

Primate Findikyan Refocuses Direction of Eastern Diocese

*Assembly Covers
Wide-ranging Issues*

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BURLINGTON, Mass. — The 117th Assembly of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) was hosted by St. James Armenian Church of Watertown, with the general sessions on May 2-4 at the Boston Marriott at Burlington. There were 148 registered delegates.

In many ways, the highlight of the Diocesan Assembly was the keynote speech of Primate Fr. Daniel Findikyan (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_z27IsQP6U&feature=youtu.be) on May 3 in which he laid out his new approach for the Eastern Diocese and all its connecting bodies, which he called “Building Up the Body of Christ.”

The Primate's Vision

Findikyan began by reviewing his first year in office, declaring: “During this past year, it has been a time for me of discovery, a time for learning. Learning is always a humbling enterprise and that process continues. But it has also been a time for me to connect with the entirety of this great Diocese, to connect with our parishes, our



Primate Fr. Daniel Findikyan

pastors and clergy, and all of our people. It has been so heartening. It has been so uplifting.” He exclaimed that for the most part, his job this year has been fun. He praised the clergy of the Eastern Diocese as “the very finest, the most well trained, most dedicated clergy in the entire Armenian

Church” and gave various examples of their work.

Findikyan found that three phrases written by St. Paul Ephesians (4:11-16), encapsulate for him the vision and some of the goals that he thought the Diocese should see DIOCESE, page 9

California Governor Increases Investment in Armenian American Museum

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Following a successful meeting and review of the Armenian American Museum by his policy director, Governor Gavin Newsom has included \$5 million for the Armenian American Museum in his May revised 2019-2020 budget. The meeting and visit with the museum's Board of Directors earlier in May was initiated by state Sen. Anthony J.

Portantino, (D-La Cañada Flintridge), with the hope of sharing the museum's vision directly with the Governor's office. In an apparent positive outcome, the governor's proposed budget seeks to increase the California's investment in the museum to \$8 million. In his first term, Portantino had requested \$3 million for the museum and has continued his ardent legislative advoca-

cy for the project.

“I'm ecstatic and extremely thankful to Governor Newsom and Policy Director Anthony Williams for recognizing the overwhelming merit and momentum behind this amazing museum. The governor's generous offer to help the museum is a clear recognition of the importance of the project to the State of California,” commented Portantino.

The Armenian American Museum and Cultural Center of California is in the heart see MUSEUM, page 20

Armenia PM, China President Discuss Further Development Of Relations

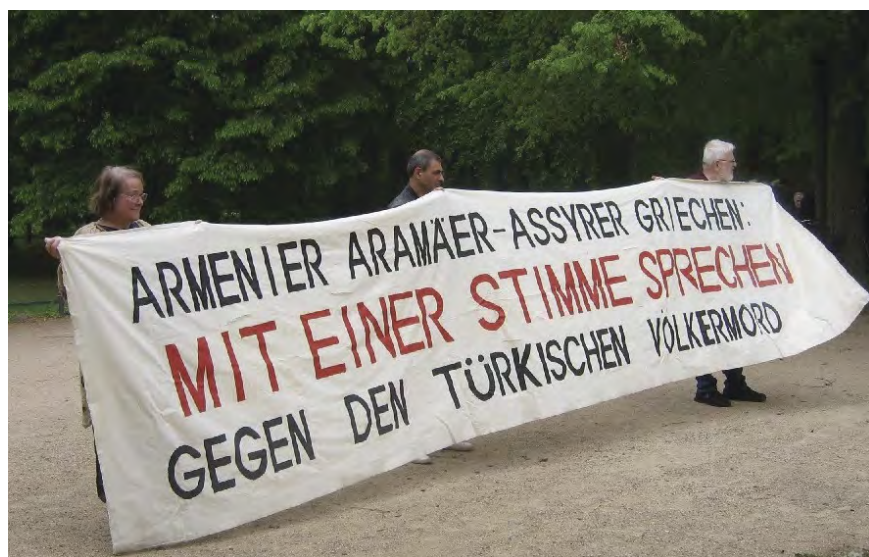
BEIJING (news.am) — Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan, who is on a working visit to the People's Republic of China, met with President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping at the National People's Congress on May 14.

After the handshake and protocol video filming and photographing, the leaders of the two countries discussed several issues on the agenda of the Armenian-Chinese relations.

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Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, left, with President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping



Protesters outside the Turkish Embassy in Berlin

Vigil and Commemoration in Berlin

BERLIN — A central feature of the events organized every year by the Armenian community on April 24 is the demand that Turkey acknowledge the genocide. The

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

AGA, a Working Group for Recognition, held a vigil on April 27 in front of the Turkish Embassy in Berlin, precisely to rise this demand. Participants in the vigil held up a banner with the text, “Armenians, Aramaeans, Assyrians, Greeks Speak with One Voice against the Turkish Genocide.” On the following day, the FÖGG, a Society for the Promotion of an Ecumenical Monument for Genocide Victims in the Ottoman Empire, joined with the Armenian Church and Cultural Society held its commemoration at the site of the ecumenical alters of remembrance in the Berlin-Charlottenburg cemetery. Prof. Tessa Hofmann, sociologist and Armenian studies scholar, plays a leading role in both organizations.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Armenian Girl Killed In Syria Rocket Attack

DAMASCUS (news.am) — Six people, including five children, were killed as a result of a terrorist attack in the city of Scalbiyah in the north-west of the Syrian Hama province on May 14, SANA reported.

According to the Armenian *Gandzasar* newspaper published in Syria, among the children who died are Armenian girl Jessica Semerjyan.

Sculpture from Aznavour Collection at Auction for 2.5 Million Euros

PARIS (news.am) — A sculpture from Charles Aznavour's collection was put up for auction for 2.5 million euros, *Le Figaro* reported on May 14.

According to the source, two works by one of the most famous representatives of modern art, the sculptor and graphic artist Germaine Richier, owned by Aznavour, will be on display at Christie's auction in Paris on June 4.

The value of one of the sculptures is estimated at 2.5 million euros, the other 60,000 euros.

Armenian Teen Forcibly Converted to Islam on Live TV in Turkey

ISTANBUL (news.am) — Cases of forcible religious conversion continue in Turkey. This time an Armenian teen was converted to Islam on live television on May 14.

During his religious TV program, Turkish theologian Nihat Hatipoglu violated the Treaty of Lausanne and applied one of the points that define genocide. He converted a 13-year-old Armenian boy named Artur to Islam live on the air, and without the presence of his parents.

The Turkish press covered this event as top news.

But this incident is unacceptable under the Treaty of Lausanne, as it violates the rights of national and religious minorities, in terms of religious conversion of a minor without the presence of his parents.

In addition, this act also fits into one of the points that define genocide, and according to which it is unacceptable to forcibly convert a child into another religion. In this situation, this case fully fits into that point, since the religious conversion of a minor without the presence of his parents is equal to forcible religious conversion.

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Cher Turns Back Time

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Tourism in Armenia Keeps Increasing

YEREVAN (Armenpress) —The number of tourists who visited Armenia increased by 18,031 in the first quarter of 2019 compared to the same period of 2018, according to the data of the National Statistical Committee.

In January-March 2019, 364,489 tourists visited Armenia, which is an increase of 5.2 percent compared to January-March 2019.

Armenian PM's Wife Visits Children Receiving Treatment for Cancer

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Anna Hakobyan, spouse of Armenia's prime minister, chairwoman of the Board of Trustees of City of Smile and My Step charity foundations, on May 10 visited the Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Clinic in Yerevan, her Office told Armenpress.

Accompanied by director of the Clinic Samvel Danielyan and pediatric oncologist Gevorg Tamamyan, Hakobyan toured the medical center and talked to the children receiving treatment, their parents and treating doctors.

Armenia Hopes to Become First Country to Switch Government Fleet To Electric Cars

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenia has sent a project to the Global Environment Fund that hopes to change the government's fleet from petroleum-fueled cars to electric ones through an environmental grant funds, Minister of Nature Protection Erik Grigoryan told lawmakers in parliament when asked by opposition MP Artyom Tsarukyan from Prosperous Armenia party whether or not they plan such an initiative on May 8.

"We have joined the Global Electric Mobility process, which is carried out under the UN's environmental program. We have relevant grant funds, around 700,000 dollars. We have presented a program which will be the first of its kind globally, and with the program we propose the entire government to switch to electric cars," he said, adding that the preliminary document has been sent to the GEF, which will fund it.

According to him, in case of everything proceeding swiftly, all cabinet members will be issues electric cars by year's end.

Armenia Considers Temporary Hunting Ban To Restore Wildlife

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The May 10 Cabinet meeting featured some noteworthy debates regarding wildlife preservation, as the Government of Armenia approved to bring forward a proposal on enforcing a 100,000,000 dram fine for poaching of the endangered Caucasian leopard.

Moreover, National Security Service Director Arthur Vanetsyan, who was in attendance, suggested to enforce a 3-5 year total nationwide hunting ban.

"Let's ban hunting for 3 to 5 years in Armenia in order for the wildlife population to be restored. I myself was a very active hunter in the past, but I haven't hunted for already 6-7 years and I am speaking about this all the time. Let's introduce this initiative, let's ban hunting generally, and for the ban to be not only through these laws that we are adopting, but also, for example, by a temporary ban on hunting cartridges. Because they are doing irregular hunting," Vanetsyan said.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan ask a committee to study the issue comprehensively.

"We must do something like that because this idea is a very good and appropriate one. But we must look at this problem comprehensively. I suppose there are animals whose population is of no problem. Let us carry out an expert study," he said.

Knights of Vartan Lead by Example

YEREVAN — On April 18, the First Deputy Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Gabriel Ghazaryan, awarded Sbarabed Tigran Sahakyan of Mamigonian Lodge with the Gold Medal of the Ministry for his ongoing investments in Physical Culture and Sports in homeland.

For a number of years Sahakyan made immense investments in borderline villages, creating and supporting sport and cultural centers, supporting schools and training centers. In 2015 the groundbreaking work for the Knights of Vartan Sports and Cultural



Deputy Minister Gabriel Ghazaryan awarded Sbarabed Tigran Sahakyan of Mamigonian Lodge with Gold Medal of the Ministry

Center was launched. In two years with over \$250,000 support of Sahakyan family, and Ghukasyan family immediate organizational work was built a sports and recreation center for the children and their families in nearby Vervyn Karmiraghbyur village, Tavush Province



Another shot of the Vartanants Sport and Cultural Center in Tavush



Tigran Sahakyan at the opening of Armath laboratory at 102 school

(Marz). This center operates free of charge and serves 17 villages in Tavush for a population of 22,500.

Creating such centers in borderline villages derives from a strong strategy to encourage the families to remain in their hometowns, and raise a healthy, happy and educated generation in these rural villages, and create new jobs.

The center was completed in September 2016 and dedicated with the visit from the Knights of Vartan delegation from the US. The complex includes a gymnasium, two soccer fields, a swimming pool, a playground, an open-air stage and state of the art utilities and fixtures. Currently the center has four different soccer groups and 86 children attend these groups on a weekly basis. The center employs seven coaches and this number is expected to grow with new groups and opening of upcoming operation of swimming pool from June 1.

Another big project that Sahakyan was involved with this year was the Armath Engineering Laboratories for public schools.

At Armath Engineering Laboratories

kids aged 10-17 are introduced to science, technology, engineering, and math through interactive after-school classes, competitions, innovative camps and more. The young engineers are given the opportunity to design, build, test, and improve their own creations in a safe and fun environment, while making new friends and creating startups.

With North East Knights of Vartan lodges and District Representative Jacob Bournazian they donated toward such a laboratory in border Aygepar school, in Tavush. The second Armath laboratory was donated by Sahakyan for the #102 school in Yerevan. Sahakyan of Mamigonian lodge visited Yerevan and joined the opening of the event. Director of Armath, teachers from the school, representatives from the municipality and Ministry of Education and Science joined the opening as well. More than 35 kids will join the classes 2-3 times per week immediately.

Sahakyan also financially supported an After School Program in the border village of Aygepar. Last year new kitchen furniture, a stove, a refrigerator, canteen tables and chairs were purchased for the school. Since September 1, 2018 this program has been operating with 15 pupils. Many of the parents of these pupils are employed therefore it is very beneficial for them to have their children prepare homework with professional guidance. In addition, the children receive complimentary hot meals.

Continuing his philanthropic projects, Sahakyan initiated essay contests at the Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences. Since 2016 he has granted awards ranging from \$100 to \$500 to 26 students through two different essay contests. The theme of the Essay that was established in 2018 has been the Armenian Genocide.

For more information about the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, visit <http://kofv.org>.

Armenia PM, China President discuss further development of relations

CHINA, from page 1

The Chinese president stated that he is glad to host Pashinyan and expressed gratitude to him for accepting the invitation to participate in the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations. Xi Jinping stated that China attaches importance to the ongoing enhancement of relations with Armenia in different sectors and talked about the strong cultural and historical relations. Jinping also emphasized that China is ready to participate in the construction of the North-South Road Corridor and other infrastructure projects.

According to the President of the People's Republic of China, certain

Armenian products were successfully showcased at recent exhibitions in China and are presented in the Chinese market.

Prime Minister Pashinyan expressed gratitude to Xi Jinping for inviting him to the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations and stated that this meeting serves as a good opportunity to discuss the perspectives for bilateral cooperation. "The relations with the People's Republic of China are among the priorities of Armenia's foreign policy. We attach great importance to fruitful and constructive relations with China," Nikol Pashinyan said and congratulated Xi on the 70th anniversary of the formation of the

People's Republic of China.

The two exchanged views on Armenian-Chinese relations, as well as current global and regional policy issues of mutual interest.

They discussed the development of cooperation in agriculture, transport, energy, information technologies, infrastructures, education and other sectors as prospective.

