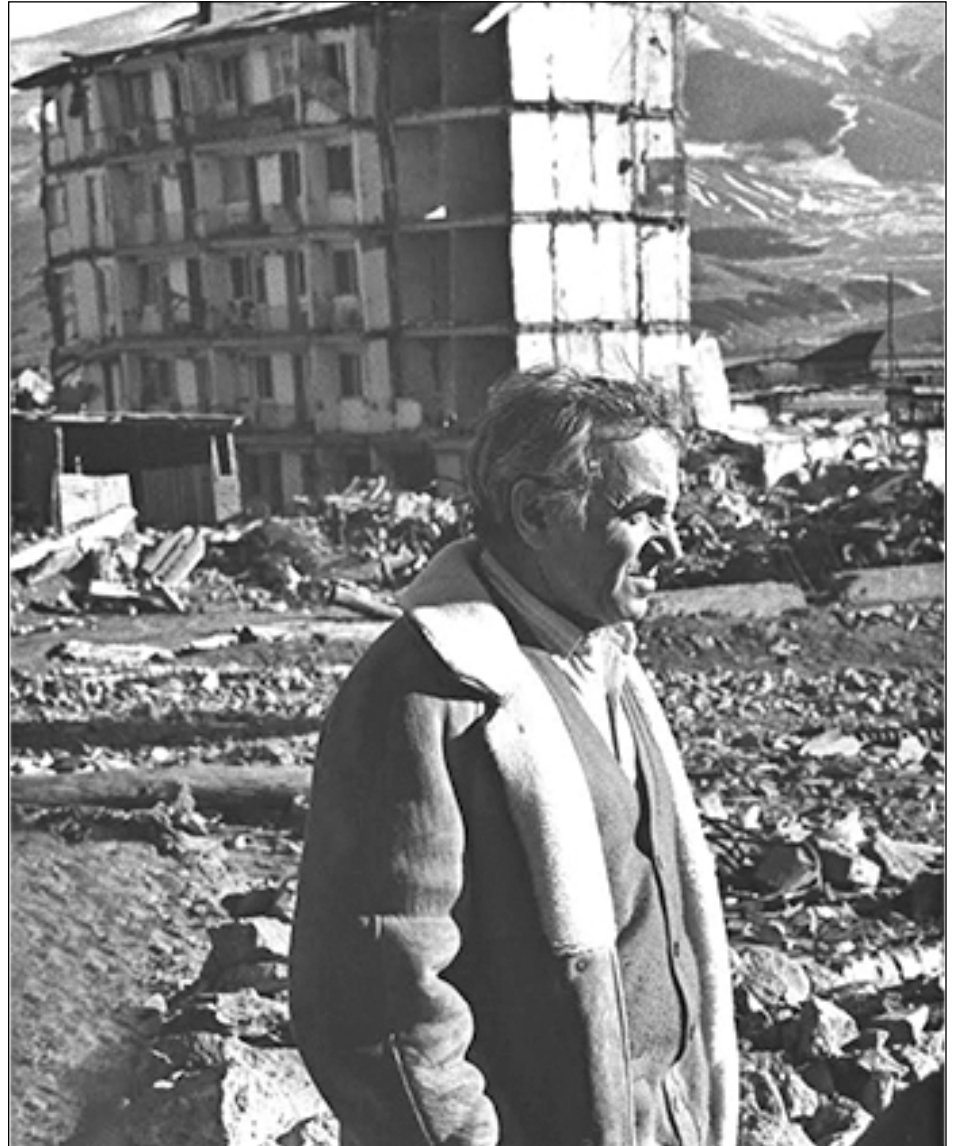
On their return to France, Georges and Aïda Garvarentz then found Charles Aznavour. They worked all night to write what would become *For you Armenia* (Pour toi Arménie).

The French media heavily covered the event. Charles Aznavour was solicited from all sides. He announced the creation of the association

at Trema Records) Katia (Katia promotion), the Raffi brothers and Patrick Shart and this writer, Jean Eckian. No refusals were recorded. Only impossibilities of professional order.

Meanwhile, in Gyumri and Spitak, the toll was growing day by day.

For 9 long hours, Charles Aznavour and Georges Garvarentz taught the artists the



Charles Aznavour in Gyumri (Named Leninakan then)

"Aznavour pour l'Arménie." The next day Sayan's office was full of parcels, checks and offers of help.

At the same time, the idea of appealing to French artists made its way. "For you Armenia" was one of France's answers to the appeal for help launched by the Armenian friend.

To contact the artists a team was formed around Sayan: Gérard Melet (artistic director

song while Henri Verneuil (Achod Malakian) was preparing the filming of the video. Then the miracle happened. This group of artists who have nothing in common except to belong to the families of song, film and television, in styles sometimes different from that of Charles Aznavour, offered the best of themselves when singing the word "Hayastan."

No doubt, that day, Mount Ararat produced a snowfall shaped like a tear.



MOSCOW (news.am) — A new memorial to the victims of the Armenian Genocide was officially unveiled on December 12, near the Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in Kemerovo, Russia, MK.ru reported.

Community News

Armenian Christmas Service at St. Vartan Cathedral on January 6, 2019

NEW YORK — The Nativity and Baptism of Jesus Christ will be observed at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral on Saturday and Sunday, January 5 and 6, 2019. A special liturgical schedule will be in effect for these “Armenian Christmas” services.

This year will mark the first time new Diocesan Primate, the Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan, will celebrate the Christmas badarak in St. Vartan Cathedral.

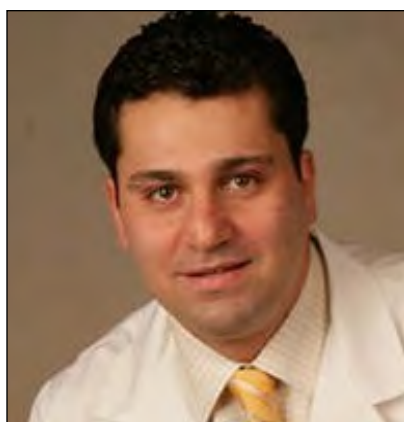
On Armenian Christmas Eve, Saturday, January 5, there will be an Evening Service at 5 p.m., featuring Scripture Readings by students of the St. Gregory Mission Parish of Brooklyn. The Divine Liturgy will immediately follow, beginning at 6:30 p.m., celebrated by the Very Rev. Mesrop Parsamyan, Vicar of St. Vartan Cathedral.

The Astghikner Children’s Choir will sing the Divine Liturgy, conducted by Maria Sahakian. A reception will take place following the services in Guild Hall of the Diocesan Center.

On Armenian Christmas, Sunday, January 6, the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), will celebrate the Divine Liturgy. The Morning Service begins at 9:30 a.m., and the Divine Liturgy follows at 10:30 a.m.

The sacred music will be sung by the St. Vartan Cathedral Choir, under the direction of Khoren Mekanejian.

In Armenian tradition, this feast day commemorates not only the birth of Christ, but also his baptism by John the Baptist. The latter is remembered through the “Blessing of Water” ceremony, which will follow the Divine Liturgy. Dr. Ed Khoury will serve as “godfather” of the Blessing of Water service.



Dr. Ed Khoury

After the cathedral’s January 6 church services, a Home Blessing Service and Christmas Reception HOME will take place in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium. (Suggested donation of \$10 at the door.)

Armenian Christmas will also be observed at local parishes across the Eastern Diocese. Parishes will celebrate on Sunday, January 6. Contact local parishes to ascertain the time of its Armenian Christmas celebration.

The cathedral’s Armenian Christmas Divine Liturgy will be broadcast live over the Eastern Diocese’s Livestream channel and Facebook page.

St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral is located at 630 Second Avenue (corner of 34th Street and Second Avenue), in New York City.

For information, visit www.armenianchurch.us.



From left, Alla Yeremyan, Levon Chukaklyan, Yuri Avagyan, Ara Hakobyan, Garik Miskaryan and Astghik Isakhanyan (photo: David Medzorjian)

CYSCA Panelists from Armenia Discuss Activism And Revolution

WATERTOWN — The Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA) presented “Activism and Transition to Leadership in Armenia,” a lively panel discussion of the events of the Velvet Revolution in Armenia earlier in 2018, at the Armenian General Benevolent Union New England center in Watertown on the evening of December 6.

By Aram Arkun

Mirror-Spectator Staff

The five speakers visiting from different parts of Armenia were all young activists in their early 20s. The event was cosponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

The audience was first welcomed by Marc Mamigonian on behalf of NAASR and CYSCA Open World Program Director Alisa Stepanian on behalf of CYSCA. Dr. Anna Ohanyan, Richard B. Finnegan Distinguished Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Stonehill College, served as moderator. Interpreter Ara Hakobyan facilitated communications for the panelists, with the exception of Astghik Isakhanyan, who spoke in English.

Ohanyan began by asking the panelists where they were during the 10 days the movement was building and how it felt to be a part of that movement.

Isakhanyan is from Goris, in the southern Armenian province of Syunik, and worked as project coordinator for the Rights Information Center, a nongovernmental organization (NGO), which works to help people know and protect their rights. In October 2016, the despotic governor of Syunik was dismissed, she said, so the atmosphere was somewhat freer than before. Isakhanyan said, “In the first days, in my region, and in the southern parts of Armenia, people didn’t believe that it would succeed, especially older people.” However, some young people went to Yerevan to join the movement when Nikol Pashinyan returned there on his march.



Anna Ohanyan (photo: Aram Arkun)

Isakhanyan said these young people were considered very courageous because in Goris, many people work for the government, at that time controlled by the Republican Party, and the latter spread the word that those who joined the movement, or their parents and family, would lose their jobs. Only when it became obvious that the movement would succeed if everybody joined in did around 80 people go out in public. Even writing on social media in favor of the movement could be dangerous. Isakhanyan’s NGO was one of the first to spread the news on its webpages and social media. They declared that they would not work for one week but instead organize a rally to demand the Republicans and Serzh Sargsyan to resign.

Amazingly, it was school children aged 7 who started the first rally. Isakhanyan said, “They ran out of the school and we saw that the police came with them and they were walking... They really were 7 years old... I was in my office and I heard some noises. We looked out and saw that children with their bags, really small ones, are running and screaming *Merzhir Serzhin* (Reject Serzh) and some

see CYSCA, page 12

USC Shoah Foundation Participates in UN Commemoration of Genocide Laws

LOS ANGELES — USC Shoah Foundation Executive Director Stephen Smith participated Friday, December 7, at a special event at the United Nations marking the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the international law that defined genocide and held perpetrators accountable.

At the event, which commemorated the UN General Assembly’s passage of the Genocide Convention on December 9 of 1948, Smith discussed the role of technology in the prevention of genocide.

“The question before us today is how we use technology to uphold the values that are enshrined in the convention,” Smith said in his prepared remarks. “For certain it does not begin with high-performance computing and end with artificial intelligence. It begins with story, and ends in empathy.”

The observance, which included remarks from UN Secretary General António Guterres, also featured a demonstration of the Institute’s Dimensions in Testimony interactive biography that enables people to ask questions and instantly receive pre-recorded responses from Holocaust survivors.

