

THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Volume LXXXIX, NO. 35, Issue 4579

\$ 2.00

The First English Language Armenian Weekly in the United States Since 1932



The funeral of Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II

Istanbul Bids Final Farewell to Mesrob II

ISTANBUL (Public Radio of Armenia) – Archbishop Mesrob II Mutafyan, the 84th Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, was laid to rest on Sunday, March 17, as many political and religious figures and Armenian nationals from overseas bid their final farewells to him, *Hurriyet Daily News* reported.

The archbishop's coffin was rested on a catafalque for mourning visitors to pay him their respects after the prayers and was

referred to the Sisli Armenian cemetery in an area designated for patriarchs for burial.

Many senior officials from ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) including the party's spokesperson Omer Celik and its Istanbul mayoral candidate Binali Yildirim, along with the presidential spokesperson Ibrahim Kalin attended the funeral service.

Mutafyan died at age 62 in the Surp Pargic Armenian Hospital in Istanbul's

Zeytinburnu district on March 8 where he was receiving treatment.

He had been incapacitated since 2008 with an early onset of dementia.

Preparations for the election of a new patriarch for Turkey are expected to begin after a 40-day mourning period.

In Defense of Christians (IDC), a leading advocacy organization for Christians and religious minorities in the Middle East, see FAREWELL, page 4

Eminent Byzantinist Dr. Speros Vryonis, Jr., Supporter of Armenian Studies, Dies

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Eminent Byzantinist and historian Dr. Speros Vryonis, Jr. passed away on March 11 peacefully in his sleep at the age of 90.

Vryonis wrote extensively on Byzantine, Balkan and Greek history. Secondly, he contributed to the advancement of Armenology through his research in Byzantine history, his unwavering stand against shoddy scholarship and the distortion of history, and his personal participation in the institutional development of Armenian studies.

Incongruously, or at least unexpectedly, combining a Southern twang and courtesy with ancient Greek aphorisms, Vryonis was see VRYONIS, page 8



Dr. Speros Vryonis, Jr



Ara Khatchadourian Tackles Mountains, Life and Obstacles

LOS ANGELES – Ara Khatchadourian, a renowned French-Armenian adventurer, extreme sport athlete and mountaineer who climbed the highest mountain in the world, now has his eyes set on a new challenge as he continues to conquer his "next Everest."

By Michael Melkonian
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Climbing Mount Everest has not been his only physical achievement.

In 2018, he ran a tri-continent marathon from Marseille to Yerevan. Khatchadourian covered 11 countries, 500 towns, and 2,685 miles in an astonishing time span of 105 days. He ran an incredible 26 miles a day without stopping for a day break. So remarkable was this achievement that he was greeted by crowds of people in Yerevan, and most notably was commended in person by the president of France, Emmanuel Macron.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1964 to Armenian parents from Erzurum, he grew up in a community that welcomed his Armenian roots. Unfortunately, after see CLIMBER, page 4

NEWS IN BRIEF

Guns Used by New Zealand Terrorist Had Armenian, Georgian Writing

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia's Foreign Ministry was in contact with the authorities of New Zealand regarding the note in Armenian and other languages found on one of the weapons used for the attack on the two mosques in the city of Christchurch, on Friday, March 15, MFA spokesperson Anna Naghdalyan noted.

"We are in contact with New Zealand's relevant authorities on all issues linked with the incident," Naghdalyan said.

Brenton Tarrant, a 28-year-old Australian, was charged with the deadly attacks on two mosques in the city, which killed 50 and injured as many.

One of the weapons used for the attack on the two mosques in New Zealand was covered with notes in different languages, including Armenian and Georgian, the videos released from the incident show.

The Georgian state security service has already reacted to these reports, stating that it is cooperating with its partners.

The gun covered in white lettering featured the names of King Davit Agmashenebeli and Prince David Soslan, the second husband of Queen Tamar, in Georgian, the Battle of Kagul 1770 (Russian-Turkish war) and the Battle of Bulair 1913 were written in Russian.

The Battle of Sarikamish (one of the biggest military clashes between the Russian and Ottoman empires during World War I) is written in Armenian on the gun.

New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern described the shootings as a terrorist attack.

Memorial to Victims of Armenian, Assyrian Genocides to Be Erected in Sweden

VASTERAS, Sweden (Panorama.am) – A monument dedicated to the memory of the victims of Armenian and Assyrian Genocides by the Ottoman Empire will be erected in Vasteras, in central Sweden, Ermenihaber reported.

Originally a suggestion had been submitted by the Christian-Democratic party for the memorial but the issue had been delayed by the local mayor's office, which had referred to a ban on the City council's adopting decisions on foreign policy matters.

To address the matter, the factions at the city council gave a press conference noting that the monument should be placed on private property because of constitutional restrictions.

A local church was among the first to respond to the initiative and suggested its land for the monument.

INSIDE

AIWA's New Director

Page 6

INDEX

Arts and Living	11
Armenia	2,3
Community News.	6
Editorial	17
International	4,5



ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Mekhitarist Delegation Meets with Armenian President, Presents Book

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian on March 15 hosted Archimandrite of the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice Father Vahan Ohanyan and Australian-Armenian figure Ara Ketipyan, the Presidential Office reported.

The guests were informed that the congregation launched the publication of a 10-volume English edition relating to the American media reports in the preceding and following years of the Armenian Genocide, which will include six leading US newspapers – the *New York Times*, the *Boston Daily Globe*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post*.

They gifted the two-volume book, titled *The Armenian Genocide: Prelude and Aftermath*. As reported in the U.S. Press to the president. The authors stated that the books are for the specialists and researchers of the field, and are available in libraries and universities.

Armenian Figure Skaters Head to Japan for World Championships

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – The Armenian team of figure skaters have left for Japan to take part in the 2019 ISU World Figure Skating Championships to open on Wednesday, March 20, in Saitama, Japan. As the National Olympic Committee reported, Armenia will be represented by Slavik Hayrapetyan and Anastasia Galustyan.

Galustyan was scheduled to perform a short program on March 20, while Hayrapetyan was to perform on March 21.

The Armenian team was accompanied by the President of the Figure Skating Federation of Armenia Melanya Stepanyan and Deputy President Ari Zakaryan.

Swedish Official to Visit Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson was to visit Armenia on March 21-22, swedenabroad.se reports.

Ahead of the minister's visit the Swedish government announced that it intends to expand its financial support to Armenia in response to the strong political will to undertake necessary reforms, following the velvet revolution of 2018.

"An active democratization process has started in Armenia after the Velvet Revolution in 2018. We see a strong political will to undertake necessary reforms and to strengthen democracy, freedom of expression and other fundamental rights and freedoms", the Swedish minister said.

The opening of a bilateral program for Sweden's development cooperation with Armenia will mean increased funding for projects in Armenia and make the Swedish support to Armenia more targeted.

Armenian Chess Player Wins Individual Bronze At FIDE Tournament

ASTANA, Kazakhstan (Panorama.am) – Individual medals were awarded on Friday, March 15, at the FIDE World Team Championship, which had concluded the day before. As the Chess Federation of Armenia reports, a member of the Armenian women's team, Lilit Mktchyan, won the bronze individual medal.

The Armenian team took 8th place at the Championship. The team won against Egypt, drew with Hungary and Georgia and lost to Russia, China, Kazakhstan, India, the US and Ukraine.

China won the championship scoring maximum 18 points out of 18 possible. Russia came the second with 14 points and Georgia - the third with 13 points.



President Sarkissian Hosts Chess Great Levon Aronian

YEREVAN – President Armen Sarkissian hosted on March 19 Armenia's leading chess player, three-time World Chess Olympiad winner Levon Aronian. Aronian told Sarkissian about his forthcoming plans and tournaments and noted that the year is pretty eventful. Sarkissian wished him every success and said, "Each victory [by you] presents unforgettable moments of pride to our people."

Café Owners, Employees Protest Dismantling Order

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Owners and employees of several cafés in Yerevan are protesting the decision of the city authorities to dismantle the property located in the vicinity of the Opera House that the municipality believes should be free from commercial facilities.

The dismantling began on March 13 – four weeks after the Yerevan Mayor's Office formally notified the café owners that they should vacate the premises and leave the area.

The demolition work with the use of heavy equipment continued in the area adjacent to Freedom (Opera) Square on Thursday.

A number of employees of the cafés briefly blocked traffic in one of Yerevan's central streets on March 14 as a sign of protest against the actions of the city authorities. "It is inhumane to deprive people of their daily earnings," said one angry woman who participated in the picket.

Police put a cordon to keep the protesters off the road. Meanwhile, some of the disgruntled café workers demanded a meeting with Mayor Hayk Marutyan.

Marutyan, who became mayor after his political team backed by popular Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan polled over 80 percent in municipal elections last fall, insists that the green zone around the Opera House, one of the landmark buildings in central Yerevan, should not be overburdened with commercial property.

Still late last year the mayor made public a plan to gradually free the area from cafés. City authorities believe that the cafés can be located elsewhere in the city and thus their business will not be affected.

"Today we fulfill our dream of many years as we free the area surrounding the Opera House [from commercial property] and bring back the atmos-

phere of the cultural hearth," Marutyan said in a Facebook post on Thursday.

The mayor vowed continuous efforts in "recovering Yerevan's cultural features" and thanked the city's residents for "being next to the authorities in this matter." "We feel your support," Marutyan wrote.

Still, the café owners believe the decision to dismantle their property is wrong and unlawful.

"We have a lease contract with the state until 2026... How can we run a business in this country from now on? How can we trust them?" a manager

part of Yerevan's identity. We do understand all this. But this area, which is directly adjacent to the Opera House, must be kept free from cafés. We even want to improve entire Theater Square," said Mnatsakanyan.

The official stressed that the cafés that are being dismantled now were built without proper documentation and are therefore illegal structures.

Opposition Prosperous Armenia Party lawmakers Naira Zohrabyan and Arman Abovyan arrived at the scene of the dismantling work in the afternoon after what they described as alerts about violence being used



Cafes being dismantled in Opera Square

of the Shokoladnitsa café said.

"Perhaps when the next authorities come some new people will build cafés here again. Who will guarantee that no one will do something else here?" he added.

The café owners also said that currently they employ dozens of workers and their continued operation also has social importance.

Prefect of Yerevan's Kentron administrative district Viktor Mnatsakanyan, who met with the café owners and employees on Wednesday, later said that there are locations in the city like the Opera House that "must be kept sacred."

"For many years cafés have become

against the protesters.

The two lawmakers urged the authorities to exclude violence and engage in dialogue with the café owners.

Meanwhile, the police reported that 16 protesters had been detained for "not complying with police officers' lawful demands." They were released later on.

At least one protester and one police officer were hurt in the standoff and were briefly hospitalized to be treated for their injuries.

The standoff between protesters and police officers continued in the afternoon, with the dismantling activities halted.



ARMENIA

Foreign Minister Praises Women as 'Agents for Change, Peace'

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Foreign minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan delivered remarks at a panel discussion titled “Women, Peace and Security: International and Armenian Practice” on March 15.

During the address, on the final day of NATO week in Armenia, he welcomed Clare Hutchinson, NATO’s Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and thanked her for the participation in this discussion.

“In recent years, we have successfully continued our mutually beneficial partnership with NATO. Today we have a solid agenda of cooperation with the Alliance – the main vehicle of it being Armenia-NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) – including the fulfillment of commitments on implementation of the UNSCR 1325,” he said.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security, was adopted unanimously by the UN Security Council on October 31, 2000. The resolution acknowledged the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

He added, “It is our firm conviction that women are strong agents of change for peace and security and that peace and security efforts are more sustainable when women are equal



Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan at the panel discussion on the role of women in peace.

partners in the prevention of violent conflicts, the delivery of relief and recovery efforts, as well as in contributing to the lasting and

endurable settlements.

“Thus, ensuring their solid participation in the resolution of conflicts is not merely an exercise

of gender equality, it is an instrument enhancing the chances of peace and development.”

He added that the recently inaugurated “Women for Peace” campaign, which aims to be an inclusive platform for women and mothers to promote peace and reconciliation in the conflict torn areas is an illustrative example of the participation of women in the peace building efforts.

In February of this year, he said, the Armenian government approved the first National Action Plan on implementation of the measure, making it the 80th UN member state to do so.

“We need to take innovative, gender-sensitive approaches, with a view to address root causes and risk factors that hamper the participation of women and create conditions that put an effective end to such malpractices. This discussion is indeed very timely for the Armenian public allowing once again to focus on the important link between the empowerment of women and the sustainability of peace and development, both at national, regional and international levels. And this is an ongoing challenge for all of us, in this country and in this region. That is why I want to renew my appeal to collective, responsible and resolute action on advancing this agenda on Women, Peace and Security,” Mnatsaknyan concluded.

Armenia Will ‘Attentively’ Listen to Azerbaijan’s ‘Counterarguments’

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia’s proposal for Nagorno-Karabakh’s full engagement in negotiations with Azerbaijan is no challenge, but an invitation to dialogue, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said on Tuesday, March 19, stressing that Yerevan is ready to listen attentively to Baku’s counterarguments.

At a press conference in Yerevan, Pashinyan repeated what he already told senior Armenian and Karabakh security aides in Stepanakert a week ago, that Nagorno-Karabakh’s becoming a full party to the peace talks “is not a whim or a precondition” on the part of Armenia, but a necessity for an effective settlement process.

Azerbaijan has opposed Nagorno-Karabakh’s participation in the talks as a separate party, insisting that the region is “occupied” by Armenia and negotiations should be held only directly with official Yerevan.

Last week, Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev rejected the latest Armenian proposal on the change in the format of the talks by way of involving Nagorno-Karabakh as a party to the process.

“It is unacceptable, and it is an attempt to block the negotiations process,” Aliyev said at a forum in Baku on March 14, again calling on Armenia to withdraw its forces from the region.

Pashinyan today insisted that his statements on the need for Stepanakert’s engagement in the talks that he has repeatedly made since being first elected prime minister in May 2018 “are not a challenge, but an invitation to dialogue.” He further argued that he had already raised the issue during his informal meetings with Aliyev on the sidelines of different international events during the past months.

Earlier this month the American, Russian and French co-chairs of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, an international format set up to mediate a solution to the conflict, announced that Pashinyan and Aliyev had agreed to have their first formal talks soon under the umbrella of the international mediators.

No date and venue of such possible talks have been announced yet.

Ahead of his possible talks with the Azerbaijani president Pashinyan said: “We will continue discussions on this subject with our partners and will try to continue this discussion in the field of arguments, because negotiations are negotiations only when we listen to each other. At least Armenia has shown its ability to listen to its opponent, try to understand the

other side, and we expect the same from them. Where our partners consider that our position can be viewed as excessively tough, we can soften this position, but we would expect the same from our partners, because otherwise no conversation will take place.”

The Armenian leader said that “we do not imagine a regime when one of the parties to the talks says that it refuses to have a dialogue.”

“It will not be a logical approach. Naturally, we will not refuse to have a dialogue and during this dialogue we will put on the table our arguments and will attentively listen to the counterarguments of our partners. I think that a constructive and effective solution or continuation should be within the framework of this logic,” Pashinyan said.

Asked whether a possible exchange of prisoners between Armenia and Azerbaijan could be discussed at his upcoming meeting with Aliyev, Pashinyan said: “The Armenian side is ready to exchange Azerbaijani citizens who strayed into Armenian territory with Armenians who strayed into Azerbaijani territory.”

The Armenian leader stressed, however, that such an exchange cannot concern Azerbaijanis who penetrated into Armenian or Karabakh territory and committed murders.

Armenia and Russia Discuss Modernization of Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant

YEREVAN (Arka) – On March 12 a joint Armenian-Russian commission set up to modernize and extend the service life of the second power unit of the Armenian nuclear power plant in Metsamor met.

The agenda of the meeting included a set of issues such as the action plan for 2019 and the program of activities until 2021, the operating conditions of the 2nd unit of the facility after the scheduled preventive maintenance, as well as the extension of the intergovernmental agreement on cooperation between Russia and Armenia on this project.

The parties also considered the issue of preparing a pilot project for the removal and reprocessing of a batch of the spent nuclear fuel.

The Russian delegation was headed by Kirill Komarov, First Deputy CEO of Rosatom State Corporation. The Armenian delegation by Garegin Baghramyan, Armenia’ First Deputy Minister of Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resources.

Metsamor is located about 30 kilometers west of Yerevan. It was built in the 1970s but was closed following a devastating earthquake in 1988. One of its two VVER 440-V230 light-water reactors was reactivated in 1995.

In March 2014, Armenian government decided to extend the plant’s service life up to 2026 because of delay in building a new unit. The service life extension has become possible thanks to Russia’s financial resources. The country provided \$270 million to Armenia as a loan and \$30 million as a grant. The Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom is a global technological leader. It is handling the project designed to extend the service life of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP. Rosatom also supplies fuel for the nuclear power plant and implements joint projects in the fields of healthcare, education and training of specialists for the Armenian nuclear power industry.

Protestors Ask for Release of Detained Iranian Lawyer

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – A number of human rights activists in Armenia have joined the open letter of Amnesty International calling on the Iranian authorities to release Iranian human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh.

On Tuesday, March 19, they held a silent protest in front of the Iranian embassy in Yerevan.

Sotoudeh, the co-winner of the European Parliament’s 2012 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, last year represented several of the women detained for removing their head scarves in public to protest against the country’s Islamic dress code.

She has reportedly been sentenced to a total of 38 years in prison and 148 lashes after what Amnesty International called two “grossly unfair” trials.

The 55-year-old activist was arrested in June and ordered to serve a five-year sentence imposed on her in absentia in 2016.

And in February, the Iranian authorities allowed Sotoudeh to read the verdict in her most recent court case, which showed that she had been convicted of seven charges and sentenced to an additional 33 years in prison and 148 lashes, London-based Amnesty International said on March 14.

Armenian human rights activist Arman Gharibian said he did not know whether the



A small protest outside the Iranian Embassy in Yerevan

Yerevan protest could change anything. “But one thing is clear: we cannot remain indifferent when this kind of repression against a human rights activist takes place in the neighboring country,” he said.

Iranian-Armenian Vardges Gaspari, who is a prominent activist in Armenia, said he was raising his voice to “encourage the jailed activist moral-

ly.” “So that she can feel that she is not forgotten, that there are people, even if few, who are concerned about her fate,” the activist added.

The protesters in Yerevan tried to hand over a letter, stating their protest, to the Iranian embassy staff, but no one came out to take it. Eventually, they had to put the letter into the mailbox placed at the entrance to the embassy.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Genocide Museum to Open in Buenos Aires

BUENOS AIRES (Estacao Armenia) – Buenos Aires has given a green light to the construction of an Armenian Genocide museum in the city.

The Buenos Aires legislature voted 54 to 2 last week to approve at second reading a bill that enables the Memory Foundation of the Armenian Genocide to build a Museum of Armenian Memory, History and Culture.

The property is located on Gurruchaga Street, close to most of the institutions of the Armenian community that are located in the neighborhood of Palermo.

The foundation received the building for a period of 30 years with the permission to make renovations.

The museum will include “the contribution of the Armenians to the social construction of Argentina. Thus, an archive of the history of the Armenian presence in Argentina will also be created.”

A library and archive of Armenian genocide is also expected to be created.

Argentina was one of the first countries to recognize the Armenian Genocide. In September 1987, Raúl Alfonsín (president of Argentina from 1983 to 1989) described the massacre of a million and a half Armenians at the hands of the Turks between 1915 and 1923 as genocide.

President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev Resigns

ASTANA, Kazakhstan (Panorama.am) – Nursultan Nazarbayev, the president of Kazakhstan, said on Tuesday, March 19, that he was resigning as the Central Asian nation’s leader after three decades in power, Reuters reported.

“I have made the decision to end my tenure as president,” 78-year-old Nazarbayev said in his televised address.

The speaker of the country’s senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev will fill the office of the president until a new president is elected.

Nazarbayev had been the leader of Kazakhstan since 1990.

German Parliamentarian On Baku Payroll Fined

BERLIN (Armenpress) – Member of Parliament Karin Strenz from Germany’s ruling Christian-Democratic Union Party has been fined 20,000 Euros by the Bundestag for keeping secret that she received money from Azerbaijan through a lobbying firm for years, Deutsche Welle reports.

The German Bundestag made the decision on March 14.

The MP’s name was also mentioned in the 2018 April report of independent experts on receiving bribes for lobbying Baku’s interests in Europe. The report says that former Bundestag MP Eduard Lintner has hired Strenz at Line M-Trade consulting company owned by him and funded by Baku.

Strenz was included in the observer mission for observing the elections in Azerbaijan in 2015. But due to the discoveries, she was not included in the German delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in early 2018.