During the meeting, the interlocutors also touched upon the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and stated that the conflict must be settled through dialogue.

Pashinyan is accompanied on the trip by his wife, Anna Hakobyan.



ARMENIA

Unseen Armenia

CRD: Students Mentoring Students

By Hovsep Daghdigian

YEREVAN — During the past decade, the Cosmic Ray Division (CRD) of the Yerevan Physics Institute (YerPhI) has extensively researched the generation of energetic gamma rays originating in thunderclouds, a new area of science called High-Energy Atmospheric Physics. A related phenomenon, Thunderstorm Ground Enhancements (TGEs), generates bursts of subatomic particles adding to the cosmic radiation reaching the earth from the sun and from outer space, thus enhancing natural radiation near the earth's surface several times for a few minutes. In conformance with the ideals of the American Physical Society (APS), which espouses openness and dissemination of scientific research, over the past decade the CRD has published 10 research articles in APS journals while making data collected at its observatories on Mt. Aragats, and from other locations, available over the Internet. CRD's reports and data mirror the history of research in this new field of High Energy Atmospheric Physics. An advantage of CRD's observa-



Prof. Chilingarian explaining cosmic ray science to visitors from the US, including two young potential scientists.

This paper documents important characteristics of TGEs, as well as where and when they are likely to occur. As a part of their education, resources permitting, many students attend international scientific conferences as well, some of which are held in Armenia at CRD's facilities on Mt. Aragats.

Having completed a decade of research with significant contributions to the science of atmospheric physics, CRD is charting a path to the future. In January 2019 a new collaboration with the Aragats Space-Environmental Center (ASEC) was established within the A. Alikhanyan National lab (Yerevan Physics Institute). The chairperson of this collaboration is Prof. Ashot Chilingarian with Dr. Mery Zazian as the secretary. The collaboration will monitor cosmic radiation within the newly expanded monitoring network in Armenia. It will utilize a multitude of newly deployed sensors to advance space weather forecasting, and provide information regarding space storms to Armenian governmental organizations and others. As usual, students will play a significant role in ASEC's

research. A board of international experts from the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the US will oversee the research plans of ASEC collaboration.

Students Mentoring Students

Meanwhile students from CRD, including PhD candidate Hripsime Mkrtchyan, as well as students from Yerevan State University, the Yerevan Pedagogical University, and the Yerevan Physics Institute have organized a Young Minds Project chapter in Armenia. The Young Minds Project was established by the European Physical Society (EPS) to organize young undergraduate to post-doctoral scientists to promote science education among youth. Yerevan's branch has visited science classes



Young Minds Project, Armenia branch members at CRD's facilities in Yerevan, left to right Astghik Chilingarian, Hripsime Mkrtchyan, Davit Aslanyan, Sona Chitchyan, Zhirayr Adamyan, Gayane Karapetyan, Gevorg Hovhannisyan.

at more than 15 high schools in Armenia and Artsakh where they delivered science kits and performed science experiments with the students.

Due to poor economic conditions schools often lack the equipment to conduct elementary science experiments demonstrating the principles taught in class. With a modest grant from the EPS, Young Minds has provided some science kits to schools. During visits volunteers work with students, helping them conduct experiments and allowing them to visualize the concepts they are studying. As stated by Mkrtchyan, "Science classes in many schools unfortunately consist only of lectures and reading. Students need to actually apply the science taught in their classes in order for them to remain interested."

Back in Yerevan, in one of CRD's laboratories, Mkrtchyan and her colleagues demonstrated some homemade science equipment, including a Tesla coil, which generates many thousands of volts but at very low current that poses no danger. Another Young Minds volunteer was unsoldering electronic components from an obsolete piece of equipment to salvage electronic components for future experiments.

Members of the Young Minds Project committee are students studying physics, mechanical engineering, biology, and education. All are bright, young Armenians pursuing their own careers. While they are being mentored by their professors, they in turn, feel a responsibility to mentor those coming a few years after themselves.

The Young Minds Project website is at <http://www.epsy-oungminds.org>.



Young Minds Project, Armenia branch, at Artsakh State University, L-R Astghik Chilingarian, Hripsime Mkrtchyan, Davit Aslanyan, Sona Chitchyan, Zhirayr Adamyan, Gayane Karapetyan, Gevorg Hovhannisyan.

tory on Armenia's Mt. Aragats is that thunderstorms frequently occur over Aragats' summit, occasionally only 10s of meters above CRD's monitoring equipment. Students studying at CRD play a significant role in participating in this research.

Students Publishing Research

A goal of educating the students at CRD is to teach them to formulate research goals and report their results in scientific papers. Prof. Chilingarian, during master's courses, works with students preparing such scientific papers. In 2018, jointly with master degree students, they published a research paper entitled "Catalog of 2017 Thunderstorm Ground Enhancement (TGE) Events Observed on Aragats".



Hripsime Mkrtchyan with Young Minds Project members demonstrating a Tesla coil, Zhirayr Adamyan on her left, Gevorg Hovhannisyan on her right.



CRD's Aragats research station, 10,400 foot altitude, Kari Lij (Stone Lake) in foreground.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Catholicos Aram, President al-Assad Meet

DAMASCUS (Armenpress) — Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad at the Presidential Palace on May 14. The meeting lasted over an hour and issues referring to the current situation of Syria and the Armenian community in the country were discussed.

President Assad particularly urged the Syrian-Armenians who left the country due to harsh conditions, to return and restore their homes and factories, assuring that the Syrian-Armenian community will continue enjoying the state support.

De-miners in Syria Aid Locals

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A group of Armenian de-miners in Syria on a humanitarian mission have cleared 25,860 square meters of territory during the technical exploration and clearing operations from February 19 to May 10.

Nazeli Elbakyan, PR specialist at the Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise, said in an interview on May 13 that the Armenian doctors have provided surgical care to 214 patients in Syria.

The Armenian specialists continue the humanitarian mission in Syria.

Turkish Minister of Interior Visits Armenian Patriarchate

ISTANBUL (news.am) — Turkish Minister of the Interior Süleyman Soylu on May 14 visited the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.

As reports Istanbul's Agos Armenian newspaper, members of the Patriarchate's religious assembly, including Archbishop Aram Ateshyan and chairman of the board of trustees of Surp Prkich Armenian Hospital Bedros Shirinoglu were at the Patriarchate during the Turkish minister's visit.

Later, Bedros Shirinoglu declared that Deputy Patriarch of Constantinople, Archbishop Aram Ateshyan agreed to hold the elections of the Patriarch and that it was decided to hold the elections on June 24.

On April 29, the religious assembly of the Armenian Patriarchate decided that there was no need to elect a vicar and that there was only a need for the elections of a Patriarch.

Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Spain Hold Discussions

YEREVAN — On May 7, political consultations between the Foreign Ministry of Armenia and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain were held in Yerevan. Armenian delegation was headed by Deputy Minister Avet Adonts and the Spanish delegation was led by Fernando Valenzuela, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The two parties discussed a range of bilateral political issues, exchanged views on the prospects of further deepening of cooperation in trade-economic, scientific-educational and other spheres.

Touching upon the current stage of Armenia-EU cooperation and development perspectives, the Armenian side presented the process of implementation of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement signed by the Government of Armenia and highlighted the importance of ratification of agreement by Spain.

The sides also discussed the launch of the EU visa liberalization dialogue.

During the meeting the sides exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues.

Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan also received the Spanish delegation, and presented the efforts aimed for the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and recent developments around the negotiation process. They also discussed cooperation with Spain within the EU framework.

Dr. Karin Markides Appointed AUA President

YEREVAN — The idea for the American University of Armenia (AUA) was born in the winter of 1989, a few months after the devastating Spitak earthquake. After this tragedy, Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian of the University of California (UC), Berkeley, and Dr. Yuri Sargsyan, then Rector of the Yerevan Polytechnic Institute in Armenia, began a conversation which eventually led to a proposal by Der Kiureghian and Dr. Mihran Agababian of the University of Southern California to establish a western-style university in Armenia. Dr. Stepan Karamardian, the Dean of Business at UC Riverside, soon joined the team. With a partnership with the University of California and a funding commitment by Louise Manoogian Simone, then president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), AUA was established. "An interesting fact about AUA is that it is as old as the Republic of Armenia, as it opened its doors on September 21, 1991, the same day Armenia declared independence from the former Soviet Union," remarked Der Kiureghian.

Twenty-eight years later, AUA's co-founder, who has been serving as president for the past five years, is passing the baton. Der Kiureghian also has held a variety of positions at AUA, including founding dean of the College of Engineering and Interim Provost.

Der Kiureghian believes the University has accomplished much beyond the initial aspirations. "We started the University at a very difficult time in Armenia. There were the lingering effects of the earthquake, an ongoing war, and severe shortages of basic necessities, but we persevered. Today, many of our graduates hold government positions all the way from ministers to regional governors. They are instructors and professors teaching in various universities, including AUA. There are great examples of successful startups, like PicsArt and gg-Taxi, that are founded by our graduates. They work in banking, businesses, NGOs, government agencies, and educational institutions in Armenia and elsewhere. We have an increasing number of supporters and generous philanthropists so, in many ways, the dream has been realized. The question now is how we grow the University so it can have even greater impact in Armenia."

That is the question that incoming president Dr. Karin Markides also has on her mind. Having gone through a thorough recruiting process, she was one of the four finalists from a pool of 60 candidates for the position.

"I'm very much about how we work to make impact in a sustainable and collaborative way by first building trust among key stakeholders and then incentivizing an evolutionary process. Through my previous work as President of Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden, one of the main things we accomplished was breaking down silos by creating cross-collaboration among

strong departments, excellent faculty, talented students, and dedicated external collaborators, creating open environments where complex challenges could be handled and innovation could happen. This is a method I believe that all institutions, whether governmental, business or academic, would benefit from."

With an impressive resume that includes lecturing at Stanford University as a guest professor, Markides completed her doctorate at Stockholm University in 1984, after which she started her research career at Brigham Young University in Utah as a postdoctoral fellow then as a research assistant and associate director. In May 1990, she returned to Sweden as a chair and dean of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering at Uppsala University. Fourteen years later, in May 2004, she became vice director general of Vinnova, the Swedish innovation agency. Subsequently, Markides was selected as president of Chalmers University of Technology and, since 2015, she serves as the Chair of the

role in Armenia, Markides remarked that she would like to see AUA play an even larger role in the transformation of the country, inviting higher education, private and public sectors to enable transformative impact in areas of high potential and emerging challenges. In these sectors, AUA would develop people's skills for transformative co-creation and connect the urban and rural areas of the country, also attracting greater attention from the international community. Her experience working with innovation and technologies is something she plans to bring to AUA.

Every region has cultural and societal roadblocks, she continued, and "it's important to be inclusive, and to make sure everyone is at the table. They need to see and understand one another and develop trust in their diverse abilities for solving problems in a complex system that could lead to making transformative impact. This systems thinking approach supports creativity and inclusion to be more powerful." Markides also acknowledges that there is still



Dr. Karin Markides

Scientific Council for Sustainable Development under the Swedish government.

When asked what attracted her to the president's role at AUA, her face lit up as she told about her mother-in-law who was raised in Smyrna among a multi-ethnic population, including Armenians. "Her insight that only inclusion can heal an experience makes her stories stay with me every day," she related. Markides's fascination with Armenia grew deeper as she talked about its unique geopolitical location. "Armenia's position — the intersection where East meets West — can be an asset if the bright brains from neighboring countries become increasingly attracted to Armenia as a nexus where cultures and minds meet. I think these meeting places can attract many people, whether from Europe, Russia, China, and elsewhere for planned and unplanned interactions and true impact."

As far as her vision for AUA and its

much for her to learn about Armenia, its challenges and opportunities, and how AUA can play a strategic role in building the future.

As Dr. Der Kiureghian passes the baton after five years as president of AUA, he said he wishes Markides the best and says she has the right standing, credentials and experience to lead a growing university. "I feel very honored and privileged to have served as President in the last five years and happy with our accomplishments, watching the University grow threefold after adding undergraduate programs, and I've really enjoyed witnessing the enthusiasm among our students and seeing how learning is happening. I am grateful to my colleagues, faculty, and executive team who have made this possible," he said.

Der Kiureghian will continue to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of AUA, and he looks forward to writing two textbooks on engineering and spending more time with his family.

Vigil and Commemoration in Berlin

BERLIN, from page 1

At the chapel of the Evangelical Cemetery, Sona Eypper of the FÖGG leadership, welcomed participants, who received greetings from Armenian Ambassador Ashot Smbatyan. Archimandrite Yeghishe Avetisyan spoke on "April 24th, 1915 and its Significance for Armenians Today," in Armenian, with consecutive translation. Amil Gorgis reported on the completion of the ecumenical monuments. "Loss and Legacy" was the title of a series of readings from memoirs of survivors, delivered by Tessa Hofmann, Gohar Baghdasaryan and Anais Gövez.

Interspersed throughout the program were musical interludes by violinist Lilit Rostomyan, including Dele Yaman by Komitas. Following a moment of silent reflection, the participants walked in a procession to the ecumenical monuments and laid wreaths, after which Avetisyan offered prayers.

(For more on the FÖGG and AGA see <https://mirrorspectator.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/March-3-2018-1.pdf>, <http://www.genozid-gedenkstaette.de/fogg-aktiv/index.php> and <http://www.aga-online.org/aboutus/index.php?locale=de>)



INTERNATIONAL

Pashinyan Gets Warm Reception in Luxembourg

LUXEMBOURG CITY, Luxembourg (Armenpress) — Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and Prime Minister of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel on May 13 discussed a broad scope of cooperation, including issues of organization of business forums and cooperation in education, Pashinyan's spokesperson Vladimir Karapetyan told reporters.