Survivors featured in the presentation were Pinchas Gutter, who was the only member of his family to survive the Majdanek concentration camp in Germany, and Eva Schloss, the last living relative of Anne Frank.

In response to a question from the audience about how to promote tolerance, Gutter’s pre-recording said: “Accept ‘my culture is this, your culture is that.’ Your prayers to God — you do it this way, I do it my way. I say Psalms, you read the Koran. Why can’t we live together? And in some places people do live together quite reasonably and tolerate each other. Why can’t the whole world do that?”

The demo was followed by an appearance from the real Pinchas Gutter, who after receiving a standing ovation from the crowd, participated in a Q-and-A with Adama Dieng, the UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide. Gutter said he agreed to participate for one main reason: to help make the hate stop.

“When I see today things which kind of remind me of what happened in the times of the five years that I spent under Nazi rule, I mean it breaks my heart,” said Gutter, an 86-year-old resident of Toronto.

The purpose of the UN event was to raise awareness of the Genocide Convention and its role in combating and preventing genocide, to commemorate and honor its victims, and to reiterate the responsibility of each individual nation state to protect its citizens.

In his welcoming remarks, Guterres talked about the progress the world has made in the 70 years since the conventions were adopted. But he also listed places where genocide occurred since its adoption and urged the 45 countries that still haven’t signed on to do so.

“My generation believed that after the Holocaust, we would never see genocide again,” he said. “We were wrong. Modernity does not protect us from genocide. The digital age does not protect us from genocide. Nothing but our actions, based on our values and principles, can protect us from genocide.”

Guterres also lamented how, 70 after the Genocide Convention was adopted, “people are still being killed, raped, their homes torched, their lands confiscated, just because

see SHOAH, page 7



COMMUNITY

USC Shoah Foundation
Participates in UN
Commemoration of
Genocide Laws

SHOAH, from page 6

of who they are.” He cited how the Yazidi people in Iraq were brutalized by the “violent extremists of Daesh” – also known as the Islamic State, or ISIS – and mentioned the plight of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, “who have been systematically killed, tortured, raped and burnt alive, victims of what has rightly been called ethnic cleansing.”

During his keynote remarks, Dieng – who served several terms as registrar of the International Criminal Tribunal in Rwanda in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi – warned that while technology can be used to deter violence, it can also be used



Pinchas Gutter (right) with Stephen Smith (left) and Adama Dieng (middle), the UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide.

to incite it.

“Social media and the increasing access to the internet allows us to communicate instantly and globally, to share in real time what is happening to bring to the world attention issues of concern,” he said. “However, it has also been used as a tool to spread hate, including incitement of violence that has, in some instances, led to actual violence targeting populations or individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion or other forms of identity.”

The event also included a panel of experts that included Smith and two others – Alison Smale, the UN’s undersecretary general for global

communication; and Agnès Callamard, director of Columbia University Global Freedom of Expression – for a discussion on the goal of preventing genocide for the next 70 years.

Smale, a former journalist for the New York Times, discussed the UN’s use of new and traditional media when promoting universal values and fighting racism.

“On this day, when we commemorate the victims of the crime of genocide, and advocate for the prevention of this crime, it is important to remember that genocide usually starts with hate speech,” Smale said. “Words matter.”

Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial summary or arbitrary executions, noted that before the genocide that unfolded in 2017 against the Rohingya Muslims in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, Facebook had been repeatedly warned that its platform was being used to spread hate and propaganda.

“Social media companies cannot just be relying on third-party notification and reporting,” she said. “They must develop their own capacities to analyze and respond.”

Smith said technology can be a powerful tool in service of genocide prevention, but only when its use is coupled with humane values.

“When we have bad values and excellent technology, terrible things can happen,” he said. “And when we have humane values and excellent technology, remarkably good things can happen.”

Smith listed several core values that are essential to preventing genocide. They include creating inclusive, respectful societies (“genocide is not mass killing,” he said, “it is exclusion taken to its logical conclusion”); instilling empathy in students and leaders alike; and developing trust.

“Genocide is a phenomenon of fear, expressed in violence,” Smith said. “The more we fear the less we trust, the more likely we are to harm. Narrative can build trust. Articulating respect is the first step to trust, without fear.”

Alex Mooradian
Named Partner at
Worcester Law Firm

WORCESTER (*Telegram and Gazette*) – Attorney Alex Mooradian was recently named partner at Glickman, Sugarman, Kneeland and Gribouski.

Mooradian focuses on immigration law and has represented many clients in deportation proceedings, including immigrant children, refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrant victims of crime. He also represents those seeking immigration benefits such as citizenship, family-based visas, and permanent residence.

Mooradian has appeared before the Federal District Court, Massachusetts Probate and Family Courts, the Boston Immigration Court, and the immigration agency, USCIS. He is the board chair of the Organization for Nonprofit Excellence (ONE Worcester), which provides pro bono business consulting to Worcester-area nonprofits. He is also on the pro bono panel at Ascentria Care Alliance and has engaged in numerous presentations and trainings to area public agencies and universities.



Alex Mooradian



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*

www.mirrorspectator.com

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is the first English-language Armenian weekly published in the US, and for more than 85 years, it has served the community. Readers can learn of the most important developments in Armenia, as well as international politics, art and culture throughout the world in a convenient and concise format.

With your encouragement, we are continuing to work to increase what we can offer you through our newspaper. We have expanded our coverage in the greater Los Angeles area, with three correspondents and seek new correspondents elsewhere. Our website has been redesigned, with greater capabilities. This year we entered into an agreement with Artsakh Public TV and now periodically subtitle in English and condense some of their video broadcasts. We also have a video correspondent in Washington, DC. Send us your email if you wish to regularly receive links to articles and videos.

Meanwhile, we continue with our annual tradition of publishing your Christmas and New Year’s wishes, and greetings to relatives and friends in the final issue of the year. In case you wish to give gift subscriptions of the *Mirror-Spectator* for Christmas, for your convenience, we are placing a gift subscription form in the newspaper as well as one below.

Sincerely,

Alin K. Gregorian
Editor

Aram Arkun
Assistant Editor

____ Yes, I/We would like to make a contribution by check:
____ \$1,000 ____ \$500 ____ \$300 ____ \$200 ____ \$100 ____ other

Or by Credit Card: Name of Cardholder.....

Billing Address.....City..... State.....Zip.....

Card Number.....Expiration date: Month.....Year.....

Security Code.....Contribution amount.....

Your Christmas Message:

Please make checks payable to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and mail this voucher in the enclosed envelope. The deadline for receiving the messages is Dec. 15, 2018. For gift subscriptions fill out the credit card information above, OR send a check, for: __ \$80 US __ \$125 Canada __ \$200 International and write: __ Yes, I/We would like to gift a subscription to: NAME _____

ADDRESS _____



OBITUARIES

Helene A. Dorian

Held Leadership Positions at Holy Trinity, Diocese

BELMONT, Mass. — Helene Armine Dorian of Belmont, and formerly of Boca Raton, Fla., passed away at home on December 2, 2018.

She was the wife of the late Daniel K. Dorian and daughter of the late Roupen and Queenie Garabedian. She was the mother of Daniel K. Dorian Jr. and his wife Lisa (Kolligian), Janice Dorian, Lois Malconian and her husband

Ronald, and Barbara Dorian; grandmother of Ashley and her husband Scott Martin, Amanda and her husband Matthew Keller, Sarah, Ronald and Danielle Malconian; Great-grandmother of Matthew Dorian Keller; sister of the late Leon Garabedian and his wife Dorothy, and the late Rose G. and Dr. Harry Samourian; sister-in-law of the late Edward S. Dorian and his wife Ethel of New York, Dr. Robert V. Dorian and his wife Mary of New Jersey, Seth Dorian and his wife Betty of Florida, Nancy D. Kasarjian and her husband Dr. Parnag H. of Massachusetts. She is also survived by many nieces and nephews and close friends.

She dedicated herself and her talents to her beloved Armenian Church. From humble beginnings as a young choir member, to becoming the first female Parish Council Chairman for the Eastern Diocese, she proudly served as a pioneer for women in the Armenian Church. Helene's push for change and representation, made her community stronger and more inclusive of all who wish to serve.

In 2011, she received the Women of Wonder (WOW) Appreciation Award in recognition of her leadership as one of the founders of the Diocesan Women's Guild Central Council, in addition to becoming the first woman to serve as Chairman of the Parish Council of Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Mass.

She also holds the unique distinction of serving not only as chairman, but also vice chair-

man of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Cambridge, Parish Council and the Women's Guild. She was chairman of the Armenian Holy Trinity Woman's Guild as well as established the Armenian Holy Trinity Cotillion. She was recipient of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church Man of the Year and in November 1994 was presented with a reproduction of an illumination from an ancient Armenian manuscript by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian.

She was an athlete playing basketball and field hockey as a youth and later became an avid golfer, spending many years playing at

Oakley Country Club in Watertown, where she served as chair of woman's golf and during the winter months at Broken Sound Country Club in Boca Raton.

Her happiest times was being surrounded by family and friends; there was always room for one more on her table.

Funeral services were at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge on Saturday, December 8. Interment was at Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

Arrangements were made by the Bedrosian Funeral Home.



Dr. Shahan Armand Adrian

Dentist and Piano Virtuoso

MIDDLETOWN, N.Y. — Dr. Shahan Armand Adrian, a retired prosthodontist from Forest Hills, NY, passed away at the Orange County Medical Center on December 1, 2018.

He leaves his wife of 46 years, Veronica (Boghossian) Adrian; their four daughters, Laurel (John) Termini, Elyse Adrian and Scott Johnston; Heather (Davide) Scarselli and Ivy Zohra Adrian; grandchildren Karlsten, Kiersten, Scott, Spencer, Shaffer, Matteo and Fabio; his twin brother, Dr. Nurhan Adrian; nephews Matthew (Dawn) Adrian; Andrew (Maura) Adrian. His parents, Harry Erysian Adrian and Nevarte (Kapakian) Adrian predeceased him.

In 1946, piano prodigies Shahan and Nurhan

performed at the Esplanade with the Boston Pops Orchestra, conducted by Arthur Fiedler.

Together they graduated from Harvard in 1954 and Tufts Dental School in 1958.

After several years of service in the Navy, the young dentists took to private practice - Shahan in New York and Nurhan in Massachusetts.

Surrounded by his family, Shahan met his destiny with great courage and full sails ahead. His family held his funeral at the Armenian Holy Martyrs Church, Tuesday, December 4. His burial took place with an honorary flag

salute ceremony by the local veterans administration at the family plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery.



Eliz (Vanerian) Dilsizian

Mother, Grandmother

BELMONT, Mass. — Eliz (Vanerian) Dilsizian of Belmont died on December 7. She was 94.

She was the widow of the late Hagop Dilsizian. She leaves her daughter Vicky Kherlopian and her husband Norayr of Belmont, Bedros H. Dilsizian and his wife Ani of Watertown, Dr. Vasken Dilsizian and his wife Dr. Madeline Erario of Maryland and Silva Varjabedian and her husband Shanoor of Indiana; grandchildren Dickran Kherlopian and his wife Solin, Dr. Alec Kherlopian, Armen Dilsizian and his wife Lien, Sareen, Steven and Matthew Dilsizian and Arek and Liana Varjabedian; Sister-in-law Ashkhen Vanerian of Watertown and nieces Dr. Sally Salpy Vanerian and Susan Shoushig Vanerian.

