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The service at St. Gregory's Church in Yerevan

Karekin II Champions 'Strong Family' in Christmas Mass

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and other Armenian officials attend a Christmass mass at St. Gregory's Cathedral in Yerevan, January 6, 2019.

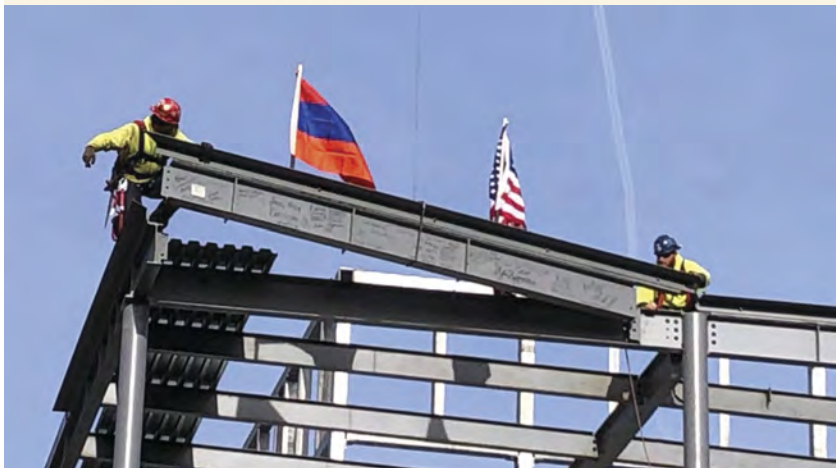
The supreme head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Catholicos Karekin II,

urged Armenians to stick to their traditional family values in the face of "pseudo-liberalism" as he celebrated a Christmas mass on Sunday.

"In the miracle-laden scene of the Holy Nativity, dearly beloved, we see that the

path of salvation began with the family. It is from the family that the illumined road ... was borne out of," he said in a homily read out at Saint Gregory the Illuminator's Cathedral in Yerevan.

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Topping Off Ceremony raising the final structural steel beam (January 4, 2019).

NAASR to Name Its New Headquarters after Historian, Philanthropist Vartan Gregorian

BELMONT, Mass. – The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) will name its new headquarters after Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the philanthropic foundation Carnegie Corporation of New York, fulfilling the request of the building's principle benefactors, Edward and Pamela Avedisian of Lexington. The new building's official name will be the NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building.

"Vartan Gregorian embodies the values at the heart of NAASR's mission. He has dedicated his entire life to educational advancement and the pursuit of knowledge, engaging in public service

see NAASR, page 9



Dr. Vartan Gregorian, left, and Edward Avedisian

Armenian Government to Hold More Talks on Russian Gas Price

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia's government and Russian-owned gas distribution network have yet to agree on new retail prices of Russian natural gas supplied to Armenian households and corporate consumers, Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan said on Monday, January 7.

The Gazprom giant announced on New Year's Eve that it has raised its wholesale gas price for Armenia from \$150 to \$165

per thousand cubic meters. The announcement followed fresh talks held by the Gazprom chairman, Alexei Miller, and Grigoryan as well as phone conversations between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

Earlier on December 31, Pashinyan assured Armenians that they will not pay

see GAS, page 2

Anti-Armenian Tension Rising in Kazakhstan after New Year's Eve Murder

ASTANA, Kazakhstan (RFE/RL) – Armenia's foreign minister, national police chief and human rights ombudsman have spoken with their Kazakh counterparts by phone on Monday, January 7, following anti-Armenian protests sparked by the murder of a young man in Kazakhstan.

The Kazakh man was stabbed to death in a clash between two groups of youths, one of which consisted of ethnic Armenians, during celebrations of New Year on January 1. Three other men were hospitalized with stab wounds.

The brawl broke out in a restaurant in the central Kazakh city of Qaraghandy in the early hours of 2019.

Local police said they arrested two ethnic Armenian men and are hunting for another in connection with the violence.

On Sunday, some 200 protesters gathered in front of Qaraghandy's regional police department and demanded thorough investigations into the killing. Some of them demanded that Armenians be deported from the country.

The Qaraghandy regional governor, Eran Qoshanov, met with the protesters and said that "all those responsible for the death will be prosecuted." "I promise you ... that the main suspect, who remains at large, will be detained in two-three days," Qoshanov said.

A statement posted on the governor's website stressed that the brawl "was not ethnically motivated." It warned that people trying to incite ethnic hatred might face criminal prosecution as well.

Participants at the Karaganda rally were ostensibly there to demand that the authorities inform them about the progress of their investigation and to punish those

see TENSIONS, page 5



NEWS IN BRIEF

Efforts Underway for Meeting Between Foreign Ministers

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – International mediators are trying to organize another meeting of Armenia's and Azerbaijan's foreign ministers later this month, the Armenian Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday, January 8.

"The [US, Russian and French] co-chairs of the [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] OSCE Minsk Group have proposed a meeting of the foreign ministers in January," the ministry spokeswoman, Anna Naghdalyan, told the Armenpress news agency. "An announcement on the meeting will be made in a coordinated manner."

Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and his Azerbaijani counterpart Elmar Mammadyarov held three face-to-face meetings in the second half of 2018.

According to the co-chairs, at their most recent talks held in Milan on December 5 Mnatsakanyan and Mammadyarov pledged to "work intensively to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict and to further reduce tensions."

"They agreed to meet again in early 2019 under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs for this purpose and in order to facilitate high-level talks," the mediating troika said in a December 6 statement.

Both ministers described the Milan meeting as "useful." Mammadyarov said that it resulted in a rare "mutual understanding" between the two parties to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The ministers met in the Italian city the day before Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev spoke to each other at a summit of ex-Soviet states held in Russia.

"The year 2019 will give a new impetus to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement process," Aliyev wrote on his Twitter page on December 14.

Tom Catena Registers Marriage in Armenia

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – Dr. Tom Catena, the 2017 Aurora Prize Laureate, and his wife have officially registered their marriage here.

"So happy to finally have our marriage with Nasima officially registered in Yerevan, Armenia. Thank you all for being with us on this special day," Catena tweeted on Tuesday, January 8, sharing images from the ceremony at the Civil Registry Office.

Catena, a Catholic missionary from New York, was named as Aurora Prize Laureate on May 28, 2017. He saved thousands of lives as the sole surgeon permanently based in Sudan's war-ravaged Nuba Mountains where humanitarian aid is restricted.

The Aurora Prize, granted by the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, is created on behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and in gratitude to their saviors.

INSIDE

Mr. Five Percent

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Carpet Production Grew In 2018

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — Armenia saw a strong growth in production volumes of carpet and carpet coverings in the first eleven months of 2018, the latest statistics reveal.

The country manufactured 24.3 tons of carpet and carpet coverings from January to November last year, up by 59.9 percent from the same period of 2017, when 4.2 tons were produced.

Armenia's carpet production volumes constituted mostly a decrease in 2017, yet recorded increase per annum. In particular, 19.8 tons of carpets and carpet coverings were manufactured in Armenia last year, showing a rise of 10 percent from 2016.

More Women Lawmakers In Parliament

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The number of female lawmakers will be 32 in the new Parliament of Armenia: their number was 18 in the previous convocation Parliament, reports Armenpress.

The females will comprise nearly 25 percent of 132 MPs in the Parliament of 7th convocation.

My Step alliance will have 23 female lawmakers in the Parliament, the Prosperous Armenia party — 5 female MPs and the Bright Armenia party — 4 female MPs.

Snap parliamentary elections were held in Armenia on December 9. Based on the election results, three political forces — My Step alliance, Prosperous Armenia and Bright Armenia parties have been elected to the Parliament.

My Step alliance will have 88 seats, Prosperous Armenia 26 and the Bright Armenia party 18 seats.

Republican Lawmakers Form Media Company

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Outgoing Republican lawmakers Arman Saghatlyan, Karen Bekaryan, Mihran Hakobyan and Samvel Farmanyan have established a media company called Quartet Media.

The company has acquired Tert.am, an online news outlet, ArmNews CJSC and Radio 107 FM LLC.

In a statement, the four lawmakers said they decided to establish the company by “attaching importance to the key role of mass media in the development of our public-political life and public agenda, as well as considering media to be an inseparable part of our [vocation] and chosen path.”

Yerevan Requests Extradition of Ex-President's Nephew

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Prosecutors have asked authorities in the Czech Republic to extradite the nephew of former President Serzh Sargsyan accused of illegal arms possession and drug trafficking.

“We sent all necessary extradition documents to the Czech Republic's law-enforcement bodies on December 28,” a spokeswoman for the Office of the Prosecutor-General, Arevik Khachatyan, said on Thursday.

Czech police tracked down and arrested the suspect, Narek Sargsyan, in Prague on December 6. He reportedly produced a fake Guatemalan passport identifying him as Franklin Gonzalez.

Sargsyan fled Armenia before his family's villa was searched by the National Security Service (NSS) in early July. The NSS claimed that 37-year-old had asked one of his friends to hide his illegally owned guns, cocaine and other drugs in a safer place.

Sargsyan's brother, Hayk, was arrested and charged with attempted murder and illegal arms possession in July.

Hayk and Narek are the sons of Serzh Sargsyan's younger brother, Aleksandr. The latter is thought to have made a big fortune in the past two decades.

A bank account in Armenia for Aleksandr Sargsyan containing \$30 million was frozen this summer as part of a separate inquiry conducted by the NSS. Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan publicly demanded in September that he “return the money to the state budget.”

Karabakh Parties Call for Kocharyan's Release

STEPANAKERT (RFE/RL) — Nagorno-Karabakh's three leading parliamentary parties have called on authorities in Armenia to release Robert Kocharyan, the Karabakh-born former president facing coup charges, from custody.

In a joint statement issued over the weekend, the Free Fatherland, Democratic Artsakh and Movement-88 parties said Kocharyan should be freed pending investigation “given his considerable contribution to the establishment of the two Armenian

what was then Soviet Armenia. He became Karabakh's top government official in 1992 during its war with Azerbaijan.

Kocharyan, 64, governed Karabakh until becoming Armenia's prime minister in 1997. He served as the country's president from 1998-2008.

The Karabakh parties called for the ex-president's release two days after the unrecognized republic's president, Bako Sahakyan, met with Pashinyan in Yerevan. Sahakyan's office said vaguely that they discussed coopera-

Pashinyan accused the critics of misinterpreting what Mikaelyan meant to say. He specifically lambasted the Karabakh leadership, accusing it of “meddling” in the Armenian parliamentary race.

Mnatsakanyan was sacked on December 14.



Former Armenian President Robert Kocharyan

republics.”

The largest of those parties, Free Fatherland, is led by Ara Harutiunyan, who was Karabakh's prime minister until June 2018. Democratic Artsakh is headed by the Karabakh parliament speaker, Ashot Ghulyan, while Movement-88 claims to be in opposition to the authorities in Stepanakert.

Kocharyan was again arrested on December 7 on charges of illegally using Armenian army units against opposition supporters who protested against alleged fraud in a disputed presidential election held in February 2008. He strongly denies the accusations, saying that Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is waging a political “vendetta” against him.

Born and raised in Karabakh, Kocharyan was one of the leaders of the 1988 movement for the Armenian-populated territory's unification with

tion between Armenia and Karabakh “in different areas.” Pashinyan's press service issued no statements on the meeting.

The two men met for a second time since Pashinyan's public spat with Karabakh Armenian leaders which erupted during Armenia's recent parliamentary election campaign.

One of the Armenian premier's key political allies, Sasun Mikaelyan, declared during the campaign that this spring's protest movement that brought Pashinyan to power was more important than the Armenian victory in the 1991-1994 war for Karabakh.

Mikaelyan's remark was condemned by Armenian opposition politicians as well as senior officials in Stepanakert, including the spokesmen for Sahakyan and General Levon Mnatsakanyan, the then commander of Karabakh's Armenian-backed army.

Armenian Government to Hold More Talks on Russian Gas Price

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more for gas despite the 10 percent price rise. He said the internal gas tariffs will remain unchanged because of “our certain internal regulations.”

Grigoryan said the government and the Gazprom-Armenia gas distributor will start discussions on the issue this week. Gazprom-Armenia will not ask Armenian utility regulators to allow it to raise the tariffs until those talks are over, he said.

“There is an explicit understanding that the issue needs to be examined in detail,” added Grigoryan. “Everything must be done so that that tariff does not rise.”

Gazprom-Armenia cut its retail prices for households and corporate consumers in late 2016 shortly after its former executive director, Karen Karapetyan, was appointed as Armenia's prime minister. The company's current

chief executive, Hrant Tadevosian, said in November 2018 that it has operated at a loss, amounting to around \$55 million, since then.

Grigoryan suggested in this regard that Gazprom-Armenia's losses can be cut or even nullified because of a significant difference between the costs of gas purchased from Gazprom and sold to Armenian consumers.

“The structure and causes of those losses need to be examined in depth so that we figure out the right ways of optimization that would not generate losses,” he said. “I think that it can be done.”

Gazprom provides more than 80 percent of Armenia's gas which is mostly used for home heating and electricity generation. Also, most vehicles in the country run on pressurized or liquefied natural gas.

New Arrest Warrant Issued For former Criminal Investigator

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — A Yerevan court has approved a fresh arrest warrant against the man who led a criminal investigation into the 2008 post-election violence in Armenia during former President Serzh Sargsyan's rule.

The former official, Vahagn Harutiunyan, was charged in late October with forging factual evidence to cover up the Armenian army's involvement in the deadly breakup of opposition protests staged in the wake of a disputed presidential election. He left Armenia for Russia in July, ostensibly to receive medical treatment, and apparently remains there.

On November 2, a court of first instance in the Armenian capital allowed the Special Investigative Service (SIS) to arrest Harutiunyan pending investigation. The Court of Appeals annulled the arrest warrant on December 13, however.

Shortly afterwards, Harutiunyan was also charged with two counts of abuse of power. According to an SIS spokeswoman, Marina Ohanjanyan, the district court again sanctioned the former SIS investigator's arrest on December 30.

Harutiunyan rejected the initial accusation leveled against him as “unfounded, illegal and fabricated” when he spoke to RFE/RL's Armenian service by phone on November 1. He insisted that his team of investigators never found any evidence of illegal actions taken by the Armenian military during the 2008 unrest, which left eight protesters and two police servicemen dead.

The SIS completely changed the official version of events following last spring's mass protests that toppled Sargsyan. It now says that Sargsyan's outgoing predecessor, Robert Kocharyan, illegally ordered army units into the streets of Yerevan before declaring a state of emergency on March 1, 2008.

Kocharyan was arrested on December 7 on charges of overthrowing Armenia's constitutional order. The former president denies them, saying that Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is waging a political “vendetta” against him.

Pashinyan was a key speaker at the 2008 protests.



Catholicos Karekin II Champions 'Strong Family' in Christmas Mass

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During the liturgy attended by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and other senior state officials, Karekin also prayed for "our faithful brothers and sisters of the great world family who mark this sacred day in affliction and suffering." He referred to victims of armed conflicts, human rights abuses and "unquenchable desire for unmitigated power" around the world.

"Ungodly paths of pseudo-liberalism – which divert people from the life which the Lord commanded us to live, from spiritual life – likewise lead to dead ends, undermining the foundations of a healthy society and strong family," Karekin went on.

"The very first platform for bringing up worthy sons and daughters for the homeland and for educating a citizen for the country is the family," he said. "It is in the family that the future of a nation is shaped, that the foundations of a powerful country are laid. It is under the family's nurturing roofs that the sown seeds of God's word bear fruit in children's souls, that the spiritual-moral values, the fearless spirit of choosing the good, are being nurtured. It is by the examples shown in the family that mutual love, trust and care are instilled."

"Let us remain dedicated to the sanctity and the strengthening of the family. Let us preserve unblemished the idea of the God-ordained family, its sanctity, the national traditions," he added.

Accordingly, Karekin declared 2019 a "year of the family," saying that Armenian church bodies and clergymen should launch "family-centered assistance projects and events." He also encouraged them to organize more pilgrimages to Armenian holy sites "in order to warmly kindle the flame of love toward the homeland."

Karekin expressed concern at "the crisis of the family" in many Christian nations in a joint declaration with Pope Francis issued during the latter's June 2016 visit to Armenia. The two religious leaders also reaffirmed their opposition to same-sex marriage.

Francis repeatedly paid tribute to Armenia's Christian heritage during the landmark trip. "For



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The service at St. Gregory's Church in Yerevan

Armenia, faith in Christ has not been like a garment to be donned or doffed as circumstances or convenience dictate, but an essential part of its identity," the pontiff declared at the Armenian Apostolic Church's main cathedral in Echmiadzin.

Pashinyan likewise praised the ancient church and acknowledged its "special significance" for many Armenians when he met with Karekin in November. It was apparently their first one-on-one meeting since Pashinyan swept to power in May on a wave of mass protests organized by

him. The 43-year-old prime minister had been very critical of the Catholicos in the past.

Shortly after the success of the "velvet revolution" Karekin came under strong pressure from an obscure group accusing him of corruption and close ties with the country's former government and demanding his resignation. Dozens of its members partly occupied his Echmiadzin headquarters in July. Police waited for several days before forcing them out of the premises.

The slow police reaction prompted strong criticism from representatives of the former ruling

Republican Party (HHK) and other conservative critics of Pashinyan's government. They portrayed it as further proof of what they see as the government's contempt for "traditional Armenian values."

In his Christmas message, Karekin made no explicit mention of the Pashinyan-led revolution. He only cited "the new changes of our life" that have increased "hope and optimism for new achievements, success, and victories."



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Political leaders at the Christmas service



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Catholicos Karekin II



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Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and his wife shake hands at the conclusion of the service.



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The service at St. Gregory Cathedral



International News

Armenia Appoints Ambassador to Holy See

YEREVAN (Arka) — Armenian President Armen Sarkissian has signed a decree appointing Karen Nazaryan as Armenia's Ambassador to the Holy See (with residence in Vatican).

Nazaryan has replaced Mikael Minasyan, the son-in-law of the former president Serzh Sargsyan.