“The visit had an important goal, that is to develop political dialogue, emphasize our attitude towards Luxembourg, also discuss bilateral economic relations. I can say that the overall atmosphere of the meeting was very positive. There is mutual understanding between the two Prime Ministers”, Karapetyan said.

There are already a number of agreements. “The Prime Minister of Luxembourg is also responsible for the sphere of technologies and he gladly responded to the invitation of our Prime Minister to participate in the World Congress on Information Technology that will take place in October. We expect Luxembourg to participate with an adequate delegation”, Karapetyan said.

It was mentioned that Armenia thanks Luxembourg for its assistance to the country in a number of areas, particularly in the political direction.

Pashinyan visited the Chamber of Deputies where he spoke with Chamber President Fernand Etgen.

Pashinyan first signed the Golden Book of the Chamber of Deputies, after which he met with Chamber members, including Luxembourg Parliament Deputy Speakers Claude Wiesler and Henry Cox, as well as Chairman of Standing Committee on Foreign and European Cooperation, Immigration and Refugee Affairs Marc Angel.

Welcoming the Prime Minister, Etgen expressed confidence that his visit to Luxembourg would promote the development and expansion of relations between the two countries.

Presenting the processes underway in Armenia, Pashinyan emphasized that democracy is irreversible in Armenia, and the country will continue to develop and consolidate the democratic institutions.

“Our government and the political team are firmly heading along the path of democracy. We are confident that our efforts will result in Armenia's full-fledged integration with the international community, which adheres to a democratic system of values. The processes that followed up the political revolution were aimed at this very objective, and we are convinced that we will succeed,” he said.

Pashinyan underscored that the political revolution will be followed by an economic revolution, and his government is taking steps to improve the business climate, create an investment-friendly environment by combating



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan with Luxembourg Prime Minister Xavier Bettel

monopolies, implementing fundamental reforms and waging an uncompromised anti-corruption campaign.

Etgen that Armenia is an important partner for Luxembourg and his country is ready to closely cooperate and expand ties in different directions.

The Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies went on to discuss ways of strengthening EU-Armenia cooperation, which has entered a new stage after the signing of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

Unlikely Woman New Heroine of Turkish Opposition

By Pinar Tremblay

ISTANBUL (Al Monitor) — Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party's (CHP) Istanbul chief criticized the Supreme Electoral Council's (YSK) decision to annul the results of the local elections in Istanbul saying that official bodies should not override the people's choice in elections.

The most contested election of the last decade in Turkey has been for the position of Istanbul's mayor. And, after 36 days of complaints from the Justice and Development Party (AKP), on May 6, the first day of Ramadan, the YSK announced a rerun of the mayoral election. However, opposition candidate Ekrem Imamoglu's now annulled victory and his strong stand after the election won the hearts and minds of not just Istanbulites but of most Turks. Along with Imamoglu, there is someone else who deserves credit: Canan Kaftancioglu. Kaftancioglu is the provincial chair of the CHP for Istanbul.

Kaftancioglu is a medical doctor, mother, motorcycle lover and feisty politician who ran a campaign against the AKP's 25-year rule in Istanbul. She has faced many challenges, including the generic “terrorist propaganda” investigations that almost all opposition figures have to endure. Yet Kaftancioglu did not stop tweeting or speaking her mind, angering President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other AKP officials.

At a time when most observers dismissed opposition parties as ineffective, Kaftancioglu and her team have proven that despite all odds a victory at the ballot box is possible. She is known as hardworking, tenacious and determined. Her management skills resonate with the least expected at both the top levels of the organization as well as the grassroots. Kaftancioglu has gained the admiration of most skeptical pundits. In an era where women's participation and voice in Turkish politics is dwindling, she has been a hope for millions.

Al-Monitor spoke with Kaftancioglu about her life, motivations and how she manages it all. What is impressive is her compassion for those who have no or limited access to education, health care and other essentials. One of the least mentioned reasons for Erdogan's loss of Istanbul is Kaftancioglu's strong empathy with the city's poor and deprived.

Al-Monitor: You are a medical doctor specialized in forensics and your thesis studied torture specifically. You were involved in grassroots politics as a college student. Why this interest in

politics as a doctor?

Kaftancioglu: I was born in Ordu [Black Sea province] and grew up in a conservative family environment with minimal financial resources in the 1980s. The only way out for me was to study hard and keep dreaming without limits. I didn't know about politics then, but I recall sharing the suffering of my friends who had to get married in middle school and stop their studies. My readings taught me that poor or rich, male or female, we are all equal. Yet for this we have to work. As long as I can remember, I sided with the righteous and the underdog rather than taking the easy way out by approving of [the actions of] the majority and powerful. If Mustafa Kemal Ataturk [founder of the Republic of Turkey] and his comrades had not saved our country, I could have been one of those girls who was forced to get married out of elementary school and be dependent on my husband's financial support for the rest of my life.

I became a doctor because at the time most successful students opted for medical school. My dream was to study law. During my medical school years I was always involved in grassroots movements. I think the reason why I opted for forensic science as my specialty and focused on the implications of torture was because of all these experiences I had and the way I perceive the world.

The struggle in my early youth was a necessity and I did not ponder whether to get involved in politics. I worked with civil society organizations that focused on rights and democratic principles. After Kemal Kilicdaroglu became the chairman of the CHP [in 2010] I realized there was a possibility for change and hope for Turkey. That's when I decided to get actively involved in politics. I would like to emphasize that once I decided to become politically active, I did not strive to become someone prominent but rather accomplish our goals together with everyone in the party.

Al-Monitor: What motivates you to work diligently and tenaciously despite all legal, financial and political odds being against you and your party?

Kaftancioglu: My struggle in the party organization was to focus on ideas rather than people. We need to work to get our ideals to win offices. If you do not hold personal expectations as your main goal, but rather work for ideas you believe in, politics becomes easier. As a medical doctor and hospital administrator previously my main concern was to serve the people. Now in politics I hope to serve more people. This is what motivated me to get involved in politics; it gives

me inner peace to have this goal.

My concern for people's well-being is not limited to equality before the law. We need to provide equal opportunity to all without concerns of party identity, ethnic, religious or other differences. My goal is the widespread dream of most Turks today.

We have a bundle of complex problems facing us. The gap in the distribution of wealth, unemployment, limited access to services such as health care and education leads to people facing injustice on their own. Women are systematically ostracized from social and economic life, people cannot achieve self-realization, minors suffer abuse and drug use is on the rise — just to name a few of these problems. The most crucial form of violence is prolonged poverty of the masses.

We keep saying every person is born equal but the political system we live in forces on us inequality in every aspect. Our republic was formed to care for those who are in need without support of anyone. We need to establish a system where a child born in poverty in a remote corner of Turkey can dream about being a doctor, businessman, teacher or president and gets the chance to realize this dream. This was the goal of our founding fathers. This is the path we are on.

Al-Monitor: When you were elected in January 2018, there was a certain opposition to your name both within and outside of the CHP. In a short time, you achieved remarkable success in the March 31 election. What is the secret of this success?

Kaftancioglu: The hype was expected. I was a last-minute candidate nominated by the party organization instead of those who have been in the game for years. I utilized different methods to earn votes. I didn't bargain with the delegates but rather I approached each one of them as a valuable human being. I did not repeat what most of the delegates want to hear but rather told them the facts and my beliefs. At the end of this process, the party won rather than just a candidate. The CHP's establishment felt strongly that if we rest on the truth, on facts we can deliver results.

The criticism and attacks from outside is also much expected given the conditions of Turkish politics. We represent a language that rejects the obedience culture. We did expect that right-wing politics would be disturbed as we refuse to act within their standards on left-wing politics — that of “timid politics.” What really angered them was the realization that I am not scared. All dictators are most angered by the presence of people who are not scared despite all of their

power — especially if that's a woman.

The CHP party establishment deserves all the credit in keeping election results in check. They put up a great fight with strong conviction and effort. Since I was elected, I emphasized that we will win the Istanbul mayoral seat. My team believed in this and carried on with this belief. That's precisely why they could survive night shifts in the cold [guarding the votes during the recount process] and attacks of right-wing Grey Wolves.

Al-Monitor: We actually share our love for motorcycles. Yet it is rare for women in Turkey to ride motorbikes. How did you start?

Kaftancioglu: Growing up in a time and place where riding bicycles was a taboo for girls, my love for cycling evolved into motorbikes. I think in a way I wanted to change the prejudice “women can't drive well” into “women even ride motorbikes.” Yes it is a dangerous activity but it is also dangerous for a woman to walk home alone after dark or speak the truth without fear. It is as dangerous as any other activity you engage in in Turkey in the name of freedom. The only way to minimize the risk in all activities in the fight for freedom is to be more persistent in defending our rights and liberties.

Al-Monitor: What would be good advice for outside observers analyzing the Turkish opposition?

Kaftancioglu: Turkey is not just about the AKP or Erdogan. Remember that Turkey is home to different cultures. Since its establishment as a republic Turkey has turned its face to the West as it would like to have good relations with its neighbors for peace and stability. We are basing our social democratic policies on this solid foundation. We aim for development of our country. We strongly believe Turkish membership in international and regional organizations would help reduce tensions in this region.

Al-Monitor: What is your take on the YSK's decision?

Kaftancioglu: Istanbulites went to the polls and made their decision on March 31; they chose Ekrem Imamoglu as their mayor. The people's will and decision cannot be dashed by government agencies, which should not act as the stick in the hands of those in power. I invite everyone to follow the situation calmly and act in accordance with the decisions our party is going to take.

(Pinar Tremblay is a columnist for Al-Monitor's Turkey Pulse and a visiting scholar of political science at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.)

Community News

Boston Orphan And Child Care Gala Honors Michèle Simourian

By Dianne Chilingirian

BOSTON – A perfect evening in early May enticed over 100 guests to the 2019 Armenian Missionary Association of America's Boston Orphan and Child Care event "Changing Children's Lives 30 Years and Counting" held at the Wellesley Country Club, Wellesley.

This year's gala honored the co-founder of the AMAA's National Orphan and Child Care Committee and longtime advocate for Armenian causes Michèle Simourian for her magnificent work to inspire and spearhead not only the National but also the Boston Orphan and Child Care Committee for more than 30 years.

The evening featured a cocktail reception and a walk and talk buffet style dinner that fostered new connections and mirrored the amazing love, enthusiasm and energy of the evening's honoree. Committee Co-Chairs Susan Covo and Phyllis Dohanian opened the evening by welcoming guests, and Rev. Dr. Avedis Boynerian, pastor of the Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown, offered a gratifying prayer of thanks.

Following dinner, AMAA representative Sona Khanjian presided over a special presentation see AMAA, page 7



Boston Orphan and Child Care Committee Co-Chairs Phyllis Dohanian and Susan Adamian Covo



Honoree Michele Simourian and her husband, John



Texas Armenians in 1907

Honoring Our 1882 TexaHye Settlers

By Mihran Aroian

Waller County Texas more than 135 years ago along with their descendants, who still live in the area. The event was held in the Pattison Area Volunteer Fire Department. Waller County Armenians hosted some 120 Armenians at the celebration. Most who attended were descendants of Armenian settlers, who immigrated and lived in this rural area.

The first Armenian immigrant group of 14 Armenians, headed by Hachadoor Donigian, arrived in Texas in 1882.

From Austin, the two-hour drive down rural roads past expansive cattle ranches and the thick roadside wildflowers that lined property fences – thanks to Lady Bird Johnson's 1960 "Keep America Beautiful" campaign – added to an astonishing not-to-be-forgotten event.

Imagine walking into a rural Texas town and meeting Armenian descendants whose roots date back 135 years. Dressed in traditional rural Texas jeans, some in caps, some in cowboy boots and hats, my family and I met many local families who have never been to Armenia, do not speak the language and whose names do not end in ian. The stereotypical Texas drawl was prevalent throughout the hall as we enjoyed *shish kebab*, *pilaf*, *fasoulya*, *choreg*, *lavash* and many other traditional and familiar foods.

Waller County residents are as proud of their Armenian heritage as any Armenian you will meet. They had photographs of their ancestors, documenting their early days in Texas. Ancestral research was displayed on posters and walls throughout the fire department. I became enthralled by this small but important community of Armenian descendants, who are clearly so proud of

see TEXAS, page 7

PATTISON, Texas – On April 27, Pattison, with a population of 477, was site of a day-long festival to honor the Armenians who migrated to



Hachadoor Donigian



The participants in the 2019 Texas reunion

Boca Raton Armenians Commemorate Genocide

By Sonig Kradjian

BOCA RATON, Fla. – On April 24, many Armenians and some our non-Armenian friends gathered together again in the Performing Arts Building of the Schmidt Center Gallery of Florida Atlantic University (FAU) to commemorate the 104th year of the Armenian Genocide.

This year St. David and St. Mary Armenian Apostolic churches, the Knights of Vartan Hayastan Lodge and the Florida Atlantic University's Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education, all joined to remind the whole world that the spirit of the Armenian Martyrs will continue to haunt the world until the present government of Turkey confesses the guilt of their ancestors and the world will be free of further genocides.

The priest of St. David Church, Rev. Gomidas Zohrabian gave the inspiring invocation and invited to the podium Master of Ceremonies Linda Medvin, the director of FAU Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education, who enthusiastically supported the spiritual leaders in their tribute to the victims of genocide and reinforced our undying resiliency to continue our survival and prosperity.

Then after Robert S. Weinroth, the Palm Beach County Commissioner, read the Proclamation by Scott Singer, mayor of the city of Boca Raton, the keynote speaker, former state Sen. Maria Sachs, delivered a most eloquent and emotional speech emphasizing the failure of the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman Turks and the Jewish Holocaust by the Nazis, both the Armenians and the Jews have not only survived but they also have successfully thrived, prospered and made significant contributions to safeguard humanity. "The proof of their failure is we are here," she said.