She was the sister of the late Hagop Vanerian and Siranoush Baralian.

Services were held at St. James Armenian Church on Wednesday, December 12. Interment followed at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge. Expressions of sympathy may be made in her memory to St. James Armenian Church.

Arrangements were made by the Giragosian Funeral Home.



Nardolillo Funeral Home

Est. 1906

John K. Najarian, Jr.

Rhode Island's Only Licensed Armenian Funeral Director

1278 Park Ave. Cranston, RI 02910 **(401) 942-1220**

1111 Boston Neck Rd. Narragansett, RI 02882 (401) 789-6300

www.nardolillo.com

Giragosian

F U N E R A L H O M E

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC

Mark J. Giragosian

Funeral Counselors

576 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472, TEL: 617-924-0606

www.giragosianfuneralhome.com

Eminent Armenologist Prof. Robert Hewsen Dies at 84

HEWSEN, from page 1

Hewsen was a Professor Emeritus of History at Rowan University in New Jersey. He was the president of the Society for Armenian Studies (1988-89). He was well known for his translation of the seventh-century *Ashkharatsoys* (Geography) of Anania of Shirak. He was also the author of the monumental work *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (University of Chicago Press, 2001).

Hewsen was born Robert H. Hewsenian in New York City in 1934 to Armenian-American parents. He spent seven years in Europe with the US Air Force and studying. He received his BA in history from the University of Maryland and his PhD from Georgetown University in 1967. The same year he joined the history department of Rowan University, where he taught Byzantine and Russian history for more than 30 years. After retiring from Rowan University in July 1999, Hewsen lectured at University of Chicago, Columbia University, California State University, Fresno and University of California, Los Angeles.

Hewsen is also the co-founder and president

of the Society for the Study of Caucasia.

Hewsen wrote a multitude of books and articles on the history of the Caucasus, especially Armenia. His *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* received wide critical acclaim. In his review Michael E. Stone wrote: "Robert Hewsen has prepared an opus magnum that has no rival in Armenian studies. This pioneering and largely definitive work is the best atlas of Armenia ever prepared."

Merrill D. Peterson wrote that it "may by itself be considered a monument of American scholarship." Charles King wrote that the book is an "outstanding achievement not only as a geographical reference but also as a guide to the demographic and political history of the entire Caucasus." Adam T. Smith wrote of the Atlas as "an important milestone in the development of Armenian studies."

Among his many articles and book chapters are "Ethno-history and the Armenian influence upon the Caucasian Albanians" in *Classical Armenian Culture: Influence and Creativity*. Philadelphia: Scholars Press, 1982.

He also contributed chapters to books by other authors or to scholarly publications.

Telephone (617) 924-7400

Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, Inc.

Continuous Service By The Bedrosian Family Since 1945

558 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02472

MARION BEDROSIAN
PAUL BEDROSIAN
LARRY BEDROSIAN

Read News in Armenian at:





COMMUNITY NEWS

Cpl. Paul S. Marsoubian Amvets Post 41 Hosts Member Appreciation Banquet: Tribute to Past Commander Edward Herosian

By Jack Medzorian

WATERTOWN — On November 24, the Cpl. Paul S. Marsoubian Post 41 American Veterans (AmVets) held its annual member appreciation banquet at the Oakley Country Club, in Watertown. Over 60 persons were present, including guests from the family of Past Commander Edward Herosian, represented by his widow, Ann Herosian and their children.

AmVets Post 41 was formed 66 years ago, the brainchild of Kasper Bejoian who recruited a group of 11 founders, including himself, to unite Armenian veterans of World War II. It continued with veterans of subsequent wars, notably, Korea and Vietnam. The Post grew rapidly and within one year it formed a women's auxiliary, comprised of female veterans, and female members of veterans' families. Overall membership since inception reached approximately 450 veterans, most of whom have passed on.

The main objective of the Post was to unite Armenian veterans who fought together to build together and serve the needs of their veteran brothers and the community. Its membership achievement included Lincoln Jelallian who became Massachusetts State Commander,



Members of Past Commander Edward Herosian's family are present as his memory is being honored (photo: David Medzorian)

and Berge Avadanian, who became National AmVets Commander.

In the 1960s, the Post moved to a new building, custom-built by Past Commander Edward Herosian, on Grove Street, in Watertown. In 2015, as the membership

dwindled, the Post sold the building, thanks to a major effort led by Herosian, who was serving a second term as Post Commander at the time. The Post then made an agreement with the AGBU New England District to use its building on Mt. Auburn Street,

Watertown, for its offices and monthly meetings.

The membership decided to utilize the funds from the sale of the building to establish an endowment fund mainly to provide scholarships, first and foremost, to families of Post members present and deceased. This program began in 2017 and has continued since. At the same time the Endowment Fund was placed with the AGBU to earn income, which together with the principal, funds scholarships.

Commander George W. Haroutunian, in his welcoming speech, paid tribute to Past Commander Edward Herosian and the out-



Post Commander George W. Haroutunian presents a plaque to Mrs. Anne Herosian, widow of past Post Commander Edward Herosian (photo: David Medzorian)

standing effort he made during his final years to sell the building. He then called upon his widow, Ann Herosian, and her family to come to the podium to receive a plaque honoring Edward Herosian. Their son, Glenn Herosian, spoke about his dad's military service in WWII and dedication to the Post. He recalled the period when his father was building the new Post headquarters and how he had helped his dad at that time on the site.

Post Donations

Following the presentation George Haroutunian reviewed the major donations made by the Post over the past 2-3 years, which included:

- Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Home, donation of Hoyer lifts to assist bedridden residents.
- Donation to Heritage Park Foundation Endowment Fund. A plaque on the site includes the name of the Post.
- Scholarships since 2017 totaling \$173,500 for 88 students, and ongoing as presented by Scholarship Committee Chairman Harold Partamian.
- Donation to the new building fund of the National Association of Armenian Studies and Research with plaque placed at the location of ancient manuscripts.
- Support of Armenia Tree Project: Bench with a plaque and trees planted at the Bash-Abaran battle site where General Dro is buried, near Gyumri, Armenia.
- AGBU New England Headquarters.
- Donation to the Muratsan Children's Cancer Center in Yerevan
- Donation of funds to support needy MA AMVETS veterans.
- Holiday meal on Army Day January 28, 2018 for Armenia's frontline soldiers.
- Finalization of Endowment Agreement with AGBU
- Establish web site and uploading veteran's interviews to go on line Jan 2019
- Conversion of Post to "Armenian American Veterans of Greater Boston."

Past Commander and Trustee Jack Medzorian praised Commander George Haroutunian for his exemplary efforts in leading the Post during the past few years, especially after the death of Past Commander Edward Herosian.

Following a full course meal, members and guests danced to the tunes of Leon Janikian and his band and enjoyed the company of veteran brothers and families. The event was ably organized by the co-chairs, First Vice Commander Edward Der Kazarian and Walter Nahabedian.



Sponsor A Teacher

In Armenia and Karabagh

18th Anniversary

Since its inception in 2001, TCA's Sponsor a Teacher program has raised over \$642,900 and reached out to 6,427 teachers and school workers in Armenia & Karabagh.



✂

☐ Yes, I want to sponsor teachers in Armenia and Karabagh to continue helping them to educate the children, our future leaders. I would like to have the teacher's name and address.

☐ \$200 ☐ \$400 ☐ \$600 ☐ Other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Tel: _____

Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association - Memo: Sponsor a Teacher 2014
Mail your check with this form to:

TCA Sponsor a Teacher
5326 Valverde, Houston, TX 77056
Your donation is Tax Deductible.



COMMUNITY NEWS



armenian
museum
of america | *art
culture
eternity*

Հնդիաւոր Նոր Տարի
էւ Սուրբ Ծնունդ

WISHING YOU A BLESSED
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY
AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
& STAFF of the
ARMENIAN MUSEUM
OF AMERICA

Visit our newly-designed gallery,
explore exhibitions, attend
lectures and musical events,
and sign up for new workshops
and classes. **Become a member!**

ARM RELIQUARY
Armenia’s conversion to Christianity
between 301–314 AD made it the first
state in the world to adopt Christianity
as its official religion. This expressive
devotional piece composes the thumb
touching the ring finger in a traditional
Armenian gesture of blessing.

Photography by George Bouret



COMMUNITY NEWS

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS WHO
JOINED US TO CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF OUR NEW GALLERY



Michele M. Kolligian welcomes
guests to the new gallery

Armenia: art, culture, eternity

*Exploring nearly 3,000 years of Armenian
culture through objects from the collection*



Vice President Bob Khderian greets
guests on the snowy evening



Virginia Durruty (Project Architect)
Jennifer Liston Munson (Executive Director)
Michele M. Kolligian (President)



Well over 200 guests attended

JOIN US AS WE GROW!
www.armenianmuseum.org



617.926.2562
Thursday through Sunday, 12-6 pm
65 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02472



COMMUNITY NEWS

CYSCA Panelists from Armenia Discuss Activism and Revolution

CYSCA, from page 6

announcements like this. Then people were encouraged. It was a really, really very emotional moment, because all the older ones were really afraid but they were really for that. The children did not understand the fear, what is fear, or what to fear. They saw on the internet that in other cities that people went out, so they also went out."

This established a culture of rallying, so that when a principal was nominated for a school whom the people did not like, the people held a rally and said they do not like the decision that was made. This was real change, Isakhanyan said, for her region.

Garik Miskaryan, foreign affairs manager for the Restart Student Initiative, declared that by October 2017, university students were already fighting for changes on issues important to their lives, such as postponing obligatory military service for some exceptional students. The main people in this movement established the

ing, including representatives of Reject Serzh, Nikol Pashinyan and members of his team, and the Restart Initiative group. Suren Sahakyan, who only later formed his own political party, proposed an obligatory strike. The protestors would block the streets in a decentralized manner.

On the night of April 15, Avagyan said, after Pashinyan's speech, they decided to allocate duties. Whoever had a car would block one of the various main city streets, especially the bridges. The student faction undertook the heaviest responsibilities. They had to close down the streets in the morning, and the bold ones among them lay down to block the entrances of the subway cars. Avagyan said, "I never imagined the situation would lead to Serzh Sargsyan's resignation because there were truly very few of us showing up there and everybody was deriding us greatly. In a word, in the morning the following picture materialized: we with the students collected at the SAS

were able to spread in our surroundings that perhaps this time things would change."

He related that during the revolution, one of the main principles was to maintain civil disobedience without violence, which hopefully would lead the police to understand that the protestors were not enemies but friends. When one of his hotheaded friends, named Mihran, was struck by the police with a club, Chukaklyan noticed to his surprise that even he merely raised his hands, understanding that it was necessary to attempt to keep the peace.

Chukaklyan is originally from Armavir, a town and region in the west of Armenia. He said that when we saw the Yerevan roads were closed down, he understood they had to do the same in his hometown, so, 13 young women and 4 young men ran around the streets of Armavir, with the police following them. At first the local residents said new Yerevan fashions were being introduced, but in a few days, even the older grandmothers and grandfathers came outside to sit on the streets in their chairs to block traffic, and the police could not do anything.