Armenian Proverb Engraved in The Hague

THE HAGUE (news.am) — An Armenian saying has been engraved in The Hague, the Facebook page of the Embassy of Armenia in The Netherlands reported this week.

"Among 28 other languages, an Armenian proverb about way—'Water will find its way'—has been engraved in front of the railway station, the most populous place in the city," the embassy's post reads\.

Trial of Ambassador's Alleged Assassin Gets Underway in Ankara

ANKARA (Panorama.am) — Ankara's Second Criminal Court for Serious Crimes started the first hearing on the case of the murder of Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrey Karlov on January 8, a Sputnik new agency reported.

The hearing is taking place in a small hall at the Palace of Justice. Apart from several journalists and civilians, many police officers and lawyers are present at the hearing, the source said, adding the judge started by reading out the passport data of the defendants and asking them about their marital status and profession.

There are a total of 18 defendants, including one woman. Four of the defendants are participating in the hearing by video link from prisons in different regions of Turkey, where they are being kept in custody.

Istanbul Hosts First-Ever Paradjanov Exhibition

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) — The first ever-exhibition dedicated to Sergei Paradjanov, a world-renowned Armenian director, artist and scriptwriter, has opened in Istanbul, Turkey.

Titled "Paradjanov with Sarkis," the exhibition opened in Pera Museum in the city's Beyoglu district on Thursday, December 13, to run through March 17, 2019, Ermenihaber reports.

Coordinated by the director of the Sergei Paradjanov Museum in Yerevan, Zaven Sargsyan, the event exhibits various works by the artist, including paintings, collages, trimmings, sketches themed after his movies, stage costumes, mosaics, photos, etc.

The exhibition is organized by Pera Museum in collaboration with the Paradjanov Museum. It marks the 95th birthday anniversary of the great artist.

Sergei Paradjanov or Paradjanov (born Sarkis Paradjanian; 1924-1990) was one of the best-known directors of Soviet films. Born in Tbilisi, Georgia, to an Armenian family, his work reflected the ethnic diversity of the Caucasus where he was raised.

His first major work was "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" (1964), which earned him an international reputation for its rich use of costume and color, and its whimsical portrayal of rural life. Possibly his greatest work, "The Color of Pomegranates" (1969), described the life of the Armenian poet Sayat Nova. The film angered the Soviet authorities, who claimed that it evoked nationalist sentiment.

Claiming that Paradjanov promoted homosexuality, the government arrested him in 1973 and sentenced him to five years in a labor camp. A number of prominent artists, writers and filmmakers protested his sentence, but Paradjanov was only released four years later. He was banned for making films for many years afterwards, when he was living in Tbilisi, but he was allowed to make "The Legend of Suram Fortress" (1984).

Spurning Erdogan's Vision, Turks Leave In Drove, Draining Money and Talent

By Carlotta Gall

ISTANBUL (New York Times) — For 17 years, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan won elections by offering voters a vision of restoring the glories of Turkey's Ottoman past. He extended his country's influence with increased trade and military deployments, and he raised living standards with years of unbroken economic growth.

But after a failed 2016 coup, Erdogan embarked on a sweeping crackdown. Last year, the economy wobbled and the lira plunged soon after he won re-election with even greater powers. As cronyism and authoritarianism seep deeper into his administration, Turks are voting differently — this time with their feet.

They are leaving the country in droves and taking talent and capital with them in a way that indicates a broad and alarming loss of confidence in Erdogan's vision, according to government statistics and analysts.

In the last two to three years, not only have students and academics fled the country, but also entrepreneurs, businesspeople, and thousands of wealthy individuals who are selling everything and moving their families and their money abroad.

More than a quarter of a million Turks emigrated in 2017, according to the Turkish Institute of Statistics, an increase of 42 percent over 2016, when nearly 178,000 citizens left the country.

Turkey has seen waves of students and teachers leave before, but this exodus looks like a more permanent reordering of the society and threatens to set Turkey back decades, said Ibrahim Sirkeci, director of transnational studies at Regent's University in London, and other analysts.

"The brain drain is real," Sirkeci said.

The flight of people, talent and capital is being driven by a powerful combination of factors that have come to define life under Mr. Erdogan and that his opponents increasingly despair is here to stay.

They include fear of political persecution, terrorism, a deepening distrust of the judiciary and the arbitrariness of the rule of law, and a deteriorating business climate, accelerated by worries that Erdogan is unsoundly manipulating management of the economy to benefit himself and his inner circle.

The result is that, for the first time since the republic was founded nearly a century ago, many from the old moneyed class, in particular the secular elite who have dominated Turkey's cultural and business life for decades, are moving away and the new rich close to Mr. Erdogan and his governing party are taking their place.

One of those leaving is Merve Bayindir, 38, who is relocating to London after becoming Turkey's go-to hat designer in the fashionable Nisantasi district of Istanbul.

"We are selling everything," she said in an interview during a return trip to Istanbul last month to close what was left of her business, MerveBayindir, which she runs with her mother, and to sell their four-story house.

Bayindir was an active participant in the 2013 protests against the government's attempt to develop Taksim Square in Istanbul. She said she remains traumatized by the violence and fearful in her own city.

Erdogan denounced the protesters as delinquents and after enduring arrests and harassment many have left the

country.

"There is so much discrimination, not only cultural but personal, the anger, the violence is impossible to handle," Bayindir said. "If you had something better and you see it dissolving, it's a hopeless road."

Thousands of Turks like her have applied for business visas in Britain or for golden visa programs in Greece, Portugal and Spain, which grant immigrants residency if they buy property at a certain level.

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Applications for asylum in Europe by Turks have also multiplied in the last three years, according to Mr. Sirkeci, who has studied the migration of Turks to Britain for 25 years.

He estimates that 10,000 Turks have made use of a business visa plan to move to Britain in the last few years, with a sharp jump in applications since the beginning of 2016. That is double the number from 2004 to 2015.

Applications by Turkish citizens for political asylum also jumped threefold in Britain in the six months after the coup attempt, and six-fold among Turks applying for asylum in Germany, he said, citing figures obtained from the United Nations refugee agency. The number of Turks applying for asylum worldwide jumped by 10,000 in 2017 to more than 33,000.

A large proportion of those fleeing have been followers of Fethullah Gulen, the Pennsylvania-based preacher who is charged with instigating the 2016 coup, or people accused of being followers, often on flimsy evidence.

Tens of thousands of teachers and academics were purged from their jobs after the coup, including hundreds who had signed a peace petition calling on the government to cease military action in Kurdish cities and return to the peace process. Hundreds have taken up posts abroad.

Mr. Erdogan has tried to make Turkey more conservative and religious, with a growing middle class and a tight circle of elites who are especially beholden to him for their economic success.

The flight of capital and talent is the result of this conscious effort by Mr. Erdogan to transform the society, said Bekir Agirdir, director of the Konda polling company.

With the help of subsidies and favorable contracts, the government has helped new businesses to emerge, and they are rapidly replacing the old ones, he said. "There is a transfer of capital underway," he said. "It is social and political engineering."

Ilker Birbil, a mathematician who faces charges for signing the peace petition and left Turkey to take up a position at Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands, warned that the country was losing people permanently.

"People who are leaving do not want to come back," Birbil said, citing the polarized political climate in the country. "This is alarming for Turkey."

"I have received so many emails from students and friends who are trying to get out of Turkey," he said.

Students are despairing of change partly because they have grown up with Mr. Erdogan in power for 17 years, said Erhan Erkut, a founder of MEF University in Istanbul, which teaches innovation and entrepreneurship.

"This is the only government they have seen, they do not know there is another possibility," he said.

Families are setting up businesses abroad for the next generation to inherit, said Sirkeci of Regent's University, adding that many students at his private university fell into that category.

At least 12,000 of Turkey's millionaires — around 12 percent of the country's wealthy class — moved their assets out of the country in 2016 and 2017, according to the Global Wealth Migration Review, an annual report produced by AfrAsia Bank.

Most of them moved to Europe or the United Arab Emirates, the report said. Turkey's largest business center, Istanbul, was listed among the top seven cities worldwide experiencing an exodus of wealthy people.

"If one looks at any major country collapse in history, it is normally preceded by a migration of wealthy people away from that country," the report said.

Erdogan has reviled as traitors businesspeople who have moved their assets abroad as the Turkish economy began to falter.

"Pardon us, we do not forgive," he warned in a speech at the Foreign Economic Relations Board, a business association in Istanbul in April. "The hands of our nation would be on their collars both in this world and in the afterlife."

"Behavior like this cannot have a valid explanation," Erdogan added.

His comments came amid reports that some of Turkey's largest companies were divesting in Turkey. Several such companies have made significant transfers of capital abroad, amid fears they would be targeted in the post-coup crackdown or as the economy began to contract.

One is the Turkish food giant Yildiz Holding, which came under fire on social media as being linked to Mr. Gulen's movement.

Soon after, Yildiz rescheduled \$7 billion of debt and sold shares of its Turkish biscuit maker, Ulker, to its London-based holding company, essentially transferring the family's majority holding of Ulker out of reach of Turkish courts.

(Yildiz representatives did not immediately respond to requests for an interview, but after publication of this article, they said that its companies were in no way associated with the Gulenist movement, which it called a "terrorist" group, and that the transfer of its debt and shares to its London-based holding company had no impact on its company's commitment to and operations in Turkey.)

"Billions of dollars have fled Turkey in the last couple of years, especially after the coup attempt when people started to feel threatened," said Mehmet Gun, the owner of a law firm in Istanbul.

Ms. Bayindir, the designer, began slowly moving her company to London two years ago. In Turkey she had half a dozen workers and a showroom, but now she designs and makes the hats herself out of a rented atelier in London.

"I could have stayed," in Istanbul, she said. "I would be better off."

But life in Turkey had become so tense, she said, that she fears civil strife or even civil war could develop between Erdogan supporters and their opponents.

"Now when I come here I don't see the same Istanbul. She does not have energy anymore. She looks tired," Bayindir said. "Me not wanting to come here is a big, big thing, because I am one of those people who is in love with the city itself."



INTERNATIONAL

Project Will Map Genetic make-up Of Armenian Community in Cyprus

NICOSIA (*Cyprus Mail*) – Members of the Armenian community were asked to provide DNA samples on Sunday, January 6, after a Christmas church service in Nicosia for research that aims to map the genetic background of the Cypriot population.

Armenians celebrate Christmas on January 6 and the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics (CING) – which is carrying out the research – has chosen this date as the most suitable for the DNA collection since it the church was expected to see a bigger turnout than usual.

Members of the Armenian community over the age of 18 who were born in Cyprus and who would like to participate in the project, will give saliva samples after the liturgy.

The aim of the study, supervised by Professor Marios Cariolou of the CING's Department of Cardiovascular Genetics and the Laboratory of Forensic Genetics, is to identify the genetic profile of Armenians living in Cyprus.

The project, according to Cariolou, is a continuation of efforts to study the background of the Cypriot population.

Cariolou and his team have already published the results of a similar study on Greek and Turkish Cypriots which revealed a common pre-Ottoman paternal ancestry between members of the two communities. Next in line are Armenians, Maronites and later on, Latins, he said.

"We have already collected some DNA samples from Maronites and now we are collecting from the Armenian community," Cariolou said.

He said that the response from both communities was very positive.

"The final goal is to study the genetic background of the Cypriot population," he said.

The overall project is aimed at providing important historical and scientific data on the genetic background of all Cypriots residing in Cyprus.

Researchers will analyze the Y-chromosome of DNA samples from men whose father is of Armenian extraction and the mitochondrial DNA of women whose either mother or father are Armenian.

According to the Armenian Representative in the House of Representatives Vartkes Mahdessian there are around 4,000 Armenians living in Cyprus.

He said when they were asked for help by the CING the idea of a DNA collection sample after the church liturgy was deemed as ideal as many community members would be there.

Mahdessian said that members of the Armenian community who wish to participate in the project can also go to his office another day as DNA samples will also be collected there.

The Armenian community in Cyprus consists mostly of



Caption: MP Vartkes Mahdessian

descendants of the Genocide survivors, Mahdessian said, who arrived on the island in the early 1920s although there were Armenians on the island as early as 578 AD, during the Byzantine Period, when villages such as Armenokhori in Limassol and Arminou in Paphos were created.

The Armenian Prelature of Cyprus was established in 973 by Catholicos Khatchig I and has ever since maintained a continuous presence on the island. Historically, the Prelature has been under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia.

Prior to the mass arrivals of the mid-1910s and early 1920s, there was a very small number of Armenians in Cyprus, around 200, who had mostly arrived in the 19th century, fleeing early persecution in Ottoman Empire.

During the Latin Era, after the purchase of Cyprus by the titular Frankish King of Jerusalem Guy de Lusignan in 1192, a massive immigration of Armenian and other bourgeois, noblemen, knights and warriors from Western Europe, Cilicia and the Levant took place, to whom fiefs, manors and privileges were granted.

During the Frankish and the Venetian Eras (1192-1489 and 1489-1570 respectively), there were Armenian churches in Nicosia, Famagusta, Spathariko, Kornokipos, Platani and elsewhere, while Armenian was one of the official languages in Cyprus.

Armenian refugees arrived from Palestine (1947-1949) and Egypt (1956-1957), while during the last 20 to 30 years, the local community has received migrants from Armenia, Syria and Lebanon.

The Armenian-Cypriot population took a hit with the emigration of about 900 of its members to the UK during the EOKA anti-colonial liberation struggle (1955-1959). A second factor that contributed to the reduction of the community's population was the emigration of about 600

Armenian-Cypriots to Soviet Armenia as part of the Panarmenian movement for "repatriation" during the 1962-1964 period (nerkaght).

The Armenian-Cypriot community prospered throughout the British colonial era (1878-1960), by establishing associations, choirs, scout groups, sports teams, musical ensembles, churches, cemeteries and schools, including the renowned Melkonian Educational Institute that closed down in 2005.

Following Cyprus' independence in 1960, the Armenians in Cyprus, who were recognised as a religious group, opted to belong to the Greek-Cypriot community and were also represented in Parliament by an elected Armenian Representative.

According to Mahdessian, the governments of the Republic of Cyprus since 1960, as well as Cypriot society have actively supported the well-being of the Armenian community, "thus safeguarding the preservation of our rich culture, heritage, language and religious identity."

"It should be very interesting to see the results," he said. He said that his grandfather had told him that their family had a Persian background. "I believe it's interesting to see the origins of the community."

Georgia Neophytou, whose mother was Armenian, too said that the project was interesting and that either her or her sister would provide a DNA sample.

Neophytou's mother was also half-Armenian from her father's side, whose family had arrived from Turkey after the genocide while he was an infant.

"We are intrigued. It is an interesting initiative," Neophytou said. She stressed however that despite the results as regards origins, this did not mean anything concerning one's sense of belonging to the community in question.

Anti-Armenian Tension Rising in Kazakhstan After New Year's Eve Murder

TENSIONS, from page 1
responsible. But RFE/RL's Kazakh service reported that organizers needed to calm the crowd and ask them to refrain from addressing the ethnic angle. The broadcaster said the police presence was intensified and that officers had deployed equipment for crowd control.

The Armenian Embassy in Kazakhstan issued a statement on January 3 offering condolences to the family of the murdered man and urging media not to spread "unverified information" about the deadly fight.

In Armenia, meanwhile, the angry protests fanned by some social media users raised fears of anti-Armenian violence in Qaraghandy and other parts of Kazakhstan.

Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and his Kazakh counterpart Beybut Atamkulov discussed the fallout from the incident in a phone call on Monday. According to the Armenian Foreign Ministry, they both denounced "attempts to give eth-

nic overtones to the tragedy."

Kazakhstan's Interior Minister Kalmukhanbet Kassymov briefed the chief of the Armenian police, Valeri Osipian, on murder and hooliganism investigations launched by Kazakh law-enforcement agencies. A police statement said Kassymov downplayed the angry protests in Qaraghandy and assured Osipian that "Kazakhstan's Interior Ministry controls the situation."

The Armenian human rights ombudsman, Arman Tatoyan, claimed to have received similar assurances from his Kazakh opposite number, Askar Shakirov. In a Facebook post, Tatoyan said Shakirov ruled out any "ethnically motivated discrimination against ethnic Armenians" following the Qaraghandy violence.

Kazakhstan is a diverse country that houses dozens of ethnic groups. Official propaganda frequently praises long-ruling President Nursultan Nazarbayev for preserving ethnic concord in the Central Asian state of 18 million.

Trump Offers Turkey Patriot Missiles So They Won't Buy Russian Missiles

WASHINGTON (*Newsweek*) – The United States has offered to sell its NATO ally Turkey a \$3.5 billion Patriot missile defense system as an incentive for the country not to buy an anti-aircraft missile system from Russia, according to Turkish state media.

Turkey's defense and foreign affairs ministries are discussing the purchase of US Patriot missiles with officials from a US delegation, according to the reports.

Turkey had planned to purchase an S-400 anti-aircraft missile system from Russia despite warnings from the US and other NATO allies that the system could pose security risks if integrated with Western systems. Turkey signed a deal with Russia in 2017 that was reportedly worth \$2.5 billion.

The S-400 can allegedly protect against ballistic missiles and stealth aircraft, including that used by NATO allies like the F-35 aircraft.

During a panel discussion held on the sidelines of a NATO summit in July 2018, Turkey's foreign minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu claimed that

he had opted to buy the system from Russia because he could not obtain a similar one from allies in the West.

"I tried to buy from my allies," Çavuşoğlu said. "I wanted to buy from the US for the last 10 years, it didn't work. I couldn't buy from NATO allies, so Russia gave me the best proposal and now I'm buying from Russia."

The US has warned that Turkey could be subject to sanctions on Russian military equipment if it moves ahead with the purchase. India, another US ally, already canceled its plans to buy the S-400 due to concerns over US sanctions.

In September 2018, the Trump administration sanctioned China's People's Liberation Army over its purchase of the S-400.