Sachs continued to say that the legacy of these events must not be forgotten and the Armenian nation will continue to flourish all over the world, and she also expressed her delight to have Armenian friends whom she loves. Her eloquent and sincere expressions clearly reflect her warm and caring heart.

The highlight of the evening was the little children of St. David Armenian School who looked like angels and when they sang like angels *Der Voghormya* by Komitas Vartabed, under Jean Mosessian's tutelage. They not only captured the heart of all in attendance, but they proved once again that a nation whose children continue to sing asking God for pity and help to bring the world to be worthy of His mercy, such a nation can only survive and thrive!

The musical program by soloist Dr. Carmine Miranda-Berberian on his cello accompanied by pianist Marina Berberian elevated the evening to the stratosphere. The fact that the three composers of their music were all Armenian also: Komitas and Aslamazian, Edward Baghdasaryan and A. Ayyvzyan proved once again that Armenians are a multitasking nation that enriches the world in a multiple ways.

The evening ended when Linda Medvin, the Director of FAU Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education invited Dr. Rosemary Baghdasarian to acknowledge and thank all the participants with a bouquet of flowers and a special Armenian Book printed recently on the occasion of the Armenian exhibit of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NY to the senator who expressed thanks to receive it and promised to read it.

Rev. Fr. Vartan Joulfayan, gave the benediction and together with Fr. Gomidas blessed and prayed for our nation. A beautiful pamphlet program was printed with the Genocide symbol, and mentioning the 29 UN member countries and the 49 states (except Mississippi) that officially recognized the Genocide.

The whole evening was very emotional, classy, entertaining, meaningful and a telling addition in the annals of the memories and memorials of the Armenian Genocide.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Requiem Service At Washington's St. Mary Church

WASHINGTON — On Sunday, May 12, a Requiem Service was conducted at St. Mary Armenian church here for the souls of all freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of Artsakh.

Afterwards, Robert Avedisian, Representative of Artsakh Republic in the United States, spoke about the sacrifice the Armenians done for the liberation of Artsakh and May 9, 1992, the liberation of Shushi, the day that all people of Artsakh had the chance to come out of their basements and see the light of sun and breath the smell of freedom.



In the photo, Robert Avedisian during his speech, Rev. Fr. Gabriel Vardanyan, guest Celebrant of divine liturgy of the day and Rev. Fr. Hovsep Karapetyan, pastor of St. Mary church of Washington, DC.

It is very sad to note that citizens of Armenia who happen to work and live in Washington area, who's sons and daughters are students at the church at the same time of this event, ignored all these accomplishments and they shined with their absence.

Honoring Our 1882 TexaHye Settlers

TEXAS, from page 6

their Armenian roots and heritage. It was a treat to hear them speak about their great grandparents, the hardships they endured, the extensive genealogical research they have done, and then to visit the graves of their Armenian ancestors. Many tombstones include photographs of these individuals and Armenian lettering, beckoning us to remember our own.

Invited speaker Mark Arslan of North Carolina spoke about his Armenian Immigration Project. Mark gave an impressive presentation on the government records he has collected and made available online regarding Armenians who immigrated to the US through 1930. The oldest documented census report

dates back an Armenian who came to Massachusetts in 1850. What Mark has done is impressive. The Armenian Immigration Project is a vast resource for those wanting to learn more about the emigration of their families.

Ava Waters Henry, the main organizer of this event, is one of the nicest people you will ever meet. As we say in Armenian — dak ayroon — she is passionate about her Armenian heritage and will speak with anyone who wants to hear about her Armenian ancestors. "Today, there are no full-blooded Armenians in Waller County, as they have all assimilated with other cultures or moved away," she says. "However, their mark on the area remains. The Armenians became merchants, bankers, cotton ginner, farmers, and even a doctor."

Boston Orphan and Child Care Gala Honors Michèle Simourian

AMAA, from page 6

acknowledging Michèle Simourian for her loyalty and faithfulness to the mission of helping children in need, and ending with words from scripture felt deeply by all in attendance, "...Whatever you did for the least of these..., you did it for Me." (Matthew 25:40). True to form, Simourian was humbled and overwhelmed, yet nonetheless sure in her expression of thanks to the original co-founding members — Joanne DeAngelis, Nancy Eskandarian, Joyce Janjigian, Sheila Palandjian and Jacquie Stepanian—as

Covo, special guest Auctioneer, brought the laughter during coffee and dessert, as well as the bids on fabulous auction items such as a trip to Paris, Red Sox/Yankees box seats and SRO Boston Pops tickets.

At the end of the evening, silent auction winners were announced over bursts of joy, followed by expressions of warmth and love that seemed to coalesce over the crowd and permeate the long goodbyes.

Founded in 1918 in Worcester, and incorporated in New York in 1920, the AMAA is a



Michèle Simourian surrounded by Boston OC Committee members and AMAA representatives

well as the many contributing members over the years.

Christine Kutlu and Jeanmarie Papelian presented a touching video that went to the heart of the need, and magically garnered over 30 new Sponsors for children in Armenia. Peter

nonsectarian and a nonprofit Christian charitable organization that serves the religious, educational and social needs of Armenian communities in 24 countries around the world. For additional information, visit www.amaa.org.



The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada
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Danielle Segen
Mezzo-soprano



Artistic Director
Prof. Movses Pogossian

Ji Eun Awang
Violin 1

Aiko Richter
Violin 2

Morgan O'Shaughnessey
Viola

Jason Pegis
Cello



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Tekeyan Cultural Association Pasadena-Glendale Chapter
TCA Beshgeturian qCenter
1901 N. Allen Avenue, Altadena, Calif.

For more information, email tcaadirector@aol.com



COMMUNITY NEWS



ECHMIADZIN — This weekend, in a stirring and solemn ceremony at the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, Karekin II, the Catholicos of All Armenians, consecrated the Primate of the Eastern Diocese to the episcopal rank. The service of calling and consecration took place May 11-12. On May 13, the new Bishop Daniel Findikyan celebrated his first Divine Liturgy as a bishop, at the historic Church of St. Gayane.

OBITUARY

Charles Nigohsian

Rug Company Owner, Devoted to Family

NORFOLK, Mass. — Charles Nigohsian, 90, of Norfolk, formerly of Medfield and Needham passed away on May 11 surrounded by his family.

He was the husband of Margaret (Talanian) Nigohsian. They would have celebrated 64 years of marriage this October. He leaves his children Karen MacKenzie and her husband Glenn of Wrentham, Lisa Hansbauer and her husband Michael of Austria and Charlene Fallon and her husband William of Dover. He was “Papa” to his grandchildren, Lauren, Nicole, Nikolas, Christopher, Alyssa and Scott. He was “Great Papa” to Cameron, his only great-grandchild, whom he adored.

He was the son of the late John and Catherine Nigohsian, brother of Marlene Paul, the late Miriam Boyajian and the late Marguerite Kurkjian; brother-in-law of Edward Paul, Jack Boyajian and the late Dr. John Kurkjian. He was “Uncle Charles” to many nephews and nieces.

He was a successful businessman and owner of Nigohsian Carpet & Rug Co., of Needham, established by his father John in 1928. After several years of Charlene working together with her dad, the business continues to flourish with her and his son-in-law, William. He loved his cat Lily, making birdhouses and playing cards with his many friends over the years.



Funeral services were held at Saint James Armenian Church, Watertown, on Thursday, May 16. Interment followed at Woodlawn Cemetery, Wellesley.

Arrangements were made by the Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home.

ASA's Sixth Annual Journalism Internship Program Set for 2019

At its recent meeting the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Students' Association of America, Inc. (ASA Inc.) announced it is again sponsoring two internships in journalism in partnership with the *Armenian Weekly* and the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

Interns will work under the supervision of either the editorial staff of the *Armenian Weekly* or the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

“The ASA, Inc. Journalism Internships coupled with its Annual Scholarship Grant Program which awarded \$102,000 in grants in the previous couple of years continues its mission of providing financial assistance and professional level opportunities to qualified students of Armenian heritage. The ASA, Inc. founded in 1910 is the oldest Armenian student organization in the United States,” said Brian Assadourian, Chairman of the ASA Inc. Board of Trustees in making the announcement.

Participants in the six-week internship program will receive a weekly stipend of \$150. Interns will work under the supervision of either the editorial staff of the *Armenian Weekly* or the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

“The Internship provides a valuable opportunity for students of Armenian heritage to have hands-on experience as a member of the editorial staff of the respective publications” noted Dr. Michael G. Mensoian, a member of the ASA Inc. Board of Trustees who oversees the program.

The *Armenian Weekly* and the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* are two of the leading English-language newspapers in the United States and Canada keeping our community informed of developments locally as well as in Armenia and the Diaspora through their print and online editions. The offices of both papers are located Watertown, Massachusetts.

Applications for the ASA Inc. Journalism Internship are now available and may be downloaded by accessing <http://www.asainc.org>. Applications must be submitted no later than Friday May 30, 2019. Candidates must have completed at least their sophomore year of college by May 2019. Currently enrolled graduate students are also eligible.

Since its establishment 106 years ago the Armenian Students' Association of America, Inc. has encouraged the educational pursuits of Armenians in the United States by providing financial assistance in the form of scholarship grants, professional opportunities through internships, and fellowship through social and professional activities.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Primate Findikyan Refocuses Direction of Eastern Diocese

DIocese, from page 1

follow: the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God; equipping the saints for the work of ministry; and knitting together the body in love.

Findikyan decried what he saw as an attempt by the Diocese “to become all things for all Armenians — all things for all people: a kind of a marketplace for all things Armenian.” Though this might be motivated by the well-intentioned hope that people would come for various activities and then become engaged directly in the spiritual life of the church, he questioned whether this was diluting “our specifically God-given Christian mission.”

He noted that some people had told him they chose to attend non-Armenian churches for spiritual nourishment while coming to the Armenian Church for the sake of their heritage and tradition, as well as to be with friends and family. He said, “That stings,” and rhetorically wondered, “How can we better shape our people into fervent, zealous informed followers of Jesus Christ, people of God?”

Findikyan concluded that this required an educational endeavor. It is necessary, he said, to work together to develop a program of Christian formation with engaging resources “faithful to the theology and tradition of the Armenian Church” and tailored to diverse demographic groups in the parishes “from font to funeral.”

Though he said good progress had been made in recent years, it still needed what Findikyan called a “culture change.” Every activity of the church, parish and diocese, should become a teaching moment and opportunity to grow as Christian Armenians, he said. The central mission of all parish and Diocesan organizations must be “building up the body of Christ.”

Secondly, Findikyan, with some reservation, quoted a rough estimate of around 600,000 Armenians on the territory of the Eastern Diocese (the present writer would argue, based on available data, that this is an inflated figure but this does not affect



Primate Fr. Daniel Findikyan

ers, like the Mardigian Institute, could be revived. Findikyan said he himself was deeply changed after going to one of those programs, which led him to think that he wanted to be a priest.

The Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA), he said, should not only be an annual gathering of 400 young people or a “holding-bin for college students.” It

needs to be, he said, equipped and commissioned to be “our Diocese’s peer-based college ministry.” The Women’s Guild does great work, but, Findikyan said, “We need to commission our women to be doing more. We need to be using, energizing them, commissioning them, training them, to get out there to do God’s work that is specific and natural to women, and not so natural, perhaps, to a celibate, middle-aged man.”

All this is “equipping the saints for the work of ministry.”

Thirdly, in “knitting together the body in love” the divine liturgy is the centerpiece or heart of the life and identity of the church and the Christian

calling. Yet attendance is declining throughout the Eastern Diocese. This is a complex matter and an emotional problem, Findikyan said, involving issues of faith, language, culture and economics, some of which are out of the control of the Diocesan community. To counter this situation, Findikyan suggested education through fresh ways and mentoring. Music in the parishes must be revived and strengthened.

As far as the issue of language, Findikyan said: “We are going to have to have some hard conversations about language, respectful, obedient always to our hierarchy and to the traditions of the Armenian Church. A lot of that is out of our jurisdiction but that does not mean that we cannot respectfully ask questions and discuss and learn. I think there is room for some movement there, and I think that’s a discussion that we can have prayerfully together.”

Findikyan said that the place to start in the overall process he wishes to initiate is through prayer and love for one another and “turning the page on old hashivs.” He suggested it was necessary to “break down those boundaries of culture and language and birthplace and politics and all of these things that should have no place in the body of Christ and to work together using the best that we have to offer to build up the body of Christ.” He asked that all the delegates take this message back home, exclaiming: “And woe to you if you do not go back to your parishes and share what we have talked about and your experiences and your tweets and fire up your local communities to follow onboard.”

Elections and Finances

The Assembly elected Lisa Esayan as chair (the first woman chair in Diocesan Assembly history), as well as Vice Chair Greg Saraydarian and secretary Laurie Bejoian. The Primate in his words of welcome on May 2 prepared the Diocesan delegates for his main message by asking them to act as agents of healing, purveyors of hope and disseminators of faith in the world.

Elections took place on May 2 and 3 for members of the Diocesan Council, Board of Trustees and several Diocesan committees. The Council elections had to be held in two rounds. In

the end, Fr. Vasken Kouzouian and Fr. Krikor Sabounjian were elected as clergy representatives, and Dn. Levon Altiparmakian, Roseanne Manoogian Attar and Lisa Kouzoujian as lay delegates. Sandra Shahinian was elected to the Board of Trustees.