He concluded, "It is at that time that you become aware of how important each citizen's responsibility is to do what is necessary for civil society, so that they can educate people to be able to do their civic obligations. The direction in which the country moves forward and toward what future depends on each step." Change comes from each small step taken by individuals.

Alla Yeremyan is also from Syunik Province in southern Armenia, but from a different city called Sisian, where she is manager of the Basen Hotel and also teaches students with disabilities and doing leadership training for NGOs. She was in Sisian during the revolution, and said, "To tell the truth, in the beginning I had some fears about the success of the revolution." She recalled the fate of the 2015 Electric Yerevan struggle, but as time went on became more optimistic. Mobilizing in Sisian

was difficult, she said, for several reasons: first the majority of Sisian's youth were already in Yerevan participating in the demonstrations there. In Sisian though there was no direct actions there was an atmosphere of fear, as they feared that they or their parents could lose their jobs in retaliation. Consequently, only five or six youths did not fear going out and demonstrating, but everybody followed the events on television and social media and slowly the spirit of the revolution reached Sisian too.

As in Goris, it seemed the children took the initiative. Yeremyan related: "One morning, we all went to work and an unusual thing happened. All the students from the fourth to the eleventh grades declared a strike. They made placards stating 'Reject Serzh' and 'I am the owner of my country.'" Yeremyan worked at Vaghatin's middle school, 11 kilometers from Sisian. The students walked with their banners to Sisian, and the teachers followed them, but in their cars.

When they arrived at Sisian they saw that everyone had gone on strike. Rumors about closing the Sisian medical center had inspired them even more to struggle, so everyone from the medical centers and schools had taken to the streets. They closed a bridge and some youth with their cars closed the main highway connecting Yerevan to Meghri. The following day, April 23, Serzh Sargsyan resigned as prime minister.

After this first round of answers, Ohanyan asked what the activists did in order to bring people out to join the demonstrations and address their fears. Secondly, what role does activism and civil society have in making this transition stick and making the changes permanent.

Avagyan replied that it was a little easier for Restart to encourage people because its members were already involved in different processes and Davit Petrosyan was very well known among the students. Thus, when they saw

continued on next page



Levon Chukaklyan, left, and Yuri Avagyan (photo: Aram Arkun)

Restart Initiative on February 5, 2018. Their activity, focused on Yerevan State University (YSU), touched everything from issues like toilet paper to higher level budget questions.

Prior to the April events of the Velvet Revolution, Miskaryan said that there were two groups struggling for this revolution: Nikol Pashinyan's political faction and the Reject Serzh civil initiative, which turned into the main force moving the revolution forward. Miskaryan and Davit Petrosyan from the Restart Initiative participated in those meetings and were the first to greet Pashinyan on his return from Gyumri to Yerevan (on April 13). Before arriving in Freedom Square, Pashinyan and the whole group went to YSU, where, Miskaryan said, it became clear that the students were the main driving force of the revolution.

Miskaryan declared, "The revolution took place, in my opinion, on that day when the students, around 5,000 in number the first time, closed the intersection of Koryun and Abovyan Streets and kept it closed for an entire day. There were clashes there. On Baghramyan Street in the evening, they shot on the students and three of our members got injured. The next day when I saw those injured comrades back on the streets, the next morning, I realized that something is possible and that changes are taking place. During those ten days we were basically on the streets."

Taking to the Streets with Pashinyan

Yuri Avagyan, communications manager for the Restart Initiative and a third-year sociology graduate student, declared that the most impressive day for the students was that of the closing down of the Koryun/Abovyan intersection. The students joined the main mass of protestors, but, he said, were greater in number than those before them.

Avagyan explained that planning was very important for the movement's success. There were various initiatives taking place, including that of Nikol Pashinyan, and some individuals participated in all of them. Meetings took place at the Ketiknots' Café near the Opera and the intersection of Prospect and Baghramyan Avenue. Around 30 people were actively talk-

supermarket and, in turn, using dumpsters and benches closed the street and went on. We were 10-15 people in all. Cars couldn't travel there. It is true that we made the city very dirty but in the end something happened. As many as expected of the students came out while the picture of the city was that Yerevan was completely paralyzed."

They repeated the same actions again and again. The next day, April 17, they came to the same place, at the supermarket, and the police were waiting for them. Probably, Avagyan guessed, there was a secret police agent in their ranks who had revealed their plans. Arrests began. Avagyan showed a brief video clip showing the students resisting arrest. Avagyan and the others were kept at the Masis police precinct for nine hours.

Miskaryan interjected that Avagyan neglected to mention that the day prior to being arrested, Avagyan was shot upon three times, and once he was hit in "a very inappropriate spot."

Civic Responsibility

Levon Chukaklyan, cofounder of the Restart Student Initiative and third year political science post-graduate at YSU, spoke about his personal story since the other panelists had given information about the revolution. He said that in October 2017, when the students were working to postpone the drafting into the army of exceptional students, they did a hunger strike for the first time. His family was threatened and punished as a result. His brother was fired from his job and the secret police telephoned to threaten his mother. All his family and friends asked him to stop his protest activities and when Pashinyan began his march from Gyumri to Yerevan, his mother and others begged him not to join. He said, "However, as always I did just the opposite again." He and his friends joined Pashinyan's group. When his mother, worried, called after hearing of the shootings on April 16, Chukaklyan said, she only told him to be careful. He understood that by this point she and his family and friends were convinced there was no point to try to hold him back. Perhaps more significantly, he stressed, "I understood that among them too the belief arose that already was with me – that slowly we



COMMUNITY NEWS

from previous page

people who in the past worked for just goals, he said, “they felt they could trust these people.” He said that in Armenia, it is important as a leader to show that you do not fear and have strong will.

Last year, for example, when For the Sake of the Development of Knowledge Initiative, the predecessor group to the Restart Initiative, was invited by the then prime minister Karen Karapetyan to negotiate, the group forced Karapetyan to agree to have everything recorded



Alisa Stepanian (photo: Aram Arkun)

without cuts so it could be shown on television. The students were so confident that they could interrupt the prime minister. Minister of Defense Vigen Sargsyan got upset and left. The group also published its telephone numbers to show its sincerity and independence to the public.

Miskaryan followed up by declaring that the decentralized nature of the movement was very important. The principle of closing down the streets was announced and beyond that, individuals took over, he said. The students who had an opportunity to be outside Armenia and see other societies were more open were the first to close the streets down.

Then, he said, “When 18-year-old girls take to the street, that doubled the number of people in the street. When at home they tell the girl once, twice, don’t go, but the girl still went to the street, the father and mother themselves were forced to go to the street.” When the young women then would lie down before buses, this got televised and many more people were inspired.

The arrests of the main leaders like Nikol Pashinyan, Ararat Mirzoyan and Sasun Mikayelyan on April 22 did not change anything. People still went out to close the streets, because civil society, explained Miskaryan, was now the driving force of this movement.

Miskaryan concluded by noting that the Restart Initiative has not changed its approach or activities. Both before and after the revolution it remained active in the field of civil society, unlike many others.

Chuchaklyan gave another example of how they got people involved. He said, “if we had a lack of freedom inside the university, and that atmosphere dominated there, then we could right next to it establish a different atmosphere of freedom.” They held events at

the park or garden next to the university. Students looked while passing and became interested in their demands. Similarly, during the revolution, people saw others waging struggles or activities on the street or through the internet, and this interested them.

He said that many people of the civil movements have now entered politics but the Restart Initiative works to integrate new students in order to replace them. He said, “We have kept our ideas and activities in spheres that have great need for solutions.” Meanwhile, as far as the revolution in general goes, he said that it must be institutionalized.

Urban Vs. Rural Challenges

Ohanyan asked Yeremyan and Isakhanyan how challenges in the provinces are different from those in Yerevan. Yeremyan said that it is hard to mobilize people in far away regions. The NGO at which she volunteers tries to develop Sisian not only economically but through programs to involve the youth and women. They held leadership classes for the

youth during the summer to explain what they can change in society to make it more suitable to their own needs. They also have various economic programs promoting craftwork and tourism. In November a tourism information center was opened in Sisian.

Isakhanyan said that she has been involved in civil society organizations for five years. A long process is necessary after the revolution. She said, “I will consider the revolution as implemented when the mindset of the people will be really changed.” When bribery no longer will be relied on, and elections will be transparent.

Ohanyan also asked about the role of the diaspora in supporting civil society initiatives. Isakhanyan said, “If you care, we really get encouraged that there are people outside of Armenian who consider Armenia their home and care what is happening there.” Collaboration with Armenian civil society organizations and visiting are important. She said, “We feel a lot of respect here [in Boston]. People recognize where Armenia is and it is thanks to you. You make us really proud that we are Armenian. Thank you.”

Avagyan said that there were many cases when diasporan contributions have not yielded the expected results. Aid, he said, should not be short term, and the question is proper policy or strategy, and how to implement the strategy. Restart attempts to work in this manner, he said. He gave one example.

In the past, student bodies were formed as appendages of the Republican Party and took students to Tsaghkatsor’s resort areas and spent 9 ½ million tram. Restart instead announced grants for 100,000 tram, and got three people doing research projects and mastering specific issues. These new members became so skillful that this was considered a

great success. He stressed, “In our country, the only resources are human resources.”

Chuchaklyan said that there is a widespread skepticism in Armenia concerning grants being given through various countries or foundations. He said, “I think the diaspora can take the place of these countries or international organizations, so that with our own [i.e. Armenian] means we can help the human level of quality and progress.”

During the question and answer session with the audience, when asked to elaborate on any changes that have taken place at the university level, Avagyan declared that this was “the most painful point...nothing changed in education. The leadership and management of universities remain the same corrupt people as before, from the rectors to the governing council.” He said that his group was awaiting the completion of the revolution and afterwards will begin presenting its harder requests. First will be the removal of the old corrupt leadership, and second will be the change of the professors. He explained that “with us, the university is a very conservative body, unlike in developed countries.”

As to whether their broader political demands will be fulfilled, Avagyan replied

that it was always possible that if civil society could not be sustained, the Kocharyan system would come back to power. He said that it is still actively working in the field, and Kocharyan has numerous media resources, so activism must continue too.

Miskaryan exclaimed that the iron is hot, so it is time to mold it. This is an important period for building and creating. Success will depend on the efforts of everyone.

To an audience question of how to move conservative Armenian society toward freedom on issues like women’s rights, Isakhanyan responded that already changes have taken place since women stood outside next to their husbands, sons and friends in the revolution, and there are many women’s names now on the list of candidates for deputies in the parliamentary election. There is now a woman appointed as mayor of Echmiadzin city, which could not have been imagined ten years ago. A recent law requires that murder or family violence directed against women will be considered criminal cases.

Yeremyan said that we will reach the desired result only when women themselves are knowledgeable about their rights and demand them.