Azerbaijani Ambassador To UAE Steals Caviar Intended for Abu Dhabi

BAKU (Panorama.am) – Azerbaijan’s Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Dashgin Shikarov has reportedly appropriated 10 jars of caviar intended as a gift from the Azerbaijani government to Ruler of Abu Dhabi Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

In addition, a special commission has been set up at the Azerbaijani Embassy in Abu Dhabi to probe the disappearance of half a million dollars, suspected to have been seized, Azerbaijan media reported.

Shikarov is a highly experienced diplomat. Previously, he headed the diplomatic missions of Azerbaijan in Pakistan and Afghanistan. He began serving as Azerbaijani ambassador to the UAE in January 2016.

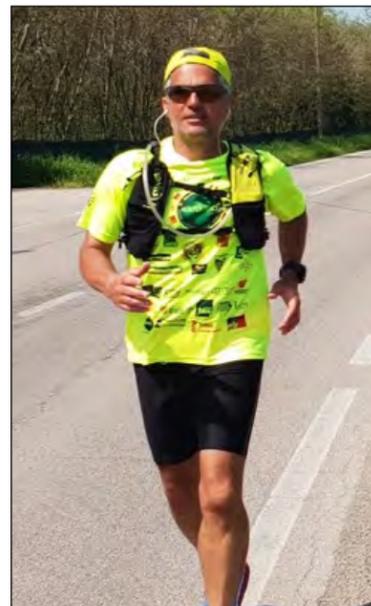
Ara Khatchadourian Tackles Mountains, Life and Obstacles

CLIMBER, from page 1

finally finding his place in Lebanon as a jeweler, he was forced to leave at age 19 for Marseille due to the escalating Lebanese Civil War.

In France, with almost no money and no knowledge of the French language, Khatchadourian worked 16 hours a day, seven days a week in order to keep his head above water. Khatchadourian did find solace in Marseille however, as it was home to a large Armenian community and the weather and its surroundings reminded him of his former home in Beirut. It was here that Khatchadourian became more connected to his Armenian roots as he learned Armenian songs and dance from the community there. He also developed his artistry in jewelry, making that his passion and profession.

Khatchadourian made many friends in his new adopted city, and some were very adventurous. When one new friend heard that he had taken up running and completed his first marathon just a few years back at the age of 40, he told Khatchadourian about his upcoming expedition to climb Mont Blanc, the tallest mountain in Europe west of Russia’s Caucasus peaks, and invited him to join



Ara Khatchadourian running in Armenia

them. Mont Blanc, in Switzerland, is infamous as climbing fatalities reach nearly 100 per year, with the overall number estimated to be from 6,000 to 8,000, making it the deadliest mountain in the world.

Khatchadourian, a man with no mountaineering experience, but in great physical condition due to his marathon running, took up his offer and embraced the challenge to explore a new horizon. He was taught by a mountaineering expert over three days on how to rock climb, including the basics such as using an ice axe and putting on crampons. After three days of developing the proper skills. Khatchadourian, his friend, and his teacher set out to climb Mont Blanc. After a long and arduous climb, Khatchadourian and his companions reached the peak at 6:30 a.m. and witnessed a breathtakingly beautiful sunrise view. This site inspired Khatchadourian

to climb even more mountains, and when he scaled Mt. Ararat before long, he described it as being the “most beautiful and greatest climb I have been a part of.” Khatchadourian then ascended Mt. Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa at 19,341ft.

Next, he set a very personal goal, to climb Mt. Everest, the tallest mountain in the world, and he wanted to climb it in 2015 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. To physically and mentally prepare for this grueling undertaking, Khatchadourian trained rigorously and climbed mountains around the world, especially those with high elevations throughout South America and Central Asia. In spring 2015, Khatchadourian headed off to Everest to begin the ascent with his crew of fellow mountaineers and sherpas. Khatchadourian and his team set out to conquer Everest from its north face due to its greater challenge, a route that is traditionally harder than its southern counterpart, as it has high-altitude base camps, technical climbing, and stronger winds. The Everest climb also included crossing massive crevices on small ladders, with only pieces of rope protecting climbers from falling 10,000 feet into certain death.

“The trick is not to get scared,” Khatchadourian said. “When you get scared you stop, and especially when crossing crevices, such stoppage could be deadly.”

By far the most treacherous part of the climb for mountaineers is when they reach the “death zone,” with an altitude above 25,000 feet. This term was coined by Everest climbers due to its extreme elevation and the knowledge that a person cannot acclimatize to that altitude; humans can only take in 30 percent of the oxygen in the air that they would take at sea level. Most of the deaths on Everest happen in this zone, with almost all the dead bodies remaining on the mountain, as it would require a herculean effort to remove them at that altitude. This provides a grisly reminder to mountaineers on how treacherous the climb truly is and makes some climbers even want to turn back. When asked how he felt seeing bodies lying along the trail as he got closer to the summit, Khatchadourian gave an encouraging response.

“To see the bodies line the trail like that gave me even more motivation to reach the summit, as I was not just doing this for myself and my people, but also for my fellow mountaineers who never made it,” he said.

The “death zone” is also known for its extreme, unbearable cold, causing frostbite to many including Khatchadourian who later lost the tops of his two big toes to it. At this sector, Khatchadourian and his peers made a mad dash to the summit, as time was of the essence. It took Khatchadourian 12 straight hours of strenuous climbing without rest to get from 27,230 feet to the summit at 29,029 feet. He and his team finally reached the summit at midday. Years of preparation and training, mind and body discipline,

and hard work led to this moment for Khatchadourian, as he now stood literally at the top of the world at the age of 51. This was symbolic for Khatchadourian as well, as he pondered coming from the bottom of society as a poor refugee from a war-torn country to now achieving a triumph which only about 4,000 people in the entire world have accomplished.

“I tell the children I talk to that if they don’t do such achievements for them-



Ara Khatchadourian with Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I

selves, [they should] do it for their family, if not them then your friends, and if not for friends and family, do it for your country,” Khatchadourian said. “For me, I do such adventures and achievements for all three of those groups.”

Khatchadourian and his team remained on the summit for 30 minutes, taking photos and enjoying the magnificent view they all worked so hard to witness.

The journey, in total, took 41 days to get from base camp to the summit, with many of those days being spent to acclimatize to the higher altitudes.

Khatchadourian is currently training and planning to tackle another challenge, to row a boat from Marseille to Beirut. This challenge would require him to undertake 1,903 nautical miles through the middle of the Mediterranean Sea.

Khatchadourian is also a motivational speaker in schools across France, Lebanon and Armenia, inspiring young people to conquer what they think is the unconquerable.

“I always tell people, everyone has their own Everest,” Khatchadourian said. “It could be summiting the tallest mountain in the world or getting the job you always wanted. It will take hard work and perseverance to conquer such things, but it is the greatest feeling in the world when you succeed and reach the summit of greatness. So I ask them, what is your Everest?”

To see a video on YouTube of some his climbs, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omSn3kQm2UU>

Istanbul Bids Final Farewell to Mesrob II

FAREWELL, from page 1

issued a plea to the Turkish Government not to interfere with the election of Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople.

IDC said in a statement it mourns the passing of Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II in Istanbul, Turkey.

“The Turkish government has historically interfered in the election process of the Armenian Patriarchate and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople,” the IDC said.

“IDC is committed to full equality for Christians and Churches in the Middle East. Churches should be able to select their own leaders without state interference,” said IDC President Toufic Baaklini.

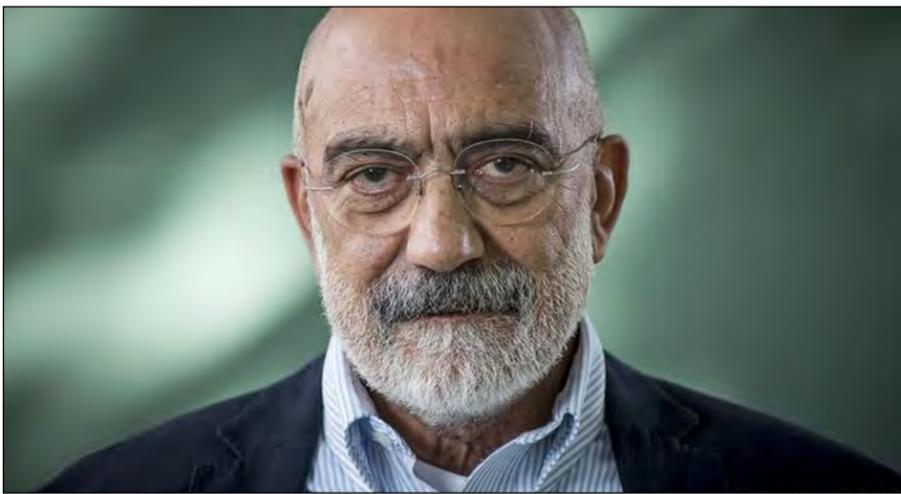


INTERNATIONAL

Jailed Turkish Novelist, Journalist Ahmet Altan Releases *I Will Never See the World Again*

By Simon Callow

LONDON (*Guardian*) – To review certain books seems like an impertinence. This is one of them. It speaks for itself with such clarity, certainty and wisdom that only one thing needs to be said: read it. And then read it again. It is a short book, divided into brief chapters, some no longer than two pages, each recounting some incident from the author's prison experience. It is wonderfully distilled, but not sententious; even in extremis, Altan never loses the limpidity and translucence, vivid with the vividness of dreams, which is characteristic of his other writing – as far as one can judge from the only other books of his available in English translation, *Like a*



Ahmet Altan

Sword Wound, the superb first volume of his *Ottoman Quartet*; and *Endgame*, a phantasmagorical crime story. Even the latter has, at the heart of all the violence, a dreamy, wide-eyed quality that seems to be quintessential Altan. To judge by *I Will Never See the World Again*, it has been and will be his salvation.

His arrest was no surprise to him. He was in the frontline. As the author of "Atakurd," a much-read piece in *Milliyet* newspaper arguing for equal status for Kurds, he had, as early as 1995, received a suspended 20-month sentence, and been fined \$12,000. In 2007, he founded and edited the satirical newspaper *Taraf*, in which, a year later, he wrote a piece called "Oh My Brother." For this, he was charged under the draconian Article 301 of the Turkish penal code that criminalizes "denigrating Turkishness," though not, at that

time, imprisoned. Knowing how exposed his position was, he habitually carried a gun.

Dissidence is the Altan family business: Ahmet's father Çetin, a polemical journalist, novelist, editor and MP, had been apprehended nearly half a century before by an earlier repressive regime. When the police came to get him, Altan senior offered them tea; they refused it. "It's not a bribe," he remarked, pleasantly. "You can drink some." The joke didn't go down very well. Four and a half decades later, Ahmet repeated it to the policemen who came for him; they were equally unamused. To be making jokes at all in the circumstances reveals an almost inconceivable sangfroid. He knew that there was no chance whatever of a fair trial; the sentence was a foregone conclusion.

In the car that took him to prison, the guard

offered him a cigarette. "I only smoke when I am nervous," replied Altan. He had, he said, no idea where the words came from. But they changed his life. "There are certain actions and words that are demanded by the events, the dangers and the realities that surround you. Once you refuse to play this assigned role, instead doing and saying the unexpected, reality itself is taken aback; it hits against the rebellious jetties of your mind and breaks into pieces." This insight – "Reality could not conquer me. I conquered reality" – gave him the strength to face what followed. He saw that this capacity was an extension of his trade as a novelist: creating an alternative reality. *I Will Never See the World Again* is as much about writing as it is about prison, but above all it is about freedom, a freedom epitomized by the exercise of the imagination.

His liberty and independence of thought were

not effortlessly maintained: whatever your inner fortitude, prison, by its very nature, is crippling. "In a matter of 5 hours I had travelled across five centuries to arrive at the dungeons of the Inquisition." The sensory deprivation was immediately disorienting: like Oscar Wilde, he discovered that time ceases to mean anything. "The air and the light in our cage never changed. Each minute was the same as the last. It was as if a tributary of the river of time had hit a dam and formed a lake. We sat at the bottom of that motionless pool."

Taken to court, the disorientation continued. The judges were out of Kafka, but as in Kafka, not savage or brutal, but erratic, bewildering, surreal. He found that he had been arrested not, as originally stated, for sending "subliminal messages" in support of the attempted coup, but for having participated in it. Challenged as to the change of charge, the judge, remarked, airily: "Our prosecutors like using words the meanings of which they don't know."

He was released and returned home; later that evening, a new warrant is issued and he is back in prison, put into a cell marked Ladies' Infirmary. He launches an appeal, based on the Supreme Court's rejection of his conviction: as he waits for the verdict, he tries to dismiss "the pale flickering dreams fed by hope" that "stir shyly in the shadowy folds of my mind". He begins to realize as he waits that he is living out the very scene that he wrote years earlier in his novel *Like a Sword Wound*, where a character also waits for a verdict. "Years ago as I was wandering in that unmarked, enigmatic and hazy territory where literature meets life. I had met my own destiny but failed to recognize it; I wrote thinking it belonged to someone else. I feel I am being dragged into a vertiginous, wuthering vortex in which novel and life are entangled, where what is real and what is written imitate one another and change places, each disguised as the other."

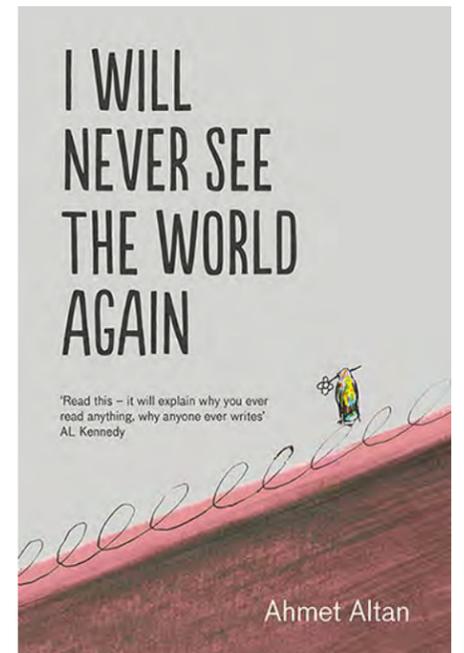
The verdict is handed down: life, without parole.

As he writes, "I will never see the world again; I will never see a sky unframed by the walls of a courtyard. I am descending to Hades. I walk into the darkness like a god who writes his own destiny. My hero and I disappear into the darkness together."

But in time, his imagination saves him:

"Like Odysseus, I will act with heroism and cowardice, with honesty and craftiness. I will know defeat and victory, my adventure will end only in death ... a ship stands in the middle of the cell; its timbers are creaking. On its deck is a conflicted Odysseus."

In a heart-stopping moment, he thinks to



• *I Will Never See the World Again*, translated by Yasemin Çongar, is published by Granta (£9.99). To order a copy go to guardianbookshop.com.

himself:

"What a beautiful scene to describe. I reach for a pen with a hand that is white in the ghostly light. I can write even in the dark. I take the ship cracking in the storm in the palm of my hands and begin writing. The prison door shut behind me."

The book is put together from papers found among notes Altan gave to his lawyers, and translated – superbly – into English by his friend Yasemin Çongar, *I Will Never See the World Again* is deeply satisfying in form. It is not *Midnight Express*; it is not *From the House of the Dead*, and it is not *De Profundis*. In a sense, it eclipses all of these. It is a radiant celebration of the inner resources of human beings, above all those triggered by the imagination. Its account of the creative process is sublime, among the most perfectly expressed analyses of that perpetually elusive phenomenon. And it is a triumph of the spirit. "You can imprison me but you cannot keep me here. Because, like all writers, I have magic," Altan says in his final phrases. "I can pass through your walls with ease." Yes: but enough is enough. He is still in prison. Eighty Nobel prize-winners have protested, unsuccessfully. We must move heaven and earth to spring him.

Businessman, Philanthropist Osman Kavala Indicted on Government Overthrow Charges

ISTANBUL (*Arabnews.com*) – Turkish activists behind mass 2013 anti-government protests on Monday, March 4, rejected as "irrational" and "illegal" an indictment against prominent Turkish businessman Osman Kavala on charges he sought to overthrow the state.

Kavala, in pre-trial detention since 2017, is accused of ties to the protests which erupted over development plans for an Istanbul park and grew into a major challenge to Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who was premier at the time and is now president.

Turkish prosecutors are demanding life imprisonment for Kavala and 15 others on charges of attempting to topple the government. Erdogan accuses the philanthropist of financing "the terrorists."

"This irrational and unlawful bill of indictment must be withdrawn immediately," Mucella Yapici, spokeswoman for the Taksim Solidarity activist group, told a press conference in Istanbul.

She said the suspects "must be released immediately."

Western governments accuse Erdogan's government of eroding rights especially since a 2016 failed coup and the mass arrests and purge of tens of thousands of people from the public sector that followed.

The so-called Gezi Park rallies constituted the

biggest challenge against Erdogan's government, and snowballed into nationwide protests against the country's rulers.

The police response drew criticism from Turkey's Western allies.

In 2015, a Turkish court acquitted 26 defendants on trial for their involvement in the Gezi protests – most of them were members of the Taksim Solidarity Platform.

"We reject your futile efforts to smear Gezi!" said Yapici. "Gezi is this land's hope for equality, freedom and justice."

"We will never allow you to recast the Gezi resistance as an action associated with crime, terror, coups or insurrections."

The trial of Kavala and 15 others will begin on June 24.

A respected figure in intellectual circles in Turkey and abroad, Kavala is chairman of the Anadolu Kultur (Anatolian Culture) foundation.

The Amnesty International launched an urgent action campaign for Kavala, Yigit Aksakoglu and 14 other rights defenders: "The indictment attempts to rewrite the history of the Gezi Park protests and silence some of Turkey's most prominent civil society figures."

Amnesty directed the following letter at Minister of Justice Abdülhamit Gül: "I am deeply concerned



Osman Kavala

about the 4 March decision of the Istanbul Heavy Penal Court No. 30 accepting the indictment against Osman Kavala, Yigit Aksakoglu and 14 other prominent civil society figures, accusing them of 'attempting to overthrow the government or prevent it from performing its duties' during the Gezi Park protests of 2013.

"These protests were peaceful in character and

there is no credible evidence linking any of the individuals named in this indictment with acts of violence or public disorder.

"The indictment is filled with unsubstantiated accusations that attempt to rewrite the history of the Gezi Park protests and silence some of Turkey's most prominent civil society figures. If found guilty on these baseless charges, those accused could face life imprisonment without parole.

"Osman Kavala has already been remanded in pre-trial detention for over 16 months and Yigit Aksakoglu for almost four months based on these spurious claims, an imprisonment that represents an arbitrary deprivation of their liberty.

"Acceptance of the indictment, given that it should mean the prosecution and the court both believe all relevant evidence has been collected to start the prosecution, further exposes the arbitrariness of Osman Kavala and Yi it Aksakoglu's continued incarceration.

"I therefore urge you to do all in your power to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Osman Kavala and Yi it Aksakoglu and that the charges against all 16 individuals are dropped."

(Amnesty International contributed to this report.)

Community News

NAASR Launches Undergraduate Essay Contest

BELMONT, Mass. – The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) is sponsoring an essay contest for undergraduate students centering around the transformative power of education at the core of NAASR's mission and the life of Dr. Vartan Gregorian, after whom NAASR's new world headquarters building in Belmont, will be named when it opens in November 2019.

"Have you had an extraordinary relationship with a professor that changed your life? We want to hear from you," said Sarah Ignatius, NAASR executive director, in encouraging undergraduates from all over the country to participate.

"Central to Dr. Gregorian's life is his dedication to educational advancement and the pursuit of knowledge, just as these principles are central to NAASR's mission," said Yervant Chekijian, Chairman of NAASR's Board of Directors. "We look forward to hearing from students how they have felt inspired in the same way."

The contest is open to any full-time undergraduate student in the United States, whether or not of Armenian descent. Entrants must compose an original essay in the English language of 750 to 1,000 words about an important relationship he or she forged with a teacher or professor and how that relationship served to inspire and to make a fundamental difference in his or her life. The essay need not specifically mention NAASR or Vartan Gregorian.

The entry deadline is June 15, 2019, at 11:59 p.m. Submissions must be by email to hq@naasr.org, with the subject line "Essay Submission." In the body of the email, entrants must include name, age, degree program, and school as well as the essay. Entrants should attach proof of undergraduate enrollment, such as a dated photo of a current student ID.

The winners will be announced in the fall of 2019. The first-place winner will receive a \$1,000 cash prize, plus travel and lodging in the Cambridge area on November 2, where he or she will read his or her essay at NAASR's 65th Anniversary Gala and Grand Opening of NAASR's headquarters, to be named the NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, in Belmont, fulfilling the request of the building's principal benefactors, Edward and Pamela Avedisian of Lexington. The second-place winner will receive a \$500 prize, and the third-place winner will receive a \$250 prize.