Reports were given on the Diocesan Clergy Conference and Parish Council Chairs Meeting, and presentations were made on various operational issues on May 2 and 3. The Endowment Campaign Steering Committee, represented by Oscar Tatosian and Melanie Dadourian, explained that the goal of the committee was to raise \$15 million and over \$8 million has been raised from 75 families, beginning with the \$3 million gift from Edward and Janet Mardigian in 2012. This fund is different than the Annual Appeal and its goal is to generate revenue to support annual operating expenses. Over the past 12 months, \$112,000 was pledged. While pledges this year have been lower than last year, Dadourian said, possibly due to the debate over the project to monetize or develop the Diocesan complex, she declared that the presence of a new Primate has invigorated the campaign.

Findikyan reported that Fr. Mesrop Barsamyan, formerly Director of Ministries, has been appointed as Vicar of St. Vartan Cathedral (this position used to be called Dean); Fr. Mamigon Kiledjian as Diocesan Instructor of Sacred Music, and Laurie Onanian as part time Director of Development.

Fr. Krikor Sabounjian in a separate session the next day reported on Diocesan financial development and the annual appeal that last year fell a little short but with Onanian now working on it, the appeal goal has been raised from around \$750,000 to just under \$1 million.

Gorky Collection and Cathedral Complex Plans

Esayan reported on behalf of the Diocesan Council on the status of the Diocesan Arshile Gorky collection. Outside counsel is being sought for advice on the management of art collections, including the costs of insuring the collection at full value. The Gulbenkian Museum, which at present holds the collection for the Diocese, does have it insured but not necessarily at full value. The Gulbenkian wishes to renegotiate the agreement with the Diocese for holding the collection as well as the conditions for loaning pieces elsewhere. Among the possibilities the Diocese may consider is lending some or all of it to Echmiadzin, which has requested this repeatedly, according to Esayan. At this point, it was said, it



Fr. Mesrop Barsamyan at the podium with Diocesan staff

the point the Primate was making). The priests available, approximately 50 clergymen and 7 theologically trained people at the Diocesan headquarters, are not enough to tend to their needs, he said. Therefore, it is necessary to break through routines and recruit a second tier of men and women to become involved in religious work and the daily ministry of the Armenian Church,



Paul Mardoian and Janet Mardigian at the podium

Findikyan said. These members of the Diocese should act as apostles, mentors, teachers, and musicians, and work with pastors to build up the church, he continued.

To do this, he first suggested forming a network or fellowship of deacons, teaching them liturgical and musical skills and how to be “the right hand of the priest or bishop.” The traditions of Armenian sacred music could be revived along with regional and national fellowships. Programs that used to exist for teach-



Lisa Esayan

is too early to make any decisions by vote.

Diocesan Council Vice Chairman Paul Mardoian reported on the Diocesan Development Project, as Council Chairman James Kalustian, who presented this issue at last year’s assembly, could not be present due to the illness of his parents, including the hospitalization of his father. Mardoian declared that no sales contract existed for the Diocesan Complex. There was only a signed letter of intent to investigate the possibilities. Inaccurate things, he said, were reported in the press, but he also apologized on behalf of the Council for “errors in our communication to the Diocese.” He warned against paying attention to information in a recent email that was being circulated, though the origin of this email, its contents and errors were not specified.

One positive result from the process of working with real estate developer Scott Resnik, Mardoian said, was that it was possible to ensure that the Second Avenue subway will have a station across the street from the cathedral, not under the Diocesan facility.

Mardoian stressed that “there was only good intent” in the real estate negotiations and that “a sale is totally off the table.” He said that the Board of Trustees met with the Council last month which led to a joint process on repairs. Their cost and the costs of realizing Findikyan’s vision for the Diocese would be quantified and juxtaposed against assets available in order to then evaluate any project to develop the Diocesan property.

Janet Mardigian from the Board of Trustees confirmed that the two bodies would work together and, “back at square one,” start over to get more information from experts on such things

see ASSEMBLY, page 11



COMMUNITY NEWS

Diocesan Clergy Meet in Annual Conference

WALTHAM, Mass. — The annual Clergy Conference of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America convened April 29 to May 1, at the Babson College Executive Conference Center, hosted by the St. James Armenian Church in Watertown.

Several dozen clergymen, active as parish pastors and in other capacities throughout the Eastern Diocese, came together for the three-day gathering to pray and plan for the future.

They were led by a Diocesan Primate elected to that office just one year earlier: the Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan, who presided over the gathering for the first time.

Elected chairman of the conference was the Rev. Aved Terzian (of Worcester, MA), with Rev. Abraham Malkhasyan (Bayside, NY) as vice chair, Rev. Voskan Hovhannissyan (Belleville, IL) as Armenian secretary, and Rev. Avedis Kalayjian (Racine, WI) as English secretary.

The Rev. Arakel Aljalian, of the host parish, gave a message of welcome.

A message from the Catholicos of all Armenians, Karekin II, was read to the conference. Visiting representatives from the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin—the Rev. Fr. Gabriel Vardanyan and Rev. Ghevond Temkin — spoke about develop-

ments at the Gevorkian Seminary, and the emerging church-state relationship following last year's "velvet revolution."

In his address to the clergy, Diocesan Primate Fr. Daniel Findikyan spoke with optimism and enthusiasm. Striking a note that he would return to throughout the week, the Primate said that the church's focus should be to "Build up the Body of Christ" — effected through education for all ages, expanding ministry groups, increasing the role of the diaconate, and establishing pathways for meaning participation in the liturgical and spiritual life of the church.

A presentation by the Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian (Diocesan Center, NY) highlighted his activities as Diocesan director of music ministry, working with local parish choirs, organists, and deacons. The Rev. Hovhan Khoja-Eynatyan (Evanston, IL) of the Sacred Music Council (SMC) addressed the group's ongoing work on a website, the Kiraki mobile app, parish Junior Choirs, and new print projects.

Three priests — the Rev. Hovnan Demerjian, Rev. Tadeos Barseghyan, and Rev. Vart Gyozyan — spoke about the graduate programs they completed with the support of the Diocese. Rev. Hratch Sargsyan demonstrated the way he employs Social Media in his ministry, which led to a discus-

sion of guidelines for clergy participation in social media. Also discussed was the Kavazan app for Armenian clergy, launched by the Diocese last year and utilized by a number of parish priests.

Dr. Roberta Ervine of St. Nersess Seminary gave an inspirational talk on Scriptural interpretation in the Armenian Church. Deacon Eric Vozzy (Diocesan Center, NY) spoke of his experience as a baptized member of the Armenian Church, who was later raised in a Pentecostal environment but eventually returned to his baptismal church.

The conference received greetings from the Massachusetts Council of Churches via its executives the Rev. Laura Everett and Anthony Barsamian. Diocesan Development officer Laurie Onanian shared practical advice on building fundraising relationships.

Diocesan Council members Paul Mardoian and Roseann Manoogian Attar updated the clergy on research into tax and retirement concerns.

The conference concluded on the morning of May 2 with the Divine Liturgy at the St. James Church, celebrated by Fr. Gabriel Vartanyan, which Fr. Ghevond Temkin delivering the homily.

Arts of Armenia, and Art of Service Honored at the Diocesan Assembly Banquet

BURLINGTON, Mass. — The warm hospitality of Watertown's Armenian community made the annual Awards Banquet of the Eastern Diocese an engaging and memorable affair. Several hundred guests gathered for the occasion on the evening of Friday, May 3 at the Marriott Hotel.

Hosted by Watertown's St. James Church, the banquet was the culmination of the 117th Assembly of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern). The Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan presided over the banquet as Diocesan Primate. In the course of the evening, several distinguished individuals were applauded for their support of the Armenian Church and community.

Diocesan Legate and Ecumenical Director Archbishop Vicken Aykazian delivered the invocation to open the evening.

Herman Purutyan, who co-chaired the host

became a 'family reunion' of our people: a chance for us to gather together, and stand in the presence of the great works of beauty and Christian faith created by the loving hands of our ancestors," said Mardoian.

In Evans' gracious response, she thanked all Armenians for the "privilege to study the visual voice of your people."

"I accept this award on behalf of those who enabled me to be a scholar: the scribes and artisans, clerics, royalty, and your ancestors who preserved these great works," she said. She recalled seeing for the first time the great manuscripts of Hromkla, "that opened my eyes and my heart to Armenian art." She conveyed gratitude to the generous Armenians who helped fund the "Armenia!" exhibit, and to her scholarly colleagues Thomas Mathews, Nina Garsoïan, and Fr. Daniel Findikyan.

Speaking on behalf of the family, son Michael Guleserian surveyed the lifetime of charitable works undertaken, often with no fanfare, by his parents. "In honor of my father's reluctance to be in the spotlight," he said, "I accept this award on behalf of the entire Guleserian family."

Daughter Dr. Kristine Guleserian thanked the Diocese and all the banquet guests for honoring her parents. She paid special tribute to her parents as exceptional role models, who had shown her powerful lessons of generosity and inner strength.

At last, Nancy Guleserian came to the podium, to the warmhearted applause of the entire room. "This is truly Ed's honor," she said, "and I'm grateful to all of you for keeping his memory alive. In a few graceful words, she summed up the values undergirding the couple's life together: "Sharing our time, wisdom, and generosity with others; and living a kind and good life."

Inspiring Achievement, Love, and Beauty

St. James pastor the Rev. Arakel Aljalian rose to thank his parishioners for their work preparing for the Diocesan Assembly, and touchingly remembered departed leaders of the St. James parish: figures from the past who had left a deep impression on the Diocese as a whole.

To conclude the program, Fr. Daniel Findikyan remarked on the beautiful atmosphere of the evening, and congratulated each of the honorees in turn.

"A lot has changed in our Diocese this year," he said. "But looking out among you, I am proud to lead a Diocese that inspires such achievement, love, and beauty."

To his friend and colleague Evans, the



Dr. Helen Evans

Primate said, "I have enormous admiration for you, Helen. And we as a church are enormously indebted to you."

He expressed regret for never having had the opportunity to meet Edward Guleserian in life, but added that "I am grateful to have become friends with Nancy, and experience the hospital-



Herman Purutyan



Michael Guleserian

parish committee alongside Thomas Gengozian, gave a generous welcome to guests from throughout the Diocese.

Diocesan Assembly chair Lisa Esayan offered a heartfelt toast to the health of the health of the Primate and the prosperity of the church.

St. James parishioner and altar server Mark Giragosian splendidly executed the role of Master of Ceremonies, extolling the work of the parish assembly committee and the legion of volunteers for making the week a success.

Boston's fine Urartu Armenian Women's Choir sang the anthems of the United States and Armenia under the direction of Artur Veranian. And the city's Sayat Nova Dance Company, directed by Apo Ashjian, gave a spectacular performance combining quiet grace with high-energy athleticism.

Diocesan Council vice chair Paul Mardoian introduced the evening's first honoree: Dr. Helen Evans of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, who received the 2019 "Friend of the Armenians" award for curating last fall's landmark "Armenia!" exhibit.

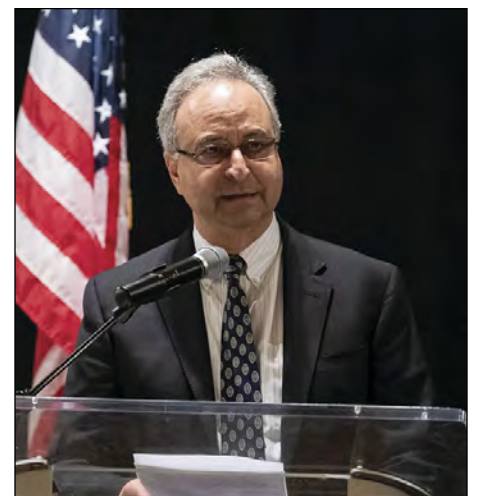
"Tonight, we have the opportunity to thank Dr. Evans for organizing the exhibit that

This year's "Armenian Church Member of the Year" award was given posthumously to the late Edward Guleserian and to his surviving wife Nancy. In introductory remarks, Diocesan Council member the Very Rev. Aren Jebejian noted the family's ongoing role as proprietors of Boston's Sheraton Commander Hotel, and praised the Guleserians' long record of "generosity and care for Armenians, the clergy, and anyone who needs help."

"You do all these things from a clean and loving heart — continuing a family legacy that goes back generations to the great Catholicos Papken Guleserian," Jebejian said, in the course of his warm personal remembrances of Edward, Nancy, and their children Michael and Kristine.



Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan and Rev. Arakel Aljalian with the members of the Guleserian family



Paul Mardoian

ity so characteristic of the family. I've come to admire the warmth they show to all our people." Touching on a thematic thread of the 117th Diocesan Assembly, the Primate added that the Guleserians "have brought healing to the lives of real people."

The Diocesan Assembly Committee of St. James Church was led by Fr. Arakel Aljalian and co-chairs Thomas Gengozian and Dn. Herman Purutyan. The main committee consisted of Mark Giragosian, Sandra Raphaelian, Gail Boroyan, Yn. Natasha Aljalian, Maria Derderian, Nancy Kassabian, Janice Kavjian, and Edward Kazanjian—and included dozens of volunteers from the local community. Carolyn Atinjian and Mark Torre, and Kalyn Babikyan, respectively led the banquet and booklet subcommittees.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Primate Findikyan Refocuses Direction of Eastern Diocese

ASSEMBLY, from page 9

as necessary structural and cosmetic changes for the cathedral complex and on offsite air rights. She promised that their reports would be thorough and they would be very transparent in everything they did. Mardoian chimed in, stressing that they were trying to do the best they could do and hoping that this was seen in

Daniel's vision. In addition, the Diocesan staff is not given the benefits and raises it deserves and the parishes cannot be given more help because of the lack of funds at present.