The delegation visits Armenian Heritage Park (photo: David Medzorian)

CYSCA Hosts Young Activists from Armenia: Follow-on Activities Planned

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – The Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA) hosted a delegation of young activists from Armenia in late November to early December, sponsored by the Open World exchange program of the US Congress. Five young professionals involved in the Velvet Revolution and a facilitator took part in a whirlwind week of meetings and site visits in the Boston area on topics covering activism, transition to leadership, civic participation, and the US legislative process. The group consisted of three young men, students at Yerevan State University, who founded the Restart Initiative in early 2018, and two young ladies – one from Sisian involved in children’s education, and one from Goris who works for the Rights Initiative Center NGO.

The group met with federal, state and municipal legislative/administrative heads, and NGO leaders and their organizations. Highlights included a meeting with Mayor Marc McGovern of Cambridge, MA. The delegates commented that this would not really be possible in Armenia, to sit down and have a conversation with a city mayor. Another highlight was the panel discussion in which the young adults from Armenia were the panelists. They shared their experiences of their America trip, as well as the current realities in Armenia, including post-Velvet Revolution situations and their future plans upon their return. The group also met with staff from Congresswoman Katherine Clark’s office, as well as State Representative Jonathan Hecht, Middlesex Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, and local Watertown town officials.

Other meetings included a session with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the Pioneer Institute, Common Cause, Amnesty International, Campus Compact, and the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

CYSCA project manager Alisa Stepanian commented, “It was a privilege to host these young activist leaders from Armenia. We are indeed encouraged that several of the professionals whom they met expressed interest in working with the delegates on various projects and continuing their dialogue on activism and transition to leadership.”

This group was sponsored by Open World, the only federal legislative exchange program working with all the post-Soviet republics. It brings groups of young professionals on different topics to the United States. During their stay, groups are immersed in a week of activities and meetings on their respective themes. CYSCA was very proud to host this wonderful, passionate group and looks forward to continued opportunities.

CYSCA was formed in 1987 as a nonprofit corporation by a group of concerned citizens of Cambridge. In the 30 years which have followed, many citizen exchanges and training programs have taken place. In the past 20 years alone, CYSCA has hosted over 20 professional groups from Armenia on a variety of themes, such as entrepreneurship, social work, education, theater management, university administration, museum management, aviation, NGO management, and public health, as well as ten youth exchanges, school partnerships, and school aid in Armenia. For more information, visit www.cambridgeyerevan.org.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Students of Armenian Descent

Having Completed One Year of College by June, 2019

Applications and other information may be obtained from

**ARMENIAN STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION
Scholarship Committee**

**333 Atlantic Avenue • Warwick, RI 02888
Tel. 401 461-6114 • Fax 401 461-6112**

e-mail: headasa@aol.com

Deadline for returning completed Applications: March 15, 2019



Arts & Living

SAS Award for Distinguished Dissertation Conferred on Dr. Mehmet Polatel

FRESNO — The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) announced that Dr. Mehmet Polatel has been chosen to receive the SAS Distinguished Dissertation Award for 2015-2017 for his dissertation “Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914.” The SAS Award is accompanied by a \$1,000 prize.

Polatel received a PhD in Modern Turkish History from Bogazici University (Istanbul) in 2017. He is a historian focusing on late Ottoman history and the early Turkish Republic. His research interests are in the fields of power, state formation, social change, nationalism, and genocide. He has conducted research on the fate of Armenian property in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. He is the co-author, with Ugur Ümit Üngör, of *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London and New York, 2011). Currently, he is a Manoogian post-doctoral fellow at the University of Michigan.

Polatel’s dissertation examines the emergence and transformation of the land question in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, focusing on the extent and characteristics



Dr. Mehmet Polatel

of land disputes concerning Armenians. The views on the land question, which emerged as a distinct social problem in the 1870s, varied among the central government, local authorities, the Armenian political elite, Armenian institutions, Kurdish powerholders, and the Kurdish political elite.

Based on Armenian, British, and Ottoman sources, this study demonstrates that there were significant changes in the extent and characteristics of land disputes during and after the massacres of 1894-1897. These novelties include the escalation of the problem, the participation of ordinary people in the seizure of Armenian properties, the dispossession of Armenian large landowners, and the development of a state policy directed at changing the demographic profile of the population in the region.

On the news of receiving the award, Polatel stated: “I am humbled and deeply honored to receive this award from the Society for Armenian Studies which has been promoting Armenian studies for decades. It means a lot to me. I sincerely thank the selection committee for considering my dissertation to be worthy of this distinguished award.”

The SAS also chose Dr. Christopher Sheklian’s dissertation, “Theology and Community: The Armenian Minority, Tradition, and Secularism in Turkey” (University of Chicago, 2017), for honorable mention. Sheklian is director of the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center at the Armenian Diocese in New York.

The Society for Armenian Studies, founded in 1974, is an international professional association representing scholars and teachers in the field of Armenian Studies. The aim of the SAS is to promote the study of Armenian culture and society, including history, language, literature, and social, political, and economic questions.

The SAS (societyforarmenianstudies.com) is headquartered at the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno. It publishes the peer-reviewed Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies and a semi-annual online newsletter, and organizes panels and conferences on Armenian Studies.



Stéphane Kazandjian

Stéphane Kazandjian From ‘Sexy Boys’ to Potential Armenian Projects

YEREVAN/PARIS — Last October French-Armenian filmmaker and scriptwriter Stéphane Kazandjian visited Armenia for the first time as a jury member of ReAnima Yerevan International Animation film festival, celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. This interview with Kazandjian discusses his films as well as his Armenian background.

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Stéphane, I first learned about you in 2002 due to your first feature film, “Sexy Boys.” Frankly, comedies about youth are not my piece of cake, but the director’s -ian led me

to watch it. And if I am not mistaken, the main character’s family name also has an -ian. Is the film somehow autobiographical?

The main character’s name is indeed Sebastian Kibarian — Kibarian being my grandmother’s maiden name. The film was never intended to be about an Armenian family, but as I was looking for my character’s family name, I thought it might be something meaningful to me too.

Strange as it may seem, “Sexy Boys” is actually quite autobiographical. This is my group of college friends — that I still meet with — and those are the kind of issues we dealt with, as I guess most young adults do. What interested me in this film was to deal with the idea of masculinity. It is a very tricky question when you are in your late teens / early twenties — even later, I am afraid. American teen movies usually deal with the question of “being an outsider/being popular,” but rarely with guys totally lost about the idea “what does it mean to be a man?” Who is the “real” man? The sex god with multiple partners? The quiet family guy? The romantic sensitive friend?

There is an opinion that very few art professionals of Armenian origin, including filmmakers, deal with comedy, being more inclined to serious, even depressive matters. But your “Modern Love,” followed by “Sexy Boys,” as well as your last feature from last year, “Bad Buzz,” are light comedies as well.

When I got started, I had two screenplays — one comedy (that would later turn into “Sexy Boys”), and one drama. The comedy got made first. And that was it. More seriously, I would love to do drama if this is the right approach for the story I want to tell. But I guess I have a tendency to always try to find what is funny about situations, even depressing ones. It is not a philosophical pose; it is just who I am. For instance, one thing I hate is power. Power over others because you are rich, because you were born in the right family, because you

see KAZANDJIAN, page 15

‘Best Christmas Pageant’ Brings Families Together

By Rodger Mullen

FAYETTEVILLE, S.C. (*Fayetteville Observer*) — For more than a decade, Christmas has meant “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever” for the Samuelian family.

Four members of the family are performing this year in Cape Fear Regional Theatre’s production of the play, which it has staged annually since 1991.

“Our family has been involved since our oldest started in 2007,” said mother Savanna Samuelian. “It’s wonderful for me to be a part of. It’s a great way to get everyone in the Christmas spirit.”

Performances started this week, and will continue through December 22.

Based on a novel by Barbara Robinson, “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever” tells the story of a rowdy group of children, the Herdmans, who take over a church pageant. The production is thrown into chaos, but the family eventually comes to embrace the true meaning of Christmas.

Three casts of about 60 performers each bring the story to life. Aside from a few adult roles, nearly all the parts are played by children. Hundreds of young performers from throughout the community turn up every year to audition.

This year, the task of shaping those performances has fallen to Brian Adam Kline, who has directed CFRT youth camps and several productions at Gilbert Theater.

“It’s a ride, it really is. 180 actors, three casts, rehearsals six days a week,” Kline said. “We’ve been rehearsing since before Halloween, mid-October.”

This year, three of Savanna Samuelian’s children are involved in the production: Eva, 11; Tucker, 13; and Warner, 8. At one time or another, all five of her kids have taken part.

Tucker in in his seventh year with the play. This year, he’s playing Charlie Bradley, one of the pageant kids who gets terrorized by the Herdmans.

“He’s kind of a playful spirit as well as understanding,” Tucker said of the character. “He understands more by the end of the play.”

Benjamin Flom, 16, has been involved with the play for 10 years, both backstage and onstage. He’s playing the role of Leroy Herdman this year.

“I enjoy the different perspectives of the show,” Benjamin said. “It’s interesting to see how it changes over time.”

Samantha Eason, 17, has performed in the play for seven years, starting in the sixth grade.

In that time, Samantha has performed the roles of Gladys Herdman, Ollie Herdman, Beth Bradley and several others. CFRT artistic director Mary Kate Burke jokes that Samantha “could probably do the play as a one-woman show.”

“Playing all those different characters has really helped me expand as an actor,” Samantha said.

Savanna Samuelian is playing the role of Mrs. Armstrong, who organizes the pageant until a broken leg sidelines her.

Samuelian said the play has the effect of bringing the family together during the hectic holiday weeks, when time is at a premium.

“It’s that couple of times a week when we are together for a few hours,” she said. “You have to set everything else aside. I’d like to say that we would do that anyway, but that’s not always the case.”

For information, visit cfrt.org.



ARTS & LIVING

How Artist Marysia Lewandowska Found Inspiration in UAE

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (*The National*) – Inside a cube-like installation in Abu Dhabi Art, clothed in chain-mail and illuminated so that it shines like silver, are “women’s voices,” says the artist Marysia Lewandowska. “They come seeping out of the structure, floating like a welcome.”

Lewandowska’s work is the latest instalment in her Open Cinema project, which she has been pursuing since 2012. For each of these, she investigates a country’s media archives, and works with an architecture firm to create a bespoke cinema to show a place’s history back to itself.

“I rely on archives – what exists and circulates in the country,” says the artist, a tall, bookish woman who has the wry determination of a veteran researcher. “Those archival films already say a lot about the culture before I come and edit it into something that I want to say.”

Lewandowska grew up in communist Poland, and in a way, seems not to have relinquished the fidelity to things held in common, whether it be goods or a set of ideas. In Open Cinema, which has had previous instalments in Portugal and Hong Kong, she looks to a country’s archives as a common memory.

“I am trying to build a picture of the Emirates that is not based on the official footage and which is not about the oil,” she explains. “The question is: who has access to generate those images that represent the culture? That was very crucial for me in Abu Dhabi ... many of the films that you see [of the emirate] were commissioned by the government or corporations, so they had professional filmmakers or editors. That’s different to someone just having a camera. In the 1980s, the first portable camcorders appeared on the market, and to have access to that footage was my next challenge – to find people who had access to cameras for pleasure. What they generated was a very different image to the people who were commissioned to say something about this part of the world.”