Founded in 1955, NAASR is one of the world's leading resources for advancing Armenian Studies and building community worldwide to preserve and enrich Armenian culture, history, and identity for future generations. NAASR supports scholars with research grants, academic programming, and research assistance in its 28,000-volume rare book Armenian Studies library, connects their scholarly findings with a broad general public, worked to found the first chairs of Armenian Studies at Harvard and UCLA, and has gone on to support other endowed positions, which now exist at 13 universities in the United States.

Dr. Gregorian, who is currently pPresident of the philanthropic foundation Carnegie Corporation of New York, was born in Tabriz, Iran, receiving his elementary education in Iran and his secondary education at Collège Arménien in Beirut, Lebanon. He graduated with honors from Stanford University and was awarded a PhD in history and humanities from Stanford. He was appointed the Tarzian Professor of Armenian and Caucasian History and professor of South Asian History at the University of Pennsylvania, and then served as president of the New York Public Library, which includes a network of four research libraries and 83 branch libraries. He was then appointed the 16th president of Brown University.

For questions regarding the essay contest, email hq@naasr.org. Learn more about NAASR at www.naasr.org.



Rachel Nadjarian (Photo by Aram Arkun)

New Director Nadjarian Sees Global Role for AIWA

WATERTOWN – The Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) hired its first fulltime executive director in November 2018. In that post, Rachel Onanian Nadjarian is attempting some major changes in direction for the organization.

Nadjarian has extensive experience in nonprofit management, marketing and advertising as well as decades of involvement in the Armenian community. She related that though her mother was not Armenian, she raised her two daughters to be involved in Armenian affairs. Nadjarian went to Armenian Saturday school at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Mass., and later taught Sunday school at the same church. She joined the Armenian General Benevolent Union's Daron Dance Ensemble and, following its director Apo Ashjian when he founded a new ensemble, became one of the original members of the Sayat Nova Dance Company in 1986.

The only dancer of the company who could not speak fluent Armenian, she decided her senior year at Wellesley College, while as an economics and sociology major she was preparing to work on Wall Street, to travel to Armenia. Prof. Philip Kohl was preparing for an archaeological dig in Armenia and on the spur of the moment, Nadjarian decided to join it for seven weeks in the summer of 1992. She became comfortable in Eastern Armenian during this trip.

She began a career in advertising in Cambridge, Mass., but after two years switched to working for the Museum of Science in Boston, and was inspired by working in a nonprofit environment. Consequently, she did the nonprofit program from 1995 to 1997 to earn a Master's in Business Administration from Boston University's Questrom School of Business and then went to work on a \$132-million fundraising campaign for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which was, she said, at the time the largest ever of any institution. She said, "I felt I had learned fundraising in probably the best environment in which I could ever learn – major gifts, gift recording, donor relations and how it is done right."

After running the career center for MBAs at Boston University's School of Management, she went to Crimson and Brown, leading a sales team on career events. Due to her husband getting jobs in Michigan and then San Francisco, she moved several times, focusing on their children while doing consulting projects, often for Armenian organizations, for several years. She moved again in 2004 to New York, where she lived until 2015, with the exception of one year in Boston. The last two years in New York she worked as the director of

see AIWA, page 7

Hai Guin Scholarship Association Hosts Spring Benefit Luncheon

BELMONT, Mass. – The Hai Guin Scholarship Association will hold its 2019 Spring Benefit Luncheon on Saturday, April 27th at the Belmont Country Club, Belmont. This year a fashion presentation and pop-up shop will be featured by world renowned St. John, of Boston.

St. John is an American luxury house that was founded in 1962 by Robert and Marie Gray. A fascinating coming together of craft and couture based on the premise of a simple, yet elegant knit dress. Over the years, the brand has evolved, but the basis for the collection remains the same today as it did from the very start – effortless, alluring, and refined clothing that appeals to women all over the world. St. John has a unique American design with a core in signature innovative knits, and has an undisputed reputation for luxury and quality.

The Spring Benefit will begin with a silent auction, raffle prizes, a Pop-Up Shop & more, followed by a luncheon and a Fashion Presentation by St. John. Proceeds from the Pop-Up Shop will be donated to the organization's scholarship fund. Michele Kolligian, Joyce Jones, and Pamela Gechijian, Benefit Co-Chairs, Gladys Partamian, president, and committee members are diligently working to put the final touches on the Spring Benefit event. Committee members are: Christine Berberian and Andrea Garabedian, ticket reservations; Karen Martin, donations; Carol Haroutunian, centerpieces; Sandra Aghababian, program booklet; Carol Haroutunian and Donna Deranian, silent auction; and Joyce Guleserian, Ida Kolligian, and Mary Kupjian, raffle prizes.

The Hai Guin Scholarship Association has provided educational assistance to undergraduate and graduate college students of Armenian heritage since 1935. Proceeds from this event fund scholarships to students who are Massachusetts residents, and attend a college in the continental United States. Candidates must have completed one year at the school for which the scholarship is requested. Scholarships awarded are based on merit and need. Your attendance and support allows the Hai Guin Scholarship Association to continue its mission.

Applications are available upon request by writing to: Hai Guin Scholarship Association, 23 Bradley Road, Arlington, MA 02474, Attn: Scholarship Chairman. All application requirements are due by October 25.

The Hai Guin Scholarship Association's 2019 Spring Benefit Luncheon will commence at 11:30 a.m. Call Christine Berberian or Andrea Garabedian for tickets.

Armenian American Veterans of Greater Boston Offer Scholarships

BOSTON – The Armenian American Veterans of Greater Boston (AAVGB), formerly the Paul S. Marsoubian Amvets Post 41 of Watertown, announces an academic scholarship program and selection process for the children of its past, present and deceased members in good standing of Amvets Post 41.

Applicants must be members in good standing, for at least three years, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, including those of deceased members, who were in good standing at the time of their death.

To be eligible for consideration, applications must be received by April 30 of any given year.

Request for the AAVGB scholarship applications should be directed and requested of:

Harold R. Partamian, Scholarship Committee Chairman, 6 Apache Trail, Arlington, MA 02474. Email apache_927@verizon.net.



COMMUNITY NEWS

New Director Nadjarian Sees Global Role for AIWA

AIWA, from page 6

advancement of a private school and helped create their development department, but after a move to the Washington D.C. area, she returned to consulting, with her Armenian clients including the Armenian Tree Project, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative and the IDeA Foundation. She also got involved in the Armenian Relief Society as a volunteer from 2013 to 2017.

Nadjarian presented her varied work as good background for her position with AIWA. She said, "I am used to wearing many hats, dealing with a lot of ambiguity, and creating structure with brand and mission so it makes sense."

Nadjarian served as a volunteer on AIWA's board starting in June 2017. AIWA had hired Jennifer Philips, a part-time executive director, for the first time, from 2016 to 2018. When Philips left, Nadjarian was already pondering the role of AIWA. She said, "In that year or so I saw a lot of opportunity that was being overlooked, a little bit of slowing down or inertia, complacency maybe. I decided on my trip to

Armenia that summer [after the Velvet Revolution] to do my own research and investigation on what Armenian women were thinking...I felt we are at a turning point for the Armenian world and I need to go and listen to what women there have to say about anything — where they are, the future, what they are working on."

Nadjarian said she felt there was an incredible amount of work being done in Armenia about which most people abroad are not aware. She concluded, "I felt very inspired and said I think AIWA is in a very good position to change the conversation, the platform, the playing field on which Armenian women are connected around the world."

Nadjarian urged that the AIWA director position be expanded to full-time, and offered herself for the post. She said that first of all, "We have to simultaneously...recreate the brand a little, recreate the conversation, the narrative, the message, and engage more women around the world. As we do that, we are going to start to see reach, engagement and membership

increase and then the fundraising strategy will come from that."

Nadjarian's initial focus will be on the vision and the message and their dissemination. She already has reworded AIWA's original goals "in a 2019 way as opposed to a 1991 way," and her goal is to redo the entire platform, not just the website.

To redo the platform, she is assembling a vision team of 8-9 young people from around the world who will be led by a UX (User Experience) designer in Armenia. They are not AIWA members but, Nadjarian said, are engaged and active users of technology who have a lot to say about what they think Armenian women want and what the challenges to them are.

Most immediately, Nadjarian has begun a listening tour of all of AIWA affiliates as well as cities with Armenian populations with no official affiliates, and to Russia and Armenia, to hear the needs, aspirations, challenges and opportunities of Armenian women. She said that the information gathered will help decide how to redirect the efforts of AIWA. She also is engaging new people and spreading the word about AIWA.

Armenia will be her final stop. There used to be an affiliate there which never got going but now Nadjarian feels there is a good possibility for collaborating with the My Step Foundation of Anna Hakobyan, wife of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. AIWA always worked with the American University of Armenia (AUA) and the Women's Support Center, but, Nadjarian said, now she wants to deepen AIWA's work beyond just providing funding.

Among the programmatic areas being considered for the near future is a global mentorship program, an examination of domestic violence on a deeper level, not only in Armenia but in other Armenian communities around the world, and a conference in Armenia next year. Nadjarian is putting together a conference committee now which she wants to "work on a very different form of interaction among people, that will not only architect conversations but move those conversations to the next place, which could be architecting solutions or creating content which could be the basis of change for the future." The conference, she said, would be an opportunity to bring the new membership to Armenia.

The membership of AIWA at present is under 500. Nadjarian finds this to be far too low for a global network of Armenian women. There are Armenian women's Facebook sites with much larger memberships. She believes it should reach the tens, if not hundreds, of thousands. Membership costs \$50 annually or \$1,000 for a lifetime. Nadjarian is focusing on bringing in

younger people, and says, "So far, everyone wants to be a part of it. They are very excited about what is happening. In Armenia too, there are many young women, including the web graduates of our entrepreneurship program at AUA, which we founded many years ago, who are coming forward, as well as our scholarship recipients of the past."

Nadjarian is also forming committees and subcommittees at various levels of engagement to bring people in on particular projects in which they have a vested interest.

AIWA, under Nadjarian, has a number of top goals for Armenian women. She said, "I would like an Armenian woman to be able to have access to absolutely anything that she needs and wants that is going to help her personally and professionally, with her own wellness, with her ability to economically advance and to be engaged as a citizen in her own awareness of her rights."

Aside from access to information and opportunities, Nadjarian wants to break down barriers between Armenian women. "In building solidarity, we need to recognize that we have a long history of seeing each other as aligned by where we were born, where we socialize, where we immigrated from, what our education level is, what our income level is, and where we reside," she explained.

The Velvet Revolution in Armenia, Nadjarian said, provides "shining examples of what can be accomplished through civic engagement... Everyone is paying attention to this movement in Armenia...The Diaspora has been criticized, rightfully so, for telling Armenia how to do things. We have a lot to learn from them about this revolution." She pointed out that the Armenian Revolutionary Federation just announced a gender quota and though that might have been forced, the truth will become clear if everyone embraces this approach.

AIWA is in conversation with Girls of Armenia Leadership Soccer (GOALS), a program started in 2015 which began the first women's soccer league in Armenia in 2016. AIWA would like to work together to bring Armenian girls in soccer in the US into this program. Nadjarian pointed out that "this is an example of something done in Armenia that shows a ripe opportunity to connect outside of Armenia and we should be the connecting tissue for that." Another possible avenue of cooperation is working with the Girls in Tech chapter in Armenia, whose managing director, Seda Papoyan, is a graduate of a program sponsored by AIWA at AUA.

AIWA will continue to work at the United Nations as a nongovernmental organization with the Commission on the Status of Women, where AIWA holds five seats. This year's priority themes include "social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls."

Fundraising will be necessary to achieve many of AIWA's long-term goals. Nadjarian said that the diasporan gala or banquet culture is both a blessing and a curse, noting, "There is a lot to be said for a celebratory event. They can be great but inevitably leave people out."

She stressed that "from a fundraising point of view, the Armenian world has never really been good at it...We have this understanding that if I shake hands with someone who gives a million dollars, then I am a fundraiser. But really good fundraising is a mindset, how you see relationships. They take time and they take building trust and transparency."

Nadjarian said that she is treating AIWA like a professional nonprofit, and building it so that in two or three years it will be running how a model nonprofit should be run. She noted that her board is very supportive. Nadjarian said, "Armenians are not good at accountability. Nobody wants to be the fall guy. I would rather have the accountability and be in the hotseat so that I can make real progress, rather than...inertia, hiding behind the board that makes the decisions."

The 12-person AIWA board itself may undergo change soon, with a number of open seats coming up as older members withdraw. Right now it is all American, with a majority on the East Coast, but, Nadjarian said, in the future it may become international.

Hagop, Arousiag, & Arpy Kashmanian and Hazaros Tabakoglu Funds

**\$1,000 - \$6,000
SCHOLARSHIPS TO
UNDERGRADUATES OF
ARMENIAN DESCENT**

nycommunitytrust.org/armenian

Deadline to apply May 3, 2019

**NY
CT** THE NEW YORK
COMMUNITY
TRUST



City of Smile Charitable Foundation Boston Friends

Join Us For An Unprecedented Evening To Benefit Children With Cancer in Armenia

Friday, April 5, 2019 • Cocktails 6:30 PM • Dinner & Program 7:30 PM
The Westin Waltham Hotel

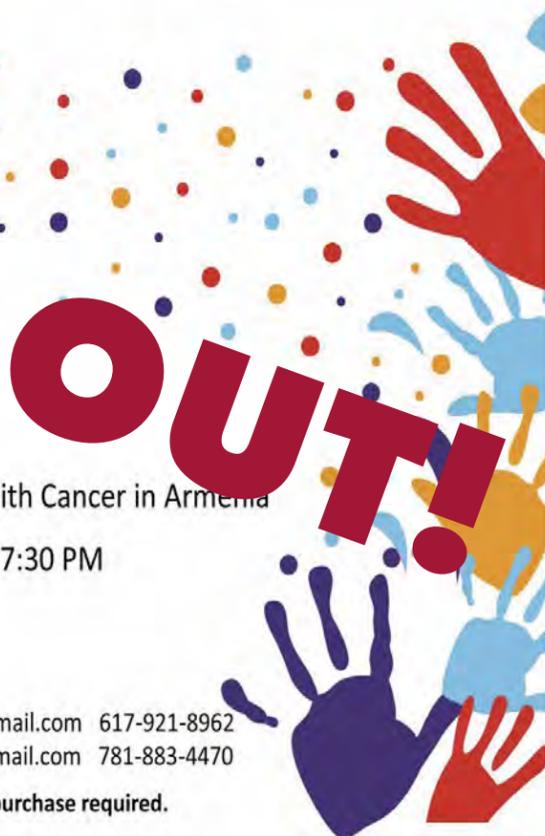
Distinguished Guest

Anna Hakobyan
Honorary Chair, City of Smile Foundation
Spouse of Prime Minister of Armenia

RSVP

postaljian@hotmail.com 617-921-8962
manuk0102@gmail.com 781-883-4470

Advance ticket purchase required.





OBITUARY

Eminent Byzantinist, Dr. Speros Vryonis, Jr., Supporter of Armenian Studies, Dies

VRYONIS, from page 1

witty and gregarious. He had the lean physique of a man who used to enjoy boxing and playing basketball. Vryonis admired both physical and mental prowess. He was loyal to a fault to his friends and his students. I had the honor and pleasure of being one of the latter in graduate school at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where he was a popular lecturer. An eloquent speaker, he had a great sense of humor, sprinkling his lectures with jokes, including Nasreddin Hoja anecdotes, and spotlighting some of the eccentric figures who pop up here and there in Byzantine history.

He was born in Memphis, Tenn. in 1928, where his Cephalonian father ran his bakery and meat plant. Though there were few Greek families there, Vryonis became interested in Greek history, and graduated Southwestern College (now Rhodes College) in 1950, majoring in ancient history and Classics. He went to Harvard University for his doctorate on Byzantine history, which he received



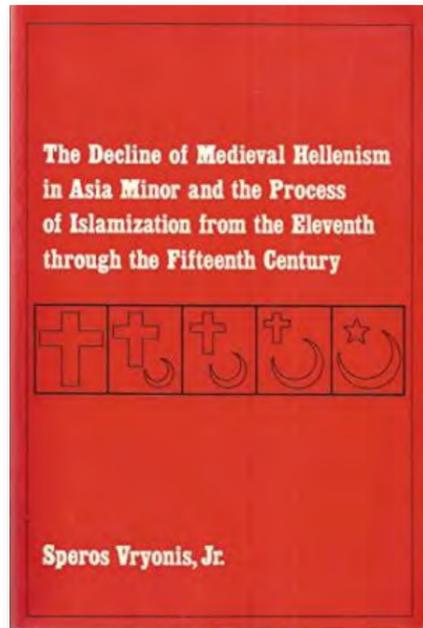
Dr. Speros Vryonis, Jr.

in 1956, and later taught there. At Harvard, he was a colleague and friend of Drs. Avedis Sanjian (1921-1995), a specialist in Armenian studies, and Ottomanist Stanford Shaw (1930-2006).

When UCLA began expanding its Near Eastern program, it first recruited Vryonis, and then Sanjian and Shaw. Vryonis came in 1960. He served as the director of the G. E. von Gunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies in 1972-75 and 1979-82. Vryonis held the Chair of Medieval and Modern History at the University of Athens from 1976 to 1979. He left UCLA for New York University to become the first director of the Alexander S. Onassis Center for Hellenic Studies from 1988 to 1993.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences and Fellow of the American Philosophical Society. In 2007, Vryonis was appointed American Hellenic Institute Foundation Senior Fellow for Hellenism and for Greek and Turkish Studies. Vryonis had given numerous scholarly lectures around the world, and organized many conferences. Without a doubt, he was a scholar of the first rank who attained world renown.

He published a survey titled *Byzantium and Europe in 1968* which still is considered an excellent introduction to this topic. Perhaps his most famous book, his magnum opus, is *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (1971), which is now considered a classic in the field. In it, Vryonis describes the process by which Turkic invaders Islamicized and Turkified a prosperous and populous Hellenized Asia Minor. Conversely, he



shows the influence of Byzantine culture on the succeeding Turkish culture. While the book specifically focuses on the fate of the Hellenized population of Asia Minor, supporting evidence from Armenian history is frequently provided, and many of the destructive or assimilatory forces described also affected Armenians.

Aside from his own research, Vryonis gave direction to scholarship through a critical examination of the works of others. One important example of such analysis is the monograph entitled Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Volume I. Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808, ...: A Critical Analysis*. In it, Vryonis marshalled considerable evidence indicating that Shaw's work is derivative of a limited number of secondary sources and is replete with factual errors, contradictions, and the apparent fabrication of historical data. Shaw's work is also marred by the anachronistic insertion of modern Turkish nationalistic viewpoints. Aside from the light this monograph sheds on Ottoman historiography, it also points out specific problems in Shaw's presentation of Armenian history. These include contradictory information on the origin of the Ottoman Armenian *millet*, and the unfounded claim that Armenians attempted to usurp Kurdish territories in the 16th century.

Vryonis, perhaps more outspoken than even professors of Armenian origin at UCLA concerning Shaw's biased approach - which among other things helped create a school of denial of the Armenian Genocide, paid a price for this in his relations with UCLA faculty and administration.

Toward the latter part of his career, Vryonis began to publish more on issues of modern and even contemporary history. He was worried in particular about the massive distortion of history supported by the Turkish government. In response, he published *The Turkish State and History: Clio Meets the Grey Wolf* (1991). His volume *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: The*

Turkish Pogrom of September 6-7, 1955, and the *Destruction of the Greek Community of Istanbul* (2005) is a meticulously documented work on the Turkish pogroms which targeted Greeks as well as Armenians and Jews in Istanbul.

Aside from concern about Turkish state intervention in academia, he had a second fear, which he expressed in the September-October issue of *Greek America Magazine*: "I should add that many Greeks and Greek Americans have lost their sense of history, of whence they came, of who they are, and of what they are becoming."

In 1993, Vryonis' students published a two-volume festschrift in his honor: *To Hellenikon: Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.* Volume II included Armeniaca among its essay topics.

Vryonis played an active personal role in the establishment and support of Armenian studies in the United States. He spoke in favor of the establishment of a chair of Armenian studies at UCLA in the early 1960s, and was on the

search committee that brought Avedis Sanjian, soon to become Grigor Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies, to UCLA in 1965. He was on Richard Hovannisian's doctoral committee and was the chairman of the search committee which selected him as the first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA in 1987. He served on the doctoral committees of several other students in Armenian studies. Over a period of nearly half a century, Vryonis spoke at numerous Armenian functions throughout the United States and abroad about various issues of Armenian history, including the genocide.