Delegate Van Krikorian declared that people were voting against the plans to monetize the Diocesan property with their feet and pocket books. He stressed the symbolic importance of

Bylaws, Mission Parishes and the Role of Women

For a number of years now, the Diocesan Council has tried to get the new global bylaws prepared by Echmiadzin accepted by the Diocese. On the topic of a legal opinion on the validity of Diocesan vs. Echmiadzin's global bylaws, including whether New York State law may override that of Echmiadzin, Antranig Garibian declared on behalf of the Council that the latter was now seeking an unbiased opinion and has DL Piper, a corporate law firm (Berge Setrakian of the Armenian General Benevolent Union is a partner there), looking at the bylaws. Garibian initially preferred to defer to the absent Diocesan Council chairman in response to a question as to whether the 2013 Diocesan bylaws or the global bylaws proposed by Echmiadzin was in force at present, but the next day clarified that it was the March 2013 Diocesan bylaws that at present were still in force, with one minor modification to Article 14B. The Council promised to send a copy of the 2013 bylaws with this amendment electronically to the delegates within a week.

Diocesan organizations and auxiliary committees presented their reports on May 3. The host committee for next year's assembly, from St. Sarkis Armenian Church near Dallas, Texas, made a presentation, and St. Mark Armenian Church of Springfield, Mass. was chosen as the site of the 2021 assembly.

Fr. Findikyan announced that the approach to mission parishes as being changed. The new approach would start with a fulltime priest appointed by the Primate for a three-year program, in which local people initially pay a minimal amount which increases annually. Donors are being found to underwrite this approach.

Fr. Findikyan reported that in principal he supports increased participation of women serving in the church, and spoke twice briefly with the Catholicos of All Armenians on this, as well as with the Canadian and West Coast Primates, along with a *vartabed* studying this

issue for the Supreme Council. He declared that "basically, this is a work in progress" because the Eastern Diocese does not have the full ability to make decisions, but he said he would support those studying this issue.

The Catholicos is in favor of young girls serving as acolytes, Fr. Findikyan said, but is cautious about it and has charged people to research it based on the traditions of the Armenian Church. At present, young boys, but not girls, may receive minor orders and Fr. Findikyan said that he is uncomfortable with this situation. He concluded, "This issue will be driven along to some extent by resolutions of this assembly, but relatively modestly. The more powerful force is going to be our own learning and dedication to our own ministry and prayer. If we as an Assembly can be praying for good and active ministries of men and women in our church, then I believe that together with God, he will open the doors for us... Unfortunately, it is not a push-button approach."

Proposals

Among the important proposals voted on during the last day of the general session, on May 4, was a call for term limits for Diocesan Council members. The initial proposal was for a limit of two terms but this was modified to three terms, after which two years must pass before the individual can again hold office. This proposal was accepted and must pass again at next year's assembly by majority vote to be valid.

Proposals on allowing telephonic or electronic communications for meetings of the Diocesan Council and Board of Trustees, and on requiring majority votes of each of the latter bodies separately to reach joint decisions passed, and must be approved by vote next assembly to become law.

Proposals on redefining membership of the Armenian Church and giving the Diocesan Assembly authority to sell or dispose of any interest in the Diocesan headquarters failed to pass.



From left, Fr. Aren Jebejian, Paul Mardoian and Janet Mardigian

a positive way.

During the question session, several people asked again specifically whether a decision had been made to monetize the air rights or develop the Diocesan property. Esayan explained that a joint meeting of the Diocesan Council and Board of Trustees must vote on the purchase or sale of the Diocesan property, while Mardoian said that no decision has been made on whether to monetize the Diocesan property. He said that everything is on the table, and repeated that all options are being considered because new revenue is needed to carry out Fr.

the Diocesan headquarters and declared that the Assembly should get a vote in the decision. Krikorian asked whether the Council believed this issue has to be handled in a different way. Mardoian replied that yes, the Council understands this and will bring the issue to the Assembly before there ever will be a deal signed and repeated that all the options are still being looked at.

Treasurer Attar in answer to a question on repairs said that the ultimate goal was a maintenance fund but unfortunately the Diocese financially barely has been breaking even every year.

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Arts & Living

Three Artists Exhibit in Netherlands, Germany

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

WIESBADEN, Germany – Two years ago, a group of six young Armenian artists came to Wiesbaden, Germany to exhibit their works at the Haus der Heimat. (<http://www.mirak-weissbach.de/Publications/Archive/files/96e44e6572b1e38f4cf202e09e7e8bb0-135.html>) Now, two of the six have returned, this time with a new colleague, for a show in the Netherlands and a brief visit again to Wiesbaden.

The Dutch exhibit took place at the Galleria Unexpected, in Groningen, from April 12 to May 3. Guy Ghazanchyan, 28, and Arman Hambardzumyan, 31, have shown their paintings and sculptures in numerous countries of eastern and western Europe and the United States. Romeo Melikian was here for the first time but has already exhibited in England, Lebanon, Russia and Armenia.

The opportunity to show their works in Groningen came quite by chance. Gallery owner Kors van Bladeren was in Armenia in 2014 and saw some of Hambardzumyan's works. Impressed, he suggested organizing a solo exhibit in Groningen, but the artist was not quite ready. He did participate in an international symposium there however. In 2018 van Bladeren returned to Armenia and this time they struck an agreement, whereby the Armenian sculptor would travel to the Netherlands, and would take two colleagues with him. The show, which lasted three weeks, was very well received.

While in the Netherlands, the three took advantage of the enormous opportunity offered by a country with such a rich artistic heritage. In Amsterdam and Rotterdam as

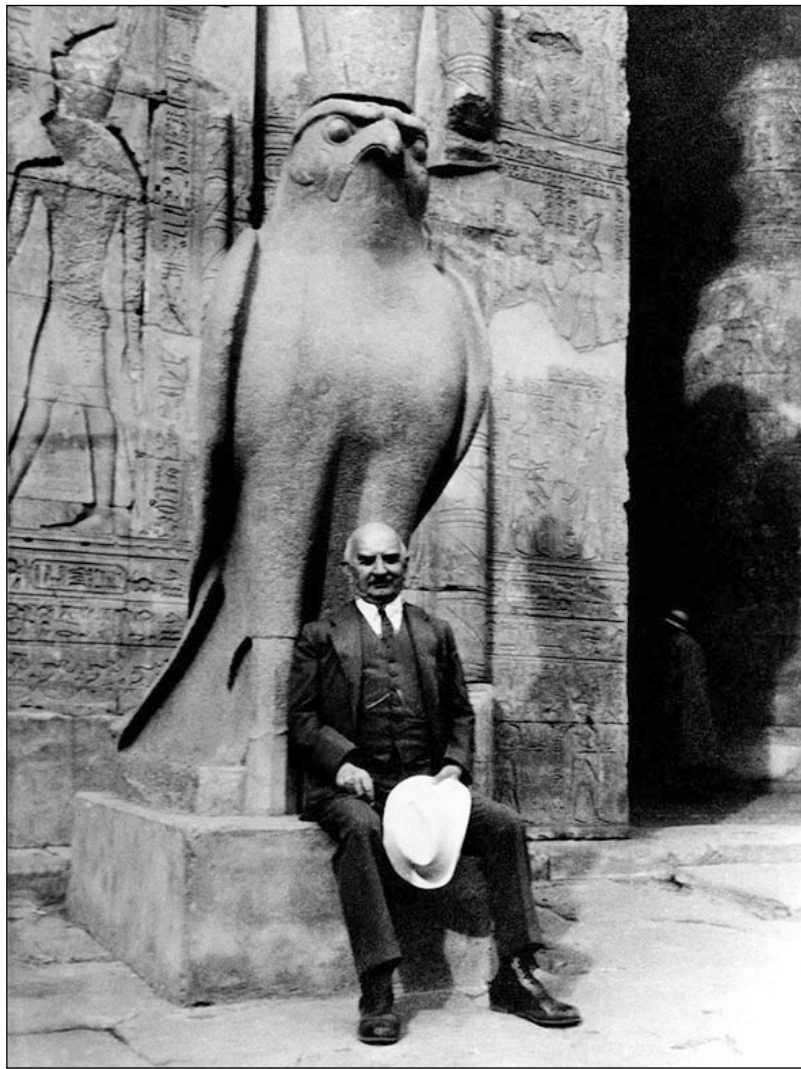


From left, Arman Hambardzumyan, Guy Ghazanchyan and Romeo Melikian

well as The Hague they spent days visiting the museums and experiencing the works of the great masters in the original.

Before returning to Armenia, they stopped over in Wiesbaden. Guy Ghazanchyan became acquainted with Germany at a tender age, when his mother (also an artist) took him to visit his grandmother, Nona Gabrielyan, who has been living and working here as an artist for decades, together with her artist husband Van Soghomonyan. Gabrielyan organized a one-day show for the trio in their atelier/gallery V&N in central Wiesbaden. While here, the three again visited museums in the region, including the famous Städel in Frankfurt, which was hosting an exhibit of works by Titian and other masters of the 16th century Venetian renaissance.

In June, the three will return to Europe for an exhibit at the National Art Museum of Belgrade, Serbia.



Calouste Gulbenkian in Egypt (1933)

Marking the 150th Anniversary of Calouste Gulbenkian

Celebrating Legacy of His Foundation

Calouste Gulbenkian, born in 1869 in Constantinople (Istanbul), gained fame since 1910 as he followed the steps of his mentor Alexander Mantashian of Tbilisi, a giant in the petroleum industry. His father died early in 1893, and his mother in 1908. According to legend, the family name is derived from the first name of Prince Vart Rshtuni, the father of the 7th century Prince Theodoros Rshtuni, who defended

By Fr. Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD

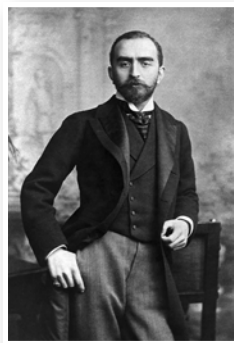
Armenia against the Arab incursions. Following his graduation from the Armenian grade school in Kadikeoy, Calouste was admitted at Oxford University in England, and graduated as an engineer writing his first essay on the petroleum mines of Baku. It was published in a French magazine. Calouste married Nevart Yessayan in London and they became the parents of Nour and Rita.

Starting in 1895, Calouste Gulbenkian was engaged in the petroleum industry working with the well-known companies of England and Holland, and in 1900 he became the pioneer of the discovery of a vast mine in Mesopotamia. During the following decade, already a British citizen, Calouste became one of the founders of Turkish Petroleum Company. It was through his skill and wisdom that he soon attained the heights of international and national benevolence worldwide.

His Fame and Bequest

During the first half of the 20th century, Calouste Gulbenkian proved to be a leading figure in Lisbon, Portugal, where he established his residence and his future foundation in 1942. According to his bequest, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation was established by the Portuguese government in 1956 as a State Foundation, based on his monumental wealth of \$500 million, accumulated from his previous investments. The Foundation aimed at benevolence to assist the country's educational, scientific, and publication endeavors, mostly non-Armenian.

In honor of this great benefactor, Armenians should gratefully acknowledge that the state decree dated July 18, 1956, included a section reserved to "Armenian see GULBENKIAN, page 13



Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (1900)

BOOK REVIEW

The Meaning Of Being Armenian

By Gary A. Kulhanjian

Michael Boyajian has authored 25 books nearly half about ancient history and the Armenians. Like a jubilee celebration, readers continue to enjoy his books which are for the general audience. His narrative and focus in the book investigates the question: "What does it mean to be Armenian especially in an entirely non-Armenian world?" He further explores the relevant and important subject of "bullying" based on his personal experiences, views and analyses. The difficulty of being viewed differently in a multi-ethnic society is not always understandable. Prejudice starts with stereotypes. We all possess an image

The Armenian Identity Examined: What is He?

By Michael Boyajian. New York: Jera Studios Publishing, 2019, 105 pp.

of others individually or collectively. Racism is perpetuated by an individual, society, or an institution. Hence, Armenians have acculturated and assimilated over their 400-year presence in the United States. Yet, Armenians like other ethnic, racial, and religious groups have undergone prejudices and stereotypes. Clearly in many parts of the world, they have lived in urban areas after World War I and have existed in enclaves on various continents.

In America today, Armenians live mostly near metropolitan areas and both on the east and west coasts which have the largest Armenian-American populations. For Armenians, the "ghetto" experience in early 20th century was for a short time. Today, the west coast, particularly California, has the largest concentration of Armenians in the diaspora. In the historical past to the present, Armenians have a collective identity of themselves, and the people whose nations they have inhabited over centuries.

The reviewer is sure all Armenians may want to read Boyajian's book for two reasons: first, their interest in their identity; secondly, in an era of heightened research in the multiplicity of our ethnic origins and certainly awareness of DNA which has given us a desire to address a question posed by the author: "What is He (or She)?" Boyajian heard this question himself years ago and non-Armenians may still be asking it about Armenians.

The author says as early as in third grade, he remembered when a student asked him: "...what religion are you?" Boyajian responded by saying he was a Christian and Apostolic. A student enticed others and yelled "...he is an atheist," not having any knowledge about his fellow student's religion or background.

The incident led to pandemonium among some students who attacked Boyajian. The teacher looked on in astonishment before situation was under control. Boyajian continues thinking how the fight broke out with these words "... You lay broken on the ground a son of the first Christian nation, in 301 A.D., decades before Rome." Others in the class were also bullied for different reasons.

The author reviews the image and identity of Armenians in the ancient world and their survival. Furthermore, he examines the turbulence of the Armenian experience through various empires and times. Briefly tracing the history of the Armenians from ancient times up to the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian identity has

see REVIEW, page 16



ARTS & LIVING

Edmond Azadian Feted in Metro Detroit Event

By Harry A. Kezelian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. — The publication of Edmond Azadian's Armenian-language new book, *Zhamanag yev Zhamanagagitsneru hed* (With My Time and Contemporaries) was presented on Wednesday, May 8, at the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School in Southfield, in a literary evening sponsored by the Detroit Chapter of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA). The book entails Azadian's thoughts on different literary figures he has encountered in his time, and criticism of their works. On this occasion, the speakers took the opportunity to not only celebrate the new book, but to celebrate the life work of Edmond Yervant Azadian.