Lewandowska’s resulting video, “Cinema Island” (2018) splices together home footage from a local Emirati family with images shot by British Petroleum (BP) to document their activities in the region. Shown as part of Hammad Nasar’s exhibition “Structures of Meaning | Architectures of Perception,” within the fair, the video takes Abu Dhabi’s history into something more nebulous: the slipperiness of memory and the permanence of feeling.

Stories in Mother Tongues

Lewandowska arrived in Abu Dhabi around a year ago, hoping to make a film out of its archives, but access was harder than she antic-

ipated. In the end, she found two major sources: the archives of BP in London, and with the help of Dyala Nusseibeh, the fair’s director, the artist and designer Ahmed Al Areef.

“Ahmed said, yes, my father shot a lot of footage when I was little,” recalls Lewandowska. “And he was born the same year as my daughter, 1989, so I suddenly felt I would be seeing something I knew – I had been filming my own daughter at the same time.”

Al Areef digitized around six hours of footage, and Lewandowska placed the two sources together: the corporate story of Abu Dhabi, related to oil and economic expansion, and the more personal history of the family

experience of seeing a lot of home videos, you rarely see men with such tenderness, and so relaxed.”

There are no women in the film, at the request of the family, creating a gender split which Lewandowska addressed by separating the film into sound and image. “When I came here to research I met a lot of people in a lot of cultural institutions, and they were all women. So I went back to those women and asked them to record a story in their mother’s tongue.” She used these stories for the video’s soundtrack.

Part of the joy of this video becomes the sheer beauty of the Arabic language: at points it dissociates from the footage and takes over the work. One of the songs has a rising and

movies *My Dinner with Andre* and *Au Revoir les Enfants* were international hits in the 1980s.

Lewandowska used glitches from the BP footage as markers between the five chapters of the video, which are each overlaid with a different story. The film’s construction had the setting of the art fair in mind: people can wander in and out of the 20-minute work, without feeling like they have to watch the whole thing. Tellingly, there are no seats in this cinema. The structure was designed by Aram Mooradian, Summer Islam and George Massoud of the London-based MMI Architects. The firm used chain-link silver to incorporate the method of hanging and hooking that is key in putting a temporary structure together,



The structure that houses the film by Marysia Lewandowska, second from left, was designed by, from left, Aram Mooradian, Summer Islam and George Massoud of MMI Architects. Pawan Singh / *The National*

growing up here. Footage shows a father allowing himself to be tackled by his kids, the family’s young boys watching the spray come up against rocks in Oman, or horsing around with snowballs in Pakistan.

“There are beautiful displays of tenderness between father and sons,” she says. “The amount of physical embrace is almost surprising. They’re not paying any attention to the camera – it’s completely genuine. In my expe-

rience of seeing the histories on show and brings a more general sense of heartbreak and loss: the video shows time that no one will ever regain.

‘Amateur footage is about love’

The oldest footage in the film is from 1953: images of divers dredging the ocean bed in search of oil. Improbably, the images were taken by French filmmaker Louis Malle, whose

while also referencing the famous “silver screen” of the cinema.

The structure is as much a part of the total work as the video. “Cinemas negotiate the space between public and private, bringing this private footage to a public exhibition,” Lewandowska says. “The camera is a powerful tool, but cinema is too.”

Cinema Island is on show at Manarat Al Saadiyat until January 26.

Stéphane Kazandjian: From ‘Sexy Boys’ to Potential Armenian Projects

KAZANDJIAN, from page 14

know the right persons... Ridiculing the oppressor is much more effective than just moaning about how unfair life is. When you laugh at people, you stop being afraid of them, just see them as faulty human beings. And it is true also when you laugh at your own faults: Okay, I know, I’m ridiculous, maybe I do not have to pretend to be better than I really am. That is truly liberating. And to me that is the power of comedy.

In your filmography there is also another type of comedy, this time a mockumentary with a serious message, “Moi, Michel G., milliardaire, maître du monde” [Me, Michel G., Billionaire, King of the World]. After talking on human sexuality, gay and sport issues you suddenly were engaged in the world of capitalism. How did this sharp transition happen?

A long, long time ago, I graduated from business school. It was a way to reassure myself and my parents that in case my dreams of a career in the film trade collapsed, I would still have a Plan B. Of course, such a background is not something you brag about when you are trying to establish yourself as a creative force. But at some point, I just felt this was also part of who I was. Besides, at that time, we had experienced

the 2008 economic crash and my anger at the supposedly “all-knowing, powerful masters of the world” who had led us the brim of collapse was quite strong. So I thought it would be a good idea to try to do something about it. “Modern Love” had been a difficult film to shoot, it suffered from a way-too-low budget compared to its ambitions. I wanted to do something fast, with a very small crew. And hence the idea of “King of the World” came.

You are in Armenia for the first time due to an animation film festival. Do you have any direct links with animation?

Even though I have directed four feature films, my main activity is scriptwriting. In that capacity, I have written two animations feature films: “A Monster in Paris” (starring Vanessa Paradis) and “Sahara” (starring Omar Sy and Jean Dujardin).

Do you believe that your Armenian heritage can be somehow reflected in your films? If yes, so how?

I would not really know. I guess I do have the “Armenian director’s depressed gene” if you consider that in three of my films, there is a death in the family and a cemetery scene. More seriously, I do not know what my Armenian heritage is. One thing that surprised me with that

first visit to Yerevan for the Re-Animania festival was how “at home” I felt there. I do not speak Armenian, do not understand it, but still there was a strange feeling of familiarity, of belonging there. Let’s talk again about that in ten years when I’ve completed my therapy!

Please tell us about your Armenian roots and connections.

My Armenian heritage comes from my father’s side – my mom is French. My grandparents survived the genocide as kids and as often the case, after a long travel, being separated, they finally got together in France where part of the family was already established – my great-grandfather was the first archbishop of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Paris. I grew in a French environment, with touches of Armenian culture – going to the church with my father, eating the great Armenian dishes my grandmother would cook. I tried to mingle with Armenian youth when I was a young adult but I must say I felt out of place. I am in and out of the community, really. Sometimes it feels awkward. But it can also be a great observation point.

Usually people like you after their first visit think about an Armenia-related project. Are you an exception?

I have about a dozen “Armenian projects” in my computer files. Some are about the genocide, some about the French-Armenian community, some are historical dramas, others comedies. I have been trying to find for years for the right angle to do a film that resonates with who I am and be meaningful not only to the Armenian community but to the whole world as well. I have not found it so far, but getting a feeling of Armenia opens new possibilities. So we will see.

The motto of your first feature hero is: “Live with sex!” What is your life motto?

Wow, that is a big one. I am not sure, I never really thought about it. Some days it could be “try your best,” since life has taught me that success is quite a relative notion, so it is better to concentrate on one’s efforts rather than the end result. Some other times, it could be as simple as “be nice,” not “stupidly-naïve” nice, but just respect others, try not to judge them, be compassionate (even with yourself). There is so much violence and negativity in this world that just a little basic “niceness” can really save the day. I’d rather have people remember me as an okay writer-director who was a good person rather than a genius who was a total A-hole. That said, I am not a genius, so I would better try to be good!



ARTS & LIVING

BOOKS

A Timely Celebration Of the AMAA

By Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji

This volume is a timely celebration of the centennial of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), authored by a uniquely qualified church historian, minister and theologian.

The Rev. Vahan Tootikian is a teacher of the Armenian Evangelical community worldwide. He has worked diligently to have a complete survey of the birth and maturation of the AMAA. As he puts it in his concluding paragraphs, this is not only a “retrospective” look at the history of the AMAA, but also an “introspective” study of the lessons we learn from that history, as well as the “prospective”



The Genesis and Early Development of the Armenian Missionary Association of America

By Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian

direction of the AMAA within the larger context of the hopes and aspirations of the entire Armenian community in America and abroad.

This study also covers, in part, a historical survey of the Armenian Evangelical Church. Dr. Tootikian rightly highlights the dictum, that the church cannot be devoid of mission and, conversely, mission without the church cannot survive. Both are intertwined for the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and service in his name, The AMAA was born in the arms of the AEU which nursed it, organized it, and structured its raison d’etre.

Recipe Corner

Guest Recipe

by Christine Vartanian Datian



Crustless Zucchini Pie (Tutumov Boreg)

Courtesy of Robyn Kalajian at TheArmenianKitchen.com

INGREDIENTS

4 medium zucchini
4 medium eggs, beaten
1/2 cup Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (any mild cheese that melts well can be used)
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
1/2 cup flour
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
3/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon Aleppo pepper or 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

Preheat oven to 375°F. Wash and peel the zucchini. Using a grater or food processor, shred the zucchini. Place a colander in the sink and add the shredded zucchini; sprinkle a little table salt over the zucchini and allow to sit for 10-12 minutes to help draw moisture out. Using your hands, squeeze out as much of the zucchini’s liquid as possible. If necessary, place the zucchini in towels to squeeze out excess liquid. In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients until well-mixed. Place the mixture in a lightly greased 8”x 8” baking pan or a 9-inch pie pan. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes if using the 8-inch pan or for 30 to 35 minutes if using the 9-inch pan. The top should be lightly golden brown and a knife inserted in the center should come out clean. Serve for breakfast, brunch, lunch, or dinner. Just add a side of fresh sliced fruit or a tossed green salad, and rolls or crusty garlic bread to complete the meal. Serves 6 to 8.



See recipe at: <https://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/2016/04/crustless-zucchini-pie-armenian-style.html>

The idea for “The Armenian Kitchen” evolved while the Kalajians discussed retirement plans. “We’ve always wanted to work on something together,” added her husband Doug. “Robyn’s extensive knowledge of food and cooking combined with my writing skill was an obvious conclusion.” They discussed a number of potential projects, including collaborating on a cookbook and a theme calendar. Every idea they hatched involved Armenian food. Using the internet was something that would have intimidated both of them not long ago. But friends who were avid bloggers suggested they give it a try.

Robyn’s interest in Armenian cooking and cuisine began as a young child, helping her beloved grandmother pick tender grapes leaves from their back yard grape arbor.

“Armenian food is as richly diverse as the Armenian people,” she said. She noted that many Armenian dishes share many ingredients with Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cuisine, with an emphasis on fresh vegetables and whole grains. In addition to outstanding traditional Armenian recipes, TheArmenianKitchen.com features useful how-to videos as well as tips on nutrition, kitchen tools and food safety.”

Check out the Kalajian’s how-to videos at:
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=thearmeniankitchen.com

For recipes and stories:
<http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>
<https://armenianweekly.com/2011/11/08/kalajians-cook-up-a-storm-inside-their-armenian-kitchen/>
<https://www.thedailymeal.com/users/robyn-and-douglas-kalajian>
<https://flarmenians.com/tag/the-armenian-kitchen/>
<http://thearmenianpantry.blogspot.com/>



A century ago, Armenians were being decimated by the Genocide. Providentially the pain and suffering they experienced became the birth pangs of the Church to bring forth the AMAA, not because of the Genocide but in spite of it. The AMAA was the response of the Armenian Christianity to the atrocities of an evil empire.