Dr. Vryonis is survived by his wife Badri, sons Demetrios (Victoria) and Nikolas, grandchildren Sophia and Alexander, and other relatives, and was preceded in death by his eldest son Speros Basil. He passed peacefully in his sleep on March 11 at the age of 90. His funeral service took place at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Sacramento on March 20.

Miriam (Nigohsian) Boyajian

SOUTH NATICK, Mass. - Miriam (Nigohsian) Boyajian, 92, of South Natick, formerly of Needham, passed away on March 13, surrounded by her family.

She was the wife of Jack Boyajian for 63 years and mother to her son Jack Jr. and his wife Jody, to her dear predeceased son Ronald and his wife Janet, and to her daughter Valerie (Boyajian) Camiel and her husband Charles.

She also leaves behind her large and adoring family - grandchildren, Nicholas, Talia, David, Shawna, Blair, Adam, Danielle and Ross, and her great-grandchildren Mia, Cohen, Oliver and Fay.

Miriam was the daughter of the late John and Catherine Nigohsian and was predeceased by her sister Marguerite Kurkjian and her husband John. Miriam was the sister to Charles Nigohsian and his wife Peggy and to Marlene Paul and her husband Ed, and an aunt to many.

Miriam put others before herself - friends, family, and acquaintances. She was fun, silly and always upbeat and happy - never one to complain. Miriam will leave a hole in the hearts of everyone that knew her, but most of all her family. As Miriam would say - "So long, see you in the funnies."

Funeral services were held at Saint James Armenian Church, Watertown, on Tuesday, March 19. Interment was in Needham Cemetery.

Arrangements were made by the Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home.



The Turkish State and History

Clio Meets the Grey Wolf
SPEROS VRYONIS, JR.



Vryonis did post-graduate work at Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington and later provided advice for it on Byzantine studies as a Senior Fellow from 1985 to 1991. He served from 1996 to 2000 as director of the Speros Basil Vryonis Center for the Study of Hellenism near Sacramento, which was named after Vryonis' eldest son after the latter's death in 1986. The library was transferred to Sacramento State University in 2002 after the closure of the center. Vryonis was an indefatigable collector of books and periodicals, and periodically sold or donated his collections as far afield as Australia (to the National Library of Australia).

His countless honors include being chosen as Fulbright Fellow, Guggenheim Fellow, Fellow of the American Medieval Academy, Fellow of the

Donation

Nayiri Berberian of Watertown donated \$30 in memory of Rev. Dajad Davidian, Louise Manoogian Simone and Julieta Karapetyan.

Nardolillo Funeral Home

Est. 1906

John K. Najarian, Jr.

Rhode Island's Only Licensed Armenian Funeral Director

1278 Park Ave. Cranston, RI 02910 (401) 942-1220
1111 Boston Neck Rd. Narragansett, RI 02882 (401) 789-6300

www.nardolillo.com

Giragosian

FUNERAL HOME

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC
Mark J. Giragosian

Funeral Counselors

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

www.giragosianfuneralhome.com

Telephone (617) 924-7400

Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, Inc.

Continuous Service By The Bedrosian Family Since 1945

558 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02472

MARION BEDROSIAN
PAUL BEDROSIAN
LARRY BEDROSIAN



OBITUARY

John P. Amboian

Church Leader, Veteran, Executive

HAVERTHILL, Mass. — John P. Amboian died at the High Pointe House, on March 16, at the age of 87.

He was the husband of Patricia (McLarnon) Amboian for 60 years and the son of immigrant parents, the late Asadour and Tourvanda (Juknavorian) Amboian. He was the father of Michael E. Amboian and his wife Patricia (Rook) of Methuen, MA; John P. Amboian, Jr. and his wife Ann (Lee) of Winnetka, IL; Leslie Amboian and fiancé John Royce of Manchester, NH; grandfather of Michael Jr., Megan, Andrew, Madison, and Alexander Amboian; Mitchell and Lucas Takessian; brother of Rose Amboian and Sandra (Amboian) Boroyan of Chelmsford and uncle of numerous nieces and nephews.

He was born in July 1931 in Lowell. He was a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Northeastern University, earning a bachelor's degree in business.

He was a former member of the Directors of the National Council of Northeastern University, and a member of the Sigma

Epsilon Rho Honor Fraternity of the University. He served in the US Army as a Staff Sergeant in the Korean Conflict, receiving several medals and decorations. He was a retired senior vice president of administration of the former Arkwright Mutual Insurance Company, which merged into the FM Global Insurance Company. He retired in 1992 after 32 years of service.

He was a former president of the Boston Chapter of the Budget Executives Institute, and a member of the National Financial Executives Institute. He served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Waltham, Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce, and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Town of Dracut.

He was an active member of several fraternal organizations, some of which, included: Pentucket Masonic Lodge, in Lowell; 32 Degree Scottish Rite; Aleppo Shriner; Armenian Knights of Vartan; Armenian-American Veterans of Lowell and the Armenian Genocide Commemorative



Committee of the Merrimack Valley in Massachusetts.

He was a lifelong active member of Saints Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church, of Chelmsford. He served in several significant leadership positions in his parish, along with leadership roles in the New England Region, and with the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. He served as a Diocesan Delegate for 32 years, was chair of the 1995 Diocesan Assembly Host Committee, and chaired on a myriad of other

committees. In 1996, he chaired the Pontifical Visitation Committee to the New England Region, upon the visit of, Karekin I, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians of blessed memory. His willingness to give generously of his time and talents found him elected to the Diocesan Council and as a member of the Diocesan Board of Trustees of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America.

He served as a member of the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary Board of Directors, and was a recipient of the prestigious St. Nersess Shnorhali Medal from the Holy See in Armenia. In 2007, John was honored by the Diocese by being selected as the "Armenian of the Year". He was part of the delegation which represented our Diocese at the 1995 and 1999 National Ecclesiastical Assemblies, convened in Holy Echmiadzin in the Republic of Armenia. The purpose was to participate in the 1995 election of Karekin I, Catholicos of all Armenians of blessed memory; and in the 1999 election of Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians.

His funeral was held on Wednesday, March 20, at Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford, with burial at Edson Cemetery in Lowell.

THE ARMENIAN LEGIONNAIRES: SACRIFICE AND BETRAYAL IN WORLD WAR I

By SUSAN PAUL PATTIE

Saturday | March 23, 2019 | 4:00 – 6:00 pm

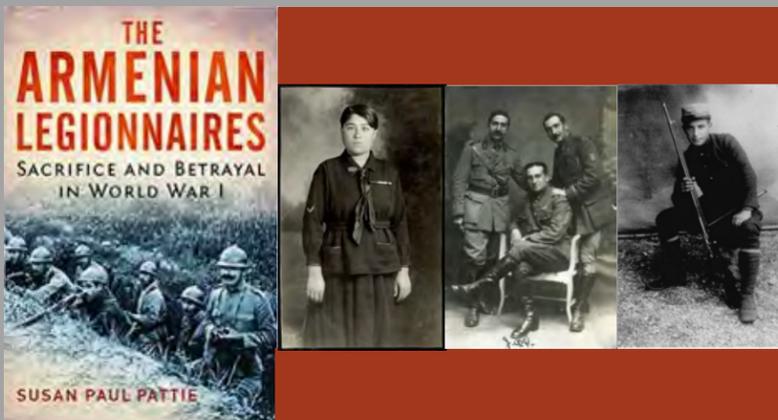
Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church | 4906 Flint Drive, Bethesda, MD, 20816

Free street parking or Friendship Heights Metro (+ 10 minute Lyft/Uber ride away)

Admission free | Book launch and signing followed by light appetizers and beverages

For more information, please contact Nancy Najarian

202-251-7821 or nancynaj@gmail.com Books will be available for purchase



Using illustrations from the more than 150 photographs in *The Armenian Legionnaires*, Susan Pattie will discuss the creation of the book, the research and translation and how the many sources were found. The book describes the motivations and dreams of the Armenian Legionnaires and their ultimate betrayal as the French and the British shifted priorities, leaving ancestral Armenian homelands to the emerging Republic of Turkey. Complete with eyewitness accounts, letters and photographs, this book provides an insight into relations between the Great Powers through the lens of a small, vulnerable people caught in a war that was not their own, but which had already destroyed their known world

'The author has done a wonderful job by giving voice to the main actors of this story, the Legionnaires themselves, who through extracts from their memoirs make this book more vivid, concrete and comprehensible. The richness of the photographs of the Legionnaires in this book is also a very important contribution towards successfully reconstructing this crucial period of Armenian history.'

Vahe Tachjian
director and chief editor of Houshamadyan Project

Susan Pattie is an Honorary Senior Research Associate at University College London and former Director of the Armenian Institute in London. She holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

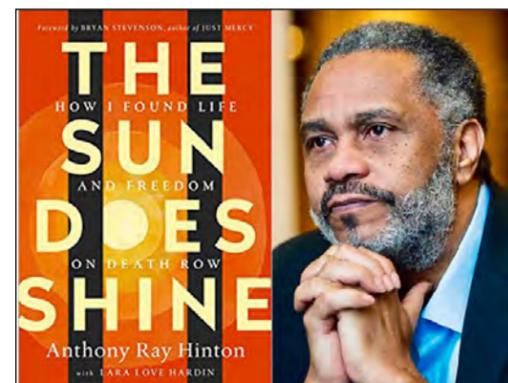
Death Row Exoneree Anthony Ray Hinton to Speak At Holy Trinity Armenian Church on April 25

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The issues with today's criminal justice system are human rights issues. On Thursday, April 25, an evening with death row exoneree, Anthony Ray

Joyce Kolligian Distinguished Speaker Series.

The program will take place at the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St., at 7 p.m.

Hinton wrote the captivating memoir, *The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row*. Hinton's book is a *New York Times* Best Seller and was Oprah's Book Club Summer 2018 Selection. He will share his story of wrongful conviction, death-row survival and his decades-long journey to exoneration and freedom. Now free after nearly 30 years, Hinton will discuss the changes to the criminal justice system that need to be made to prevent these types of injustices from happening to other innocent people. He will also remind everyone of the power of faith and forgiveness, for in his words, "I'm just trying to be a little tiny light in God's world."



Anthony Ray Hinton

Hinton, will give the community the opportunity to hear his extraordinary story of faith and hope sustained through the darkest times. The lecture is part of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston Dr. Michael and

The event is open and free to the public. A reception and book signing will follow Mr. Hinton's talk, and books will be available for purchase. For further information, contact the Church Office.ā

Public Schools Should Offer More Vegan Menus, Assemblyman Nazarian Says

LOS ANGELES (*Press Enterprise*) — Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian, D-Van Nuys, announced proposed legislation on February 13 that he said would provide incentives for public schools across the state to offer students a plant-based entree and plant-based milk at meals.

Under AB 479, the Healthy Climate-Friendly School Lunch Act, schools would receive additional state funding for serving the vegan options, which Nazarian said would be healthier and more climate-friendly.

The bill would also provide state support for staff training, engagement, recipe development, and other technical assistance needed to help boost participation rates, according to Nazarian's office.

"This is going to be one option that looks at not only making us more healthy as Californians, not only helping us meet our climate goals, but also allowing us to save money in the long run," Nazarian said.

Nazarian announced the bill at a news conference outside Los Angeles City Hall, alongside City Councilman Paul Koretz and members of organizations backing the idea.

"We've received a lot of positive feedback, which doesn't surprise me, considering the last few years there has been a 600 percent increase



Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian

in people who identify as vegan," Koretz said.

The bill is backed by Animal Hope in Legislation, Friends of the Earth, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and Social Compassion in Legislation, according to Nazarian's office.

Read News in Armenian at:



Donations to Sponsor a Teacher

• Tom and Debbie Krikorian of West Bloomfield, MI donated \$100.

• The Evereg-Fenese Educational Society, President Debbie Zazaian, donated \$200.



COMMUNITY NEWS

ATP Thins Hrant Dink Memorial Forest to Ensure Its Health

By Vahe Martirosyan and Jason Sohigian

WOBURN, Mass. — In the days after the senseless killing of Agos editor Hrant Dink in Istanbul in 2007, the Armenia Tree Project (ATP) decided to plant a memorial forest in his honor. Advisory board member Nancy Kricorian penned a crowdfunding appeal about her friend and colleague, and a living legacy to the renowned intellectual was born. The effort was supported by people around the world, even from organizations within Turkey. On the West Coast, friends in the Armenian Bar Association mobilized support for the forest.

A new forest was established on two plots of land in Margahovit and Fioletovo villages in honor of Dink. Twelve years later, the location has become one of ATP's model sites; the trees planted included pine and wild apple.

The site has been visited by numerous dignitaries including Raket Dink, Dink's widow, Henry Morgenthau IV, the great-grandson of Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, and artist-activist Serj Tankian. The large forest is located on a hillside along the main road in the Lori province just across from ATP's Ohanian Environmental Education Center and close to the Mirak Reforestation Nursery.

In following the best practices for planting a new forest, about 3,000 trees were planted per hectare at a density of one meter apart, which is done to take average tree mortality into account. Over time, a healthy, mature forest should have closer to 1,000 trees per hectare. Due to an exceptionally high survival rate of the trees planted, the Hrant Dink Memorial Forest has become overcrowded. This impedes the overall growth of the forest, forcing the trees to compete for soil nutrients, sunlight, and water.

As a result, ATP's plans for 2019 include carrying out thinning activities in the Hrant Dink Memorial Forest. The thinning will be done on two hectares of the 11-hectare plot in several stages, starting in spring and continuing for the next five years.

ATP has continuously monitored the Hrant Dink Memorial Forest, and the need for thinning was identified in 2018. It is the first forest planted by ATP that has required thinning in order to ensure the overall ecological health of the site.

In accordance with the country's forest management regulations, ATP has consulted with experts from Armenia's forestry department (HayAntar), the Environmental Department of the Provincial



An aerial drone photograph of one plot of the Hrant Dink Memorial Forest, planted by ATP in 2007.

Administration, and the State Forest Monitoring Center. These departments will visit the forest to study the area, set up experimental zones, and estimate how many trees will be cut. Selected trees will be marked with a stamp for clear identification.

Thinning has proven to be an effective management tool for sustainable forest management worldwide. It will leave the rest of the trees in better health and allow them to flourish. Thinning can also stimulate more plants to grow on the site, increasing the likelihood that wildlife will inhabit the forest.

Another benefit is the reduction of wildfire risks and effects, as fires tend to spread more easily when trees are planted close together. There is a high risk of wildfires in Armenia as a result of the dry climate and ecological changes caused by climate change.

Several criteria will be taken into consideration before thinning activities begin. For example, only trees that are growing in the highest density will be removed. Trees growing on the steepest parts of the forest will not be thinned in order to avoid land erosion and degradation.

The removed wood will be turned into mulch, which ATP has

been using as a natural form of weed and grass control in its new forestry sites. Placing mulch around small seedlings has been found to hold moisture and prevent tall grass and weeds from overcrowding the young trees.

After the thinning, hardwood species such as oak, birch, wild apple, and pear trees will be added to the forest in order to transform it to a more diverse forest ecosystem.

ATP's forests are planted on community, publicly owned land with a 20-year lease at no cost, and ownership of the sites is passed back to the community after the lease ends. ATP's forestry and environmental education departments work with officials and residents in those communities to teach them about the importance of forests and sustainable resource management, with the expectation that people will protect the site in future years. ATP's leadership will continue to monitor the sites and provide consultation to ensure that the forest is managed in a sustainable manner for future generations.

(Vahe Martirosyan is ATP's forester and Jason Sohigian is the organization's deputy director.)

INSURANCE FOUNDATION FOR SERVICEMEN

A not-for-profit insurance foundation meant to serve military families recover from the loss or injury of their sons.

HOW YOU CAN HELP



Share:

Help spread the word in your community by sharing our story on social media.



Donate:

No amount is too small. Please consider contributing to the Foundation at www.1000plus.am



Learn:

Visit our website at www.1000plus.am to gain a deeper understanding of who we are and what we do.

WWW.1000PLUS.AM



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

TEKEYAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION
MHER MEGERDCHIAN THEATRICAL GROUP OF GREATER NEW YORK

PROUDLY PRESENTS

ԴԱՏԱՐԱՆԻ Է, ՈՏՔԻ...
A PLAY BY BERJ ZEYTOUNTSIAN
All Rise, The Court is in Session
DIRECTED BY GERALD PAPASIAN

DEDICATED TO THE TRIAL OF
THE ARMENIAN HERO SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
H. E. VARUZHAN NERSESYAN
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY
OF REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE USA

SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 2019 - 4:00 PM
KENMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
200 S. CARLIN SPRINGS ROAD - ARLINGTON, VA

SPONSORED BY
KNIGHTS AND DAUGHTERS OF VARTAN

TOTAL BENEFIT TO DONATE ARMY BOOTS
FOR MILITARY CADETS IN ARMENIA
DONATIONS ARE WELCOME

PERFORMED IN ARMENIAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER 10 YEARS OLD

RESERVATIONS
GARBO AFARIAN (202) 270-0324
TAKUHI HALADJIAN (301) 219-4041
YERETSGIN ANAHID KALAYDJIAN (240) 477-8869

TICKETS \$35
FREE PARKING

Arts & Living

‘Groom’ Makes Appearance in Pasadena

By Taleen Babayan

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles, to me, never symbolized stars, signs and stardom. Whenever we packed our bags during the holidays, it wasn't Hollywood we were heading to – we were preparing to enter an Armenian enclave, one that couldn't be found in the homeland or in my parent's birthplaces of Aleppo and Beirut. It was something else, a unique sensation, an amalgam from one tip of the Diaspora to the other.

As an East Coaster, it was a culture shock every time we traveled to Los Angeles to visit my dad's side of the family. The innumerable trips we took throughout the years gave me a chance from a young age to not only catch a glimpse of, but to relive my parents' experiences of their upbringing: eating *manaish* fresh out of an industrial oven a couple of blocks down from my grandparents' apartment on Everett Street in Glendale, watching my grandfather in his retirement still at work for the community at the Tekeyan Cultural Center in Altadena, observing the editor of *Nor Gyank* laying out the newspaper on Colorado Street, visiting my cousins at the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian Armenian day school, and tasting my grandmother's homemade pumpkin jam, as alumni from Beirut's Vahan Tekeyan School breezed in and out for impromptu coffee and conversation with their former principal, Yervant Babayan.

Our tourist photos weren't only at the Grauman's Chinese Theater or the Walk of Fame in Hollywood. They were also a few miles away along the storefronts of Zankou Chicken and PEKO records. It was a marvel to me that the intertwining of the past and the present existed outside of the storied Diasporan communities of the Middle East, which certainly were not found in my hometown of Saddle River, NJ. Even the climate and the beaches were somehow reminiscent of the Mediterranean.

As I've woven into the thread of the intricate fabric here in Los Angeles for almost a year, I once again see the fusion of the past and the present: reading books of an eminent church leader who read my grandfather's books, seeing him in action coalescing the community the same way he saw my grandfather do a generation before; shopping at the same bookstore I would go to as a youngster, now the next generation at the helm with a similar vision intact; going up and down those steep stairs of the Tekeyan Cultural Center, this time passing by, instead of entering, my grandfather's old office.

This city is the Armenian Diaspora squeezed into a radius of less than 100 miles. Among the cramped freeways and open valleys, pockets of neighborhoods have formed and flourished over the years: Armenians from Iran, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Cyprus and Armenia itself, each bringing something palatable to the diversified table, whether it be the literature, music, cuisine, customs or history reflecting the very communities Armenians found safe haven and newfound opportunities.

It is where one can experience the entire diaspora in a solitary sitting and exchange conversation with a multitude of Armenians who have contrasting perspectives, but whose core essence remains the same: whether it be the owners of the local family-owned Armenian coffee shop down the street to the Uber driver whose family fled Van during the Armenian Genocide and sought solace in Tehran, only to witness further upheaval at the onset of the Iranian revolution, serve in the Iran-Iraq war and eventually succumb to that Armenian trajectory, displaced once again and finding

see PASADENA, page 12



Torkom Movsesiyan

Torkom Movsesiyan

‘Actually All Men Can Perform Eastern Dances!’

YEREVAN/NEW YORK – Torkom Movsesiyan is a dancer and cultural ambassador of the arts. His cultural organization, Torkomada, envisions dance to be an important but neglected diplomatic tool in cultural diplomacy versus more conventional methods that have failed. His dance projects are an original contribution to the world of art and diplomacy, and recipients of

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Grant, the Creative Engagement grant, the Brooklyn Arts Fund grant, and the CUNY Dance Initiative Residency at the LaGuardia Performing Arts Center. The New York Foundation for the Arts named him a renaissance artist with extraordinary abilities: a college professor, actor, dancer, singer, cultural ambassador, scholar and polyglot. He lectures on the Armenian Genocide at universities, and Cambridge University Publishers published his 2016 book essay, “The Armenian Holocaust and International Law,” in Dr. Klein's Society Emerging from Conflicts. He holds an honors BA in international studies and MA in international relations. Torkomada is starting academic courses on *Raqs Sharqi* and cultural diplomacy.