Turkey, however, has signaled that it would be interested in purchasing military equipment from both the US and Russia. Reports have suggested that Turkey has already started constructing a site for the missile system, and Russia has pledged to begin deliveries by as early as October 2019.

Community News

Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) Annual Gala Raises \$4 Million

NEW YORK – With the Armenian flag raised over the historic Cunard building, 400 guests attended the sold-out 15th Annual Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) Holiday Gala held December 15 at Cipriani 25 Broadway. COAF announced a record fund-raising total for its 2018 Gala with over \$4 million raised. The purpose of the event is to fund innovative programs in education, healthcare, social services, and economic development throughout rural Armenia. This will include the completion of the state-of-the-art COAF SMART Center campus, which will reach over 150,000 people and was recently visited by President Armen Sarkissian of Armenia.

“It was a spectacular evening, and we are delighted by the support from the Diaspora as well as our global family who have demonstrated a deep sense of commitment to COAF’s mission over the last 15 years,” said Dr. Garo Armen, Founder of COAF. “We are energized by the evening’s outpouring of generosity and will be expanding our reach which now includes 44 rural communities impacting over 75,000 lives to over 100 communities impacting 150,000 lives. Furthermore, the peaceful revolution in April underscores COAF’s core values to bring about democracy and freedom to allow citizens to define their future. All this will result in accelerated innovation and economic growth. We feel a moral responsibility to provide the next generation with the tools, skills and infrastructure to advance what has already started.”

see COAF, page 7



COAF Founder and Chairman Dr. Garo Armen



Actor Victor Garber leading Charles Aznavour tribute



Sara Brown at the 3rd Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide held earlier this month in Armenia.

Storytelling Is Valuable Tool in Teaching about Genocide

YEREVAN and LOS ANGELES – Storytelling and personal narrative are indispensable tools when educating young people about the dangers of genocide, a University of Southern California (USC) Shoah Foundation fellow told an international audience during a speech at the third Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide held in December in Armenia.

Sara Brown, the institute’s postdoctoral teaching fellow, said that storytelling and narrative are central to the human experience and are ancient ways societies preserve their historical record. In her remarks at the conference, she urged that educators use testimonies of genocide survivors to engage their students to learn how to resist dangerous stereotypes and to treat people with more respect and dignity.

“The influence of stories and personal narrative is particularly significant for effective and meaningful genocide education and activism,” Brown said. “And the over 55,000 audiovisual testimonies collected and housed in USC Shoah Foundation’s Visual History Archive provides educators a unique opportunity to access highly tellable narratives about lived experiences during genocide and other mass atrocities that can be used to educate students around the world.”

The event was held in Yerevan, Armenia. It is dedicated to the prevention of the crime of genocide through education, culture and museums. The forum was organized by the Foreign Ministry of Armenia with the support of the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect and in cooperation with the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

Brown noted that courses that look into the causes and consequences of genocide are becoming more popular around the world, a move she found hopeful.

“The significance of the human story of genocide, going beyond the historical facts, chronology of events and casualties suffered cannot be overlooked by educators,” she said.

Using the Armenian Genocide as an example, Brown noted that the story of each victim is important.

“The Armenian Genocide was not the mass murder of over 1.5 million Armenians,” she said. “The Armenian Genocide was the murder one by one by one of over 1.5 million individuals. And each individual has a story that may help promote comprehension of the atrocities that occurred, the lessons that can be learned.”

She was also concerned that discrimination and antisemitism are on the rise. “The need for meaningful and impactful instances of modern genocide is all the more pressing today,” she said. “We are witnessing a resurgence in xenophobia, bigotry and hatred, including anti-Semitic beliefs.”

But she said the rising tide of hatred can be pushed back by using testimony in the classroom.

see STORYTELLING, page 8

Karagheusian Foundation Delegation from Armenia Attends One-Week Intensive on Preventive Dental Care in the US

NEW YORK – Last November, as part of continuing efforts to bring healthy smiles to thousands of Armenian orphans and children in the Middle East and Armenia, a delegation of health professionals from the Howard Karagheusian Commemorative Corporation (HKCC), also known as the Karagheusian Foundation, concluded a one-week visit to some of the top dental schools in the Boston area. The invitation had been extended by Dr. Myron Allukian, Jr., the president of the Massachusetts Coalition for Oral Health and a faculty member at Harvard, Tufts and Boston University dental schools.

Founded in 1921 by the family of Howard Karagheusian, who lost his life at age 14, the Karagheusian Foundation provides free dental care in Armenia for children aged 5-14. Education and training remains an important component of the HKCC clinical model, which was launched in Armenia in 1993 with a primary focus on pediatric dentistry and ophthalmology. Today, there are five clinics across the country serving over 60,000 patients annually. In 2017 alone, over 90,000 dental procedures were performed on Armenian children by the HKCC clinical staff.

“We are pleased to continue delivering state of the art pediatric dental treatment to children in Armenia,” said HKCC Managing Director Irina Lazarian, from the Foundation’s US headquarters in New York City. However, she also acknowledged that the Foundation is determined to improve oral health in Armenia through preventive care, with an emphasis on hygiene and regular dental screenings. “We would like to see fewer children visiting us for treatment and more children coming in for regular checkups and cleanings,” explained Lazarian. “This will minimize the fear of visiting a dental office for many children because the procedures will be less invasive.”

Lazarian and HKCC-Armenia Deputy Director Dr. Alisa Badalyan, along with mem-



Dr. Mayron Allukian Jr., right, and Irina Lazarian with participants in the program in Boston

bers of the professional and management staff, traveled to the Boston area to attend lectures and interactive presentations as well as meetings with the dental school faculty including the dean of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, the associate dean at Boston University, and a sealant program director who provided an overview of the school-based sealant programs in Boston and neighboring Chelsea. The delegation also visited the Fenway Community Health Center and toured the dental clinics at Harvard and Tufts. These interactions provided the necessary information and insights to recognize that a preventive oral health program should be designed, tested and launched as a pilot program to account for the cultural differences and awareness levels of the patient population in Armenia, as well as such considerations as available local resources and application of modern western technologies, among other factors.

During the visit, members of the HKCC see KARAGHEUSIAN, page 8



COMMUNITY NEWS

Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) Annual Gala Raises \$4 Million

COAF, from page 6

A significant component of the evening was a live art auction guided by Gala Honorary Chair Tony Shafrazi, one of the art world's most prominent figures. Shafrazi, an Iranian-born Armenian, rose to fame managing artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Donald Baechler, and Kenny Scharf. Renowned auctioneer Simon de Pury once again masterfully conducted the auction.

COAF ambassador Andrea Martin once again hosted this year's gala. The Andrea Martin Performing Arts Auditorium, located in the COAF SMART Center, was named after the Emmy and Tony Award-winning Armenian-American actress in appreciation of her love and support for the children of Armenia.

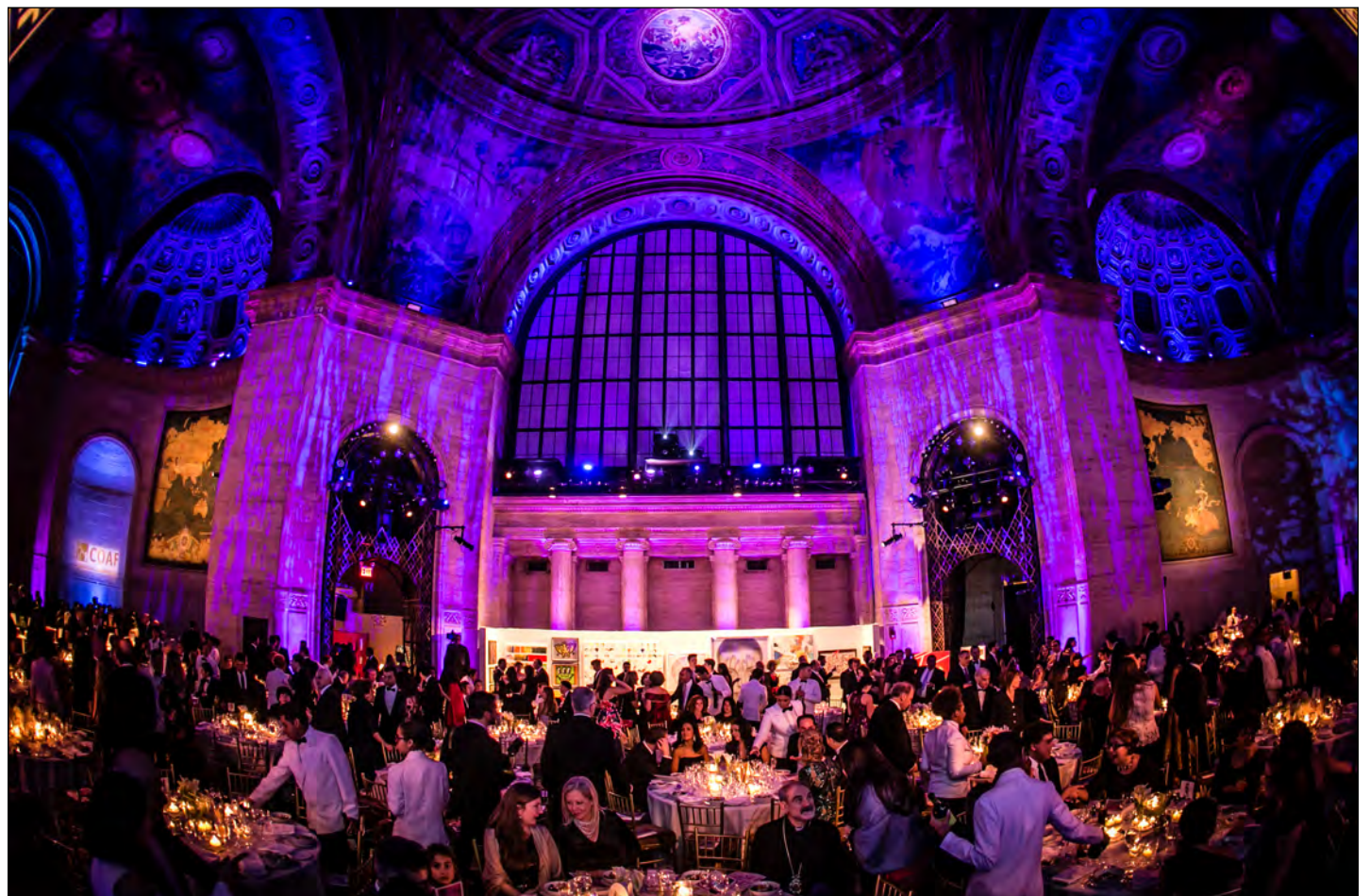
Celebrity guests included Grammy-nominated singer Melody Gardot and Emmy-nominated



Actress Andrea Martin hosting COAF Gala

actor Victor Garber. Gardot, a proponent of music therapy for children, learned about COAF's work after performing at the Francophonie Summit held in Yerevan this year. Victor Garber, a past COAF award recipient who has taken part in several COAF galas, led the evening's special tribute to the late French-Armenian iconic entertainer Charles Aznavour.

COAF's Humanitarian Award was presented to Vartan Gregorian (president of the Carnegie Corporation) and his late wife, Clare Gregorian,



15th Annual COAF Holiday Gala at Cipriani 25 Broadway in NYC

who was a founding COAF board member. Nine college scholarships were established for COAF youth in Armenia in appreciation of Clare Gregorian's dedication.

Vartan Gregorian has served as an adviser to the COAF Board for several years. Prior to his current position, which he assumed in 1997, Gregorian served as the president of the New York Public Library, and later as the president of Brown University. He has been decorated by various governments, including over seventy honorary degrees.

Attendees also heard an inspiring speech from a young teenager by the name of Marina Mirzoyan from the COAF-supported village of Hatsik. Marina is currently a study

exchange student in Colorado and who has excelled in English language programs offered by COAF at her local school. She spoke on gaining confidence and not being afraid to fail as a result of COAF's impact on

her life. The evening also featured performances by two teenaged musicians from Armenia. Armen Puchinyan (piano) and Armen Daghtents (saxophone) moved guests with both classical and popular pieces.



COAF Humanitarian Award recipient Vartan Gregorian of Carnegie Corporation

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Deadline for returning completed Applications: March 15, 2019

Read News in Armenian at:



Live auction conducted by Simon de Pury and Haig Boyadjian



COMMUNITY NEWS

Karagheusian Foundation Delegation Attends One-Week Intensive on Preventive Dental Care in the US

KARAGEUSIAN, from page 6?

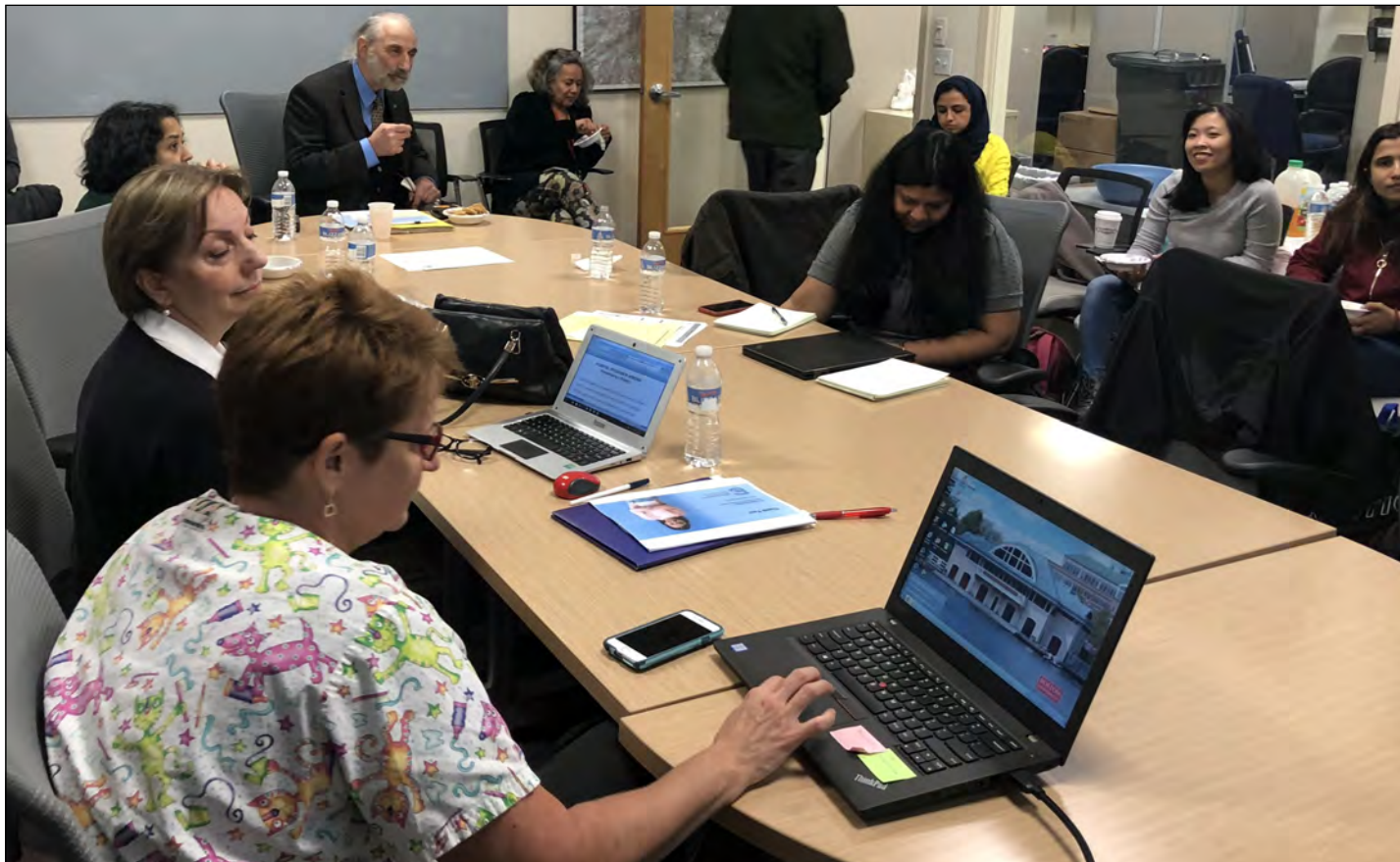
delegation had the opportunity to acquaint residents from Harvard, Boston University and NYU Langone Health Systems with the Foundation's century-old history and its current operations. They also presented an in-depth case study on current HKCC services and practices at the Journal Club in Boston.

"It was a great experience learning about Karagheusian Foundation's dental programs for children in Armenia and its plan for more effective school prevention programs," stated Dr. Nishitha Ponnamaneni and Dr. Melvin Thomas, both DPH residents working with Allukian at NYU Langone Health Systems.

The visit concluded with a debriefing session with Allukian, Dr. Vartan Ghugasian and Dr. Raffy Bagdassarian, whereby the design and implementation of a more cost-effective prevention dental care program were discussed with the delegation.

Allukian reflected on the week-long visit, saying: "I am very pleased to work with the Karagheusian Foundation to develop effective community prevention programs and dental care delivery systems so that fewer Armenian children will suffer from pain or infection."

Ghugasian remarked on his long relationship with the foundation. "It was a great endeavor to start this program with the Foundation 20 years ago, when it established operations in Armenia. It is amazing to see how far it has come and how it continues to strive for the excellence in its quest to deliver modern western standards of dental care."



A presentation at Boston University

The Armenian delegation agreed that, although of short duration, the experience was

highly productive and constructive, as it served to reaffirm the Foundation's commitment to

bringing preventive oral health care to Armenia.

Sponsor a Teacher Donation

The Haiganoosh Mengushian/Ajemian, Robert Ajemian, Gloria Ajemian and Hrach Mgrdich Ajemian Foundation has donated \$2,500 to the Tekeyan Cultural Association's Sponsor A Teacher Program.