This book is rather small in size and few in pages, but it is encyclopedic in portraying the lives and services of dedicated lay persons as well as pastors. Through the AMAA they were able to reach out to a bereaved community and share the good news of Christ by word and deed.

Armenians worldwide owe a word of gratitude to Dr. Tootikian for introducing the calling of the AMAA to the celebrants of the next bicentennial.

Copies of the book may be purchased from the AMAA office: 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ, 07652. Price: \$20 plus \$5 for shipping and handling.



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

FLORIDA

JANUARY 20-27, 2019 — Armenian Heritage Cruise XXII 2019. Western Caribbean Cruise aboard the Royal Caribbean’s Allure of the Sea. Traveling to Nassau, Cozumel, Roatan, Costa Maya. Cabin Rates, starting from \$949/person based on double occupancy, including port charges and ACAA registration fee. Government rates of \$137.45 are additional. Armenian entrainment, Armenian cultural presentations, Armenian Festival Day, Tavlou and Belote Tournaments and much more. Call Travel Group International at 1-561-447-08750 or 1-866-447-0750 ext. 108, contact person Janie.

MASSACHUSETTS

DECEMBER 16 — Candlelit Labyrinth Peace Walk, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Sunday, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Walk the Candlelit Labyrinth. Tie a Ribbon on the Wishing Tree. Luscious Pastries, hosted by Jana Grill & Bakery, and Hot Chocolate. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

DECEMBER 16 — St. James Annual Name Day Banquet - Celebrating the 87th Anniversary of the Parish and Honoring Rev. Arakel Aljalian on the 25th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood. V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan, Primate, Presiding. 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy. Name Day Banquet to follow. \$45 per person. \$15 for children 12 and under. Advance Reservations Required – purchase tickets online at www.stjameswatertown.org. 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown 617.923.8860 info@stthagop.com.

JANUARY 7, 2019 — St. James Men’s Club Dinner Meeting - social hour and mezza at 6:15 PM and dinner at 7:00 PM, St James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA. The speaker will be Jeanmarie Papelian, Executive Director of the Armenian Tree Project. She will present ATP’s strategy to use trees to transform a village in Armenia. ATP is working to help create an Armenia that is clean and green, with a respect for people and planet. ATP is proud to stand out as the only non-profit organization dedicated to using trees as a means of improving the standard of living for the Armenian people and protecting the environment. Mezza and a Losh Kebab & Kheyma Dinner \$16/person. Ladies invited. For additional information call the St James Church office at 617-923-8860 or call Hapet Berberian at 781-367-6598

APRIL 25, 2019 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston Presents The Dr. Michael and Joyce Kolligian Distinguished Speaker Series: Anthony Ray Hinton, Author of The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row, “Surviving Criminal Justice in America.” Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA 02138. Reception and book signing to follow talk. Open and free to the public. For further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632, email office@htaac.org, or log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/622/.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2019 – SAVE THE DATE! **InterContinental Hotel, Boston.** Extraordinary Benefit for Armenian Heritage Park’s Endowed Fund for Care.

NEW YORK

DECEMBER 16 — “Gorky’s Dream Garden,” 2018 Sneak Peek, a musical theater opera of love, courage and modern at. Sunday, 12.45 p.m. With live performances by stars from Broadway, Opera and Modern Dance Theater, plus a community “Procession of Light.” A Multimedia glimpse into the Broadway/Yerevan Bound Show created by award-winning composer Michelle Ekizian. RSVP Required (914) 428-2595. Pre-program Lunch, 12.15 Adults \$20, Students and children free. St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church, 1131 North St., White Plains. Presented by the Cultural Committee.

SEPTEMBER 22 — January 13, 2019 – ARMENIA! at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Armenia! is the “first major exhibition to explore the importance of Armenians and their remarkable achievements in a global context...” <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2018/armenia>

Calendar items are free. Entries should not be longer than 5 lines. Listings should include contact information. Items will be edited to fit the space, if need be. A photo may be sent with the listing no later than Mondays at noon.

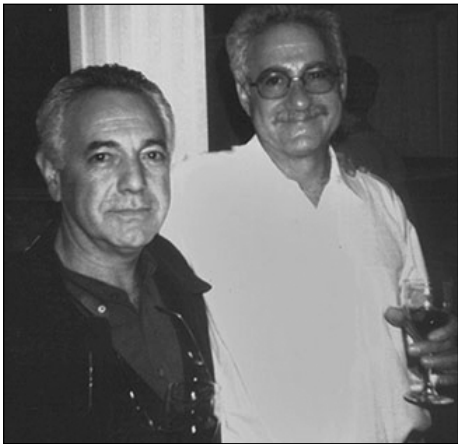
Café La Med Will Keep on Going

By Sarah Han

BERKLEY, Calif. (*BerkleySide*) — In September, it was reported that Café La Méditerranée, the 36-year-old Elmwood restaurant, was for sale. Owner Garbis Baghdassarian, 72, told Nosh he was selling Café La Med to retire, but was hoping to find a new owner who would continue operating the spot as a Middle

Eastern or Mediterranean restaurant. Soon, he will get both of his wishes. Baghdassarian opened Café La Med on Nov. 3, 1982, with the restaurant’s founder, his cousin, Levon Der Bedrossian. The third location was run by Baghdassarian independently of La Méditerranée’s restaurants in San Francisco. When Baghdassarian put the restaurant up for sale this fall, Der Bedrossian, who still owns the two SF La Meds and a catering business, was not interested in taking over the

Berkeley location, but apparently, the founder had a change of heart. Starting next year, Café La Med will be operated by Der Bedrossian under the management of his son Vanick Der Bedrossian and longtime business partner Alicia Vanden Heuvel. Nosh spoke with Vanick, who said his family decided to take over the business to continue the La Med legacy in the East Bay. “It’s been 36 years and the Berkeley location is a staple in Elmwood, and for us, we’re very busy in San



Levon Der Bedrossian and Garbis Baghdassarian



Café La Méditerranée

Francisco, but it was breaking our hearts to imagine it disappearing,” he said. The younger Der Bedrossian has been involved in managing his family’s restaurants for the past 13 or so years. Although technically, he first started working at La Med when he was five or six, cleaning the gum from under the tables. (“I was the right height,” he said about his qualifications. “I got paid in chocolate mousse.”) These days, he’s part-owner and his roles include overseeing back of house and managing the business’s growth. Der Bedrossian plans to bring the Berkeley location “up to speed,” with some new equipment, a few touch-ups and repairs, and some menu tweaks, including adding four popular dishes from the La Med SF restaurants: chicken shawarma wraps, housemade falafel, salmon kebabs and shakshuka for brunch. The restaurant will also revamp its catering services and offerings. . What won’t be changing is Café La Med’s staff, some of whom have been employed there for decades. Der Bedrossian said, “The loyal employees who’ve given their time and energy for all these years were a big factor in the decision” to keep the business going. Café La Méditerranée, 2936 College Ave. (at Ashby), Berkeley



Mirror Spectator



Established 1932
An ADL Publication

EDITOR
Alin K. Gregorian

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR
Marc Mgrditchian

SENIOR EDITORIAL COLUMNIST:
Edmond Y. Azadian

CONTRIBUTORS:
Florence Avakian, Dr. Haroutiun Arzoumanian, Philippe Raffi Kalfayan, Philip Ketchian, Kevork Keushkerian, Harut Sassounian, Hagop Vartivarian, Naomi Zeytoonian

CORRESPONDENTS:
Armenia - Hagop Avedikian
Boston - Nancy Kalajian
Los Angeles - Taleen Babayan
Berlin - Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Contributing Photographers:
Jirair Hovsepian

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July and the first week of the year, by:

Baika Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509
Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

U.S.A.	\$80 a year
Canada	\$125 a year
Other Countries	\$190 a year

© 2014 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472

Other than the editorial, views and opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the policies of the publisher.

Copying for other than personal use or internal reference is prohibited without express permission of the copyright owner. Address requests for reprints or back issues to:

Baika Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509

COMMENTARY

New Configuration of the Power Structure in Armenia

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The year 2018 was a tumultuous period for Armenia. In view of its precarious situation in the region, a lackluster economy and a war on its borders, many thought that Armenia could ill-afford any domestic upheaval. But despite those risks, change did come to Armenia because of the exasperation of its people living in poverty, lawlessness and hopelessness.

The ruling Republican party was well entrenched and it controlled all levers of power. Nikol Pashinyan's My Step movement triggered the Velvet Revolution, which swept away the ruling Republican Party. People were driven to such desperation that they took the radical step of supporting a complete overhaul, believing that nothing could be worse than the conditions in which they were forced to live. The majority of people were against the old regime rather than for Pashinyan's movement. Pashinyan, a journalist, took advantage of the popular discontent and he made his decisive move. He brought a wave of optimism which is conducive to creative thinking and positive action. That optimism needs to be channeled into realistic means to achieve promised changes and to put the country back on its track of development.

Pashinyan was elected as prime minister on May 8 by an antagonistic parliament which had tried to use any means to derail his course. Backed by popular support, Pashinyan and his revolutionary team stayed the course and were able to engineer snap elections last week. The Republican-controlled parliament cried wolf that Pashinyan was stealing the election while putting on a euphoric display, not allowing time for other parties to get organized. Of course, that was the name of the game and any one in his position, including the disgruntled Republicans, would have done the same and used the political vacuum to push ahead his or her agenda.

Finally, the elections took place on Sunday, December 9 offering a landslide victory to Pashinyan's My Step alliance.

Armenia, like other post-Soviet republics, has not been able to form political parties based on ideology. This time around is no different; people have rallied around a charismatic leader, and the nature of politics will remain the same, driven by bread-and-butter issues rather than ideology.

However, Pashinyan delivered on the first installment of his promise by organizing fair and free parliamentary elections. A sober analysis of the situation is in order, before anyone questions the new leader's future performance or the possibility that he may be biting off more than he can chew. He is bringing with him a young and educated class of legislators who have yet to grow as statesmen.

The election results were long anticipated; My Step garnered 70.43 percent of the vote; Gagik Tsarukyan's Prosperous Armenia came second with 8.27 percent of the

votes and Edmond Marukyan's Bright Armenia took third place with 6.37 percent of the votes.

Two parties which were expecting to be in the parliament and yet did not clear the 5 percent vote threshold were the Republican Party, which received 4.7 percent of the votes and the ARF (Dashnaksutyun), which got 3.9 percent of the votes.

The Republican party does not deserve any sympathy because it brought upon itself its destiny by misrule and insensitivity towards the basic needs of the population, while its cronies enjoyed a flashy, opulent lifestyle. Their loss burnt some mature statesmen, among them Vigen Sargsyan, who was heading the Republican slate.

The other hopeful party was the ARF, which has been in the parliament since 1999, sometimes playing the role of the opposition but most of the time in a coalition with the ruling party, always its eyes on the gravy train. During the 2017 elections, it is believed that Serzh Sargsyan underhandedly offered 20,000 votes to help the party meet the election bar. After accepting defeat, the ARF issued a statement blaming the electorate for voting for popular individuals rather than ideas. That statement is true, because among all 11 parties and alliances in the running, the ARF was the only party based on ideology.