What is required for a man to be engaged in that profession?

Unfortunately, we live in a world full of stereotypes and hypocrisy, where everyone must fit a certain norm in order to be considered normal. Despite that, if one makes the effort to look beyond these limiting stereotypes, one can realize that the profession of a belly dancer is as normal as any other. Although the term belly dance is more popularly used in the media, in its native origins this ancient art form is often called in Arabic *raqs sharqi* – meaning Eastern dance. In another sense, the terminology belly dance or *la danse du ventre* is vague because it not only involves the “belly,” but also the hips, torso, arms, and abdominal muscles. In Arabic culture, the art of *raqs sharqi* is unisex because it is a social dance similar to other folk dances: *merengue* from the Dominican Republic, *kathak* from India or *kochari* from Armenia. Similar to other unisex dance styles, a male *raqs sharqi* performer must possess many qualities, some of which are stamina, energy, fluidity, hip movement vocabulary, and graceful arms.

Please tell us how your passion for *raqs sharqi* began.

I never imagined that one day I am going to be a dancer. As a child, I dreamed of becoming a pop singer, which is why I moved to New York City at the age of 21. While working at a women's clothing store as a stock boy, my Moroccan co-workers would constantly play Arabic music, to which I would always enthusiastically move my hips. One day one of my co-workers, Souad, told me, “You dance so professionally, honey. I don't believe you! You are Turkish,” to which I replied with a laugh that I am not. While auditioning as a singer, I began acting as well. During

see MOVSESIYAN, page 13

VEM Ensemble to Perform at Holy Trinity Church

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Boston-area classical music lovers are in for a treat. On Sunday, March 31, the classical VEM Ensemble will perform at 1 p.m., at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church at 145 Brattle Street, at a concert cosponsored by the Tekeyan Cultural Association and Holy Trinity Church.

The concert is part of the group's North American tour with stops in Detroit (March 27), Montreal (March 29), Glendale (April 27) and Altadena, Calif. (May 19), organized with the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada.

A new musical piece based on the poetry of Vahan Tekeyan will receive its premiere during this tour and musical masterpieces by Gomidas, Khachaturian, and Western classical composers will comprise the rest of the program. The concerts are sponsored by the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada, with support from the UCLA Armenian Music program at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

The VEM Ensemble consists of the VEM Graduate String Quartet, in residence at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music, and a singer, currently mezzo-soprano Danielle Segen. VEM means “rock” in Armenian, symbolizing the strength and power of this ensemble to bring to live music written by prominent and emerging Armenian composers.

The ensemble is the cornerstone of the newly created Armenian Music Program at UCLA, which, thanks to generous donor support as well as artistic guidance of the Lark Musical Society, endeavors to raise awareness and celebrate the richness and diversity of Armenian musical tradition. As part of their studies, members of the quartet strive to cultivate an appreciation and passion for Armenian music throughout the community through musical performances, music education, outreach services, and a series of collaborations with composers to create new works dedicated to and enriching the Armenian cultural heritage.

The VEM Quartet, coached by its Artistic Director Movses Pogossian, has worked with such musicians as Kim Kashkashian, Seth Knopp, David Starobin, Nickolas Kitchen, and Tigran Mansurian. In his review of their performance at the Incontri in Terra di Sierra Festival in Tuscany, Italy, critic Laurence Vittes writes: “The evening's most memorable music was made by the VEM Quartet...who laid out Eduard Mirzoyan's String Quartet with a feline, subtle grace that touched hearts with its gentle melodic content and long-lined eloquence.”

Artashes Kartalyan: Tekeyan Triptych

An exciting world premiere to be presented during this 2019 tour is of the recently completed *Tekeyan Triptych* by Artashes Kartalyan, commissioned by the Tekeyan Cultural Association in 2018. This is a remarkable composition structured around three poems by Vahan Tekeyan (1875-1945), widely regarded as the “Prince of Armenian Poetry.” Its poetic choices, focusing on two love poems followed by a meditation on what one leaves behind, combined with intricate musicality, promises to make the *Tekeyan Triptych* one of the composer's masterpieces.

In addition to the *Triptych*, recognized masterworks by Gomidas upon his 150th anniversary of birth, Khachaturian, Mirzoyan, Hovhannes, and Schubert will be performed. The VEM Ensemble during its March trip will provide outreach performances at the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School (Detroit), St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (Watertown, MA), and in Montreal.

VEM was established in 2013 by artistic director Prof. Movses Pogossian. Pogossian see VEM, page 16



'Groom' Makes Appearance in Pasadena

PASADENA, from page 11

sanctuary here in Glendale. As we drifted along the 405 freeway towards Sherman Oaks, our divergent pasts took a backseat and we spoke, in different dialects, neither of us leaning into English. Our impact as Armenians has always been far beyond our numerical count, as is our inherent ability to create community, in even the most far-flung parts of the world, and that is because our themes are universal: from migration to the concerns of assimilation and ultimately, to preserving the Armenian language, culture and religion, no matter the cost.

It was with all of this in mind when I wrote "Where Is Your Groom?" and its sequel, both of which are rooted in this idea of finding the meaningful similarities in our palpable differences, while showcasing these relevant themes. The first part focused on a diasporan Armenian family's desire for their children to carry on their culture, while the second, in a stand-alone play, highlights the comedy that emerges when two families come together to plan their children's wedding, bringing to life, through satire, the alternating worries of mixed generations.

The play's purpose, however, surpasses the stage. It gives me the chance to work with, and learn from, veteran actors who graced the stages of Beirut, where the Armenian Diaspora experienced a rebirth, and where the curtains didn't close on a city bombarded by civil war. The cast includes leading actors, such as Harout Soghomonian, who, along with Maro Ajemian and Sossy Varjabedian, transcend a bygone golden era.

"I am delighted to be part of an original play and interact with all generations of Armenians," said Soghomonian, an actor, comedian and musician who plays the role of the patriarch, Koko in the play. "This is a great group of talented individuals who I look forward to sharing the stage with while bringing laughter and meaningful dialogue to the audience."

The 20-member cast and crew – including Aleen Khanjian, Mardik Iskenderian, Asdghig Abadjian, Arevig Abadjian, George Semerjian and Arees Setrak – have become embedded in their culture while expanding their networks and friendships by joining this production.

"I am so eager to possess this creative outlet," said Khanjian, who assumes the part of the non-Armenian wedding planner. "This play is fresh, funny, and relatable and I feel privileged to take part in it."

They fuse their experiences with Sarineh Garapetian and Raffi Rupchian, trained actors who are familiar with the stage through diverse productions on the stage and in film.

"Where Is Your Groom?" also creates a forum for those with a natural propensity towards acting, providing a safe space to further dig into the craft.

"It's been a refreshing and fulfilling journey to find the key to unlock my character, who is a mirror image of our generation," said Zaven Demirjian, who tackles the role of the groom, Ari. Demirjian's interest in theater was sparked as a student at the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School, where he participated in the drama department. This production has further ignited his passion for acting. "I am excited for the audience to engage and connect with our characters' modernized struggles, not only in relationships, but also in themselves."

This play has brought together the East and West Coast Armenian communities as many longtime friends, who are currently living in Los Angeles, became part of this production, including Aleen Vartkessian, Joseph Hovsepian, Hannah Pollock, Haig Hovnanian and Deepender Singh. A decades-long cross-country friendship is highlighted through Los Angeles-born cast member Dr. Sharis Simonian, whom I met during the AGBU Summer Internship Program in New York.

"I'm thankful to be around such talented and witty Armenians who are all beyond dedicated to bring laughter and joy to the community," said Vartkessian, who plays the role of Sirvart, the blunt and overbearing future mother-in-law.

It reflects, through comedy, the distinct characteristics among Armenians and the rich tapestry of our people.

"This captivating play is a true reflection of an Armenian household and culture," said Singh, a project manager, who represents the

unique fragments of the Diaspora through his portrayal of an Armenian-Indian character. "Taleen has broken ground by conveying the influences of the Diaspora, proving that they are all beautifully colored flowers comprising the single wholesome Armenian rooted tree."

Since the first production of "Where Is Your Groom?" in 2013 at the Players Theatre in Greenwich Village, we have performed 15 times for over 4,000 audience members.

At a recent rehearsal, cast member Henry Abadjian handed me a card that was once written to his mother. My grandfather's steady handwriting was unmistakable, as were his trademark traces of erased pencil lines under each carefully written word. On the back of the card was the address of that Everett Street apartment, to this day an untouched space in Glendale's ongoing transformation. There was something mythical about that past once again permeating into the present, tying generations and geographic locations together, to bring the present to life - on stage.

"Where Is Your Groom? II" will take place on Sunday, March 31, at 6 p.m., at the AGBU Manoukian Performing Arts Center in Pasadena. The play is in English with some Armenian. Tickets are available online at <https://www.showclix.com/event/where-is-your-groom-ii>.



Cast of "Where Is Your Groom? II"

Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Spring Vegetable Beef Soup



INGREDIENTS

1 pound lean beef (or lamb) stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes, seasoned with salt and pepper, tossed in flour
 4 tablespoons olive oil (or unsalted butter)
 1 14.5-oz. can crushed tomatoes
 3 cloves garlic, chopped
 1 cup yellow onions, chopped or 10 small pearl onions peeled and left whole
 1 cup zucchini or summer squash, cut into chunks
 1 pound green beans, cut into 1-inch lengths, or frozen peas
 1/2 pound carrots, sliced into thick coins
 1/2 pound rutabagas, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks
 2 medium leeks, well-washed and thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons tomato paste
 Salt, pepper, dill, tarragon, or paprika to taste
 1 tablespoon dried crushed oregano
 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
 1 bay leaf
 2-3 cups hot low-sodium beef or vegetable broth, water
 1/2 cup dry white wine, optional
 1/2 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
 Warm pita bread, chopped mint, fresh herbs, fresh lemon wedges



PREPARATION

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven or heavy pot. Add the beef (or lamb), toss, and cook until beef is browned. With a slotted spoon, remove beef to a bowl and set aside.

Add the tomatoes, garlic, onions, vegetables and tomato paste to the same pot, and stir constantly until vegetables are softened. Stir in spices, lemon juice, and bay leaf. Add the browned meat, and stir in the broth, wine, and some water to slightly cover the meat and vegetables.

Bring to a full boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 50-60 minutes. Stir occasionally, adding more broth or water, if needed. Stir in parsley and cook for another 10 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Serve with warm pita bread, chopped mint, fresh herbs, and fresh lemon wedges.

Note: This soup keeps well in the refrigerator for a few days, but you may need to thin it with beef broth when you reheat it because it thickens up a lot when chilled. For more ideas about spring soups, go to: <https://www.foodandwine.com/slideshows/spring-soups>
 Serves 6.



ARTS & LIVING

Torkom Movsesiyan: 'Actually All Men Can Perform Eastern Dances!'

MOVSESIYAN, from page 12

one of my acting auditions, I met the late belly dancer, Serena Williams, whom I asked whether she knew of any professional male *raqs sharqi* dancers teaching male students. Little did I know at that time that men perform *raqs sharqi* professionally as well as women. Serena had informed me about the legendary dancer Morocco and her protégé Tarik Sultan, both of whom became my teachers. I fell in love with Middle Eastern dance and music ever since, and the rest is history.

Do you think that only non-macho men are able to perform *raqs sharqi*?

To reiterate my point about stereotypes, all men can perform *raqs sharqi* as it is an art form. In general, art is open to anyone, disregarding age, race, religion, sex, political opinion, sexual orientation, etc. There are no boundaries in art. Hence, limiting the art of *raqs sharqi* to non-macho versus macho men is like claiming that it is only suited for well-fed or wider hip women versus skinny women.

What is the most vivid experience of your stage life?

In 2016, when the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council awarded my not-for-profit organization, Torkomada, the Creative Engagement grant to host my first Middle Eastern dance festival, Raqs Without Borders. What's more, many more prestigious awards followed for several of my dance projects. I remember seven years ago when I was dreaming of opening my own dance festival but had no funds to begin. As the saying goes, "Work hard and dream big." Torkomada is a not-for-profit organization that advocates for the arts in cultural diplomacy through dance classes, cultural festival, foreign language classes, genocide prevention, acting, and academic research (www.torkomada.weebly.com).

You have also some experience in films.

I love acting and transforming into different characters. My acting career, namely my multilingual skills and ability to produce various accents and dialects, enabled me to be a part of major Hollywood projects: HBO, "Everyday with Rachael Ray," "The Daily Show with Jon

Stewart," "TimeOut NY," "Law and Order," "Guiding Light," a commercial for Nissan, voice-overs for an ESL textbook for the Cambridge University Press, a commercial print model for Microsoft, a voice-over for a documentary on the Discovery Channel, assistant dialect coach and Armenian Genocide consultant for "The Cut," acting in a series of educational videos for the American Museum of Natural History, acting in the Celebrity Ghost Series for the Biography Channel, a voice-over in Bulgarian for Google and a voice-over in Bulgarian for the insurance company AIG.

According to your Facebook page, you know 23 languages. How so?

Because my lovely ears catch languages the same way some people catch a flu. I was born and raised in Bulgaria, surrounded by many cultures. I grew up with Bulgarian Roms and Turks learning about their culture and language. Bulgaria's geographical location is excellent as it is where East meets West. Growing up I was exposed to international music and art, and studied Armenian, Russian and English in elementary school. Transitioning to college, I learned German, Turkish, Arabic, Spanish, Italian, French, Farsi, Mandarin, and Portuguese among many others. Although a gifted polyglot, I am not fluent in all 23 languages. If I had the opportunity, I would travel to every single country in the world to learn every single language. While in college, my classmates used to call me a language freak. I practically became a piece of furniture in the library's foreign language department. I still remember being interviewed for the honors program at the City College of NY, and asked in what language do I dream. I am currently teaching Arabic, English as a second language and Spanish language courses at various U.S. universities.

You have an ancient Armenian name, very beautiful, but rare among us. Where do your roots go back to?

I was very fortunate to grow up in a strong and supportive Armenian community where I studied Armenian, volunteered as a church choir singer, participated in Armenian theatri-



Armenian-American Students' Association, Armenian Relief Society, the Armenian Educational Foundation, the Organization of Istanbul Armenians, and the Constantinople Armenian Relief Society. In like manner, I would like to thank you for acknowledging my achievements in your book, Armenians in World Choreography.

There were and there are very skilled belly dancers among female American Armenians. Our compatriots, often being conservative, could not tolerate belly dancing for women, not to mention for men. How do the Armenians perceive what you do?

I haven't performed *raqs sharqi* for that many Armenians, but I understand that there are some people who may not approve of what I do, which is fine. However, it is my hope that through education one day they will be able to look beyond these limiting stereotypes with an open heart and mind to appreciate the art of *raqs sharqi*, and its contribution to the world. As Emma Goldwin once said, "If I can't dance, I don't want your revolution!"

The stage life of ballet dancers is short. What about male belly dancers?

I am grateful for the opportunities I have encountered as a *raqs sharqi* performer, and look forward to future endeavors. I am in preparation for my fourth annual award-winning Middle Eastern dance festival, Raqs Without Borders in NYC: A Dance-in-Cultural-Diplomacy Series. It is an original contribution to the world of art and diplomacy versus more traditional methods that have failed. In today's strenuous US-Middle East relations where both do not need divorce but therapy, *raqs sharqi* may serve as a diplomatic tool in international affairs. I am currently in pre-production for my award winning dance spectacle, Raqs Revolution. Similarly, I am working on a big dance project with a live band of musicians and dancers, dedicated to Egyptian music from the 50's, 60's and 70's. In like manner, I am prepping for a massive Egyptian Shaabi dance event in NYC. I aspire to open my own foreign language school, write a book about *raqs sharqi* in cultural diplomacy, present new lecture-demonstration series, and pursue my PhD studies.

ՔԵԲԵՆԱՆ ՄՇԱԿՈՒԹԱՅԻՆ ՄԻՈՒԹԻՒՆ ՄԵԾՍԱԳՈՅՆ ԼՈՍ ԱՆՃԵԼՍԻ ՄԱՍՆԱՃԻՐ
Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro Los Angeles Chapter

Presents

AN EVENING OF COMEDY II

New Material

Featuring

HAROUT SOGHOMONIAN

Special Guest

MARO AJEMIAN

Saturday, May 4, 2019
7:30 PM Cocktails • 8 PM Dinner • 8:30 PM Program
Phoenicia Restaurant (Upper Hall) • 343 N. Central Ave., Glendale, CA
Admission • \$80 • www.itsmyseat.com/tekeyan
Contact • info@TekeyanLA.org for group seating (12 per table)
Tickets must be pre-purchased • No tickets will be sold at the door

facebook.com/TekeyanLA TekeyanLA @TekeyanLA

FRIENDS OF THE ARMENIAN CULTURE SOCIETY

68th Annual
ARMENIAN NIGHT AT THE POPS

Featuring

LAURA NAVASARDIAN, CELLO

and

BOSTON POPS ORCHESTRA
JACOMO BAIROS, CONDUCTOR

plus...
A SYMPHONIC JOURNEY
across Europe with Rick Steves, America's leading authority on European travel.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2019 at 8PM
SYMPHONY HALL, BOSTON

TICKETS & INFORMATION:
WWW.FACSBOSTON.ORG

ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

ARIZONA

APRIL 15 — Genocide Awareness Program featuring presenters Prof. Taner Akçam and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian. Dr. Akçam will discuss the Armenian Genocide including his evidence of Turkish denials which he covers in his latest book, *Killing Orders*. Der Mugrdechian's topic will be *Genocide in the 21st Century: Turkey and Armenia*. Monday, 1 p.m. Scottsdale Community College, 9000 E. Chaparral Road, Scottsdale. Admission is free and open to the public. Dr. Akçam will sign copies of *Killing Orders* following the program. Speakers are sponsored by St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church.

CALIFORNIA

MARCH 23 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir, *Forced Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*. Saturday, 2 p.m. Calabasas Library Multipurpose Room, 200 Civic Center Way, Calabasas. Special Guest — Councilman James Bozajian RSVP blockwood@calabasaslibrary.org. Reception and book sale/signing will follow presentation — proceeds donated to the library.

MARCH 24 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir, *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*. Sunday, 2:30 p.m. Museum of Tolerance. Co-sponsored by the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian International Women's Association, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and the Armenian Assembly of America. 9786 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles. RSVP (310) 772-2505. Book sale/signing will follow presentation — proceeds will be donated.

MARCH 28 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir, *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*. Thursday, 7 p.m., Glendale Downtown Central Library, With support from the Armenian National Committee of America. 222 East Harvard Street, Glendale. RSVP (818) 548-2021. Book sale/signing before and after the presentation — proceeds will be donated.

April 7 — Heghnar Watenpaugh, "The Missing Pages: The Modern Life of a Medieval Manuscript from Genocide to Justice," Sunday, 4 p.m., at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum. Co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

APRIL 22 — 7:30 p.m.: Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Talat Pasha: Father of Modern Turkey, Author of Genocide," at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, 15105 Mission Hills Road, Mission Hills, CA. Co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Nor Serount Cultural Association, Hamazkayin Educational and Cultural Society, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

APRIL 27 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada Presents the 2019 North American tour of the VEM Ensemble of the UCLA Herb Albert School of Music, Danielle Segen, mezzo-soprano, Ji Eun Hwang, violin 1, Aiko Richter, violin 2, Morgan O'Shaughnessey, viola, Jason Pegis, cello. 7:30 p.m. Tekeyan Cultural Association Los Angeles Chapter Cosponsored with Abril Bookstore, 415 E. Broadway, Glendale. For tickets, call Abril 818 243-4112. Introductory remarks by Artistic Director Professor Movses Pogossian. Performing a world premiere of Tekeyan songs by the Los Angeles-based composer Artashes Kartalyan, commissioned by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, and masterworks by Komitas, Khachaturian, Mirzoyan, Hovhannes, and Schubert. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com.

APRIL 28 — Christina Maranci, "The Art of Armenia: An introduction," at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum. Co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR). 4 p.m.

MAY 4 and MAY 5 — 2nd Feminist Armenian Studies Workshop: Gendering Resistance and Revolution, at the University of California, Irvine. Co-sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR)/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Topics.