Storytelling Is Valuable Tool in Teaching about Genocide

STORYTELLING, from page 7

"Interaction with the Visual History Archive has been found through studies to engage learners at the cognitive, moral and affective levels," she said. "It fosters an interest in historic topics, which is great for me as a historian, but also increases critical-thinking skills. Teaching with testimony provides students with the necessary tools to resist the us-vs.-them paradigm identified by genocide scholars as necessary to bring about the social death of a group and other dehumanizing tactics often employed by extremists."

Noting that USC Shoah Foundation offers

several ways to bring testimony to students, Brown said that students have to learn how to embrace differences in others instead of rejecting them.

"The interpersonal connection and emotional investment that accompany these in-person and virtual interactions with survivors and witnesses to genocide help students overcome apathy, polarizing influences in their own lives, and helps them close the psychological distance between them and the victim or survivor," she said. "And it gives a human story to statistics that document the suffering."

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COMMUNITY NEWS

NAASR to Name Its New Headquarters after Historian, Philanthropist Vartan Gregorian

NAASR, from page 1

throughout his career, and working to better the human condition. We are grateful that we can acknowledge and memorialize his tremendous accomplishments by naming the institution's new headquarters the NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building," said Edward Avedisian.

"I am overwhelmed by this most generous and selfless offer and accept it with humility, and with gratitude," said Gregorian. "I thank NAASR for bringing Armenian history, culture, and values to life through its programming and collections, now visible and accessible to anyone."

"We are proud to recognize Gregorian's distinguished life of service and dedication through our new global center," said Yervant Chekijian, chairman of the NAASR board. "He is an inspiration for generations to come. We are also sincerely grateful to the Avedisians for their generosity and vision."

Distinguished Career of Vartan Gregorian

Gregorian has had a distinguished career as an academic, scholar, historian, philanthropist, and visionary. Born in Tabriz, Iran, Gregorian received his elementary education in Iran and his secondary education at Collège Arménien in Beirut, Lebanon. In 1956, he entered Stanford University, where he majored in history and the humanities, graduating with honors in 1958. He was awarded a PhD in history and humanities from Stanford in 1964. Gregorian has taught European intellectual history and Middle Eastern history at San Francisco State College, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Texas at Austin.

In 1972, he joined the University of Pennsylvania faculty and was appointed Tarzian Professor of Armenian and Caucasian History and professor of South Asian History. He was founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Penn in 1974 and four years later became its twenty-third provost until 1981. His outstanding tenure at the university has been honored with endowed professorships in English and in the Humanities and through several graduate fellowships in the humanities.

After an academic career spanning two decades, Gregorian served as president of The New York Public Library from 1980 to 1989. The institution includes a network of four research libraries and 83 branch libraries, and during his tenure, Gregorian was widely credited with restoring the status of the library as a financially sound, cultural landmark. In 1989, he was appointed the 16th president of Brown University, where he led a campaign that raised over \$500 million, bringing the institution's endowment past the \$1 billion mark. Gregorian also oversaw the creation of several new academic departments. In honor of

his legacy at the university, a residence quadrangle was named after him, as well as three professorships: the Vartan Gregorian Assistant Professorship, The Brooke Russell Astor Professorship in the Humanities in Honor of Vartan Gregorian, and the Aga Khan Professorship in Islamic Humanities created in honor of Gregorian. In 1997, the City of Providence renamed the Fox Point Public Elementary School after Gregorian to acknowledge his role in strengthening relationships between the university and the community.

In 1997, Gregorian assumed the presidency of one of the country's oldest grantmaking foundations, Carnegie Corporation of New York. His philanthropic work and scholarly accomplishments have been recognized with more than 70 honorary degrees and dozens of significant awards, including the National Humanities Medal, awarded by President William J. Clinton; and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, awarded by President George W. Bush. President George H. W. Bush appointed Gregorian to the J. William Fulbright Board of Foreign Scholarships, and President Barack Obama appointed him to the selection committee of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. Gregorian has also been decorated by the Austrian, Italian, Portuguese, French, and Armenian governments.

Gregorian is known for his leadership in support of democracy, human rights, and civic engagement, and his efforts have been recognized with honors from numerous nonprofit organizations such as the Council on Foundations' Distinguished Service Award; Aspen Institute's Henry Crown Leadership Award; the Africa-America Institute's Award for Leadership in Higher Education Philanthropy; and a special recognition from PEN America. Civic honors from state legislatures and municipalities include Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Houston, San Francisco, Fresno, Austin, and New York City.

Throughout his illustrious career, Gregorian has written extensively about Armenia and has maintained close ties to the Armenian community. When he was appointed Tarzian Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Gregorian recruited three professors to teach Armenian history, language, and literature: the late Vahé Oshagan, the late Robert Hewsen, and Michael Stone. In 1999, the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Karekin I, bestowed upon Gregorian the St. Gregory the Illuminator Medal, the church's highest honor; and His Holiness Aram I, Catholics of Cilicia, honored him and his wife, Clare, with the Prince and Princess of Cilicia Medals.

Gregorian is a member of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, which awarded

him an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters in 2001, following an honorary degree awarded by Yerevan State University in 1995. He is a former trustee of the American University of Armenia, a trustee emeritus of the Dilijan International School of Armenia, and a co-founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative with Ruben Vardanyan and Dr. Noubar Afeyan, who established the Vartan Gregorian Scholarship Program in 2018 to support scholarly research of Armenian history. In 2012, Gregorian was presented with the Republic of Armenia's Medal of Mkhitar Gosh, and in 2017, he was the recipient of the country's Order of Honor.

Philanthropist Edward Avedisian

Avedisian, a NAASR Board member, is a world-class clarinetist who performed with the Boston Pops Orchestra and the Boston Ballet's orchestra before changing careers to focus on investments. Through his philanthropy, Avedisian has donated generously to the Armenian community and beyond. He is a trustee of the American University of Armenia (AUA), where he was the principal benefactor of the new 100,000 square foot Paramaz Avedisian Building. He is also the principal benefactor of the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian K-12 School and Community Center in an underprivileged section of the capital city, Yerevan.

Avedisian is a 2016 recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. He is a director on the board of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), and he recently gave a transformative gift to the Rhode Island College of Pharmacy in honor of his late brother Paramaz Avedisian.

New Headquarters

NAASR's new headquarters, designed by a team from the architectural, design and engineering firm of Symmes, Maini and McKee, led by Ara Krafian, will be a three-story building with a glass façade, allowing natural light to illuminate the interior. A variety of Armenian features are incorporated into the design, including a hand-carved wooden door, which a master artisan in Armenia is carving, and an Armenian Alphabet Wall.

The general contractor, Altair Construction, anticipates completion by the fall of 2019.

The building will have many spaces for the public to gather as well as a secure environment for NAASR's rare-book collection gathered in the Mardigian Library, one of the top-five Armenian libraries open to the public in the diaspora. It will soon total 40,000 books, with some dating back to the 1600s, and rare periodicals dating back to the 1800s, as well as the unique personal archives of prominent scholars, early Armenian-Americans, and religious leaders.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has given full support with a capital grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund and MassDevelopment of \$225,000 awarded in 2017, for installation of an elevator, other accessibility features, and fire suppression.

The NAASR staff is working in temporary offices at the AGBU-New England headquarters on Mt. Auburn Street in Watertown and continuing its programming and bookstore on-site and online at www.naasr.org.

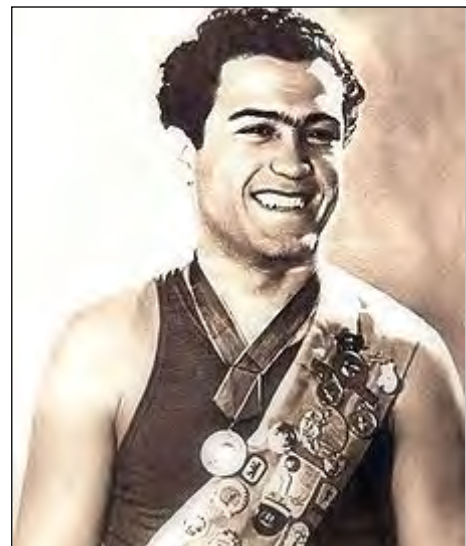
To date, NAASR has financial commitments for more than \$6 million of the \$6.5 million needed to build the new center. The nonprofit invites the community to contribute at all levels to support this project.

Vladimir Yengibaryan, Gold Medal Winning Armenian Boxing Legend, To Be Remembered by the TCA Los Angeles Chapter

ALTADENA, CA - The Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro Los Angeles Chapter will host a program titled Vladimir Yengibaryan: Gold Medal Winning Armenian Boxing Legend on Friday, January 25, 2019 at 7 p.m. at the Glendale Public Library, Glendale, CA. Avetis Bairamian, sports editor of *Nor Or*, and author of the Armenian language publications *Famous Armenians in the World of Sports* and *Armenian Sports Encyclopedia* will serve as the keynote speaker and present the fascinating life of Yengibaryan.

Also participating in the program are renowned Armenian boxers, Khoren Injeyan and Nshan Munchyan, who will offer their remarks on Yengibaryan.

Vladimir Yengibaryan was born in Yerevan, Armenia on April 24, 1932. He retired with a record of 255 wins and 12 losses. Yengibaryan was a three-time European champion (1953, 1957 and 1959) and three-time Soviet champion (1955, 1956 and 1958). He won a gold medal representing the U.S.S.R. at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia as a light welterweight (-63.5 kg). Yengibaryan is considered



Vladimir Yengibaryan

the most prominent Soviet boxer of the 1950's period. He was the first Soviet boxer to become European champion. After his retirement, he served as an international boxing referee and international boxing judge. Yengibaryan was a noted boxing coach who trained and developed generations of Armenian youth in the sport of boxing. Yengibaryan passed away on February 1, 2013 in Los Angeles. He is buried at Tokhmakh cemetery in Yerevan.

Carl Bardakian, chairman of the Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro Los Angeles Chapter, stated "Vladimir Yengibaryan is not only a beloved boxing figure, but also a great patriot and national hero of the Armenian people. His impact and influence on Armenian boxing is still felt to this day. Our goal is for Vladimir Yengibaryan to become a candidate on the ballot for the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, New York when they finally establish an amateur section."



Tekeyan Cultural Association
Metro Los Angeles Chapter

Presents

Ara Dabandjian Quartet of Element Band

Saturday, February 9, 2019
8 PM Dinner • 9:30 PM – 10:30 PM

11 PM • International Singer Koko Hayitian
Phoenicia Restaurant • 343 N. Central Ave, Glendale, CA 91203
Admission • \$80 • www.tekeyanla.eventbrite.com
Contact • info@TekeyanLA.org for group seating

Tickets must be pre-purchased • No tickets will be sold at the door.





COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Assembly Ohio State Chair Hosts Smithsonian Folklife Festival Presentation

CLEVELAND, Ohio – Armenian Assembly of America Ohio State Chair Ara Bagdasarian hosted a presentation by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage Director of Special Projects Halle Butvin, titled “Armenia on the National Mall: How A Festival Was Brought To Life” at an event organized in partnership with the Assembly, the Armenian Cultural Association, and St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church of Richmond Heights. She spoke to a packed room of St. Gregory of Narek parishioners and Cleveland-based Armenian Americans on the Smithsonian’s successful “Armenia: Creating Home” cultural experience during the 2018 Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

“I would like to especially thank Halle Butvin for doing a wonderful job introducing Armenian culture and history at the Festival, and sharing that experience with us back



Smithsonian Director of Special Projects Halle Butvin

here in her home state,” Bagdasarian said. “The Cleveland Armenian community was inspired and proud to hear Halle’s presenta-



Smithsonian Director of Special Projects Halle Butvin

from Armenia. Following her presentation, there was a lively question-and-answer session with those in attendance.

Butvin shared a behind-the-scenes look into the different Armenian cultural, musical, and food exhibits that were on display at the Folklife Festival in Washington, DC. She told moving stories of how the event was put together and her important role in making it a reality. Butvin, who travelled to Armenia numerous times, was one of the curators of the festival.

At the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Butvin is responsible for expanding the reach of cultural sustainability work around the world, designing collab-



Razmig Pounardjian, Armenian Assembly Ohio State Chair Ara Bagdasarian, Smithsonian Director of Special Projects Halle Butvin, Rev. Fr. Hratch Sargsyan, and Ari Terjanian

tion on ‘Armenia: Creating Home,’ with some guests even expressing tears of joy. Those who could not attend the Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. this summer had the opportunity to feel the magnitude and excitement created by the Festival and the Armenian volunteers, and for that we are grateful,” he added.

The festival, which the Armenian Assembly co-sponsored, drew more than 750,000 visitors, and featured more than 100 musicians, dancers, artisans, winemakers, and cooks

orative projects to support communities, safeguard their heritage, promote cultural expression, and elevate cultural practices to improve local economies. Prior to joining the Smithsonian, she spent ten years designing and implementing impact-driven international development programs in East Africa and Asia, ranging from democracy and governance to biodiversity conservation and economic growth. She is a native of northeast Ohio, and was accompanied at St. Gregory Church by her family.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

At 21, This Aerospace Engineering Student and Former Refugee Has Created First Invention

By Dario Ayala

MONTREAL (*Globe and Mail*) – The distance from Aleppo to the lab at Montreal's Trudeau airport where a young engineer-in-training is perfecting her first invention is 8,580 kilometres, but Shoushi Bakarian's trajectory might better be measured in light speed.

Three years ago, Ms. Bakarian was sitting in Lebanon, part of a family of four Syrian refugees facing an uncertain future with hope of making a new start in Canada. Fast-forward those 36 months: Ms. Bakarian is in her third year of aerospace engineering at Montreal's Concordia University. She has learned her fourth language, French – in addition to English, Arabic and Armenian. She's got two part-time jobs with promising prospects in her field: one in the parts department at Bombardier Aerospace and another at Stratos Aviation, a small aviation and flight simulation firm. There, she's co-created her first invention in the lab she's building. Oh, and she leads a Scout troop where she hopes to influence her young charges.

She's 21. "I want to reach girls and tell them



Shoushi Bakarian, an aerospace engineering student at Concordia University, poses for a photograph with a ventilation device that she redesigned for Cessna Aircraft, at Stratos Aviation in Montreal on Oct. 30, 2018. Bakarian arrived from Syria in 2016.

they don't have to limit themselves to traditional jobs, like teachers. Especially for girls from

my community, they have a very limited idea of what's out there," Bakarian says. "I want to

become an example."

On a recent late fall day, Bakarian tinkers with the tiny generator fan blades of her latest accomplishment: The Ventus, a 5-volt accessory charger for Cessna airplanes that runs off the aircraft's air vents and as an added bonus cools the air by compressing it. The simple blue tube prototype seems likely to become a must-have accessory for pilots who rely on tablets and smartphones for aviation computation but fly aircraft that were mostly built long before the smartphone era.

"I like clean energy, solar power, wind power, so we developed it further to add on the charger idea," she says. "I spent my summer designing, drawing and testing until it worked."

Naor Cohen, the owner of Stratos Aviation, hired Bakarian within days of meeting her during an outreach program for women in aviation about a year ago. Bakarian started out as an instructor on the company's flight simulators. One day he shared an idea he had to improve cooling small Cessna cabins by using a Venturi tube to compress and cool the air. He invited her to set up a lab with computers and 3-D printers and she ran with it.

"I guess she must sleep very little," Mr. Cohen says. "We've never seen her as an employee, and more as a partner in the team. She's free to come whenever stuff needs to be done. Right now, she's concentrating mainly on the lab. We want to put that imagination and creativity to work more."

Bakarian arrived in Canada on Christmas Eve, 2015, with her father, Antranik, her mother, Ani, and her now-24-year-old sister, Meghri. The daughters had high school diplomas earned during the Syrian civil war with rockets flying overhead and bombs bursting not far from their Armenian school in Aleppo.

Small details come back to Bakarian as she remembers the time. "Our school was in the firing line, so we had to study in a kindergarten in these tiny little chairs," she recalls. "I always make jokes about it, but it's not funny."

By 2015, the battle for Aleppo had settled into a stalemate and her family was stuck. "In Grade 10, the big bombs started, by Grade 11, we were without electricity or running water or internet. Some people started to leave but we didn't know how to get out of Aleppo. We didn't know who was on the road waiting to kidnap us. ... Once the missiles started falling, we didn't know where they were coming from or where they'd land."

A turning point came when her mother needed surgery that had to be performed in Lebanon. The medical issue combined with mounting violence forced the family to make a move. They spent a year in Lebanon while she recovered. Her parents concluded the family would have limited education and work opportunities in that country. That's when Canada opened the doors to Syrian refugees.

In those early Canadian winter days, the family enrolled in French classes while all four of them set about finding work. Bakarian got hired at McDonald's, a job she kept as she enrolled at Concordia, which helped her family survive while her parents found work in the garment industry. It was a step down from her father's previous job managing a tools warehouse. Meghri, meanwhile, is specializing in child studies at Concordia.

Bakarian is grateful for the sacrifices her parents made, but she made some, too. She was almost crushed by her workload as a first-year university student who was working 30 hours a week at her fast food job. "I was physically, emotionally and mentally exhausted," she says. "But now I'm making up for it. My family is okay now, and it's easier."

Arpi Hamalian, an education professor emerita at Concordia University, took the younger Bakarian women under her wing when they showed up at an orientation in early 2016. "They were looking a little lost," Dr. Hamalian recalls now, but it didn't take long for them to get on track. "Shoushi, well both girls really, know exactly who they are and where they are going. They are unbelievably talented, focused and team-oriented. There aren't many like them."



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Arts & Living

Geoffrey Zakarian Embarks on Culinary Partnership with Miami Heat

By Nicole Schubert

MIAMI (*Ocean Drive*) – This season, celebrity chef and restaurateur, Geoffrey Zakarian, most known for dishing it out on the Food Network, heated up Miami diners and took over the Flagship Lounge at the American Airlines Arena with notable eats from the Diplomat Beach Resort’s Point Royal. And with the Heat’s Chef Partner Program transforming their Flagship Lounge into eclectic culinary concepts throughout the year, premium members were able to toast to 2019 with a five-star chef who represents the best of the best.