While the participation of the voters was 48 percent, in the ARF's case, perhaps their members and followers' participation hit 90 percent because of their organizational skills and discipline.

With this election loss, the change of the leadership will be precipitated as Hrant Markaryan has lost popularity in



Armenia and among the ARF rank and file across the diaspora.

Pashinyan tried to reform the election laws which are complicated and lower the bar for election to 3 percent for parties and 5 percent for alliances, instead of 5 and 7 percent, respectively. But his move was defeated in the parliament. Ironically, that defeat hurt the Republican party in the first

continued on next page



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

US Ambassador to Armenia Should Call The Armenian Genocide, a Genocide

Everyone knows that ambassadors have to follow the foreign policy guidelines of their governments and cannot make their own decisions. Yet it is strange that successive US ambassadors are not allowed to call the Armenian Genocide, a genocide. Just imagine the uproar if a US Ambassador stationed in Israel would refuse to use the term Jewish Holocaust!

Contrary to public misconception even among Armenians, the United States has repeatedly recognized the Armenian Genocide at the highest levels of the government.

Any US government official who refrains from using the term Armenian Genocide is distorting the long-standing record of the United States. As I have repeatedly written, the US government first recognized the Armenian Genocide in 1951 when it submitted an official report to the International Court of Justice, known as the World Court. The US House of Representatives adopted two resolutions in 1975 and 1984 recognizing the Armenian Genocide, and President Ronald Reagan issued a Presidential Proclamation on April 22, 1981, making a reference to the Armenian Genocide.

Contrast the above US historical record with the evasive statements made by recent US Presidents and Ambassadors to Armenia, with the exception of US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans who fearlessly spoke truth to power about the Armenian Genocide, risking his diplomatic career which was cut short in 2006 by the Administration of President George W. Bush.

On December 4, 2018, the proper acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide was discussed once again during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's confirmation hearing, on the nomination of Lynne Tracy as US Ambassador to Armenia.

In her opening statement at the hearing, Tracy avoided using the term Armenian Genocide: "Mr. Chairman, the horrific events of 1915, the Meds Yeghern or Great Calamity, when 1.5 million Armenians were deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths in the final years of the

Ottoman Empire, must never be forgotten. As President Trump stated on Armenian Remembrance Day this year: 'As we honor the memory of those who suffered, we [must] ensure that such atrocities are not repeated.' If confirmed, I pledge to do everything in my power to remember the Meds Yeghern victims and uphold that solemn commitment. We must also look to the future and the opportunities for Armenia's next generation. Progress toward reconciliation with Turkey can help reduce Armenia's isolation and bolster its economy. Towards that end, we encourage Turkey and Armenia to acknowledge and reckon with painful elements of the past. If confirmed, I will do my best to support Armenian and Turkish efforts to forge a more peaceful and productive relationship."

Instead of upholding the US historical record on the acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide, Tracy cleverly resorted to the old Armenian term "Meds Yeghern" to avoid using the correct term Armenian Genocide. She described "Meds Yeghern" inaccurately as "Great Calamity" which actually means "Great Crime."

After Tracy's opening statement, Sen. Ed Markey (Dem.-MA) asked her: "It seems unlikely that the Trump Administration will change its long-standing US policy on how we refer to the Armenian Genocide. How do you address calls by the Armenian-American community to call what the 1915 slaughter was, a genocide?"

Tracy answered: "The Trump Administration and I personally acknowledge the historical facts of what took place at the end of the Ottoman Empire – of the mass killings, the forced deportations and marches that ended 1.5 million lives and a lot of suffering. And I will, if confirmed, do everything in my power to acknowledge and respect the losses and the suffering and commit myself to participating in any remembrance activities."

Senator Markey concluded: "It's time for us just to stand up and call it what it was. It helps us in the future to have credibility."

Sen. Bob Menendez (Dem.-NJ) then followed up with a series of questions to ambassadorial nominee Tracy on the Armenian Genocide: "Do you acknowledge that from 1915 to 1923, nearly 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were killed by the Ottoman Empire?"

Tracy responded: "Yes, Senator. As I stated, the Administration and I acknowledge the historical facts that you have mentioned."

Menendez: "Do you acknowledge that on May 24, 1915, the Allied Powers – England, France, and Russia – jointly issued a statement explicitly charging for the first time ever another government of committing 'Crimes Against Humanity and Civilization?'"

Tracy: "Senator, I am not aware of that particular event."

Menendez: "I commanded it to your attention and you give me your written response after you read it. Do you acknowledge that the US Holocaust Memorial Council, an

independent Federal Agency, unanimously resolved on April 30th 1981, that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum would document the Armenian Genocide in the Museum and has done through the examination of the public record?"

Tracy: "Senator, I will provide a written acknowledgment to you on that."

Menendez: "Do you acknowledge that Henry Morgenthau, the United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire at the time, said that the Turkish government's deportation order for the Armenians was 'a death warrant to a whole race,' and 'made no particular effort to conceal in their discussions with him.'"

Tracy: "Yes, Senator. I acknowledge the facts of that reporting of Ambassador Morgenthau."

Menendez: "Would you discipline or otherwise punish an employee of the US Embassy in Armenia for an honest remembrance of the Armenian Genocide?"

Tracy: "Senator, I would expect that, as with myself, we follow the policy of the Administration. And, the policy is that we acknowledge the historical facts of the events of 1915 as a mass atrocity and that we participate in any remembrance activities. And, I'll just say, as a senior leader in the Foreign Service, I am always open to debate on my team. I don't punish people for expressing their viewpoints. But, as members of the Executive Branch, at the end of the day, we support the President's policy."

Menendez concluded: "This is the problem with nominees who come before us, and it's not you particularly. In fact, we have a historical reality: 1.5 million people were massacred. That's a genocide. And yet, we send an Ambassador to a country and have them go to a memorial of a holocaust of the Armenian people and yet they won't be able to call it a genocide. It's pretty ironic. If we are not able to acknowledge the past, we are destined to relive it. So I hope that the Department [of State], this is not unique to this Department. It's been going on for a while. We need to change that reality. I gave you a series of questions because I try to give you all the other elements. But the reality is that it seems we cannot have the words come out of our lips – Armenian Genocide. That's what took place. That's what history shows. That's what the world recognizes. That's what our own Federal Agencies recognize like the Holocaust Museum. So I hope you can look at all the other questions and give me answers in order to get to a better place."

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will consider Tracy's nomination at a future hearing after she submits her promised written answers to the questions asked by Senator Menendez.

(To see a video of the hearing visit www.mirrorspectator.com)

from previous page

place, which would have been within range to get into parliament.

According to Article 76 of the election code, the minimum number of parliament members should be 101. The strange calculation of the same code allows bonus percentage points to the winners, thus raising their percentage to 83.6 percent for My Step (84 members), 9.8 for Prosperous Armenia (25 members) and 7.5 for Bright Armenia (17 members). The total number of MPs will be 132.

Pashinyan's alliance includes also four members from Armenia's ethnic minorities, namely Assyrians, Russians, Kurds and Yezidis.

Armenia's constitution allocates 30 percent of the parliament to opposition forces. Now the question will arise as to who will play that role. During the rule of the previous regime, Serzh Sargsyan would nominate any group to assume the role of the opposition artificially. In this case, the same game will force itself on the system because neither Tsarukyan nor Marukyan have ever opposed Pashinyan. Commenting about the election results, Pashinyan stated that "an absolute constitutional majority will not have any problems with the adoption of legislative initiatives."

This lopsided system denies the legislature the mechanism of checks and balances in the absence of a viable opposition. This absolute power brings with it also an awesome responsibility for self-control, because as the saying goes, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Some commentators in the media have been warning Pashinyan not to overplay the power at his disposal. Even a Russian commentator went so far as to describe Armenia in the atmosphere of the 1930s Soviet Union.

At the same time, former president Robert Kocharyan's incarceration exactly two days before the elections fuels those conspiracy theories rampant on line about the incitement of fear.

The voter turnout was 48 percent versus 61 percent in the 2017 elections. Many justifications are offered to explain the downturn, beginning with inclement weather to bribes used in the past and false statistics as well as the assurance of the electorate that My Step's landslide victory was a slam dunk, so why bother to vote. Some arguments are valid and others questionable.

For the Republican Party, the election results signified sour grapes, as demonstrated by their post-election statement that "these elections were democratic in form but not in sub-

stance."

The polls were monitored by more than 500 foreign observers. Most of them came from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In addition, 17,813 observers from local NGOs and SOS observers of international organizations carried out observer missions in the snap parliamentary elections. The OSCE offered the most positive evaluation by a Western-led monitoring mission. Its report stated, "Election day proceeded calmly and peacefully, with all its stages assessed by almost all mission observers, indicating general adherence to the procedures."

The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) representative was more generous and specific in his assessment. "I congratulate the Armenian people," said Aleksander Pociej, the head of the PACE delegation. "Armenia's 2018 peaceful Velvet Revolution, in conjunction with the political will of the current authorities, enabled the holding of democratic elections."

The reporting of the international news media was equally positive. The BBC, the *Economist*, the *Nation*, the *New York Times*, all covered the elections and they were unanimous in their positive assessment.

For the first time, the US State Department has endorsed the election results. The congratulatory message from Chancellor Angela Merkel and other European leaders were also encouraging.

Now that Pashinyan passed his first test with flying colors, received by the electorate and supported by the international community, he has to embark on his awesome mission to deliver on his promises.

With the elimination of corruption, trust will be restored soon, which will encourage investments and grants to build up the economy, which is currently in shambles and to vigorously exercise the rule of law in the country to justify and reinforce the hope that the Velvet Revolution generated.

People have voted for Pashinyan believing that he has brought a new era in Armenia. They are still filled with anger and rancor against the old regime and Pashinyan is playing up to that popular sentiment by some macho statements. Hopefully, that will gradually fade out, because that is not an attribute of a mature statesman. Corrupt people have to be brought to justice while the government should always avoid the temptation of giving in to a witch hunt.

The victory has been sweet and sour. But the hopes and confidence of the people are great. This is a historic moment whose momentum should not be lost.

ARMENIA, LIKE OTHER POST-SOVIET REPUBLICS, HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO FORM POLITICAL PARTIES BASED ON IDEOLOGY. THIS TIME AROUND IS NO DIFFERENT; PEOPLE HAVE RALLIED AROUND A CHARISMATIC LEADER, AND THE NATURE OF POLITICS WILL REMAIN THE SAME, DRIVEN BY BREAD-AND-BUTTER ISSUES RATHER THAN IDEOLOGY.



THE
MET

“Eye-opening”
—The New York Times

“A great and ancient
culture stands revealed”
—The Magazine Antiques



ARMENIA!

metmuseum.org

#MetArmenia

FINAL WEEKS: Closes January 13

The exhibition is made possible by The Hagop Kevorkian Fund.

Additional support is provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Michel David-Weill Fund, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, The Giorgi Family Foundation, The Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation, the Karagheusian Foundation, The Nazar and Artemis Nazarian Family, the Ruddock Foundation for the Arts, The Strauch Kulhanjian Family and The Paros Foundation, Aso O. Tavitian, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Altar frontal (detail), New Julfa, 1741.
Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia.
Photo by Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.