MAY 5 — Mathew Karanian, "The Armenian Highland: Western Armenia and the First Armenian Republic of 1918," 4 p.m. at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, 15105

Mission Hills Road, Mission Hills, CA. Co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Kharper Cultural Association, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

MAY 19 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada Presents the 2019 North American tour of the VEM Ensemble of the UCLA Herb Albert School of Music, Danielle Segen, mezzo-soprano, Ji Eun Hwang, violin 1, Aiko Richter, violin 2, Morgan O'Shaughnessey, viola, Jason Pegis, cello. 7:30 p.m. Tekeyan Cultural Association Los Angeles Chapter Cosponsored with Abril Bookstore, 415 E. Broadway, Glendale. Introductory remarks by Artistic Director Professor Movses Pogossian. Performing a world premiere of Tekeyan songs by the Los Angeles-based composer Artashes Kartalyan, commissioned by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, and masterworks by Komitas, Khachaturian, Mirzoyan, Hovhannes, and Schubert. Tekeyan Cultural Association, Pasadena-Glendale Chapter, TCA Beshgeturian Center, 1901 North Allen Ave., Altadena. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com.

FLORIDA

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 feature Armenian Duduk Soloist and Classical Clarinetist Mher Mnatsakanyan and Bassist Hova Burian. The performance will be held at Fillmore Miami Beach in Miami (Times 8:00-9:30pm)

MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 24 — Luncheon and Book Talk featuring Senator Lou D'Allesandro of New Hampshire, sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston and the Trinity Men's Union, 12:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Senator D'Allesandro will be discussing the book about his extraordinary career in politics, *Lion of the New Hampshire Senate and Thoughts for Presidential Hopefuls*. Donation for lunch: \$8. Tickets on sale at the door. Books available for purchase. For information, contact the Church Office, 617.354.0632, or www.htaac.org/calendar/event/652/.

MARCH 28-29 — Graduate Student Conference, "Entangled Encounters: Antiquity and Modernity in Armenian Studies," at Harvard University. Co-sponsored by the Hrant Dink Memorial CMES Fund and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR). Christina Maranci, Tufts University; David Zakarian, Oxford University; Marie-Aude Baronian, University of Michigan and Sylvia Alajaji, Franklin & Marshall College 5 to 7 p.m. Fong Auditorium, Boylston Hall, Harvard Yard, Cambridge.

MARCH 31-APRIL 14 — Needlelace Workshops at the Armenian Museum. Join us for this unique opportunity to continue the tradition of Armenian needlelace! Taught by Textile Curator Susan Lind-Sinianian, these three sessions are a unique opportunity to learn intricate regional techniques that were passed down through generations from mother to daughter. All materials are supplied so just show up ready to learn techniques practiced by Armenian women for centuries. Examples from the Museum's textile collection will provide inspiration as you find your voice by sewing edgings on linens. Have Armenian needlelace at home? Bring them in to share your family story! Sundays, 3-5 p.m. Adele & Haig Der Manueelian galleries, 3rd floor. Cost: \$90, Members discount: \$60. 65 Main St, Watertown.

MARCH 31 — Armenian Themed Painting Event. Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) New England. 2 p.m. at Demos Restaurant, 146 Lexington St. Waltham. Tickets include food, glass of wine, canvas, paint, and instruction by artist Katerina Delegas. Make new friends and bring home a masterpiece! Information and tickets <http://aiwainternational.org/paintnight>

[al.org/paintnight](http://aiwainternational.org/paintnight)

MARCH 31 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada Presents the 2019 North American tour of the VEM Ensemble of the UCLA Herb Albert School of Music, Danielle Segen, mezzo-soprano, Ji Eun Hwang, violin 1, Aiko Richter, violin 2, Morgan O'Shaughnessey, viola, Jason Pegis, cello. BOSTON Sunday, March 31, 1 p.m. cosponsored with Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Free admission. Introductory remarks by Artistic Director Professor Movses Pogossian. Performing a world premiere of Tekeyan songs by the Los Angeles-based composer Artashes Kartalyan, commissioned by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, and masterworks by Komitas, Khachaturian, Mirzoyan, Hovhannes, and Schubert. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com.

APRIL 1 — St James Men's Club Dinner Meeting - social hour and mezza at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m., St James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA. This meeting will be celebrated as a "Father, Daughter, and Son" evening. Speaker Steven Biondolillo is a pioneer in the fields of public health and human services marketing, and special-event fundraising. "Rethinking Teambuilding." Mezza and a Losh Kebab & Kheyra Dinner \$17/person. Ladies invited. For additional information call the St James Church office at 617-923-8860 or call Hapet Berberian at 781-367-6598.

APRIL 4 — Tufts Armenian Genocide Commemoration, Thursday, 7 p.m., featuring a lecture by Helen Evans, "Medieval Traditions of Commemoration." Co-sponsored by the Darakjian Jafarian Chair in Armenian History, the History Department at Tufts University, Tufts University, the Armenian Club at Tufts University, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

APRIL 4-JUNE 6 — SAVE THE DATE. First Thursdays: Jazz at the Armenian Museum, Watertown, Featuring the John Baboian Quartet. April 4 from 8-10 pm, May 2 from 8-10 pm, June 6 from 8-10 pm. Special thanks to the Dadourian Foundation for their generous grant in support of 2019 music events.

APRIL 5 — Friday, City of Smile Boston Friends will host an evening to benefit children with cancer in Armenia. Special guest Anna Hakobyan, the City of Smile Charitable Foundation's Honorary Chair, wife of Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, at the Westin Waltham Hotel for her inaugural visit to Boston. The City of Smile Charitable Foundation is based in Armenia, providing financial support to children with cancer. In addition, the foundation is developing training doctors to provide the best cancer care for oncological and hematological diseases. To learn more, visit www.cityofsmile.org. Tickets-\$150 each. For reservations, contact Postaljian@hotmail.com 617/921-8962 or Manuk0102@gmail.com 781/883-4470. Deadline to RSVP is March 22. Tickets will not be sold at the door. Cocktail Reception/Cash Bar - 6:30pm, Dinner and Program - 7:30 p.m.

APRIL 7 — "Vaping 101: A Seminar for Parents," sponsored by the Parent Partnership of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 12:30 pm-2 pm, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. All are invited to an educational session designed to help parents and caregivers learn more about the effects of the dangerous epidemic of teen vaping. Presenters are Carlene Newell, Health Educator/Tobacco Specialist, Karen Koretsky, Community Coalition Director, Arlington Youth Health and Safety Coalition, and Cindy Sheridan Curran, Arlington High School Truancy Officer. Admission free; light refreshments served. RSVP by April 5 to Director of Youth Ministries at youth@htaac.org. For information, log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/667/>

APRIL 7 — Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 7:00 am. Coffee & Conversation from 8:00am -9:00am. A crane lifts and pulls apart the two halves of Abstract Sculpture, made of steel and aluminum, to create a new sculptural shape. The annual reconfiguration is supported by the Park's Charles and Doreen Bilezikian Endowed Fund. Rain date: April 14. RSVP appreciated — hello@armenianheritagepark.org

April 11 — Jonathan Conlin, "Mr. Five Percent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the World's Richest Man," at the AGBU Center, 247 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Presented by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR). 7:30 p.m. Details to follow.

continued on next page



ARTS & LIVING

MASSACHUSETTS

from previous page

APRIL 12 – Presentation on “Connecting with your Family Through Mindfulness” by Dr. Christopher Willard, a nationally known clinical psychologist. Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford, MA. 6:30 p.m. Dr. Willard will discuss how to detect the early symptoms of youthful distress, and offer a variety of mindfulness strategies and approaches to help families effectively cope with everyday childhood anxieties. A complimentary light dinner will precede Dr. Willard’s presentation. Contact Sandra Adourian for reservations, (617) 926-7344 or email sandra.adourian@gmail.com.

APRIL 12 – Massachusetts State House annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Reception to follow. Boston. Bus transportation free from Watertown to State House. Deadline April 8 to register. Bostonagcc@gmail.com

APRIL 20– Annual Procession and Raising of the Armenian Flag at Lowell City Hall in commemoration of the 104th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Procession to be led by the Lowell Armenian-American Veterans Honor Guard. Participants should meet at the corner of Merrimack and John Sts. in Lowell at 9:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Armenian National Committee, Merrimack Valley (ANCMV) with the participation of all area Armenian Churches and Organizations.

APRIL 24 – Armenian Heritage Park Armenian Genocide Commemoration, 7 to 9 p.m. Bus transportation available. Reserve by April 22. Bostonagcc@gmail.com

APRIL 24 – Save the Date! “In the Shadow of Branches: Diana Apar/Berjouhi Kailian. The Armenian Museum. In recognition of Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day. 6–8.30 pm. The Armenian Museum presents a new exhibition in the Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries that explores the intertwined lives of diplomat Diana Agabeg Apar (1859–1937) and artist Berjouhi Kailian (1914–2014). The Armenian Museum wishes to engage in meaningful dialogue around this solemn subject that permeates Armenian experience around the world. Candlelight viewing of the galleries followed by a discussion of the traumatic effects of the Genocide to remember the victims, survivors, and individuals who chose to intervene.

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 Nevert 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/.

APRIL 27 – SAVE THE DATE! Hai Guin Scholarship Association 2019 Spring Benefit Luncheon. Belmont Country Club. Saturday, 11:30 a.m. Sip, Shop and Support! Featuring Fashions and Pop-Up Shop by St. John. Please contact Christine Berberian 978-500-1116 or Andrea Garabedian 978-618-3030 to reserve your tickets (\$65 each).

APRIL 30 – Panel, “Bucking the Trend? Why Is Armenia Moving Towards Democracy When Authoritarianism is on the March Worldwide?” (provisional title), 7:30 p.m.: featuring Anna Ohanyan (Stonehill College), Dmitri Sotiropoulos (Visiting Scholar, Center for European Studies, Harvard), and Valerie Sperling (Clark University), moderated by Lisa Gulesserian. At Harvard University. Co-sponsored by the NAASR/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, AGBU YP Boston, and the Harvard Armenian Students Association.

MAY 3 – 117th Diocesan Assembly Gala Banquet – V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan, Primate, presiding. Boston Marriott Burlington. Hosted by St. James Armenian Church in Watertown. Save the Date – Details to Follow.

MAY 4 – Celebrate Public Art two-part program during ARTWEEK BOSTON. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. 1 p.m. World Labyrinth Day: Walk as One. Join people in cities and towns in 35 countries world-wide walking in peace and harmony including Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay and USA followed by reception to view the 2019 configuration of the abstract sculpture, hosted by Eastern Lamejun Bakers and MEM Tea Imports. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org.

MAY 6 – Irina Ghaplanyan, “Post-Soviet Armenia: The New National Elite and the New National Narrative,” at the AGBU Center, 247 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by the NAASR/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues. Further details to follow.

MAY 9 – The Armenian Museum of America and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) present an illustrated talk by author Matthew Karanian, *The Armenian Highland: Western Armenia and the First Republic of 1918*. On Thursday, May 9, 2019, 7:30 pm at the Armenian Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown. Copies of *The Armenian Highland* will be available for purchase. Reception following program.

MAY 10 – Lenny Clarke & Friends. Fundraiser to benefit the Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe Building Fund. 8 p.m. The Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, 1280 Boston Road, Bradford. Mezze/Appetizers are Included & Cash Bar. Call Dro Kanayan at 978 828 5755 or Stephanie Naroian at 978 835 1636 for tickets or tables and packages are available. Tickets will only be sold in advance, not at the door.

MAY 15 – The Tekeyan Cultural Association and the Armenian General Benevolent Union will present a literary evening with writer Aris Janigian, author of *Waiting for Lipchitz at Chateau Marmont*, *Bloodvine* and *Riverbig*, among others, with discussant author, poet and editor Susan Barba. 7.30 p.m., AGBU Building, 247 Mount Auburn Building. Free, reception to follow. Books will be on sale.

MAY 19 – SAVE THE DATE! Concert at the Armenian Museum. Concert to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Komitas Vardapet and poet Hovhannes Tumanyan. Sunday, 2-4 p.m.

MAY 19 – “International Food Festival – A Taste of the World,” presented by the Women of Holy Trinity, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 12:30-2:30 p.m., Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Join us to sample authentic cuisine from 9 countries: Armenia, Iran/Persia, Lebanon, Greece, France, Russia, Brazil, China and Italy. Donation: \$15 adults; \$10 children 12 and under. Tickets on sale at the door. For further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632.

JUNE 1 – Armenian Food Festival, Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Armenian Church at Hye Pointe, 1280 Boston Road, Haverhill. Chicken, Losh Kebab, Kheyma, and Dolma Dinners. Armenian Cuisine featuring Spinach Pie, Lahmajoon, Cheese Beoreg, and more. Pastries Paklava, Kadayif, Cheoreg and more Plus Activities for the Children, White Elephant Table, Gift Basket Raffles.

JUNE 12 – Tea and Tranquility. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday from 4:30 p.m. -6 p.m. Meet & Greet. Walk the Labyrinth. Enjoy refreshing Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and dessert. Introduction to walking the labyrinth, mindful and meditative walking at 4:45pm. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

JUNE 13 – SAVE THE DATE. Film Screening: “Motherland” At the Armenian Museum in Watertown. Cosponsored by the Armenian International Women’s Association (AIWA). Thursday. More details coming soon!

JUNE 27 – Under a Strawberry Moon. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Thursday at 8:30 p.m. Meet & Greet. Moonlit Labyrinth Walk. Luscious Chocolate Dipped Strawberries, hosted by vickilee’s and refreshing Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and the fabulous Berklee Jazz Trio. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

JUNE 28 – July 10 – St. James Armenian Church 7th Pilgrimage to Armenia. Led by Fr. Arakel Aljalian. Join us and Discover the Land of our Ancestors. All are welcome. Registration deposits due March 1; Full Payment due April 1. For full details visit www.stjameswatertown.org/armenia.

JULY 17 – Tea and Tranquility. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday from 4:30-6 p.m. Meet & Greet. Walk the Labyrinth. Enjoy refreshing ice teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and dessert. Introduction to walking the labyrinth, mindful and meditative walking at 4:45pm. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

AUGUST 14 – Tea and Tranquility. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday from 4:30-6 p.m. Meet & Greet. Walk the Labyrinth. Enjoy refreshing Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and dessert. Introduction to walking the labyrinth, mindful and meditative walking at 4:45pm. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

AUGUST 22 – Under the August Moon. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Thursday from 7:30– 9 p.m. Delightful evening for supporters,

partners & friends featuring fabulous signature dishes, hosted by anoush’ella and the Berklee Jazz Trio. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

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

SEPTEMBER 22 – Sunday Afternoon for Families and Friends. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. 2:00pm-4:00pm. Wonderful afternoon with The Hye Guys Ensemble featuring Ron Sahatjian and Joe Kouyoumjian. Hoodies, Face Painting and more RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

OCTOBER 19 – The Vosbikians are coming to the Merrimack Valley. The Armenian Friends of America proudly present their Annual HYE KEF 5 Dance, featuring The Vosbikians. The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Andover, MA. Tickets Purchased before 9/13/19 will include the Great Venue, Outstanding Buffet, The Vosbikian Band and 5 Free Raffle Tickets Adults \$75.00 & Students 21 & under \$65 Specially priced AFA Rooms available through 9/17/19. For Tickets and more information, Contact: Lu Sirmaian 978-683-9121 or Sharke’ Der Apkarian at 978-808-0598 Visit www.ArmeniaFriendsofAmerica.org

NOVEMBER 16 – St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary School 35th Anniversary Celebration. 6:30 PM Cocktail Reception, 7:30 PM Dinner and Program. The Westin Waltham - Boston, MA \$150 per person.

MICHIGAN

MARCH 27 – The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada Presents the 2019 North American tour of the VEM Ensemble of the UCLA Herb Albert School of Music, Danielle Segen, mezzo-soprano, Ji Eun Hwang, violin 1, Aiko Richter, violin 2, Morgan O’Shaughnessey, viola, Jason Pegis, cello. Wednesday, March 27, 8 p.m. Cosponsored with Music Guild of St. John Armenian Church Recreation Center, 22001 Northwestern Hwy, Southfield. Free admission. Introductory remarks by Artistic Director Professor Moses Pogossian. Performing a world premiere of Tekeyan songs by the Los Angeles-based composer Artashes Kartalyan, commissioned by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, and masterworks by Komitas, Khachaturian, Mirzoyan, Hovhannes, and Schubert. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com.

NEW JERSEY

MAY 18 – St. Nersess Armenian Seminary invites you to Hope & Gratitude, a celebration honoring Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Bishop-elect Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan. 6:30 p.m. Old Tappan Manor, Old Tappan, NJ. For more info on reservations and booklet sponsorships, please go to www.stnersess.edu.

OCTOBER 25 – 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

MARCH 28 – Ara Sanjian, “Unwelcome Topics in Armenian Diaspora Historiography,” at Columbia University. 7 p.m. Co-sponsored by the Columbia University Armenian Center, Armenian Society of Columbia University, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR)/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, and Research Institute on Turkey.

APRIL 9 – Alessandro Safina, will bring in his pop-opera rhythms to the US. Safina will be accompanied by Victor Espinola and the Forbidden Saints. The tour will feature Armenian Duduk Soloist Mher Mnatsakanyan and Bassist Hova Burian will take part. Official FaceBook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AlessandroSafinaUSA/>

APRIL 10 – Wednesday, 7 p.m., Jonathan Conlin, “Mr. Five Percent: The Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, the World’s Richest Man,” at Columbia University. Co-sponsored by the Columbia Armenian Center and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

APRIL 18 – Sato Moughalian, “Feast of Ashes: The Life and Art of David Ohannessian,” at Columbia University. Co-sponsored by the Columbia Armenian Center, Research Institute on Turkey, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR). 7 p.m.

APRIL 28- Sunday at 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Armenian Genocide Commemoration at Times Square, NYC Sponsored by : Knight & Daughters of Vartan, AGBU, ADL-Ramgavars. Armenian Assembly of America, ANCA and Armenian National Council

continued on next page



ARTS & LIVING

VEM Ensemble to Perform at Holy Trinity Armenian Church

VEM, from page 11

made his American debut as a violinist with the Boston Pops in 1990, about which Richard Dyer of the *Boston Globe* wrote: "There is freedom in his playing, but also taste and discipline. It was a fiery, centered, and highly musical performance..." Prizewinner of several important competitions, including the 1986 Tchaikovsky International Competition, he extensively performed as soloist and recitalist in Europe, Northern America, and Asia. He was one of the 2016/17 Artists in Residence of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. He is Artistic Director of the acclaimed Dilijan Chamber Music Series, currently in its 14th season.

Champion of new music, Pogossian has premiered more than 70 works. In Los Angeles, Pogossian frequently performs on Monday Evening Concerts, and is a recipient of the 2011 Forte Award, given for outstanding contributions to the promotion of new music. Pogossian's discography includes the recently released "Complete Sonatas and Partitas" by J. S. Bach (New Focus Recordings), as well as solo violin CDs "Blooming Sounds" and "In Nomine," and Kurtág's "Kafka Fragments," with soprano Tony Arnold.

Since earning his advanced degrees from the Komitas Conservatory in Armenia and the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow, Pogossian has held teaching positions at Duquesne, Bowling Green, Wayne State, and SUNY Buffalo Universities. Deeply committed to musical education, Movses Pogossian is currently Professor of Violin at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. He proudly participates in the Music for Food project, which raises awareness of the hunger problem faced by a large percent of the populations and gives the opportunity to experience the powerful role music can play as a catalyst for change.



Prof. Movses Pogossian

VEM violinist Ji Eun Hwang was born in Korea and has performed as a soloist and chamber musician across United States and South Korea. She began her music studies at an early age and studied in the Preparatory school of Korea National University of Art and in Seoul National University with a Bachelor's degree in violin performance. After then, she studied with an Artist Diploma in violin performance at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University with Professor Mark Kaplan and Ik-Hwan Bae with a full scholarship. She attended Tanglewood Music Festival, Sarasota Music Festival, Heifetz International Music Institute, Texas Music Festival with full scholarships and Pontlevoy music festival in France. Her musical development has been furthered in masterclasses with Mihaela Martin, Patinka Kopec, Samuel Rhodes, Yael Weiss, Ani Kavafian, Pamela Frank, Mauricio Fuks, and Lucie Robert. In the past year, she has been the featured performer with many solo and chamber recitals and won several violin competitions. She played at the Yurim promising artist recital and the Young San young artist

recital, and performed with the Gwangju Symphony Orchestra and City of Mokpo Symphony Orchestra. Since 2012, she has joined Sejong Soloists as a guest artist and she is a principal violinist of the Sejong City Philharmonic Orchestra. She is currently pursuing a Master of Music in violin performance at Herb Alpert School of Music, UCLA with Professor Movses Pogossian.