Zakarian spoke in January about this one-of-a-kind partnership, what signature plates premium members nibbled on off the bleachers, his favorite moments on the Food Network, and what we can look forward to at this coming year’s South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

Geoffrey, tell us about partnering with Miami Heat, as part of the Diplomat Beach Resort’s first-ever culinary partnership, with our hometown all-star team.



Geoffrey Zakarian

GEOFFREY ZAKARIAN: What an incredible experience. We did a VIP dinner from Point Royal for a one-of-a-kind experience. The Heat made me a Zakarian jersey and I got to test my skills on the court for fun. I’ve been thinking about turning pro. What do you think?

I’m thinking MVP! Speaking of, what champion dishes did you serve?

GZ: We served an astonishing amount of food! A few of the offerings were spinach and wild arugula with pumpkin seeds, and carrot yogurt, our signature raw bar set up with chilled shrimp, crab legs, and lobster, and a classic clam bake with Maine mussels and clams, crawfish, shrimp, baby corn, and peanut potatoes.

What spirits did you recommend pairing with these eclectic dishes?

GZ: We have a robust cocktail program at our bar and I think beverages are such an exciting part of the meal. My personal choices would be a Negroni, a classic Manhattan or Tequila Sunrise. Champagne is never a bad choice either!

I have to ask, who’s your favorite Miami Heat player and were you able to play one-on-one with them?

GZ: Kelly Olynyk. Let me tell you what I did do, stand next to them. Humbling.

Geoffrey, you’re a leader in the culinary
see ZAKARIAN, page 13



Georgs Avetisjans at work

Georgs Avetisjans Following His Crane to the Fatherland

YEREVAN/RIGA – I met Latvian photographer Georgs Avetisjans at the end of April in Yerevan, at the height of the Velvet Revolution. Yet the purpose of his visit was not connected with this historical event, but a planned project and the simple

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

desire to get acquainted with the country of his paternal ancestors. Georgs’ two sisters and brother-in-law were with him, accompanying him sightseeing, meeting interesting people and participating in public actions. Months later, I received Georgs’ gorgeous photo-book of his last exhibition, “Homeland,” featuring landscapes and portraits from the Latvian village of Kaltene which present its recent history from World War II until the end of the Soviet Union in 1991 via interviews, notes and archival imagery.

Avetisjans was born in 1985 in Talsi; he graduated from the University of Brighton (UK) in 2016 with a Master of Arts degree in photography. He has lived in the US and the UK for seven years, and had several exhibitions in Latvia, Italy, China, Netherlands, Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia, France, Denmark and the UK. Most recently selected for the Magnum Photos Graduate Photographers’ Award 2017 in partnership with Photo London and RBB Economics, he won the Second Prize “Different Worlds 2017” at Photon – Centre for Contemporary Photography in Ljubljana, Slovenia, which showcased recent works of ten young and emerging contemporary photographers from Central and Eastern Europe. In July 2018 the photo-book *Homeland: The Longest Village in the Country* was published by Milda Books during the opening week of Les Rencontres d’Arles in France, and it was launched officially together with a solo show at the Latvian Museum of Photography in Riga.

My conversation with Georgs concerns his creative life, photography, and art, as well as his ties with Armenia.

Georgs, you studied photography in prestigious schools in the USA and the UK. What did this give you which you could not obtain in your native Latvia?

In Latvia it was not possible to get an MA degree in photography and we don’t have as strong and qualified professionals as in the UK or in the US, so I decided to move abroad. It was also an opportunity to strengthen my academic English and challenge my writing and reading as well as translating from one language to another - especially for my final MA dissertation and body of work, which was closely related to my home country in Latvia. Study abroad gave me discipline, shaped my beliefs and helped me to expand my visual and critical thinking as well as writing. It has opened completely new horizons, points of view and new ways of approaching my individual practice as a visual storyteller. The course has developed my research capabilities, aesthetic control, critical thinking and improved my academic voice and understanding of how to read, review and analyse other photographic works.

In Latvia we also have a really great institution called International Summer School of Photography (ISSP), which is a non-commercial platform for contemporary photography acting internationally offering high-quality alternative education and networking programs for emerging photographers around the globe. Since 2006, ISSP has yearly run the International Summer School of Photography, initiated local and international education and exchange programmes, produced exhibitions, publications and festivals with qualified and renowned professionals worldwide, and, most importantly, gathered a thriving community of emerging photographers in Latvia and internationally. I’ve participated at the ISSP in 2015 and 2018, and in 2018 I was invited as a guest lecturer for their ISSP School students.

Since the invention of photography hundreds of photographers document this world through black and white or color images or express their inner

see AVETISJANS, page 14

BOOK REVIEW

Mr. Five Per Cent Brings to Life Story Of Buccaneers Calouste Gulbenkian Who Anticipated Today’s Unfettered Global Tycoons

By Oliver Bullough

What does the life of an Ottoman-born ethnic Armenian oil tycoon have to teach us about the modern world? Quite a lot, it turns out, judging by this fascinating biography of Calouste Gulbenkian, a dealmaker for the ages and, at his death in 1955, the world’s richest man.

Gulbenkian saw an oilfield only once, on a visit to Baku (then an oil-fueled boomtown in the Russian empire, now the capital of Azerbaijan) as a 19-year-old graduate from King’s College London, but he was very quick to appreciate the importance of oil as a commodity, and the opportunity inherent in international competition for it. He combined excellent contacts in the Middle East with skills he learned as an entrepreneur in the City of London, and secured a 5-percent stake in all oil found beneath the Asian territories of the Ottoman empire.

When the deal was signed, on the eve of the first world war, his stake didn’t sound like much, but he fought for decades to hang on to it and, by the 1950s, he had a shilling for every pound earned from some of the world’s richest oilfields. And that really added up. In modern



Mr. Five Per Cent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the World’s Richest Man

terms, he died with a fortune of almost £5bn.

He was clearly not an easy person to like, and fell out with almost everyone he came across, but his buccaneering qualities make him an extremely interesting person to read about. At one point, he exploited the young Soviet Union’s shortage of capital to build the nucleus of a world-class art collection. There are several Rembrandts missing from the Hermitage, thanks to his negotiating skills.

When Gulbenkian was born in 1869, Armenians were a significant minority in Istanbul, and dominated the city’s commercial sector, having taken advantage of a series of reforms passed by an Ottoman government

see GULBENKIAN, page 17



ARTS & LIVING

Geoffrey Zakarian Embarks on Culinary Partnership with Miami Heat

ZAKARIAN, from page 12

world. How did your journey first begin as America's ultimate top chef?

GZ: It started at the Culinary Institute of America. The best place to start if you want to be a professional chef. The way in which Tim Ryan leads the school is impressive.

Known for your sophisticated taste, you first worked at New York's Le Cirque. How did Le Cirque shape you into becoming the chef you are today?

GZ: That kitchen had access to the most amazing ingredients. It was incredible. Now everyone can get pretty much everything but in those days, it all hit the kitchen at Le Cirque first. I had this incredible opportunity to learn how to cook with things I would never have had access too. Also, Sirio Maccioni — the owner of Le Cirque — from him I learned the true art of hospitality.

Who first inspired you and what was the first dish you ever made?

GZ: My Aunt Anna. She was an amazing cook. Stuffed grape leaves was a dish we made together all the time. Not sure if it was the first, but definitely one she taught me to perfect.

You recently published a cookbook, *My Perfect Pantry*. If you could fill a pantry inside a Miami home, what would be inside of it?

GZ: You don't need everything. You just need the right things. The book is laid out around the 50 ingredients any home cook should have on hand to make delicious, easy meals.

In addition to being a writer and esteemed restaurateur, you're also a judge on *Food Network's Chopped*, an *Iron Chef*, and co-host on *Food Network's Emmy-nominated daytime series, The Kitchen*. How did you jumpstart your career on the *Food Network*?

GZ: Chopped! It was a little show that became a big hit! I can't believe how popular it became. I had been cooking for 25 years already, so when the TV thing took off it was a cool addition to my career as a chef and restaurateur. I love teaching



Geoffrey Zakarian at work

so it was a great natural progression. One of my favorite things to film is *Iron Chef*. There's nothing quite like *Kitchen Stadium*.

Plans to add an additional show?

GZ: Yes, my production company Corner Table Entertainment is working some very exciting multi-platform concepts. Can't share anything just yet, but keep an eye out.

With *Food Network South Beach Wine and Food Festival* nearing this February, what can guests look forward to experiencing?

GZ: I'm hosting a Bloody Mary Brunch with Jeff Mauro on the Sunday of that weekend to close out the festival. It's an annual event at Point Royal. Always a sell out, so get your tickets early!

Rolling Stones Have No Sympathy for The Disabled, Fan Alleges

Michael Gartland

NEW YORK (*New York Daily News*) — A retired administrative law judge is accusing the *Satisfaction* supergroup's promoter of having little sympathy for the disabled because prices on handicapped seats are five times more than other tickets at the band's June 2019 shows at MetLife Stadium.

Michael Boyajian, 60, sent a claim against promoter Concerts West/AEG to the state Division of Human Rights after learning accessible seats for the rickety rockers' June 2019 gigs at MetLife Stadium cost five times more than other seats — \$1,075 compared with about \$200.

You can't always get what you want, but the Stones should be particularly sensitive to accessibility, he said, due to both their own age and that of their core audience.

"It blew my mind," Boyajian said recently. "The baby boomers are their biggest rock 'n' roll fans, and we're aging out now."

The Stones' senior singer Mick Jagger is a spry 75, as is geriatric guitar god Keith Richards. Guitarist Ronnie Wood is the youngest Stone at 71 and drummer Charlie Watts is 77.

The first problem Boyajian said he encountered when trying to buy tickets was that wheelchair-accessible seating was either nonexistent or quickly sold out for the two shows. The only other accessible seats still available were for people with hearing and sight impairments, and those tickets, while not addressing his challenges, were out of his league — and, he says, discriminatory.

"I just want them to make more accessible seating available," he said. "I have to use a walker. I have trouble getting up and down steps."

Boyajian said he's had trouble getting around since 2011 when he injured his right leg in a fall down the icy steps in front of his home. He hurt his left leg two years later in another tumble and now needs a walker to get around.

A former judge who also worked as an investigator for the state Division of Human Rights, Boyajian said he's never seen the band and is between a rock and hard place in his efforts to check seeing them live off his bucket list.

He claims his case has merit for two reasons: the relative scarcity of tickets for people with impaired mobility and the huge markup for accessible seating.

In his complaint, Boyajian requests the defendant "provide additional accessible seats at all its concerts" and seeks tickets for him and his wife to one of the Stones' shows in New Jersey as well as "any civil remuneration."

Boyajian said he filed his complaint with New York instead of New Jersey because he lives in Fishkill, Dutchess County.

A publicist for the Rolling Stones did not return calls. AEG also did not respond.

A link on the Ticketmaster website — one of the sites where Boyajian shopped for seats — offers an accessibility disclaimer and notes "venues are solely responsible for establishing their own accessible seating ticket policies."

"Some venues sell all or a portion of their accessible seating tickets only through their box office and not through Ticketmaster," it continues.

Tickets for the Stones' New Jersey gigs range from anywhere between \$200 to more than \$4,000. Boyajian does not specify ticket prices in his complaint, but notes "accessible seats were priced at 5 times the price of average non-accessible seats."

When asked about the disclaimer Boyajian said he didn't see one and doesn't think that would impact his case.

Wild horses couldn't drag him away from his claim.

"That's going to be up to the investigators," he said. "I'm going forward with it."

A spokesman for the state Human Rights Division declined to comment because the complaint is a pending matter.

'Lights! Camera! Saroyan!' Documentary on William Saroyan to Have International Premiere at Fresno State on January 25

FRESNO — The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, in conjunction with the William Saroyan House Museum, is presenting the international premiere of "Lights! Camera! Saroyan!" on Friday, January 25, at 7:30 p.m., in the Satellite Student Union at Fresno State.

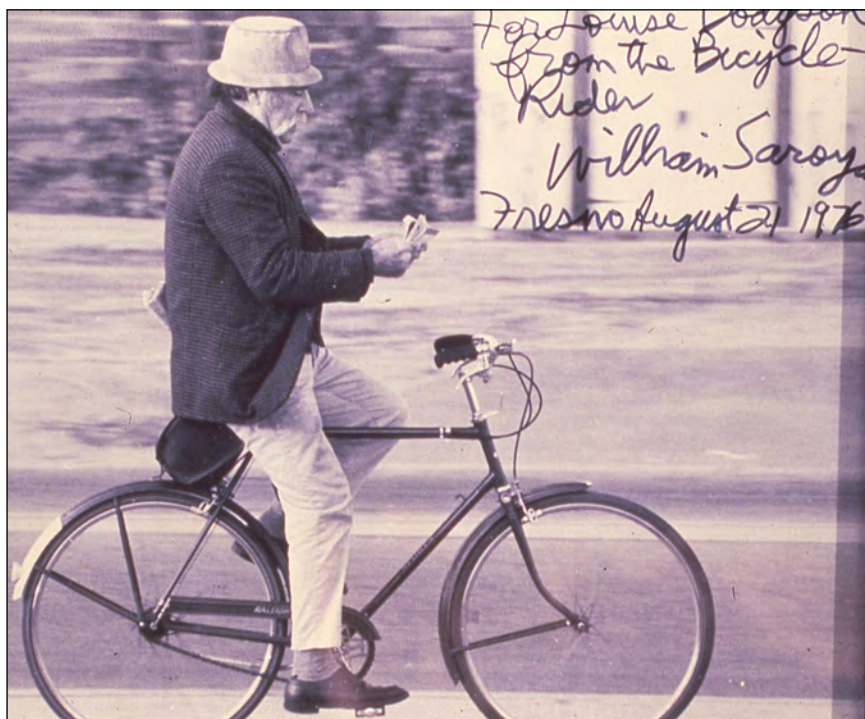
Directed by Harut Shatyan, and produced by Ara Baghdasaryan, "Lights! Camera! Saroyan!" examines the career and personal life of Fresno native William Saroyan, a Pulitzer Prize and Oscar winning author, playwright, and artist. Through exclusive interviews with his family and friends the documentary spans the artist's years living in Fresno and abroad.

No reservations are required, and admission is free.

Seating is available based on a first-come, first-served basis. Doors open at 7:00 and the showing will start at 7:30. Free parking is available in Lots P15, P16, P5 and P6-parking permits not required.

The Fresno State Satellite Student Union is located at 2485 E. San Ramon.

For more information about the screening contact the Armenian Studies Program, visit website at www.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies.



William Saroyan

Wishing my family and friends a joyous Christmas and a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year!

Michele Kolligian
Boston, MA

What greater gift could Christmas bring than love that touches everything? Healthy 2019 to all!

Mary Bergoudian
Belmont

Wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year and a very Merry Xmas. Keep the good work going. You're doing a great job.

Knarig Khatchadourian Meyer
Ridgewood, NJ

ARTS & LIVING

Georgs Avetisjans: Following His Crane to the Fatherland

AVETISJANS, from page 12

world through the images of inner reality. What you do with your photo camera?

I'm mostly interested in multi-layered, research-based storytelling about contemporary issues from a historical and ethnographical aspect on the line between reality and fiction, as well as poetic, metaphoric and authentic imagery in the field of documentary reality. I'm also very much interested in photobook making, archival materials, notes and investigative recordings and ways of how photography, design and materials could possibly shape the story of an entire photographic project. The themes of my work are mostly about regional and national identity, genetics, ethnography, memory, nostalgia and existentiality. Years ago as a photographer I started to explore subjective aspects such as moods, associations in documentary reality, which formed, and still forms my visual narrative.

Do you think that it is still possible to say something new with the language of photography?

Yes, always! That is as if I ask a writer is it still possible to write a new sentence or a novel with your pen? The pen, like the camera, is just a mediator between the writer's philosophy and a reader (destination).

In our digital epoch many professional photographers still use non-digital means. Do you think one day the digital will rule over the others?

It is inevitable, but there will always be someone who will prefer to work with the analogue techniques, just as audiophiles will always seek a vinyl quality sound when MP3 digital audio files will rule over the other possible audio techniques.

You write your first and last name in the Latvian way. It would be Gevorg Avetisyan in Armenian (transliterated into English). Please tell us about your Armenian roots.

In the early 1980s (when both countries were still under the umbrella of the Soviet Union) my father Vladimirs Avetisjans migrated from Tbilisi, Georgia to Riga, Latvia where he met my mother Inta Avetisjana while he was studying at the Russian State University of Cinematography (VGIK) at the world's oldest film school in Moscow. While my grandfather Georgs Avetisjans was born in Tbilisi, Georgia, my great-grandfather Artjoms Avetisjans came from the land of our forefathers – Armenia, to Georgia, whereas my father migrated to Latvia from Georgia. My great-grandfather Artjoms Avetisjans was born in Kars, Armenia, which is currently a city in northeastern Turkey and the capital of Kars Province today.

While my father's roots go back to Armenia, he was born in Tbilisi, for centuries a centre of Armenian culture and socio-political thought,



Georgs Avetisjans in Echmiadzin

genetics. Of course, Latvia is my birthplace, the country I love as the place I grew up in, but I have never been quite sure if I really belong here, having always lived with this fragmentation of ethnicities, and with a hidden, as yet unfamiliar mystery of the Armenian soul, which I now long to uncover.

Have you any idea how many Armenians live in Latvia and can you remember some interesting figures?

Nowadays it could be around 2,500. We have many art professionals, like film director Aik Karapetian, painters Arturs Akopjans and Varuzh Karapetian, ballet dancer Avetik Karapetyan. I have interviewed pastor Ter Khosrov Stepanyan, artist Babkens Stepanjans, businessman Roberts Ogenesjans, poet Gagik Sarkisjans, painter Varuzh Karapetian, and musician Tigrans Tumanjans.

Last spring you came to Armenia during a very crucial for the country period. Tell us please your impressions of what you have experienced and your general thoughts.