The chairwoman of the Detroit TCA, Diana Alexanian, welcomed the guests with her bright smile and warmth, then turned the microphone over to the day's master of ceremonies, Sebouh Avedikian. Avedikian introduced each speaker in his professional tones in English and Armenian. He made a special introduction for the first speaker, Very Rev.



Edmond Azadian

Andon Atamian of St. Vartan's Armenian Catholic Church, as he told the assembled group of Atamian's brave ministry for the Armenian community in Iraq over the past 20 some years of warfare in that country.

Atamian spoke in beautiful literary Armenian, giving a traditional ode to the life work of Yervant Azadian in the Armenian cultural and especially literary worlds. His speech seemed a tribute not only to Azadian but to the beauty of the Armenian language itself.

The next person to speak was Dickran Toumajan of Wayne State University and the Manoogian School. He read a moving

piece written in English by Azadian, titled "Hugging a Turk," in which Azadian, though decrying the country of Turkey for denying the Armenian Genocide to this day, was movingly reconciled with a Turkish taxi driver who emotionally apologized for the events of 1915, on behalf of her people. Although Azadian believes in continuing the fight against Turkey, this moving experience allowed him to give at least that small amount of forgiveness on behalf of the taxi driver.

At this point the guests enjoyed a musical interlude presented by kanon player Narine Ghambaryan, originally from Vanadzor, Armenia, who has been a music teacher for

ary figures presented in Azadian's book. Bardakjian spoke about the ways Azadian approaches these figures in his literary criticism and more than once praised Azadian for his ability to stand against certain celebrated figures when he thinks they are wrong, or to praise the little-known efforts of forgotten or even disliked individuals when he finds they have something to offer.

Next, Anahit Toumajan of the Manoogian School, and active in all aspects of Armenian community life in Detroit, gave a reading in Armenian from Azadian's new book, specifically a section dealing with Azadian's interactions with the writer Varoujan Bedigian and his appraisal of Bedigian's work.



(left to right) Prof. Kevork Bardakjian, David Terzibashian, Sebouh Avedikian



Nora Azadian, the author's wife, third from the left

many years. Ghambaryan presented works by Sayat-Nova and Komitas, and extended an invitation to the community, offering kanon lessons for the youth of Detroit.

Renowned scholar Dr. Kevork Bardakjian, holder of the Marie Manoogian Chair of Armenian Language and Literature at the University of Michigan, was the next to speak. Bardakjian spoke in English, in a conversational tone, presenting an inside look at Edmond Azadian's life from one of his close collaborators, and sharing moments from interactions both of them had with the liter-

The literary evening's closing remarks were given by Rev. Vahan Tootikian, former pastor of the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit, and a major leader in the greater Armenian Evangelical movement. Rev. Tootikian gave a lighthearted speech, joking that every time he had been reassigned to a new church in the Middle East or America, Azadian had "followed" him, being assigned to literary and cultural posts in the very same cities.

The evening ended with the guests enjoying conversation over a light desert spread.

Celebrating Legacy of Calouste Gulbenkian

GULBENKIAN, from page 12

Affairs" that authorized the perpetual and lasting assistance which the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation granted to the various Armenian churches, schools, scholarships, publications, and philanthropic needs worldwide. Some of the following calculated distributions marked below will give a general idea about the perpetual and lasting assistance the foundation has granted. The widespread scholarships over the years, numerous indeed, attest to the value of this great foundation.

Gulbenkian Library, Jerusalem

Much earlier than the establishment of the Foundation, in July of 1931, the Gulbenkian Library in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was built in honor of Patriarch Yeghishe Tourian on the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in 1929. Hearing about the plans, on his official visit to Paris as the Pontifical Legate of H.H. Catholicos of All Armenians Kevork V, the Primate of Egypt Archbishop Torkom Koushagian had met philanthropist Calouste Gulbenkian in 1929 and secured "the entire cost of the monumental building of the Library in memory of the benefactor's parents Sarkis and Dirouhi."

The Executive Board of the Brotherhood of the Patriarchate had formed a committee to oversee the project, as they soon became aware of the gift of the full cost incurred from Archbishop Koushagian. Upon hearing the good news, Patriarch Yeghishe Tourian wrote a letter of appreciation, himself designating the name of the Library as "Gulbenkian Library dedicated to the memory of the benefactor's parents Sarkis and Dirouhi, with additional funds possibly raised by the Armenian community for publications," thus revising the initial honor of his own anniversary. The Patriarch passed away in April of 1930. The following year he was succeeded by Patriarch

Torkom Koushagian who inaugurated the elegant Library in July, 1931.

As an eye-witness who has visited the Patriarchate twice, I wish to state that the monumental structure, purely in Armenian traditional style, comprises two stories, and from the exterior and the interior is an impressive house of learning. The main hall at the center is surrounded by the two-level balconies overseeing the hall with iron cabinets and shelves carrying tens of thousands books, with eight reading rooms on the sides evenly opened for study. Soon the entire personal library of the late Patriarch Tourian was transferred in the new building, so were the valuable correspondences and the ancient archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople shipped by the orders the then Patriarch Zaven Der Yeghiayan just before World War I.

Armenian Appropriations

Since its founding in 1956 and until 1969, the Gulbenkian Foundation in general allocated some \$135 million to Portuguese institutions, including a portion to the Armenian institutions. At the time the foundation had opened its central offices and a museum where some 3,000 personal artifacts of the benefactor are treasured. In addition, in 1960 the section of the "Armenian Affairs" had made significant appropriations of which the following represent

only a few samples, taken from the Foundation's Report that appeared in the monthly Sion of the Jerusalem Patriarchate.

From July to December 1960, the allocations to Armenian institutions represented \$550,000 for the six months, totaling the

had received from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation no less than \$20 million. A decade earlier, a report from Lisbon dated January 1961 and published in the monthly *Sion*, included in the grand total \$2,100,000 for the year ending December, 1959. For sure the Armenians are indebted to this great benefactor for leaving behind a monumental Foundation posthumously, no less important than the AGBU, whose second President Calouste Gulbenkian was elected, succeeding the founding President Boghos Nubar Pasha. However, his tenure was very short and disappointing for him as he resigned, given the primitive initiatives and the slow motion of the AGBU in its initial stages.

Holy Resurrection Cathedral

During the initial years of his patriarchate of Jerusalem, Patriarch Yeghishe Derderian faced a major task in the costly renovation of the Holy Resurrection Cathedral of Jerusalem from 1963. The estimated cost being 900,000 British Pounds, the three denominations, the Greek, Latin, and Armenian Patriarchates, who traditionally are equally the rightful guardians of the holy sites, were responsible to share the cost among them, 300,000 each. In October 1963, the Catholicos of All Armenians H.H. Vasken I was invited for a national fundraising meeting at which time a petition was sent to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation to assist. The request by His Holiness on behalf of the Patriarchate was well received by the Foundation who agreed to donate the one third of the Armenian share (100,000), distributed on six years, given the duration of the renovations. The Foundation also recommended that the Armenian communities should come together to meet the balance.

It took six years to complete the renovations, upon which the editor of *Sion* expressed gratitude on behalf of the Patriarchate and the Armenian nation for the initiative taken by the Lisbon-based Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.



The grounds of the foundation, with a statue of the namesake and an Egyptian statue.

amount to \$750,000 for the entire year. Reports show distributions of those allocations for renovation of 56 Armenian school buildings, assistance to the school in Detroit, an allocation to the Armenian Church Diocese of Iraq for the building of an additional floor above the St. Tarkmanchats School, as well as to the Mekhitarist School in Alexandria, Egypt. The same year 55 Armenian schools in Lebanon were the beneficiaries of grants for school furnishing and installation, in addition to scholarships for the Armenian youth in Lisbon, and an annual scholarship of \$150,000 to the students in the Diaspora universities over four years, totaling \$500,000.

\$20 Million Armenian Grants

At the end of 1971, Armenian institutions

Cher Shines at TD Garden

By Brenda Tavitian
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BOSTON — Armenian-American pop legend, movie star and activist Cherilyn Sarkisian, also known by the single moniker Cher, performed at

the TD Garden to a sell-put crowd on Sunday, April 28. She opened up with her hits, Woman’s World, wearing a black and gold glittery Viking costume and a headdress sporting a long orange wig. Looking trim and healthy, the crowd stood for her grand entrance. Then came *Strong Enough* and *You Haven’t Heard the Last of Me* from her

movie, “Burlesque.” Next was the *Shoop, Shoop Song (It’s in His Kiss)* and *I Found Someone*. Changing costumes many times, she even came out on a mechanical elephant whose tusks lit up. Cher has never been known to be a Plain Jane. She then took on three ABBA songs from her last movie, “Mama Mia II,” *SOS*, *Fernando* and *Waterloo*. A movie screen dropped down showing her past musical and acting achievements. The image of her former husband, Sonny Bono, came up and she performed the touching duet *I Got You Babe* with



Cher in concert

Recipe Corner

Guest Recipe
by Christine Vartanian Dalian

Faloodeh or Paludeh ye Shirazi

A frozen angel hair rice noodles and cream dessert
(Recipe and photo contributed by Robyn Kalajian at thearmeniankitchen.com.)

Known as one of the earliest frozen desserts (*The Encyclopedia of Jewish Food* by Gil Marks dates it back to at least 400 BC), *faloodeh* was kept in dome-shaped ancient refrigerators known as *yakhchals*. Made of thin vermicelli noodles that are frozen with rose water, starch and sugar, the flavors of the “Persian Sorbet” are intensely accented with a nice, generous helping of lemon juice. Legend has it that *faloodeh* was the first frozen dessert ever made, and that it was invented largely by accident, when flavoring syrups were spilled on snow, and people realized that they could be transformed into a delicious treat. Whatever the origin, *faloodeh* is native to the city of Shiraz, and is often called *Shirazi Faloodeh*. Today’s *faloodeh* is often served with sour cherries (or sour cherry syrup), fresh mint, berries, crushed pistachios, and/or a dollop of saffron ice cream. Lemon juice is sometimes added instead of lime. Made with vermicelli noodles, *faloodeh* is the ultimate summer time treat and vegetarian-friendly.

“As I was organizing my pantry,” Robyn says, “I saw a partial bag of thin rice noodles that I’d used for a Thai recipe a long time ago. Apparently, these noodles can last a life-time, if stored in an air-tight container. Since I had no intention of discarding the dried noodles, I wanted to find a use for them that would be more in keeping with Armenian cuisine.”

“Since I’d never heard of an Armenian-style recipe calling for rice noodles, I was surprised to find one for a frozen dessert called ‘*Faloodeh*,’ in an article from the ianyan online magazine written by Liana Aghajanian. Then it hit me...I had heard of a recipe with a similar-sounding name called ‘*Paludeh ye Shirazi*,’ from the cookbook, *Persian Cuisine* by M.R. Ghanoonparvar.” This recipe was adapted by Robyn Kalajian from the cookbook, *Persian Cuisine*.

INGREDIENTS

- About 1/4 lb. thin rice noodles or rice sticks, the size of angel hair pasta
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons lime zest, optional
- 2 teaspoons rosewater extract, optional
- 1 cup freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice (for drizzling)

PREPARATION

- Separate and break noodles into pieces about 1-2” long.
 - Bring two quarts of water to a boil; add noodles and cook for 10 minutes, or until soft, but not mushy. Drain and rinse in cold water. Set aside in a colander to drain completely.
 - In a mixing bowl, combine the cream, powdered sugar, lime zest and rose water extract, if using. Stir in the noodles, tossing to coat.
 - Place mixture in a freezer-safe container and freeze for one hour. Remove from freezer and loosen. Place back in the freezer for one more hour, until noodles are frozen and crisp.
 - To serve, scoop *faloodeh* in individual bowls and drizzle each serving with two tablespoons of fresh lemon or lime juice.
- Serves: 6-8.

For information on *faloodeh*, go to:
<https://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/2014/08/faloodeh-or-paludeh-ye-shirazi-frozen.html>
<http://www.ianyanmag.com/the-khohanzotz-faloodeh/>
https://munchies.vice.com/en_us/article/ezkb7n/meet-the-man-who-introduced-persian-ice-cream-to-los-angeles
<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2016/09/08/492139092/in-this-globe-trotting-dessert-many-immigrants-find-a-taste-of-home>

Where to find *faloodeh*:

- Mashti Malone's Ice Cream
1525 North La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90028
(866) 767-3423
- Shiraz Restaurant
15472 Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
(818) 942-3197
- Saffron and Rose Ice Cream Shop
1387 Westwood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90024-4940
(310) 477-5533

- Al-Naimat
37-03 74th Street, Jackson Heights, Queens, NY 11372
(718) 476-1100
- Dizin FruttiBerri
127 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, Massachusetts, 02472
This frozen yogurt spot sells *faloodeh*, fresh and frozen, in flavors like lime, pomegranate, and sour cherry.
(617) 924-8880



Memorial Concert In Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE — On Friday, April 26, the Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church and the Armenian Martyrs’ Memorial Committee of Rhode Island presented a concert in the sanctuary of Sts Sahag and Mesrob Church in Providence. The concert was dedicated to the victors and saints of the Armenian Genocide, and it also honored the 150th anniversaries of Komitas Vartabed and Hovhannes Toumanian, respectively.

Steven Zaroogian of the Martyrs’ Memorial Committee welcomed the clergy and audience. This evening’s performance, under the capable direction of Konstantin Petrossian, brought poignant musical pieces reflective of the somber subject. The beautiful tones of the chorus were augmented by the Junior Choir as well as outstanding soloists including a wave of young budding talent. The chorus was accompanied by the very talented Mari Panosian on keyboard.