Aiko Jimena Richter is originally from Baltimore, Maryland and joined VEM in 2018. She has been a fellow at major festivals including the National Orchestral Institute, Domaine Forget Academy, Festival Napa Valley, and Kent/Blossom Music Festival, during which she performed with the Cleveland Orchestra. She is also featured on the 2015 Naxos label recording of Corigliano's Symphony No. 1 as a member of the NOI festival orchestra. As a soloist and chamber musician, she has performed in masterclasses for Gil Shaham, Noah Bendix-Balgley, Ani Kavafian, Brooklyn Rider, and the Kronos Quartet among others. Aiko earned her B.M. at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill as a student of Nicholas DiEugenio and is currently pursuing her M.M. at UCLA with Movses Pogossian and Varty Manouelian.

Violist Morgan O'Shaughnessey has performed live on RAI Radio 3 at Palazzo Quirinale for the President of the Italian Republic. He has presented several recitals of modern Italian works at Teatro la Fenice in Venice as a part of the festival *lo spirito della musica di venezia*, as well as recorded an album of the complete chamber music of Gino Gornini in collaboration with the Giorgio Cini Foundation, which was released on the Tactus label. He performs on a fine viola by Vincenzo Cavani di Spilamberto, and a bow by Darrell Hanks of Ashland, Oregon. His extensive discography with legendary producer Sylvia Masy includes string arrangements for Johnny Depp, Rihanna, and Soilwork. He holds a BM from San Francisco Conservatory, where he studied with Jodi Levitz and members of the Kronos Quartet. His other musical interests include the Scottish highland bagpipes, Swedish nyckelharpa, and Quebecois fiddle music. A passionate advocate for community involvement in music and art, O'Shaughnessey is the artistic director for Springsart Series: a non-profit community concert series that produces accomplished regional artists in interactive artistic community events in a yurt deep in the forest near Ashland, Oregon. Visit www.moshalto.com for more information on upcoming concert engagements and album releases.

Jason Pegis, named "a true talent" by Montreal's *Le Devoir*, started cello lessons at age 16 and holds a Bachelor's of Music from Willamette University where he studied with Jason Duckles and Valdine Mishkin, and a Master's of Music from McGill University where he studied with Matt Haimovitz. While working on his Bachelor's, he joined the school's Waller Piano Trio, which made news as the first chamber group from Oregon to become national finalists of the 2014 MTNA Young Artist Chamber Music Competition. He has seen much success in solo competitions as well; in 2013 and 2016 he won the Willamette University Concerto Competitions, and in 2015 winning the Eugene Symphony Young Artist Competition and Outstanding Cellist Award, after which he appeared as a soloist with the orchestra for two outdoor concerts

for audiences of thousands. He also received the 2016 Zodiac Music Festival Young Artist Award, numerous instrumental scholarships from Mu Phi Epsilon, grants from the Williamson Foundation for Music, and an 1880 Neuner-Hornsteiner cello loan from the Carlsen Cello Foundation. In 2017, he became a finalist of the McGill Concerto Competition, and held a principal cello position of



Members of VEM

the McGill Symphony Orchestra. Jason has performed chamber music with artists like Johannes Moser, Axel Strauss, Victor Fournelle-Blain, Neal Stulberg, and Denis Bouriakov. He currently studies with Antonio Lysy in Los Angeles where he has started his Doctorate of Musical Arts and string teaching assistantship at UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music.

Praised for possessing "extraordinary expressivity, and a beautiful voice" (*Long Beach Gazette*), Danielle Segen is an emerging talent in the Los Angeles music scene. Danielle earned her Master of Music degree at University of California Los Angeles, where she studied with Juliana Gondek. At UCLA she was seen regularly on the opera stage with past appearances including Prince Charming in "Cendrillon," Dorabella in "Così fan tutte," and the titular role in both "Tragedy of Carmen" and the West Coast premiere of William Bolcom's "Lucrezia."

Equally at home singing new compositions as she is performing from the standard repertoire of opera and art song, Danielle has been sought after to workshop, record, and perform new works. Most recently she collaborated with composer Jeff Kryka to record the theme music for "Traces of the Brush," a critically acclaimed documentary on world renowned Chinese art historian and calligrapher Fu Shen, directed by Eros Zhao. With the VEM String Quartet Segen has enjoyed international success, performing at the Komitas Chamber Music Hall in Yerevan, Armenia as well as in the Dilijan Chamber Music Series at Zipper Hall. This upcoming year will see Danielle on concert stages across the U.S. and internationally with VEM performing Armenian art song arrangements, as well as world premieres of a new song cycle for mezzo-soprano and string quartet by Artashes Kartalyan and a new string quartet arrangement of Tigran Mansurian's "Four Hayrens."

VEM will perform at 1 p.m., Sunday, March 31 cosponsored with Holy Trinity Armenian Church at 145 Brattle St.

For a sample performance, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdGXmv8YIyc>.

CALENDAR

from previous page

OHIO

APRIL 28 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir, *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*, Sunday 2 p.m. Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage. In co-sponsorship with St. Gregory of Narek Church and Armenian Cultural Group, 2929 Richmond Road Beachwood, Ohio 74122 RSVP info@mmjh.org or (216) 593-0575. Book sale/signing during reception following the presentation – proceeds will be donated

RHODE ISLAND

MARCH 30 — Sainly Women's Day dedicated to the Three Women from the Holy Gospels, hosted by the Women's Guild of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence, 70 Jefferson St. 10:00 a.m. greeting of

guests, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service in Sanctuary followed by a Lenten Luncheon in the Egavian Cultural Center.. Guest speaker Dr. Fotini Dionisopoulos, DMD. Proceeds will be divided between CASP and the Vanadzor Old Age Home in Armenia. Donation \$35.00. For reservations please call Ann Ayrassian 401-529-5210.

TEXAS

APRIL 4 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*. Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Holocaust Museum Houston. Co-sponsored by Armenian Church of St. Kevork, 9220 Kirby Drive (Suite 100), Houston, Texas. RSVP (713) 527-1604. Book sale/signing will follow presentation – proceeds will be donated

CANADA

MARCH 29 — Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and

Canada Presents the 2019 North American tour of the VEM Ensemble of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music, Danielle Segen, mezzo-soprano, Ji Eun Hwang, violin 1, Aiko Richter, violin 2, Morgan O'Shaughnessey, viola, Jason Pegis, cello. Wednesday, March 27, 8 p.m. Cosponsored with Music Guild of St. John Armenian Church Recreation Center, 22001 Northwestern Hwy, Southfield. Free admission. Introductory remarks by Artistic Director Professor Movses Pogossian. Performing a world premiere of Tekeyan songs by the Los Angeles-based composer Artashes Kartalyan. Friday, Tekeyan Center, 825 Manoogian St., St. Laurent, Canada. For tickets call 514-747-6680. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com.

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

COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Karabakh Conflict at Crossroads

By Edmond Y. Azadian

If the pundits thus far have believed that the Karabakh conflict is one of the most intractable problems of our time, now new elements have emerged to render the problem even more convoluted and therefore more dangerous, all under the guise of forthcoming peace initiatives.

The first salvo to augment the tensions came from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group co-chairs, the group tasked with bringing the issue to a peaceful conclusion, with a sterner tone than before.

Throughout the negotiations, the co-chairs treated the issues with kid gloves, leaving the initiatives to the parties of the conflict, and agreed to play an advisory role and to consolidate for the international community whatever terms the parties involved found acceptable.

That tone was reversed completely in the statement issued by the co-chairs on March 1. Now an ironclad format is being proposed, and the tone is that of an ultimatum. This transformation seems to be a reflection of the perception of the co-chairs that changes have taken place in the region which are amenable to forcing conditions that thus far have been deemed unacceptable to the parties.

The Azerbaijani government's positive reaction, contrasting with Armenia's reservations, if not outright rejection, indicate that the weaker party is Armenia.

We have to be mindful that the co-chairs have been doing their homework all along and are aligning their own self-interests within the framework of the conditions proposed to the parties in the conflict. We should never be so naive as to believe that the co-chairs representing major powers would subordinate their interests to those of the warring parties.

Therefore, Armenia's stand-off with Russia has been factored into the formulation of this new approach. In addition, demotions in Karabakh's military's power structure and destabilizing political movements within that republic have been interpreted by the international community to mean that Armenia must be ready to accept terms that thus far it has found inadmissible.

At the height of the recent Russo-Turkish tensions over Syria, there were rumors circulating in Moscow that President Vladimir Putin was contemplating the abrogation of the 1921 Treaty of Kars between Lenin's Russia and Ataturk's Turkey which sealed the Armenian-Turkish border. To dispel all those rumors, Putin and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey exchanged some documents, in an atmosphere akin to exchanging love notes. Putin offered a copy of the treaty in exchange for a photograph by Erdogan featuring representatives of the two sides signing the abominable treaty. The exchange took place on March 15, on the anniversary of the treaty. Armenia was not a party to the Moscow signing but was forced to sign it in Kars, in October of the same year.

A seemingly insignificant gesture comes to further elucidate Russia's uncompromising position towards Armenia; indeed, the abduction by Moscow to Baku of the Talish leader Fahreddin Abuzoda should not be considered a coincidence.

Incidentally Talish and Lezgy minorities are struggling in Azerbaijan to achieve self-determination and their leaders have been languishing in Azeri prisons. Armenians have been rightfully asking Azeri President Ilham Aliyev to set a precedent of allowing the autonomy of those minorities to divulge the nature of the "highest degree of autonomy within Azerbaijan" his government is promising to the people of Nagorno Karabakh.

The OSCE issued the framework of negotiations in preparation for the forthcoming summit between Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and President Aliyev. That alerted the parties to resort to their respective posturing; Azerbaijan unleashed its offensive war games (versus defensive) deploying all categories of state-of-the-art military hardware. The Armenian side, on the other hand, decided wisely to put its house in order. The security councils of Armenia and Karabakh held an unprecedented joint meeting, where Pashinyan came out with a powerful state-

ment laying the groundwork of Armenia's position as well as the conceptual approach to the basic tenets of the negotiations.

The joint meeting was also a powerful statement of unity between Armenia and Karabakh, particularly needed in light of Pashinyan's insistence on Karabakh's participation in the negotiations, lest any doubt was left about the unity between the two entities.

Pashinyan's statement that he was not mandated by the Karabakh people's vote to negotiate on their behalf should not be construed to mean that there is an erosion in Armenia's determination to guarantee Karabakh people's security and self-determination.

Although the Minsk group co-chairs tell the two sides that no new element can be introduced to impede the negotiating process, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova has stated that Moscow would be willing to entertain Pashinyan's wish, if both parties agree to it. And this, she has added is the position of all the co-chairs.

All along, the meetings have been characterized as discussions. When the parties engage in negotiations, rather than discussions, recording every element of agreement in the process, Karabakh cannot be left out because its signature will be necessary on the final document.

Currently a very healthy public debate is taking place with the participation of representatives from Pashinyan's movement and the former regime, incredibly with minimal incrimination against each other.

The press statements of the co-chairs come with a preamble admonishing the parties "to reduce tensions and reduce inflammatory rhetoric." This refers to Azerbaijan and particularly to Mr. Aliyev. On the other hand, they ask "to refrain from statement and actions suggesting significant changes to the situation on the ground."

This, in turn, refers to Pashinyan's insistence on the participation of Karabakh representatives in the negotiations.

Some analysts believe that by the above position, Armenia has been pushing itself into an untenable situation, since Aliyev has refused that proposal out of hand. But Armenia maintains a flexible position by its willingness to engage in negotiations, even without Karabakh's participation.

Historically, the negotiations have been between three parties: even the cease fire negotiated in Bishkek in 1994 was signed by a Karabakh representative. Armenia has been alone in the negotiations against Azerbaijan since 1997, because Presidents Robert Kocharyan and later Serzh Sargsyan had worn double hats by virtue of their participation in the Karabakh war as leaders.

The trickiest part of the negotiation is contained in the principles laid down in the statement of the co-chairs. Those principles have been discussed time and again in many prior sessions in Madrid, Kazan, Geneva, Key West, and on and on. But today, they have become as crystalized and rigid as final terms for the parties to accept.

The following are those terms:

- The return of the territories surrounding Nagorno Karabakh to Azerbaijan's control
- An interim status for Nagorno Karabakh providing guarantees for security and self-governance.
- A corridor linking Armenia with Nagorno Karabakh
- Future determination of the final legal status of Nagorno Karabakh through a legally-binding expression of will.
- International guarantees that would include a peace-keeping operation.

As one may detect easily, these principles mostly favor Azerbaijan. Whatever Azerbaijan could not achieve on the battlefield, it is trying to achieve at the negotiation table with the help of the international community. The party which has lost the war is being offered the upper hand.

This reminds one of the aftermath of World War I, when a defeated Turkey was allowed to resurrect itself as one of the most powerful nations in the Middle East, courtesy of the Great Powers.

The above principles come with many loopholes and they need further explanation and exploration. That is why the Armenian side has requested clarification on all the points.

see EDITORIAL, page 19



Mirror Spectator



Established 1932
An ADL Publication

EDITOR
Alin K. Gregorian

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR
Marc Mgrditchian

SENIOR EDITORIAL COLUMNIST:
Edmond Y. Azadian

CONTRIBUTORS:

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

CORRESPONDENTS:

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

Contributing Photographers:
Jirair Hovsepiyan

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

Baikar Association, Inc.

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

Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

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

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

ISSN 0004-234X

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

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

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

Baikar Association, Inc.

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

In Memoriam

Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan

(1956-2019)

By Dr. Hratch Tchilingirian

Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan was one of the most courageous, principled and forward looking church leaders in the contemporary history of the Armenian Church. His youth, charisma, strong pastoral and administrative leadership were assets that the community in Turkey needed at the time of his election as Patriarch. However, his decade-long illness made it impossible to fulfil the hopes of the expected new era in the life of the Armenian community in Turkey.

Physically a towering figure, even as he resembled a biblical character, his thinking was fully in step with the times, creative and purposeful. Above all, as a priest and hierarch, he was a deeply spiritual person and tried to live what he preached. He became an inspiring role model for multitudes of young people for whom he dedicated serious time and energy with the love of an elder brother.

For Patriarch Mesrob, Christian faith and Armenian culture and language were inseparably intertwined – like body and soul. Unlike many high-ranking clergymen, his sermons were almost entirely focused on the Gospel message and its relevance to Armenians today. His Eastern message to the Armenian people on the occasion of the Jubilee of Christianity in Armenia in 2001, was indicative: “Although you have not personally seen the miraculous Resurrection of the Savior, re-confess and strengthen your faith in the witness of the first Illuminators, St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew and the other Apostles. Anchor unshakably your spiritual life in the preaching, character and exemplary life of our Patron Saint, Gregory the Illuminator, and the multitudes of other Christ-loving holy fathers.”

When in August 1999 a devastating earthquake hit Turkey’s Marmara region, killing almost 20,000 people, injuring more than 27,000 people and leaving hundreds of thousands homeless, Patriarch Mesrob was one of the first leaders behind the immediate organization of relief work. Within hours after the earthquake, he mobilized the Armenian community and sent rescue teams to the affected areas to help the victims. Aid distribution continued for months. This enormous effort was organized despite far-right Nationalist Action Party Health Minister Osman Durmus’ notorious decision to reject rescuers and aid from Armenia, Greece, and Romania. In a touching move, Mutafyan adopted three Armenian orphans whose parents were killed in the earthquake—one of them a 12-year-old girl whose left leg was amputated. He assured them that they will be taken care of until they graduate from university.

Two of the eminent patriarchs that Mutafyan admired for their indelible leadership and prolific scholarship were Hovhanness IXth Golod (1715-1741) and the formidable Malachia Ormanyan (1896-1908). But most influential in his life was the saintly Patriarch Shnork Kalustian (1963-1990), his spiritual father and a constant inspiration for the ideal religious life.

Mutafyan’s appreciation and taste for aesthetic details brought a certain degree of sophistication to the Patriarchal office and regalia, yet he remained faithful to church tradition and the rich history of the Patriarchate, which was established in 1461.

The assassination of Hrant Dink in January 2007 had a shocking effect on Mutafyan, as he too, started to receive more frequent death threats. In June of that year, he went to Ankara to meet with the Chief of the General Staff, General Yasar Büyükanit, the top military man in Turkey, a rather unusual visit for a religious leader, but indicative of the tortuous relationship of the church and the community with the Turkish state. When asked why Mutafyan wished to meet with the military head rather than the Prime Minister, he said there were allegations that Hrant Dink was assassinated by the security forces and, therefore, he wanted to ask the army chief “the necessary question: What would you advise the Armenians? What should we do?”

In that fateful year, he was involved in a serious car accident from which he did not fully recover. Along with the anxieties caused by death threats, his health gradually deteriorated for mysterious reasons. In the summer of 2008, the Holy Saviour Armenian Hospital in Istanbul officially announced that the Patriarch is afflicted with Alzheimer’s disease. Eight years later, in October 2016, the Clergy Council of the Patriarchate officially retired him through a canonical procedure, but the Turkish government did not recognize it and insisted that Mutafyan is the Patriarch as long as he is alive. For over a decade until his death on 8th March 2019, he remained in vegetative state in the hospital, away from public view and unable to carry out his patriarchal duties. He is survived by his mother Mari Mutafyan and his sisters.

Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan was elected 84th Patriarch of “Istanbul and All of Turkey” on 14 October 1998, at the young age of 42, after months of state interference in the election process. The election took place only after the Governor of Istanbul sent the required approval of the Government, which permitted

the Armenian community in Turkey to proceed. The 79 lay and 10 clergy delegates of the General Assembly of the Armenian Church Community officially represented 15,811 church members from Istanbul, Kayseri, Diyarbakir, Iskenderun, Kirikhan and Vakifkoy.

While historically known as the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople – and still referred to as such in Armenian – the reference to the ancient capital of Byzantium is a taboo and considered a politically charged term. Indeed, a few months before his election, a Turkish television accused Archbishop Mesrob of committing “a crime” by placing a wreath at the funeral of his predecessor with the Armenian inscription: “Patriarchate of Constantinople”. Likewise, the Greek Patriarch, who is recognized as the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople by the Orthodox world, is referred to in Turkey and by officialdom as the “Patriarch of Fener”, after the neighborhood where the patriarchal headquarters are located. It must be noted that both Patriarchates do not have legal status, which means they cannot engage in legal transactions. Ninety-six years after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the Turkish state continues to refuse to recognize them as legal personalities.

At the time of his election, the Turkish state had implicitly made its displeasure with Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan’s candidacy known. In addition to his audacious public pronouncements as the Chancellor of the Patriarchate, during previous Patriarchal elections in 1990 and 1998, the charismatic bishop had led the campaign for a “people’s choice,” rather than supporting the candidate favored by the Turkish government. The



mobilization during these elections became the catalyst for the community to become active again and engage with the Government and politics. Mutafyan mobilized a group of young and progressive Armenians and engaged them in community affairs. Among them was Hrant Dink, who became a spokesperson of the Patriarchate in the early 1990s and from where the idea for Agos germinated. The hunger to speak out and the desire to address the “existential” problems surrounding the Armenian Church and community institutions in general, sparked the creation of the bilingual weekly newspaper in April 1996.

Patriarch Mesrob was invariably criticized by the media in Armenia and the Diaspora for statements he had made or policies he had adopted. Fierce criticism were levelled at him from Istanbul to Echmiadzin and to various circles in the Diaspora, especially when he was publicly critical of the Catholicos or when he championed the cause of the Melkonian School in Cyprus, or when he spoke, for domestic reasons in Turkey, against the recognition of the Genocide by foreign parliaments. One Armenian party newspaper preposterously warned that Mutafyan is exporting “his eccentricities to other communities with unchecked imperial ambitions.”

Most notably, in June 1998, Mutafyan made headlines for commenting on the French National Assembly’s affirmation of the Armenian Genocide. “The Armenian community in Turkey finds itself between two fires,” he said. “The state of Armenia, the Armenian Diaspora and the Turkish government, all three have different views and opinions... when these three shoot at each other, we are right in the middle,” he said with frustration.

Leading an extremely vulnerable community required understanding, diplomacy, patience and judgment. Surely, Mutafyan did not satisfy everyone—Armenia, Diaspora or Turkey—but he had said from the outset of his tenure that his responsibility is to place the interests of his flock and community above all other considerations.

In the early 2000s, Patriarch Mesrob and Hrant Dink had bitter disagreements, especially over the critical issue of as to who should represent the Armenian community before the government. At times the dispute over policy and procedure played out in the media. Nevertheless, their essential problems and issues vis a vis the Turkish state and society were the same: state-instituted discrimination of minorities and erosion of their rights. In his eulogy at Hrant Dink’s funeral, Patriarch Mesrob lamented the “enmity against the Armenians” created in society and said efforts to eliminate such characterizations should “begin with our school textbooks and our schools to change the attitude, mentality, and practices that are behind the perception of Armenians as enemies, so that our government and people accept us not as foreigners and potential enemies but as citizens of the Republic of Turkey, who have lived for thousands of years on this soil.”