It was such a great coincidence that I could join you in Armenia for such a crucial period of Armenian history. It was wonderful experience

ed the voices of Armenian people from different backgrounds. All this addition to my research and materials will be shown into my new photobook *Krunk: The Crane That Flew Over The Fatherland*, reflecting the past, present and future.

Please tell us about your Armenian project.

This is a story about my father; this is also a story about our genetics, Armenian diaspora and history of the land of my forefathers in Armenia and Georgia. "Krunk" means crane in Armenian and it is a symbol of longing for one's homeland, as well as a song sung by wanderers that embodies the historical fate of the Armenian people. The song, composed by Komitas and sung for centuries, has become a quasi-official state hymn, a hymn of sadness and longing.

Endless foreign invasions, great social and ethnic oppression, and a host of other political and economic conditions have meant that large swathes of Armenians went to live abroad. The exodus began a very long time ago, and gave rise to Armenian settlements in many parts of the world where Armenians preserved their language, their cultural traits, their religion, and the idiosyncrasies of their inner life. Recent history

has few nations whose sacrifices and bloodshed could equal that of Armenians. The 1915 genocide murdered the flesh, but strengthened the spirit, as whenever the enemy tried to take out Armenian culture by storm, the same storm carried the seeds of this culture to the far corners of the Earth, and new life sprouted in faraway places, just like the crane, headed for foreign lands, and made its song heard throughout the world.

Armenia is covered in rocks, hard and weighty as the soul of the people who carry its weight, its sadness and its melancholy. This enigmatic territory of the Caucasus is nestled between two seas – the Black and the Caspian – that is traditionally regarded as the point where the West and the East meet. This befits its history, at once exciting and tragically ridden with conflict, which I am approaching to find out more about the place my father came from in Georgia and our roots in the land of our forefathers, Armenia.

My first dummy of the photobook *Krunk: The Crane That Flew Over the Fatherland* was

developed, created and produced during a workshop "Photobook As Object" in 2018 by Jan Rosseel (Belgium) and Yumi Goto (Japan) at the ISSP in Latvia. The dummy was exhibited at the ISSP Gallery in Riga, Latvia and in the Art House in Kuldiga, Latvia. My next solo show, and first of this project, will be held at the Archdiocesan Museum from September 15 - October 15 in Poland during International



Georgs Avetisjans (Photo courtesy FK Magazine. Photographer Arnis Bal us)



Georgs Avetisjan's Homeland exhibition in Latvia

and died in Kaltene, Latvia. The mix of ethnicities in my blood – Armeno-Greek on my father's side and Latvian-Russian on my mother's – has always intrigued me and encouraged me to become more familiar with ideas of identity and

and also an opportunity to witness such a spirit and elevation of the nation during the Velvet Revolution in April 2018. I think that I have photographed and witnessed an important part of my project - a history, and I also have record-

Photography Festival Bialystok INTERPHOTO 2019 and after in Yerevan (dates are still to be confirmed).

Whom have you interviewed and photographed in Armenia?

Many interesting people - musician and collector Yakov Zargaryan; artist and public activist Zaruhi Muradyan; photographer Vahan Kochar; cultural figure Gayane Georgian; ballet master Roudolf Kharatian; architect and actress Arine Tagvor; translator of Latvian and Russian literature Naira Khachatryan; Armenian cuisine researcher Sedrak Mamulyan; business woman and finansist Anna Vardanyan; architect and filmmaker Oshin Yeghiazariantz; musician Alex Mirzoyan; journalist and lawyer Zaruhi Mejlumyan; folklorist Verjine Svazlyan, and historian Knarik Avagyan. I should not forget you, philologist and author Artsvi Bakhchinyan!

What was your biggest impression of Armenia?

Unity of the whole nation, hospitality, nature and all the seasons across the country – from summer to spring.

ARTS & LIVING

The Mayor of the Internet Has a New Mission

By Katie Baker

NEW YORK (*The Ringer*) — “Grandkids on demand,” the tagline for a new Florida-based business called Papa, has a cheerfully dystopian ring. And so it makes sense that when the entrepreneur and venture capitalist Alexis Ohanian explains why he invested in such a company, he, too, sounds like he’s living in a dramatized, if familiar, future. “Empathy,” he says, speaking by phone from the Bay Area on a recent Thursday morning, “is not something I believe robots will be able to possess.”

In October, Initialized Capital, the early-stage VC firm Ohanian cofounded with Garry Tan in 2011, was part of a \$2.4 million seed round for Papa, which connects college students with seniors looking for companionship or nonmedical assistance. The “Papa Pals,” as the designated whippersnappers are called, are like if the Boy and Girl Scouts merged with TaskRabbit: They might set up an Apple TV, provide a ride to an appointment, gofer at the grocery store, or just sit and listen. (Andrew Parker, the company’s founder, tells me that a Papa Pal recently accompanied an older client to a wedding and cut a rug on the dance floor.)

There were a number of things about Papa that made it a compelling investment. This summer, Papa’s founders went through the famous accelerator program at Y Combinator, where Ohanian first hatched the website Reddit with his cofounder Steve Huffman in 2005, and where he met Tan a few years after that. The startup is based out of Miami, which Ohanian likes: He has been outspoken about the benefits of operating outside the Silicon Valley bubble, and a Florida base is a no-brainer for any strivers in the so-called “elder tech” space. But what Ohanian keeps coming back to when he talks about Papa is that the business harnesses something—kindness, basically—that “humans are uniquely good at,” he says. “It’s something we don’t have to worry about AI automating away.”

For years, as he built, left, and rejoined Reddit and did a zillion other things on the side, Ohanian had a front-row seat to many of the thrills and chills that can come from humans being uniquely good (“good”) at things. With Reddit, he watched passionate communities form around shared interests like skin care or Phish, buzzing with the collective purpose of a hive; he also presided over a business that teemed with racism, misogyny, and snuff films. He marveled at the growth of a startup that once felt like his baby; he recoiled at, yet enabled, that baby’s maturation into a troublesome punk.

Now, Ohanian has entered a new phase of his life, one revolving around an actual baby. “He has this whole Business Dad aesthetic, this whole Business Dad philosophy,” says Kim-Mai Cutler, a partner at Initialized. “Like, being great at being an investor, being great at being supportive of companies, and then also being a great father, and having that be a very visual part of his identity.”

In early January he and his wife, the tennis all-timer Serena Williams, shared with *Vogue* the startling particulars of Williams’s harrowing and life-threatening postpartum experience following the birth of their first child, a girl named Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr. In February, Ohanian stepped down from his day-to-day role at Reddit to focus his time and energy on seeding and advising startups through Initialized Capital, which has amassed portfolios valued at \$22 billion. (He remains on the Reddit board.)

Throughout 2018, Big Tech has loomed larger than ever, casting shadows over anyone who has ever idly taken a quiz on Facebook or hopped in an Uber with friends. Faced with increased scrutiny over their practices and societal impact, businesses like Google and Twitter have responded by becoming even less transparent. Amazon’s yearlong quest to find its second headquarters accentuated the company’s almost incomprehensible influence, reexposed its unsettling working conditions, and served as a reminder of the vast gulf between the average person and the technological entities they rely on.

Ohanian certainly doesn’t exist independently of this; he is, after all, a venture capitalist. Still, he lately seems to be moving in a very different direction: loudly seeking and preaching life balance, advocating for paid family leave, urging young founders to take care of themselves before changing the world, and being perceptive toward the feelings and opinions of others. “I’ve heard from founders who are walking out of investors’ offices because they went to an all-partner meeting and didn’t

see a woman,” he remarked in November to *Wired*. “You could say they are more woke than we were 13 years ago.” Ohanian comes across like a concerned parent in his public life because, well, that’s exactly what he has become.

Recently Ohanian retweeted Bill Gates, who had written a short musing about the HBO series “Silicon Valley,” a satire that sometimes seems like more of a documentary. Gates wrote that, of the characters on the show, he most identified with the squirrely, on-a-different-wavelength Richard Hendricks. I ask Ohanian whether there’s a member of the Pied Piper braintrust who resonates most with him. “Maybe — ” he says, then interrupts himself. “No, no, I got nothing.” I continue to press him, and he says, “I was thinking: ‘Who’s the vest dude?’”

Jared?

“Jared,” he says. “There’s moments where I definitely ... I feel like the suit guy. I feel like the corporate dork.” (Of Reddit’s two cofounders, Ohanian was decidedly not the one who wrote the code. In 2017 he told NPR’s “How I Built This” that, in addition to coming up with Reddit’s name and doodling its logo, his duties included haggling over cellphone bills and ordering pizza.) “And there’s a little bit of the — who’s the jackass who got kicked off the show?”

Erlich?

“It has been said that there was inspiration there, but I don’t see it at all,” Ohanian says. He explains that some viewers drew parallels between Erlich Bachman’s fictional travel-booking startup Aviato and Huffman and Ohanian’s real-life endeavor, the travel site Hipmunk. “I was like, ‘That doesn’t make any sense,’” he says. “I don’t see that at all, but whatever.” (The character comparisons he does see: that the late Peter Gregory character is part Paul Graham, one of Ohanian’s first supporters, and part Peter Thiel, Tan’s former boss.)

Rise of Reddit



Alexis Ohanian Sr. and his wife, Serena Williams

Ohanian’s actual personal arc is far too dramatic and silly even for a Silicon Valley script anyway; it’s like something out of an earnest “By age 35 you should ...” meme. His rise to prominence was so sudden — Reddit was only 16 months old when Ohanian and Huffman sold it to Conde Nast and became multimillionaires at age 22 — that his success feels both wildly aspirational and weirdly achievable, at least in a “well, if he can do it ...” sort of way. Even his early setbacks felt relatable to media types: In 2010, when he left Reddit and spent a few months living in Armenia, it was practically a rite of passage. You haven’t truly made it in New York City, after all, until you’ve quit a Conde Nast job during a recession and headed abroad.

And then there was his relationship with Williams, whom he met in 2015. One minute Ohanian was just some nerd visiting Rome to speak at a tech conference; the next he was the type of guy who attends a royal wedding, is followed around by HBO cameras, and sits down with Stephen Colbert. (Ohanian points out that his appearance on “Late Night” in May, while “rad,” wasn’t the first time he’d met the host: Back in the day he went on “The Colbert Report,” an experience that he remembers being “the hardest interview I’ve ever done ... they’re like, ‘Don’t try to be funny.’”)

Ohanian has always had a flair for the dramatic: In *We Are the Nerds*, a book published in October that details the rise, fall, and rise of Reddit—the title refers to something Ohanian once hollered in a fit of happiness at a mid-aughts party—Ohanian is referred to by a colleague as “Chief Bullhorn.” Cutler says that when it comes to the two Initialized founders, “Alexis likes to say that Alexis is the sizzle and Gary is the steak.” In a recent interview about personal finance, Ohanian sheepishly revealed that he used to bring elaborate flower bouquets to every first date. As it turned out, this unapologetic corniness turned out to be an asset when it came to Williams. The couple’s origin story is circuitous and cute, involving a cameo by Kristen Wiig and a poolside rat hoax, but hinges almost entirely on

Ohanian’s bold decision to treat an offhanded “you should totally come see me play sometime” courtesy offer from Williams—“an L.A. invitation,” as he calls it — as a legit excuse to actually show up in Paris for the French Open.

Still, during this time, Ohanian managed to piss off many of the people around him. After returning to the increasingly mutinous Reddit as executive chairman in late 2014, Ohanian oversaw a troublesome time for the company. “The second act really helped me see what it would take,” he says, “to bring a company not from zero to one, but from one to 10.” When he unceremoniously fired Victoria Taylor, a popular community manager, in July 2015 it was bad enough. It was worse that Ellen Pao, the embattled interim CEO, shouldered much of the blame.

“It was my decision,” Ohanian later wrote in a Reddit comment. “And the transition was my failure and I hope we can keep moving forward from that lesson.” Sam Altman, the head of Y Combinator and a Reddit board member, answered questions from users the same day. “Free speech is great and terrible,” he wrote in response to one question. “I think figuring out how technology can encourage empathy is one of the more interesting and important open research problems in the world right now.”

Growing up in Maryland

Ohanian grew up in Columbia, Maryland, and long before he was watching his wife play tennis and naming his baby daughter after himself, he was watching the Washington Redskins and making plans to name a future baby after a different man. “Son or daughter,” he wrote in the acknowledgements of his 2013 book *Without Their Permission*, “I’m naming him or her Robert Griffin Ohanian.” When I remind him of this almost instantaneously dated reference and ask his thoughts on the current state of the franchise, he sounds legitimately aggrieved. “I don’t even want to talk about it,” he says. “I’m so over it.”

Once upon a time, Ohanian’s first big purchase upon selling Reddit was to upgrade his father’s long-time nosebleed tickets to four sweet seats near the 50-yard line. Now, annoyed at both the team and the league, they have let the ticket subscription lapse. “I was raised a diehard,” says Ohanian. “I would have never imagined after 25, 30 years of indoctrination, feeling this ambivalent about it, but I really do.” When the Redskins signed Mark Sanchez in mid-November, Ohanian weighed in: “Am I too late to make the obvious @Kaepernick7 tweet?” Growing up, Ohanian thought the coolest thing in the world would be to own a pro football team. “And now, actually, instead,” he says, “I just own an esports team.”

Over the years Ohanian and Initialized have been a part of some extremely successful investments, like the crypto trading platform Coinbase and the increasingly omnipresent Instacart. But Cloud9 might be the objectively coolest venture they’ve backed. Cloud9, which counts among its properties the Overwatch League champion London Spitfire, was named the year’s top esports organization by ESPN.com and was also figured by Forbes to be the most valuable player in the growing esports ecosystem, based in part on its youth-focused strategy and its successful merchandising arm.

Cloud9 isn’t the only Initialized portfolio company to have racked up big wins in 2018; there was also a major victory in San Francisco’s hectic scooter wars when Skip, a scooter-share business, was awarded one of just two contracts to operate in San Francisco. For much of 2018, the standard operating procedure among competing scooter companies had been, basically, just to show up and deal with the details later, that tried-and-true ask-forgiveness-not-permission startup model. The result was sidewalks littered with devices and swift action by city board of supervisors to pass a law requiring permits.

“Three companies — Bird, Lime and Spin — unloaded hundreds of motorized scooters across San Francisco,” wrote the city’s irritated Municipal Transportation Authority in its decision to grant permits to none of the three. “I looked at this with delight,” says Ohanian of his competitors’ failed attempts to move fast and break things. “For a product and a business that requires you to work with governments and communities, it just seemed so obviously self-destructive.”



ARTS & LIVING

The Mayor of the Internet Has a New Mission

OHANIAN, from page 15

Skip's deliberately collegial approach, sitting down with city planners to draft policy and incorporating community feedback into their scooter design, wasn't rogue or cool, but it got the job done.

As an early-stage venture capital investor, Ohanian loves to be the guy who swoops in to write the "first check" to the enterprising souls behind some compelling new startup. But earlier this year, when Ohanian agreed to liaise with one particularly passionate group, it wasn't because he had visions of hockey stick growth or tangible return on investment dancing in his head. "Working with Alexis was really a big deal for a small little startup organization," says Katie Bethell, the founder of a nonprofit called PL+US that is dedicated to fighting for paid family leave in the United States.

Bethell knew that getting a response from Ohanian, to whom she reached out via a friend who had once met him at a dinner, was a long shot. But she also knew that Ohanian was a proud new dad with interest in the subject of paid leave, and wanted to see whether the famous founder would participate in a speaking engagement about fatherhood and family. He said yes, and the two chatted on stage for more than an hour this summer in San Francisco. "The thing I was most excited

about," says Bethell, "was his willingness to call for up to a year of parental leave in the U.S. I think as a business leader, that's really bold, and shows how much he is putting kids and family at the center of his analysis."

Having seen firsthand how debilitating the aftermath of a delivery can be, Ohanian gets riled up when he discusses the subject. "The statistic that was most alarming," he says, "was that one in four American women are back to work after two weeks from having a kid. And that seems—it's unconscionable." Ohanian has engaged in various forms of political activism in the past, though the issues were typically technology-based: In 2012 he protested the federal privacy bill SOPA, which would eventually die in the house, and in 2014 he lobbied for net neutrality. "He's got credibility both in the private sector but also just, like, at a national scale in terms of advocacy," Cutler says. And he plans to use it: "You'll probably be seeing me in a suit in D.C. next year, making the case for [paid family leave]," Ohanian says. "I really do think there are folks on both sides of the aisle in office who want this."

Importance of Mental Health

For much of the year, Ohanian has also been delivering an adjacent message about mental health, burnout, and perspective. In

March, ruminating about the 10-year anniversary of his mother's death from brain cancer and the depression he'd felt as a result, he wrote: "As entrepreneurs, we are all so busy 'crushing it' that physical health, let alone mental health, is an afterthought for most founders." He further expanded on this idea in November, speaking at the Web Summit conference in Lisbon. "Hustle porn!" he yelled. "This is one of the most toxic, dangerous things in tech right now," he said. "This idea that unless you are suffering, grinding, working every hour of every day, you're not working hard enough."

Humans trying to be robots: It's an instinct Ohanian can certainly understand, which is why he knows how damaging it can be. Last week, when the 34-year-old founder of HQ Trivia was found dead of a suspected drug overdose, another young founder, The Athletic's Alex Mather, fired off a bunch of tweets about the importance of self-care. "[I] want to talk about founders, failure, and mental health," he began. "I've been so happy to see @alexisohanian talk about this at length."

In February, Ohanian pulled off one of his characteristically grand gestures. With Williams returning to tennis at the tournament in Indian Wells in Southern California, Ohanian welcomed her back to the game by setting up four billboards along I-10 that fea-

tured pictures of Olympia and Williams along with the words, "GREATEST MOMMA OF ALL TIME." It was a touching tribute, and also happened to be a great way for Ohanian to do his ongoing due diligence on an Initialized portfolio company called AdQuick. By using the product for himself, he was engaging in a practice that is known as "dog-fooding." (Classic Business Dad move!)