Long before Hrant Dink’s entrance into public life, in the late 1980s there were steady public campaigns through the media and the courts against a number of clergymen—the religious leadership of the community—among them Bishop Mesrob, when he was the outspoken young Chancellor of the Patriarchate. He was falsely accused of supporting, predictably, “terrorist acts against Turks” in sensationalist newspaper headlines. Among a host of preposterous court cases brought against him in the same period, one is notable. In 1987 Mutafyan appeared in a Turkish Criminal Court in Istanbul to face charges for violating the country’s statutes on the preservation of historical buildings. A state prosecutor had charged him of being guilty of covering the leaking roof of a balcony of the Armenian Patriarchate with rubber-based tiles (“eternite”). The prosecutor asked the court to sentence Mutafyan to two- to five-year prison term for the offense. A confidential report, revealed during Hrant Dink’s trial, showed that Mutafyan was under surveillance by the police and intelligence services “for his Armenian nationalist inclinations”—as labelled by the state agencies.

Upon his election as Patriarch, Mutafyan was able to develop a *modus vivendi* with the state, even as he demanded respect for the rights of the church and community with tact and discretion. During a visit to Ankara in 2001, he assured the Chairman of the Grand National Assembly that “the interests of the Turkish Armenians are in line with the interests of the State and the place where the problems of the Community are ought to be discussed is the [Parliament].”

Among the critical challenges Patriarch Mesrob faced at his election was the lack of adequately trained and sufficient number of priests to staff Istanbul’s 33 Armenian churches. Over the years he successfully recruited a cadre of young candidates, trained and ordained them to the priesthood. Many of them continue to serve the Patriarchate until today.

Minas Mutafyan, his baptismal name, was born in Istanbul in 1956. Upon completing his elementary education at the local Essayan Armenian School, he attended a British secondary school in Istanbul and later the American High School in Stuttgart, Germany. He graduated with Bachelors in sociology and philosophy from the University of Memphis, Tennessee. He was ordained a priest in May 1979 by his spiritual mentor Patriarch Shnork Kalustian. Mutafyan continued his graduate studies in Old Testament and archaeology at the Hebrew University and the American Biblical Institute in Jerusalem. In September 1986 he was consecrated a bishop by Catholicos Vazken I in Echmiadzin. While continuing his post graduate studies, he served the pastoral and spiritual needs of the community through various churches in Istanbul and the Princes’ Islands and held high level positions within the Patriarchate.

Being Patriarch of Turkey is not an envious position. The Armenian community, the religious and lay leadership in Turkey have to constantly juggle their ethnic and state loyalties. “Every Armenian in Turkey grows up with three elements in his personality: being a Turkish citizen, then his heritage as an Armenian, and then his faith as a Christian in a country which is overwhelmingly-99-percent-Moslem,” Mutafyan had explained in an interview.

The elections of church and charity trusts are major “political” issue for the Turkish Government. It is one of the controlling mechanisms of the state by which it manages the affairs of the minorities and ensures loyalty. Since 2013, the Government has not allowed minorities to hold new elections. Previously, even participation in elections outside Turkey were not allowed. For instance, in 1995, Ankara forbade lay delegates from Istanbul to participate in elections for a new Catholicos in Armenia. A year earlier, the Government had ordered the Patriarchate to disband its Council of lay advisors.

In the coming months it remains to be seen as to how the Turkish government will handle the election of Mutafyan’s successor. Predictably, the election process will face the customary state-imposed restrictions and administrative hurdles, which will be exacerbated by the personality clashes and ambitions of the high-ranking clergymen at the Patriarchate. Turkish law mandates Mutafyan’s successor to be a Turkish citizen or at least born in Turkey, preferably one who has completed the mandatory Turkish military service, which limits the list of eligible candidates to only a few. None have the caliber and gravitas of Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan. Enormous challenges are ahead of the Church and community in Turkey.

(For a wider context and discussion of the Armenian community in Turkey, see Hratch Tchilingirian’s “The Other Citizens.”)



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Church Saves AGBU Center in Toronto In a Last Minute Financial Arrangement

This week's article is about a major controversy in the Armenian community of Toronto, Canada, which has been fortunately resolved for now.

On October 30, 2018, the AGBU Toronto Chapter issued a statement, announcing that it could no longer afford to pay its Center's operational cost which "has become staggering."

The AGBU Chapter further announced that it has received an offer from the Centennial College to buy the AGBU Center. Subsequently, it became known that the price for the AGBU Center was 8.5 million Canadian dollars. The Central Board — the headquarters of AGBU in New York City — had endorsed the decision to sell the property which was built in 1981.

The immediate impact of this potential sale was on the operations of the adjacent Holy Trinity Armenian Church whose members had used both the parking lot and the facilities of the AGBU Center. Furthermore, the Church had "the first right of refusal" to acquire the AGBU property which meant that if the Church chose to or could afford to purchase the AGBU Center, it had the priority to do so before its sale to the Centennial College, under the same terms.

On November 10, 2018, the AGBU Chapter issued a second statement expressing its regret that "a few have chosen to mischaracterize the recent announcement" regarding the potential sale of the AGBU Center to the Centennial College. The AGBU Chapter further stated that "while we understand that some did not like this decision, it is neither fair nor constructive to react with information intended to mislead the greater Toronto community, particularly those involved with the church."

In response, the Diocese of Canada and the Holy Trinity Armenian Church issued a joint statement on November 19, 2018, describing the AGBU Chapter's two statements as "futile attempts for self-justification. Moreover, they contained

comments that were intended to mislead and divide our community. In either case, they failed. Clearly, these statements are void of genuine feelings for a healthy community and are a reflection of dictated undemocratic decisions with no transparency."

Confused by the contentious press releases, the Toronto-Armenian community tried to find out what exactly was going on behind closed doors. The absence of concrete information triggered plenty of rumors. The concern was that Toronto Armenians would lose one of its main centers. The rumor mill was fueled by AGBU's previous decisions to close down Armenian schools, such as the Melkonian Educational Institute in Cyprus, even though the Toronto AGBU Chapter had announced that after the sale of its center, it would move to a new more centralized location for the community in Toronto.

The other unusual situation was the public feud between AGBU and the Diocese which normally enjoy the best of relations around the world. Furthermore, Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II, the spiritual leader of the Armenian Apostolic Church, is also the Honorary Central Board member of the AGBU. The Catholicos could have easily mediated the conflict between the two institutions, if it had become necessary.

On November 11, 2018, the Holy Trinity Armenian Church convened a special membership meeting under the presidency of the Primate, Bishop Abgar Hovakimian. The congregation adopted a resolution committing to raise the necessary \$8.5 million Canadian by January 29, 2019, in less than three months, to purchase the AGBU Center. A Mandated Committee was formed to that effect. The church announcement stated that "Bishop Hovakimyan, in support of fundraising, made an impressive gesture by donating his Panagia and Crosier as the first donation to the fundraising drive."

To everyone's surprise, the Holy Trinity Armenian Church issued an announcement on January 29, 2019, confirming that the Diocese has "exercised its right of first refusal to purchase the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) property." This unexpected and miraculous development raised a new round of questions as to how the church was able to raise the large sum to purchase the property in such a short time! Inquiries to the church for some details went unanswered, fueling more rumors as to the true source of the funding for the purchase of the AGBU Center.

After several more emails and phone calls to the church and its Mandated Committee, Ara Boyajian, a member of the Committee, was kind enough to respond. Initially, Boyajian wrote to me that "the AGBU property next to the HTA [Holy

Trinity Armenian] Church in Toronto was purchased by the Diocese and registered in the name of the Diocese. In 90 days the Diocese secured the required financing, exercised its right of first refusal, and completed the 8.5 million [Canadian] dollar transaction on Feb 28, 2019."

When asked for further details, Boyajian and the Mandated Committee disclosed to me the following information:

"1) The Diocese was able to secure the financing of the project, which of course means that it got a Loan, purchased the AGBU property, and registered it in the name of the Diocese."

"2) The Loan is secured by a 5-year term mortgage using only the subject property as collateral. The financiers currently want to remain anonymous, and the Diocese is obliged to respect their wishes."

"3) The Diocese's own feasibility study and the cash flow projections ensure that over the next five years the Diocese will head lease the premises and be able to carry the property, including making the interest payments. This will include any loss of income due to granting AGBU the right to continue its operation and activities in the building free of charge for eleven months, at absolutely no cost to AGBU."

"4) The principal amount of the Loan will be due in five years. This will provide enough time for the Diocese to strategize and plan to undertake a much-needed project which will benefit the Toronto community at large."

In a follow-up email, Boyajian explained that the term "head lease" in the above point 3 means: "a Tenant leases the entire leasable space from the Landlord and pays rent to the Landlord, or in this case to the Diocese as the owner of the building. Parallel to securing the financier(s), the Diocese was able to find, negotiate and sign a 'head lease' with a reputable Tenant prior to the purchase (during the 90-day Right of First Refusal period), to enable the Diocese for the next five years to cover all the expenses of the building, including the interest payments of the Loan. This was supported by a Feasibility Study and Cash Flow Projections."

Boyajian's answers clarify that the Holy Trinity Armenian Church will pay the interest only on the 8.5 million loan for five years, after which the entire loan amount will become due and has to be either paid or refinanced.

The most important point is that the Church leaders were able to perform a financial miracle in a very short time and save the AGBU Center — a major achievement for the Armenian community of Toronto!

Finally, it would be prudent for all Armenian organizations worldwide to become as transparent as possible in dealing with community properties and issues to avoid unnecessary rumors and the loss of trust.

LETTERS

'You Are What Your Record Says You Are'

To the Editor:

Months after "A Statement from the Diocesan Council Regarding the Diocesan Development Plan Proposal" (August 14, 2018, *Mirror-Spectator*) was issued, James Kalustian, chairman of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), still refuses to release a follow up statement concerning the status of the Diocesan Center, despite calls for greater transparency.

At the upcoming Diocesan Assembly in Massachusetts in May, Mr. Kalustian will be publicly asked to resign and/or face a vote of no confidence. Mr. Kalustian, who is up for reelection in 2021, will no longer be able to serve without fear of term limits, as he has done since 2001. A "term limits" proposal has been submitted to the Proposals Committee, which would only allow for a Diocesan Council member to serve for two consecutive four-year terms. The term limits proposal will undoubtedly pass and in due time will be implemented.

It is clear the tone of Mr. Kalustian's almost two-decades' run on the Diocesan Council has been of poor communication skills, a lack of transparency, an inability to unite, the failure to properly maintain the Diocesan Center (as it is being held up by "Scotch tape" as he publicly stated last year), colossal failures in hiring executive directors, alienating prominent benefactors from New Jersey and an isolationist management style. One of the most troubling aspects of Mr. Kalustian in his capacity on the Diocesan Council, is also the manner in which he openly belittled the former Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, both publicly and privately.

Quite simply, Mr. Kalustian is out of touch with large segments of the Diocese, from the youth to the average parishioner to even key

benefactors. Under Mr. Kalustian, the morale of the Diocesan staff spirals towards a bottomless pit (or shall I say the Diocesan Bookstore as Mr. Kalustian proposed last May) as they face uncertain times and are on a rudderless ship. With Mr. Kalustian leading the Diocese, we have clearly veered off the course set by St. Vartan when he pronounced to his valiant soldiers "We hold the Holy Gospel as our father and the Mother Church of Armenia as our mother." There is clearly no indication based on Mr. Kalustian's undistinguished financial track record as treasurer (six years) and chairman that he can remedy the tragic financial situation of the Diocese without the major fire sale he so desperately desires.

Mr. Kalustian has twice been unable to gather support for monetizing the Diocesan Center, first in conjunction with Moushegh "Michael" Harutunian and Kevoork Toroyan a few years ago, and again due to his embarrassing blunders at the Diocesan Assembly in New York in 2018. Mr. Kalustian's divisive attempt to sell the Diocesan Center without it even being an agenda item at last year's Diocesan Assembly is a textbook example of his bewildering "leadership" style. Will an accurate report on the physical condition of the Diocesan Center as well as the failed attempt to sell the Diocesan Center be included on this year's agenda or will Mr. Kalustian parade out more wolves in sheep's clothing in front of the Diocesan Delegates? "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes." ("Beware of Greeks bearing gifts").

Mr. Kalustian, as Bill Parcells, the former head football coach of your beloved New England Patriots, once said, "You are what your record says you are."

Rebecca Bakalian Hachikian
Los Angeles

Karabakh Conflict at Crossroads

EDITORIAL, from page 17

Whatever the Armenian side will lose in the compromise is irreversible. Any territory ceded can only be reconquered through new bloodshed. And vague promises of future autonomy are a non-starter for people who have experienced Baku's pogroms of 1903 and 1920, as well as in Sumgait and Baku in 1988. A generation which was born and brought up after the Karabakh in an independent, albeit non-recognized republic, will never submit willingly to go back under the Azeri yoke.

Armenians have to be extremely careful in defining the term "self-determination," in which Mr. Aliyev is offering to the people of Karabakh his utopian vision of the "highest degree of autonomy." Karabakh is an independent state now and cannot return to the status of an autonomous region under Azeri rule.

There are three fundamental principles and six elements for settlements. The three principles are peaceful methods of negotiations, the principles of territorial integrity and the right to self-determination.

We have issues with the last two principles. The term self-determination is so vague that even Stalin believed that he was granting self-determination to the Karabakh citizens when he defined the Nagorno Karabakh Oblast and handed it as an enclave to Azerbaijan.

On the other hand, the Secretary of the Security Council of Karabakh and the commander of the troops during the war, Vitaly Balassanian, goes as far as to question Azerbaijan's contention regarding territorial integrity by stating, "Azerbaijan's territory is very dubious. This country must first prove to the international community what territory it is talking about. This is a very disputable issue and I am convinced that when Artsakh comes forth as a full negotiating side, we will necessarily raise this issue."

While Armenia is gearing up for the negotiations, calls are getting louder and louder that we have to be ready for war if we wish to achieve peace. Our constant yearning for peace is interpreted on the Turkish side as a weakness. Pashinyan made a very succinct remark that if Armenia is for peace, Azerbaijan's people also vie for peace.

Clarification

In Edmond Y. Azadian's editorial column last week, titled "Turbulent Journey after Patriarch's Death," a reference was made to Arpiar Arpiarian's book, *Garmir Jamuts* (The Crimson Offering). In actual life, the transformation refers to the clergy (Archbishop Mutafyan) while in the novel it refers to a conservative parishioner.

Second, in response to Simeon Odabashian, in the same editorial, the late Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan's moral values were described as "antiquated" because, among other quirks, he used to ban women wearing lipstick from attending church services. Perhaps the word "puritanical" would have described the actions better.



The Nobility Of Henry Morgenthau

By Kay Mouradian

IN MY HEART I, along with many Armenians throughout the world, honor Henry Morgenthau, Sr., the American Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1913-1916. Morgenthau championed and alerted the world to the sufferings of the Turkish Armenians in 1915. A charismatic and wealthy man with a degree in law, he lived by the ethical principles he had planted as seeds during his young teenage years.

At age 14 he took seriously his confirmation at the temple and visited churches of all denominations, making abstracts of sermons by famous pulpit orators of his day, especially Congregationalists Henry Ward Beecher and Richard Storrs. Emerson at the time was leading American thought, and young Henry Morgenthau also read the works of Horace Greeley and William Bryant. He was learning how human great men really are.

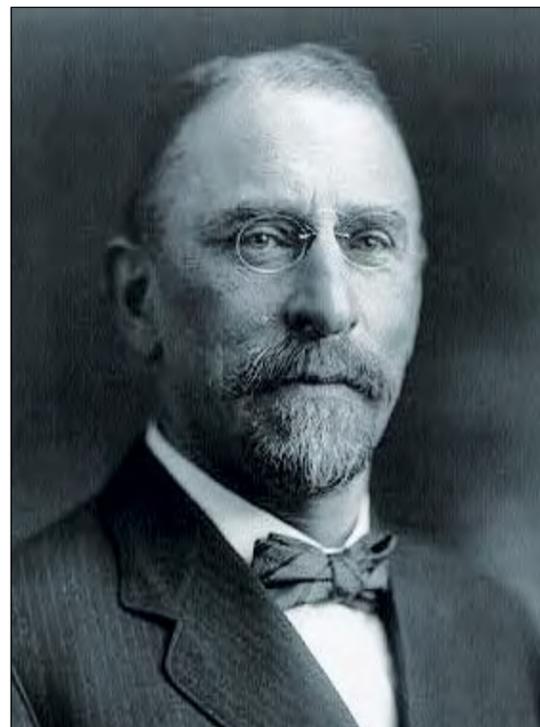
In the Morgenthau home at the time there was a boarder, a hunchbacked Quaker doctor, who was softened instead of embittered by his affliction. He and Henry had become fast friends. Young Henry listened to the noble doctor's long talks and loved the inspirational 1762 book by William Penn, No Cross, No Crown, which the doctor had given him. That book prompted young Henry to compose 24 rules of action tabulating virtues he wished to acquire and vices he needed to avoid. He made a chart and every night he marked his breaches of

that day. Much like an athlete who practices hours to perfect his skills, Morgenthau loved focusing and demanding his will in victory over those vices. That's how he built his moral muscles as a young man. He titled his chart:

Tabulating virtues to be acquired and vices to be avoided

Do not use any profane words.
Do not eat much sweet food as it darkens the mind.
Always speak the truth.
Spend nothing unnecessarily, for if you save when young, you can spend when old.
Never be idle as it will cause you to think of wrong things.
Talk little, but think much.
Study daily, or else your knowledge will not improve.
Keep your own secrets, for if you do not keep them, no one will keep them for you.
Make few promises, but if you make any, fulfill them.
Never speak evil of anyone.
Work for your employer as though it was for yourself.
Deal fairly and honestly with your fellow clerks, but be not too intimate.
Be not inquisitive.
Neither borrow nor lend if avoidable.
Trust none too much, but be not distrustful.
Be not vain, for vanity is the destruction of men.
Be grateful for the smallest favor.
Never leave for tomorrow what can be done today.
Drink no kind of intoxicating liquor nor smoke any weed.
Never play at any game of chance.
Conquer temptation though it be ever so powerful.
Keep yourself clean, as cleanliness is next to godliness.
Wonder not at the construction of man, but use your time in improving yourself.
In deciding any doubts in the meaning of above maxims, let conscience decide.

I've read this chart often throughout my research of this great man and when I look at the quality of the virtues he charted, I'm still astonished that a boy of fourteen would take such deep interest in developing his moral muscles in preference to playing football or



searching out pretty girls in school. Those moral muscles he developed and practiced as a teenager built within him strength of an honest power that eventually led to the world's recognition of him as a wealthy entrepreneur, a diplomat extraordinaire and a notable humanitarian.

I wonder if it is even possible in today's celebrity driven society to encourage our young Armenian boys and girls to follow Morgenthau's conscious preparation for living an honorable way of life and ask them to design similar charts of their own. If they did and faithfully took note of their daily breaches and tried to overcome them, could they, then, grow into the likes of a Henry Morgenthau and become great men and women with hearts filled with goodness for humanity?

(Kay Mouradian is the author of *My Mother's Voice: An Armenian Story*.)



The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada
Presents the 2019 North American tour of the

VEM Ensemble

of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

Performing a World Premiere of Tekeyan songs by the Los Angeles-based composer Artashes Kartalyan, commissioned by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, and recognized masterworks by Komitas, Khachaturian, Mirzoyan, Hovhannes, and Schubert



Danielle Segen
Mezzo-soprano



Artistic Director
Prof. Movses Pogossian

Ji Eun Hwang
Violin 1

Aiko Richter
Violin 2

Morgan O'Shaughnessey
Viola

Jason Pegis
Cello



DETROIT - Wed. March 27 8:00 pm
cosponsored with Music Guild of
St. John Armenian Church
Recreation Center
22001 Northwestern Hwy
Southfield, MI 48075
Free admission, Reception to follow

MONTREAL - Fri. March 29 8:30 pm
Tekeyan Center
825 Manooglan St.
Saint-Laurent, Canada
For tickets call 514 747-6680
Reception to follow

BOSTON - Sun. March 31 1:00 pm
cosponsored with Holy Trinity
Armenian Church
145 Brattle St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
Free admission

GLENDALE - April 27 7:30 pm
Tekeyan Cultural Association
Los Angeles Chapter
Cosponsored with Abril
Bookstore, 415 E. Broadway
Glendale. For tickets: 818 243-4112
or itsmyseat.com/abrilbooks

PASADENA - May 19 6:00 pm
Tekeyan Cultural Association
Pasadena-Glendale Chapter
TCA Beshgeturian Center
1901 N. Allen Avenue
Altadena, Calif.

For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com