There's a certain shameless beauty to much of Ohanian's strat. Earlier this year, when he and his friend Jennifer 8. Lee led a petition for interracial relationship emoji, the effort was also spearheaded by Tinder. Around Father's Day this summer, Ohanian made the rounds to talk about fatherhood and fitness in a media blitz sponsored by Johnnie Walker, which led to some casual, normal statements like, "When I see that first little outline of a six-pack, I'll be raising a glass and toasting a little bit of Blue Label to celebrate." Ohanian's daughter, who is mostly known as Olympia, although he usually calls her "Junior," has more than half a million followers on Instagram; the account for Olympia's baby doll, Qai Qai, has amassed 60,000-plus since late August. "It's kind of silly," Ohanian says, "but even watching the way that people interact with our child's doll, there are these moments of real humanity that I think people have been really hungry for this year."

It can be hard to hear that and not cynically wonder about Ohanian's motivations, or scoff at the idea of the Reddit cofounder waxing sentimental about humanity. It can be hard not to side-eye Ohanian when he gets into full "as a father of a daughter ..." mode. Even the company Papa — sweet, pure, empathic Papa — exists not to make intergenerational friends, but to make money. (Insurance companies find the business compelling because, by reducing isolation and loneliness, Papa has positive health benefits. This sounds like a win-win until you envision a future in which some poor soul has a health care claim denied because she didn't spend enough hours relaxing with a Papa Pal that month.) When I describe "hustle porn" to Bethell, she has a thought-provoking perspective. "I think working moms," she says, "have been operating under the tyranny of hustle porn since the '80s." She paraphrases the writer Amy Westervelt, noting that women are expected to parent like they don't work and to work like they don't parent. And viewed that way, it's possible that Business Dad is just what happens when hustle porn reaches middle age.

Still, Ohanian is someone who has real social and economic clout, and he generally wields it thoughtfully. (In the cutthroat world of startups and seed money and overnight millionaires, even just the appearance of propriety can feel welcome.) At Initialized, 40 percent of the investing partners are women, and one of the fund's recent investments was in an organization called The Mom Project that helps lapsed employees reenter the workforce. Initialized recently set up a panel discussion about mental health for its employees. New mothers and fathers alike are encouraged to take their full 16 weeks of leave, as Ohanian did when his daughter was born.

Ohanian hasn't seen his wife and daughter in person for days, but when I ask what's new with Junior he describes, in great detail, a video he just watched of the toddler performing her latest silly baby trick: summing her high chair, solo. "She's got a good little kick where she can handle stairs," he explains of the curly-haired girl. "She'll kick that leg over the side no problem," he repeats, "but I'd never seen a full climb, because you've really got to go vertical. It's not just kicking your leg over the side, it's lifting your knees straight up ahead of you and climbing up that high chair."

I recognize his tone: Like most parents, Ohanian speaks of his offspring's escapades in a manner that falls somewhere between a coach evaluating a quarterback and a mechanic admiring a sweet rig. Maybe at some point a machine will learn how to replicate that exactly, but it hasn't happened yet. For now, it feels like a uniquely human thing.

Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Dadian

Rustic Cauliflower Vegetable Soup

INGREDIENTS

1 head cauliflower, chopped into medium pieces
1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 cup olive oil (to taste)
2 tablespoons tomato paste
Salt, black pepper, paprika, dried basil, thyme, crushed red pepper flakes
8 cups water and low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
2 cups cooked white beans (cannellini, great northern, or other beans), drained
2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
1 medium baking potato, peeled, cut in chunks
1 cup each diced zucchini, celery, and green beans (or your choice of vegetables)
1 cup dry pasta (elbow, angel hair, etc.)
1/4 cup chopped parsley
3/4 cup ricotta cheese
Finely chopped parsley, shredded basil as garnish
Olive oil

PREPARATION

In a large soup pot, sauté the onions and garlic in olive oil until the onions are lightly browned. Stir in the tomato paste and add the spices to taste.

Fill the pot to the halfway mark with water and broth, bring to a full boil, and add the cauliflower, white beans, carrots, lemon juice, diced tomatoes, potato, and choice of vegetables. Add more water (or broth) to cover the vegetables, stir, and cook for 35-45 minutes on medium-low heat until vegetables are tender.

Add the pasta, parsley, and ricotta cheese, and cook for 15-20 minutes, stirring. Pour hot soup into bowls and garnish with parsley and basil; drizzle with olive oil.

Serves 6-8.

*Christine's recipes have been published in the *Fresno Bee* newspaper, *Sunset* magazine, *Cooking Light* magazine, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>





ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

JANUARY 25 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro LA Chapter presents a tribute to Vladimir Yengibaryan, the gold medal winning Armenian boxing legend. Keynote speaker Avetis Bairamian, sports editor of Nor Or. Remarks by legendary boxers Khoren Injeyan and Nshan Munchyan. 7 p.m., Glendale Public Library, 222 El Harvard St., Glendale. For more information contact Carl Bardakian at 626-345-9705.

FEBRUARY 9 — Ara Dabandjian Quartet of Element Band, Saturday, 8 PM Dinner, 9:30– 10:30 p.m. Ara Dabandjian Quartet of Element Band. 11 p.m. International Singer Koko Hayitian. Phoenicia Restaurant • 343 N. Central Ave, Glendale. Admission •\$80 • www.tekeyanla.eventbrite.com. Contact • info@TekeyanLA.org for group seating. Tickets must be pre-purchased. • No tickets will be sold at the door.

FEBRUARY 24 — Lecture by Aram Arkun of Boston, Executive Director of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada, on Roupen Herian: “Rescuer of Armenian Orphans.” Sunday, 5 p.m. at the Tekeyan Center in Altadena

APRIL 4 and 7 — One of the opera world’s hottest stars, Alessandro Safina, will bring in his pop-opera rhythms to USA during his upcoming concert tour in April. Safina appeared with Elton John, Cher and Jennifer Lopez for Queen Elizabeth’s 73rd Royal Variety Performance. He also performed for the Pope, sang duets with Andrea Bocelli, Sarah Brightman, and Rod Stewart. Americans first became familiar with Safina when he performed Elton John’s “Your Song” with actor Ewan McGregor for the Oscar-nominated soundtrack of “Moulin Rouge.” Safina will be accompanied by Victor Espinola and the Forbidden Saints. The tour will also feature Armenian Duduk Soloist and Classical Clarinetist Mher Mnatsakanyan and Bassist Hova Burian will take part. Official FaceBook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AlessandroSafinaUSA/> Official Promo Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHHKpxTCSSY> The performance will be held at City National Civic in San Jose on Thursday, April 4. (Times 8:00-9:30pm) <https://www1.ticketmaster.com/event/1C005554CB5A7778> The performance will be held at Dolby Theater in Los Angeles on Sunday, April 7th. (Times 8:00-9:30pm) https://dolbytheatre.com/events/details/alessandro_safina <https://www1.ticketmaster.com/alessandro-safina-with-victor-espinola-the-forbidden-saints/event/3B005546FA735928>

FLORIDA

JANUARY 20 — “International Food Festival – A Tour of the World,” sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, Sunday, 12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA. Sample the authentic cuisine from 9 countries: Armenia, Iran/Persia, Lebanon,

Greece, France, Russia, Brazil, China and Italy. Donation: \$15 adults; \$10 children 12 and under. For further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632.

JANUARY 20-27 — 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.

APRIL 11 — One of the opera world’s hottest stars, Alessandro Safina, will bring in his pop-opera rhythms to USA during his upcoming concert tour in April. Safina appeared with Elton John, Cher and Jennifer Lopez for Queen Elizabeth’s 73rd Royal Variety Performance. He also performed for the Pope, sang duets with Andrea Bocelli, Sarah Brightman, and Rod Stewart. Americans first became familiar with Safina when he performed Elton John’s “Your Song” with actor Ewan McGregor for the Oscar-nominated soundtrack of “Moulin Rouge.” Safina will be accompanied by Victor Espinola and the Forbidden Saints. The tour will also feature Armenian Duduk Soloist and Classical Clarinetist Mher Mnatsakanyan and Bassist Hova Burian will take part. Official FaceBook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AlessandroSafinaUSA/> The performance will be held at Fillmore Miami Beach in Miami on Thursday, April 11th. (Times 8:00-9:30pm)

MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 2 — St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) PTO will present its annual fundraiser. We hope you can join us in support of SSAES for an evening of food, drinks, art, music and fun! 7 to 11 p.m., Sanborn House, 15 High St., Winchester. SSAES is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible. For additional information and sponsorship please e-mail: event@ssaes.org. Note: This event is 21+.

APRIL 25 — 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 – SAVE THE DATE! InterContinental Hotel, Boston. Extraordinary Benefit for Armenian

NEW JERSEY

FEBRUARY 9 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association of New York, under the aegis of the TCA Board of Directors of the US and Canada, will present a Valentine’s Dance featuring international Armenian singer Andre. The Elan, Lodi, NJ. Tickets are \$125 before February 2, and \$150 after, while tickets for young professionals are \$100. To reserve seats, visit https://ticket-stripe.com/TCA_ValentinesDayDinnerDance. For further information and seating, write to rsvptaliab@gmail.com or call 917-238-3970.

MAY 18 — SAVE THE DATE! A Celebration of Gratitude & Hope, honoring His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Bishop-elect Fr. Daniel Findikyan. 6:30pm. Old Tappan Manor, Old Tappan, NJ. For more info, please go to www.stnersess.edu.

OCTOBER 25, 2019 —SAVE THE DATE. Honoring Dr. Taner Akçam. Abajian Hall St. Leon Armenian Complex, Fair Lawn. Sponsored by Knights and Daughters of Vartan, Under the Auspices of Primate Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan.

NEW YORK

APRIL 9 — One of the opera world’s hottest stars, Alessandro Safina, will bring in his pop-opera rhythms to USA during his upcoming concert tour in April. Safina appeared with Elton John, Cher and Jennifer Lopez for Queen Elizabeth’s 73rd Royal Variety Performance. He also performed for the Pope, sang duets with Andrea Bocelli, Sarah Brightman, and Rod Stewart. Americans first became familiar with Safina when he performed Elton John’s “Your Song” with actor Ewan McGregor for the Oscar-nominated soundtrack of “Moulin Rouge.” Safina will be accompanied by Victor Espinola and the Forbidden Saints. The tour will also feature Armenian Duduk Soloist and Classical Clarinetist Mher Mnatsakanyan and Bassist Hova Burian will take part. Official FaceBook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AlessandroSafinaUSA/> Official Promo Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHHKpxTCSSY> The performance will be held at Beacon Theater in New York on Thursday, April 9th. (Times 8:00-9:30pm) <https://www1.ticketmaster.com/alessandro-safina-with-victor-espinola-the-forbidden-saints/event/3B005546FA735928>

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

Mr. Five Per Cent Brings to Life the Story of Calouste Gulbenkian

GULBENKIAN, from page 12
keen to expand its decrepit economy. By the 1880s, however, the city was becoming uncomfortable for them, with the start of a wave of pogroms that peaked in the infamous Armenian genocide of 1915-17.

Gulbenkian had moved to London to study, and stayed, becoming a British subject, building his City career, and gradually abandoning the family’s merchant business. His life and career was, however, mostly transnational. “Empires and states, diplomats and statesmen, spheres of influence ... all were distractions to Gulbenkian: to be ignored if possible, or else coached and co-opted,” Conlin notes.

He liked some countries, particularly Britain and France, where he kept his artworks and built a pleasure garden, but avoided entanglements that might cost him money. This is why he spent most of the second world war in Portugal, then a neutral dictatorship, and leaned towards whichever side looked like winning.

Gulbenkian looks remarkably like a modern oligarch, with his high-ranking connections in all countries, and his business interests “off-shore”

And this is why his life has such relevance today: he is a relic of a previous age of globalization, the freewheeling days before 1939 when money flowed around the world as unhindered by regulation as it does now, and the powerful were able to seek profits where they liked, and to dodge laws however they felt fit. As his daughter Rita, with whom he had a more than usually complex relationship, explained: “laws are made for everyone but us.”

Stripped of anachronisms, Gulbenkian looks remarkably like a modern oligarch, with his high-ranking connections in all countries, his border-straddling ambitions, his children at English schools, and his business interests in the liminal sphere we now call “offshore”. He used corporate structures to own property, and skillfully balanced his and his family members’ movements between countries to

avoid being beholden to any tax authority.

He owned his portfolio of shares and bonds via a Liechtenstein entity called Anstalt Vega, which meant he paid only 100 Swiss francs in tax in 1931 – on assets valued at £4.6m (£288m in today’s money). Much of his empire was structured and controlled via the UK, but he had no intention of paying for the privilege.

After the second world war, with capital controls in force and countries trying to repair their economies while paying for welfare states, there was little tolerance for globe-trotting tax dodgers, so Gulbenkian stayed in Portugal, unwilling to risk the consequences of exposing himself to the revenue services of any of his former haunts. He flirted with the idea of endowing art galleries in London and the US but was concerned by the tax impact of visiting either country and, eventually, the Gulbenkian Foundation ended up in Portugal. It is now one of the largest sources of charitable donations in Europe, and the

Gulbenkian is a major Lisbon art gallery.

Conlin had access to the foundation’s archives, which did not give up their secrets without a fight. Some of Gulbenkian’s early correspondence was in Ottoman Turkish, a language no longer spoken, and written in Armenian characters, an alphabet few people know. Decoding all this, and making sense of the worlds that Gulbenkian moved in, is a remarkable feat of scholarship.

Mr. Five Per Cent is written precisely, with flashes of dry humor, and Conlin wears the depth of his research lightly. The story he tells is one of a businessman playing off great powers in the Middle East, exploiting loopholes in the world’s financial architecture, avoiding accountability, making a fortune for himself, and spending it on a life of luxury. Gulbenkian may have been a unique talent of a past age, but his heirs are all around us.

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COMMENTARY

Diaspora Living a Manifestation of Globalization

By Edmond Y. Azadian

For centuries, when Armenians were exiled from their native land, the perception was that life in the diaspora was the destiny of the Armenian people or at best one similar to the plight of the Jews. But the two world wars and the technological advances which ensued made mass mobility a way of life. Different groups which had been forced to abandon their native lands formed their own diasporas and faced different challenges for their survival.

The fall of the Soviet Union triggered new waves of migrants who moved to the West to add a new layer of diasporan life. But the migrants who had left Armenia for Russia, Ukraine or Central Asia experienced a new derivative of their former lifestyle, because they did not face the challenges of linguistic and cultural barriers that their predecessors had.

Early Armenian settlers in the Middle East or Western countries had suffered tremendously because the life of exile was traumatic for them. Additionally, they had come to their new environment with the baggage of genocide and deportation and they took relocation as a punishment born of the injustice of being uprooted from their ancestral habitat. For the new migrants, the new lands represent new frontiers, new opportunities and the expectation of improved living conditions compared to their original homes.

In the case of the Armenians – unlike Syrians, Iraqis and Libyans – the migration in most cases is on voluntary basis. In other words, there is a tremendous degree of choice compared to their forefathers.

Now that the majority of the Armenians live outside of their homeland, they still relate to that homeland and the majority among them believes their identity is defined by that homeland. Armenia has a vision of the diaspora and vice versa. It is not easy to define where those visions meet or coincide. Therefore, we are in constant quest: what is the diaspora mission and vision? Who represents the diaspora? That latter question particularly is asked when the issue of

compensation from Turkey or settlement with that country are raised. Also, the same question is raised when the opportunity arises to speak with the Armenian government.

In recent years, many pundits, scholars and scientists have been writing and discussing the above issues. At times, the subject is the diaspora, but more often it is the global Armenians. Many sensible ideas and theories are being formed and sometimes initiatives are even taken to get organized. The last case had been adopted by a bona fide benefactor, Vahe Karapetian, in California, who has already drafted bylaws for a would-be diasporan organization called “Pan-Armenian Unity.”

Some people who undertake such ambitious projects use specific communities as a model. In this case, the California Armenians shape Mr. Karapetian’s vision, although his goal seems to encompass the entire diaspora.

Global visions for Armenia and the diaspora have been promoted also by Ruben Vardanyan, the Gulbenkian Foundation and many other organizations and individual visionaries.

Whereas independent Armenia’s government is duty-bound to develop its vision or objective projects as to where Armenia and Armenians are envisioned to be 50 years from now, we find now that the new revolutionary government there has decided to eliminate the Ministry of Diaspora without any explanations. There were talks that the Ministry of Diasporan Affairs would be absorbed by another ministry, but nothing has come of it

yet.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s concept for the country’s ties with the diaspora seems to include having an agency which must deal not only with diaspora affairs but also with immigration into the country.

Attempts for earlier mass immigration movements proved to be catastrophic because of a lack of adequate planning. The Soviets had a particular format in mind and they organized the repatriation of Armenians from Middle Eastern countries at a great cost. Today, the target communities for repatriation are mainly Russia, Ukraine and Central Asian countries, where new settlers are not particularly welcome and their ties with the homeland are still fresh.

For other communities, diasporan living has become a function of globalization. They visit Armenia or even set up a part-time residence there but they continue to consider their home base to be in the West.

Whether we like it or not, there is permanence in diasporan living, that is why many people are in search of a goal or goals for that kind of collective existence.

Through a natural process, the diaspora has become fragmented. And it has also lost the kind of leadership it enjoyed in the past. Heroes such as General Antranig commanded tremendous respect and the masses looked to him to provide leadership. That caliber of leadership is non-existent today; today, even if Antranig were resurrected, not many people would heed his advice or his orders.

The diaspora no longer needs leaders who can think for the masses and issue commands. A new leadership has to emerge with different qualifications. Analyst Vicken Cheterian believes

critical thinking is essential for the new diasporan leadership as he writes, “In case traditional diaspora institutions are unable to produce critical thinking – the first step towards strategic vision and leadership – they might soon be overtaken by a new generation of activists, philanthropists and professionals who want to engage in changing Armenian-Diaspora relations and who consider the traditional institutions as obsolete.”

Of course, this would mean a threat for the tra-

ditional diasporan leadership but also an opportunity or the survival of the entire diaspora, certainly in a new structure.

Unfortunately, Armenia has not yet developed a political culture and stable statehood. The simmering war with Azerbaijan, as well as the general instability in the region will not allow the formation of a solid statehood for the foreseeable future. Had Armenia attained that stature, the diaspora would also have welcomed the Armenian government’s guidance in its own affairs. Over the centuries, Armenians have amassed communal wealth and assets in certain communities well beyond their competence to manage and maintain on their own.

The diaspora has become a rudderless entity no longer able to manage its own destiny. We are at a point where a higher authority is needed to determine the destiny, for example, of the Armenian Humanitarian College in Calcutta, India. That authority must also have a say in closing down of schools, such as the Melkonian Educational Institute in Cyprus or the real estate deals in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Tremendous amounts of moral and material are at risk in the diaspora.

Organizing the diaspora and determining its future are beyond the means of its fragmented leadership today.

Armenia still needs decades of development to attain stable statehood and extend its power over disintegrating world Armenian community.





COMMENTARY

World Has Failed to Protect Children in Conflict in 2018: UNICEF

The futures of millions of children living in countries affected by armed conflict are at risk, as warring parties continue to commit grave violations against children, and world leaders fail to hold perpetrators accountable – UNICEF said in a commentary released on December 27, 2018.

“Children living in conflict zones around the world have continued to suffer through extreme levels of violence over the past 12 months, and the world has continued to fail them,” said Manuel Fontaine, UNICEF Director of Emergency Programmes. “For too long, parties to conflict have been committing atrocities with near-total impunity, and it is only getting worse. Much more can and must be done to protect and assist children.”

Children living in countries at war have come under direct attack, have been used as human shields, killed, maimed or recruited to fight. Rape, forced marriage and abduction have become standard tactics in conflicts from Syria to Yemen, and from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Nigeria, South Sudan and Myanmar.

Over the course of 2018:

In Afghanistan, violence and bloodshed remain a daily occurrence, with some 5,000 children killed or maimed within the first three quarters of 2018, equal to all of 2017, and children making up 89 per cent of civilian casualties from explosive remnants of war.

Cameroon has seen an escalation of the conflict in the North-West and South-West regions of the country, with schools, students and teachers often coming under attack. In November, more than 80 people, including many children, were abducted from a school in Nkwen, in the north-west of the country and released a few days later. To date, 93 villages have allegedly been partially or totally burned due to conflict in the areas, with many children experiencing extreme levels of violence.

In the Central African Republic, a dramatic resurgence in fighting has enveloped much of the country, with two out of three children in need of humanitarian assistance.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, inter-ethnic violence and clashes between security forces and armed groups/militia in the Great Kasai-region and

in the eastern provinces of Tanganyika, South Kivu, Nord Kivu and Ituri have had a devastating impact on children. The response to the ongoing Ebola outbreak has been seriously hindered by violence and instability in eastern DRC. In addition, an estimated 4.2 million children are at risk of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). The situation is compounded by violations of children’s rights, including forced recruitment by armed groups and sexual abuse.

In Iraq, even as fighting has largely subsided, four children were killed in November in the north of the country when the truck they were travelling to school in came under attack. Children and families returning to their homes in areas previously impacted by heavy violence continue to be exposed to the danger of unexploded ordnance. Thousands of families remain displaced and now face the additional threats of freezing winter temperatures and flash floods.

In the Lake Chad basin, ongoing conflict, displacement and attacks on schools, teachers and other education facilities have put the education of 3.5 million children at risk. Today in northeast Nigeria, the Lake region of Chad, extreme north of Cameroon and Diffa region of Niger, at least 1,041 schools are closed or non-functional due to violence, fear of attacks, or unrest, affecting nearly 445,000 children.

A recent surge in violence in the border region between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger has left 1,478 schools closed.

In Myanmar, the UN continues to receive reports of ongoing violations of the rights of Rohingya remaining in northern Rakhine State, which include allegations of killings, disappearances and arbitrary arrests. There are also widespread restrictions on the rights to freedom of movement and barriers to access health and education including in central Rakhine State. Ensuring children have access to quality education and other essential services will avert a ‘lost generation’ of Rohingya children; otherwise, they will lack the skills they need to contribute to society.

In northeast Nigeria, armed groups, including Boko Haram factions, continue to target girls, who are raped, forced to become wives of fighters or used as ‘human bombs’. In

February, the group abducted 110 girls and one boy from a technical college in Dapchi, Yobe State. While most of the children have since been released, five girls died and one is still being held captive as a slave.

In Palestine, over 50 children were killed and hundreds more injured this year, many whilst demonstrating against deteriorating living conditions in Gaza. Children in Palestine and Israel have been exposed to fear, trauma and injuries.

In South Sudan, relentless conflict and insecurity throughout the annual lean season pushed 6.1 million people into extreme hunger. Even with the advent of the rainy season, more than 43 per cent of the population remain food insecure. While the promise of a revitalized peace-agreement offers a glimmer of hope for children, reports of extreme violence against women and children continue, most recently in Bentiu, where more than 150 women and girls reported suffering horrific sexual assault.

In Somalia, more than 1,800 children were recruited by parties to the conflict in the first nine months of the year, with 1,278 children abducted.

In Syria, between January and September, the UN verified the killing of 870 children – the highest number ever in the first nine months of any year since the start of the conflict in 2011. Attacks continued throughout the year, including the killing of 30 children in the eastern village of Al Shafa in November.

In eastern Ukraine, more than four years of conflict have taken a devastating toll on the education system, destroying and damaging hundreds of schools and forcing 700,000 children to learn in fragile environments, amidst volatile fighting and the dangers posed by unexploded weapons of war. The situation is particularly severe for 400,000 children who live within 20km of the ‘contact line’, which divides the government and non-government-controlled areas and where shelling and extreme levels of mine-contamination pose a lethal threat.

And in Yemen, the UN has verified 1,427 children killed or maimed in attacks, including an ‘unconscionable’ attack on a school bus in Sa’ada. Schools and hospitals have come under frequent attack or been used for

military purposes, denying children access to their right to education and health care. This is further fueling a crisis in a country where every 10 minutes, a child dies due to preventable diseases, and 400,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

“2019 marks the 30th anniversary of the landmark Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, yet today, more countries are embroiled in internal or international conflict than at any other time in the past three decades. Children living through conflict are among the least likely to be guaranteed their rights. Attacks on children must end,” Fontaine said.

UNICEF calls on all warring parties to abide by their obligations under international law to immediately end violations against children and the targeting of civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and water infrastructure. UNICEF also calls on states with influence over parties to conflict to use that influence to protect children.

“Much more needs to be done to prevent wars, and to end the many disastrous armed conflicts devastating children’s lives. Yet even as wars continue, we must never accept attacks against children. We must hold warring parties to their obligation to protect children. Otherwise, it is children, their families and their communities who will continue to suffer the devastating consequences, for now, and for years to come,” Fontaine said.

Across all these countries, UNICEF works with partners to provide the most vulnerable children with health, nutrition, education and child protection services. For example, in October, UNICEF helped to secure the release of 833 children recruited into armed forces in northeast Nigeria, and are working these children to reintegrate them into their communities. Since conflict broke out in South Sudan five years ago, UNICEF has reunited almost 6,000 unaccompanied and separated children with their families. In Bangladesh, in 2018, UNICEF reached thousands of Rohingya refugee children with mental health and psychosocial support. In Iraq, UNICEF is working with partners to provide specialized services to women and children affected by gender-based violence.

Surgeon, Missionary Dr. Tom Catena Named Chair of Aurora Humanitarian Initiative

YEREVAN – The Co-Founders of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative have announced Dr. Tom Catena, an American physician and Catholic missionary from Amsterdam, NY has joined the organization as Chair.

The appointment was announced during the Aurora Dialogues in Berlin. Dr. Catena joins the organization during a period of significant growth and will be responsible for engaging key humanitarian stakeholders, working with global partners and overseeing Aurora’s educational and outreach projects, including the internationally recognized, Aurora Prize. Aurora was established three years ago, and has impacted the lives of displaced individuals, children in conflict zones, refugees, migrants and vulnerable citizens around the world. Since 2016, the Aurora Prize has awarded over \$3.3 million to unsung heroes and has supported 23 projects in 11 areas of humanitarian assistance globally. This year, the Aurora Prize supported over 375,000 Rohingya refugees. A further 62 students from conflict areas have been recipients of the Aurora Gratitude Scholarships program to study at United World Colleges around the world and the American University of Armenia.

In May 2017, Catena was named as the Aurora Prize Laureate for his courageous work in the Nuba Mountains. Since 2008, he has served more than half a million people as the sole surgeon at the Mother of Mercy Hospital, an institution he has been dedicated to since. He has been based in Sudan’s war-ravaged territory for the last decade where humanitarian aid is restricted. Known as “Dr Tom” by locals, he provides treatment for people suffering ailments and war wounds. He will continue his role as Medical Director at the hospital working with a team of doctors, sourced by the Catholic Medical Mission Board in cooperation with the African Mission Healthcare Foundation, to



work in the Nuba Mountains in parallel with his new responsibilities with the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.

According to a joint statement from the Co-Founders of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative: “We are delighted to welcome the first Chair of the organization. Dr. Tom Catena truly embodies the spirit of Aurora and will be a driving force in taking our global vision forward by helping to empower individuals to embrace our shared humanity and express gratitude to those making an impact. It is gratifying that the 2017 Aurora Prize Laureate is also the first chair of this organization.”

Catena said: “It is a true honor to chair the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative – I am grateful for the impact of the Aurora Prize on my life and the financial support provided to the Mother of Mercy Hospital that has helped transform

the lives of the Nuba people in Sudan. I believe in the simple yet powerful force of humanity in addressing today’s critical humanitarian challenges and will remain committed to elevating the Gratitude in Action philosophy in my new role by supporting Aurora’s work empowering those in desperate need to create their own futures.”

In 2015, Catena was recognized by Time Magazine as one of its “100 Most Influential People” in the world. He has been recognized with Honorary Doctorates from Brown University and Yerevan State Medical University. He also formerly served as a flight surgeon with the US Navy.

As part of the leadership team changes at Aurora, the Executive Board has also appointed Dr. Hayk Demoyan, former director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute as the Chief Operating Officer of the Initiative.



Armenian Assembly Honors Longtime Capital Region Council Co-Chairs

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America and its Capital Region Council hosted its Annual Holiday Reception last month at the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia. The standing room only event honored long-time Co-Chairs of its Capital Region Council, Clara Andonian and Doris George, for their decades of hard work, “In Appreciation of Extraordinary

Armenian Genocide. One of her highlights with the Armenian Assembly was being part of its 2004 Mission Trip to Armenia, led by Totah. As one of the pillars of the Armenian community in Washington, Andonian chaired the St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church Women’s Guild, sang in the choir, and taught Sunday School for six years. She is a member of the Ararat Avak Senior Society, as well as an active member of the Daughters of Vartan, where she served as Grand Matron on occasion.

In 1973, Doris George and her husband, Robert, joined the Armenian Assembly, and, over the years, the former served the organization in different capacities. Doris was a member of the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), served on the Board of the Armenian Rights Council of America, and was Chairwoman of the Daughters of Vartan. She also serves on the Board of the Armenian American Cultural Association.

After 20 years of working together, Andonian and George completed their terms as Co-Chairs of the Assembly Capital Region Council handing over the reins to the new incoming Co-Chairs Louisa Baghdasarian and Marguerite Satian.

Also at the Reception, Yeretskin Anahid Kalayjian was awarded the Armenian Assembly’s “Volunteer of the Year” for her efforts in supporting and recruiting new members for the organization.

Armenian National Institute (ANI) Director Dr. Rouben Adalian was the Master of

Ceremonies, and introduced the guest speakers for the evening, including the Republic of Armenia’s Embassy to the United States Deputy Chief of Mission, Ara Margarian, and Aram Bakshian, Jr., who spoke about “Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.”

The evening continued with a musical tribute to the late Charles Aznavour, with performances by Edita Kalayjian, who sang Armenian Waltz by Den Gharibian and Ave Maria by Charles Aznavour; she was accompanied by Christine Kharazian on violin and Duff Davis on acoustic guitar. Victoria Petrosyan sang Hayastan by Armen Smbatyan, accompanied by Naira Babayan. Her daughter, Karine

Mikayelyan, sang Charles Anzavours’ Pour Toi, Armenie in the Armenian translated version of Qez Hamar, Hayastan.

Following the musical performances, Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny briefed the audience on the Assembly’s activities and accomplishments this past year as well as the challenges ahead in the 116th Congress. He also highlighted the Assembly’s successful National Advocacy Conference and the need to continue our efforts to make our voices heard on Capitol Hill. Both Ardouny and Totah encouraged the audience to contact their Representatives, especially the incoming freshman Members, to educate them on the importance of strengthening US-Armenia and other key issues.



Yeretskin Anahid Kalayjian awarded Armenian Assembly’s “Volunteer of the Year by Board Member Annie Simonian Totah

Commitment and Unwavering Support.”

“We greatly appreciate the tireless dedication and commitment of Clara Andonian and Doris George – two wonderful individuals who have given generously of their time and talent to help the Armenian Assembly achieve its mission and goals. Clara and Doris are both one-of-a-kind members, and we are grateful for their support and leadership,” stated Assembly Board Member Annie Simonian Totah.

Andonian has been involved with the Armenian Assembly for over 42 years, serving in areas of advocacy for the affirmation of the



Armenian Assembly Board Member Annie Simonian Totah awarding Clara Andonian and Doris George awards “In Appreciation of Extraordinary Commitment and Unwavering Support”



Musical Performances by Duff Davis, Christine Kharazian, Karine Mikayelyan, Naira Babayan, Victoria Petrosyan, and Edita Kalayjian

Yazidi Women in Europe Resorting to Suicide To Cope with Alienation and Trauma

BERLIN – Increasing numbers of Yazidi women are committing suicide after moving to Europe from their war-torn homeland. Experts note that this is caused by a number of factors, including coping with war trauma while living in a foreign country and the alienation they feel from their previously tight-knit community.

The rate of suicide among Yazidi women has increased in recent years, particularly in Germany, according to Sabriye Sevgat, who works at the Yazidi Women’s Council in Germany.

“Suicides can occur in every age group of women and in every social group. There is no limitation. Suicides were more common among young people five years ago. Then it stopped. But it’s been happening again over the last year. Most of them are young women coming to Europe after the war. But there have been women who killed themselves here for many years,” Sevgat told Ahval.

“My body is here, but my soul is there. I miss it a lot. I am not too fond of the air here [in Germany]. I don’t like it here,” Mecbure DüNDAR, a Yazidi woman who has been residing in Germany since she was 13, said.

DüNDAR added she could never belong in Europe.

“There’s everything here except the spirit of the human brain. We belong there. I go to my hometown for the holidays. But there’s a life waiting for me here. I come back because I have to. When I come back, I come back crying.”

Sevgat stated that even though the Yazidi community in Germany dates back to the 1960s, the community’s traditional culture has continued to survive, causing a contradiction for Yazidi women. While Yazidi women in Europe look contemporary and strong on the outside, many have a different life at home.

“When you come home, you have another personality. You live in one country, but you live in another culture. Our society is not an open one. Some topics remain taboo. For example, pre-marital relations. If something happens [between a couple], then the family name becomes tarnished.”

According to DüNDAR, domestic violence is increasingly becoming a problem for Yazidi families in Europe in recent years due to a breakdown in community ties.

“There is sometimes violence in the family. In the past, our communication was better. However, this is not the case for the new generation. Everyone is in their own world and alone. They find themselves helpless. They don’t see respect and love. There is a coldness in relations between families. Therefore, suicides might occur. They do this because they feel alone. But we have to get in touch with and touch each other.”

A breakdown in Yazidi community relations in Europe has exacerbated living conditions among Yazidi women who immigrate to Europe from war-torn regions. The Yazidi community once occupied areas in Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq, however, have been largely displaced through attacks and the enslavement of Yazidis by the militant group Islamic State (IS).

In August 2014, the Islamic State attacked Mount Sinjar, kicking off an assault on the community that many estimate resulted in the deaths of between 2,000-5,000 Yazidis and the kidnapping of more than 7,000 Yazidi people. Of these, women and children were rounded up to be used as IS slaves.

Gül Güzel, who has taken part in several studies about Yazidi women held in IS captivity, points out that being sexually assaulted is enough for women to be excluded from the Yazidi community.

“They are excommunicated from their own community. Women are going through massive trauma. They are completely isolated here. They are here but their souls are there in their own land. Yazidi women don’t trust people who come from outside, and most of the things they’ve been through stay with them,” according to Güzel.

“The women kidnapped by IS were referred to as “contaminated.” We mounted a massive resistance for Yazidi women during the massacres. We revolted against this word. Most of the Yazidi women said “if those women have been contaminated, then we have been, too.” Men didn’t put up a fight in the face of this female resistance.”

One major reason for the isolation felt by Yazidi women, is that women who have been enslaved and assaulted by IS are seen as being “defiled,” Sevgat noted.

Sociologist Fle Jiyen noted that the Yazidi women who come to Europe are unable to both simultaneously overcome this trauma and adapt to this new lifestyle in Europe, which is what has led to the recent uptick in suicides.

“This captivity completely changes their lives. When they get to Europe, a new life begins. It’s better for them to go back to their old lives for their recovery. I think that the suicides are not because of their old lives but because they’ve started new ones. If they stay close to home, then they’ll recover more quickly. But they don’t go back there but to Europe for a new life here. They need to get used to a new life in Europe. They can get used to a new life, but they can’t survive their trauma here,” Jiyen stressed.

Sevgat agreed that Yazidi women cannot process the trauma they experienced at the hands of IS.

“Many women suffered severe torture. Their children were killed in front of them. Many women who come here don’t accept psychological support. They live with everything they’ve been through. This is a heavy burden. In this case, this is an important cause that triggers suicides,” Sevgat explained.

(This analysis originally appeared in Ahval.)