Soprano Kate Norigian gave an exquisite performance of *Hayastan* by Komitas which evoked nostalgic feelings. Mezzo-Soprano Gohar Manjelian gave a hauntingly beautiful emotion to the song, *Garoon a*, also by Komitas. Soprano Joanne Mouradjian gave a marvelous rendition of *Groong* by Komitas. Soprano Mari Megrdichian gave a deeply moving performance of *Qeler-Tsoler*. Larisa Poghosian, the youngest of the evening’s singers, sang a solo portion of *Erebounee-Yerevan* beautifully. Two students of the Armenian School each recited a poem. Sophie Vorperian recited “Let My People Live Forever” by Gevorg Emin and Siran Sohakian recited “My Name Is Armenia” by Aret Barseghyan.

The youngsters, with their budding talent who performed this evening, bring a ray of hope to our future.

The Very Rev. Shnork Souin, pastor, congratulated the performers and offered a prayer.
–Shirley Ventrone



Members of the Junior Choir



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

ARIZONA

NOVEMBER 2-3 — ARMENIAFest at St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church. Weekend food and cultural festival featuring traditional Armenian foods, beverages, exhibits, music and dance performances. 8849 E. Cholla St., Scottsdale.

NOVEMBER 16 — SOAR (Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief) Annual Golf Tournament. Saturday 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stonecreek Golf Club, 4435 E. Paradise Village Pkwy, Phoenix. This is a fundraising event for Armenian orphans. For more information, contact Dr. Alan Haroian, 603-540-1961.

CALIFORNIA

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 master-works 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.

MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 19 — Concert at the Armenian Museum. Concert to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Komitas Vardapet and poet Hovhaness 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 Nevart 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.

MAY 30 — Annual Spring Dinner and Drawing sponsored by the Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club, 6:30pm, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Open to all. You don’t have to be a member of the 1000 Club to join us for a delicious losh kebab and pilaf dinner, \$9.99 per person; tickets on sale at the door. Regular monthly raffle drawing at 8 p.m., plus 5 \$25 door prizes. “One-time” numbers will be sold on the night of dinner; special offer: purchase five “one-time” numbers for \$20, save \$5. For further info, contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/696/.

MAY 31 — Tribute to 150 birth anniversary of Komitas, Friday, Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church, Nishan and Margrit Atinizian Hall, 200 Lexington St., Belmont. 7 p.m. A benefit concert presenting the life and music of Komitas Vardapet. Concert will benefit wounded soldiers’ hospital and their families in Yerevan. A reception will follow. Performers will be Marina Margarian and Gegam Margarian on piano, and Zori Babroudi on duduk, with members of the Holy Cross Church Choir and the Meghedi Children’s Vocal Ensemble.

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 morePlus Activities for the Children, White Elephant Table, Gift Basket Raffles.

JUNE 3 — St James Men’s Club Dinner Meeting - social hour and mezza at 6:15 PM and dinner at 7:00 PM, St James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown. Guest will be Michael Zildjian, author, pod-caster, and speaker. Zildjian is a Watertown native and former AGBU student. His Zilosophy platform leads conversations which teach self-awareness and honest self-evaluation with the goal of helping people make informed choices that allow them to bring their best to whatever they do. He will lead a discussion based on

what it means to be the best Armenians we can be for our community and our world. Mezza and a Losh Kebab & Kheyma 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.

JUNE 6 — First Thursdays: Jazz at the Armenian Museum of America, Watertown, 6–7 pm: Gallery hours will be extended until 7 pm for guest to explore the Museum. 7 pm: Reception in the Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries, 3rd floor. 7:30–9:30 pm: The Black Sea Salsa Band

JUNE 6 — First Thursdays: Jazz at the Armenian Museum, Thursday, 8–10 p.m. Armenian Museum of America, Watertown. Featuring The Black Sea Salsa Band. More details coming soon!

JUNE 9 — St. James Armenian Festival Annual Picnic! Join us for a fun-filled festival! Delicious Armenian food, Live Armenian music, children’s activities with moon bounce, face painting, and more! Rain or shine. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more info visit www.stjameswatertown.org or call 617.923.8860.

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 14 — The Friends of Armenian Culture Society presents the 68th annual Armenian Night at the Pops, featuring cellist Laura Navasardian as soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra. Symphony Hall, Boston. 8 pm. For tickets and information, visit <http://www.FACSBoston.org>.

JUNE 17-AUGUST 16 – Abaka Dance Academy, Summer Program for ages 5-12, with principal/director Apo Ashjian at 101 Bigelow Ave., Watertown. Arts and crafts, Indoor games, Sports, Music, Dance, Free T-shirts, Friday pizza and more. Weekly sessions at \$250/week, begin June 17 - August 16, 8 am - 3 pm. Late stay available. Register at www.abakadanceacademy.com. For more information, email abakadanceacademy@gmail.com or call 617-283-2010.

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 vicki lee’s and refreshing Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and the fabulous Berklee Jazz Trio. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

JUNE 22 —Armenian Food Fair, 11 a.m. -7 p.m., St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church Ladies Guild. Jaffarian Hall, 158 Main Street, No. Andover. Serving all day. Lamb Shish Kebab, Chicken & Losh Kebab, Kheyma, Vegetarian plates. Pastry, Boregs, Choreg, Khadaif, Paklava, Gift Table, Country Kitchen, White Elephant, 50/50 Raffles and much more.... Take out available. Call the Church @ 978-685-5038 Ann @978-521-2245 or Sossy @ 978-256-2538

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 5 — Armenian Church of Cape Cod presents Third Annual Kef Time - Dinner & Dancing Friday, 6 to 11:30 p.m. at The Cape Club, 125 Falmouth Woods Road, North Falmouth. Chicken Kebab & Losh Kebab dinner Leon Janikian band with special appearance by Harry Minassian and a DJ \$65/person, children 7 to 14 \$15 For tickets/tables contact Andrea Barber (617)201-9807

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 16 — Registration is now open for the 2019-2020 sessions of the Abaka Dance Academy, 101 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, MA. Principal/director Apo Ashjian. Classes begin September 16 for grades Nursery II - Grade 10 students. Check the schedule and enroll today at www.abakadanceacademy.com. For more info, email abakadanceacademy@gmail.com or call 617-283-2010.

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. Hoodsies, 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.Armenia-FriendsofAmerica.org

NOVEMBER 1,2 — NAASR Grand Opening and Gala. Friday, November 1 – Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting, NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, at NAASR’s new world headquarters, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA. Saturday, November 2 – NAASR 65th Anniversary Gala, at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, Cambridge. 6 pm Reception, 7 pm Dinner and Program. Honoree Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; Master of Ceremonies David Ignatius, columnist for the Washington Post and novelist; Featuring renowned soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian, accompanied by the Borromeo String Quartet, performing a program of songs by Komitas. Further details to follow.

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

JUNE 12 — The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum and Richard A. Manoogian will host Dr. Helen C. Evans, at St. John Armenian Church Cultural Hall, on Wednesday, at 6:30 p.m. Slide-lecture program based on the recent Armenia! Art, Religion, and Trade in the Middle Ages exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. She is the Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator for Byzantine Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art. For the occasion, Sylvie Merian, a contributor to the Armenia! catalog, and also one of the editors and contributors to A Legacy of Armenian Treasures: Testimony to a People — Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum, will read a specially written colophon. Free. Complimentary Reception following program. For more information: www.manoogianmuseum.org. To RSVP for the event, call by June 7: Gloria Korkoian, 313-730-6698.

NEW JERSEY

MAY 18 — St. Nersess Armenian Seminary invites you to Hope & Gratitude, a celebration honoring Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Bishop-elect V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan. 6:30pm. Old Tappan Manor, Old Tappan, NJ. \$150pp. For reservations and booklet donations, please contact Mrs. Lynn Beylerian, event co-chair, at 201-914-0354 or lynnbeylerian@gmail.com. More info at www.stnersess.edu.

continued on next page



ARTS & LIVING

Dr. Helen Evans to Present Slide Lecture in Southfield on Met Exhibit

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. — In their ongoing efforts to preserve Armenian art and artifacts, and to enlighten the community about Armenian culture, the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum and Richard A. Manoogian, chairman of the Board, Armenian Apostolic Society, will host Dr. Helen C. Evans, at St. John Armenian Church Cultural Hall, on Wednesday, June 12, at 6:30 p.m.

Evans will present a special slide-lecture program based on the recent “Armenia! Art, Religion, and Trade in the Middle Ages” exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Dr. Helen Evans

She is the Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator for Byzantine Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art. In addition to the “Armenia!” exhibit, Evans was curator of several other exhibits, including: for the Morgan Library and Museum, “Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts” in 1994; for the Metropolitan Museum, “The Glory of Byzantium (843-1261)” in 1997; “Byzantium: Faith and Power (1267-1557)” in 2004; and “Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition (7th-9th centuries)” in 2012.

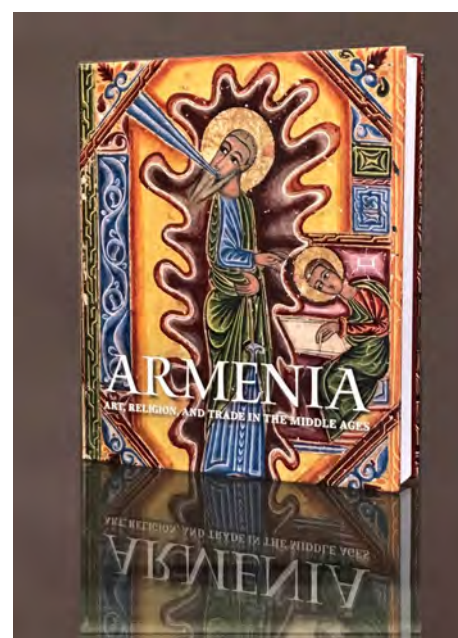
Three artifacts from the Manoogian Museum were included in the exhibit and

the exhibit catalog: the 18th century Hand Reliquary of Saint Abulmuse; the 18th century Kütahya Egg-Shaped Ornament; and the 18th century Kütahya Hexagonal Tile with Architectural Scene. They will be discussed in the program.

Evans received several awards for her work on the “Armenia!” exhibit: Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, presented her with the Order of Saint Sahak-Saint Mesrob; and the Prelacy of the Great House of Cilicia presented her with the Mesrob Mashtots and Queen Zabel Award as well as the “Spirit of Armenia” Award. For the occasion, Sylvie Merian, a contributor to the Armenia! catalog, and also one of the editors and contributors to: *Testimony to a People—Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum*, will read a specially written colophon.

There is no admission charge to the program. Complimentary Reception following program.

For more information: www.manoogianmuseum.org



The Meaning of Being Armenian

REVIEW, from page 12

changed over a vast amount of time; however, its enduring identity remains steadfast in a changing world. The Armenian population evolves from Armenia currently to a worldwide community of diasporas. Many people worldwide do not have much knowledge of the Armenian identity. Readers can reach their own conclusions in regard to Armenian identity. Clearly, there is no definitive Armenian identity by others, although there are stereotypes which are positive and negative. Image and identity are used here interchangeably but may be treated as separate concepts by the reviewer.

Although Boyajian points out growing up in “homogeneous” Long Island, New York in the 1960s and 1970s, he was the outsider moving there from New York City. He felt his peers were constantly testing or challenging him.

The author felt he was a victim of “bullying” by others because of his ethnicity and because of the ignorance of his peers in his youth. “Bullying” is a major contemporary social problem for many not just because of one’s ethnicity, race, or culture. Later in his adult life, he moved to Brooklyn, New York. It was in Brooklyn when he felt assimilated into the local population but was always misidentified as Latino, Jew, Italian, Arab, Serbian, French, or as a member of a different ethnic group, he wasn’t part of himself. He also talks about accents people have which do not always identify who they are either.

Chapter 4 gives the most ethnocentric views of those who were invited by the author to write and address his question: “So what does it mean to be Armenian?” The reaction of the respondents was diverse. The chapter is a very valuable aspect of the book but unfortunately the respondents were few for any broader analysis of Armenian identity. Nevertheless, the chapter and text makes one think more about his or her roots, alienation in a multi-ethnic society, and “bullying” which needs attention for lawmakers to erase prejudice which leads to domestic and global violence. Together, it is everyone’s business to step forward when their are injustices in a society that guarantees everyone egalitarian treatment and respect whatever their identity may be or wherever their ancestors originated from. The small book has sociological and historical value.

(Gary A. Kulhanjian, social historian and educator, has served under three New Jersey governors, he is a former member of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education who represented the Armenian community. He has published two monographical studies on Armenian immigration to the United States in the early twentieth century.)

C A L E N D A R

from previous page

NEW JERSEY

JUNE 23 – Summer Picnic, Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to ??? St. Stepanos Armenian Apostolic Church, 1184 Ocean Avenue, Long Branch. Chicken, Lamb Kebab, Dolma Dinners. Armenian Cuisine featuring Cheese Beoreg, Pastries, Paklava and more. Armenian Music and Children’s Games.

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.

RHODE ISLAND

JUNE 1 – The Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence, Talent Show “Reflections of Armenian Youth” dedicated to 20th anniversary of Arts Education program, on Saturday, 6 p.m. Egavian Cultural Center 70 Jefferson St. (Mesrob Mashdots Blvd.) Performances

by students of our Cultural Committee’s Arts Education Classes; featuring Nazeli Dance Groups, Art Exhibit including Sculpture, Solo Singers, Junior Choir, several musical instruments, and more! Any youngsters wishing to participate in the Talent Show are urged to contact Janna Guegamian at 861-3573 or Irene Eranosian at 942-5423 by May 26. This Talent Show is open to the youth of the entire Rhode Island Armenian Community. Donation: \$5.00 at the door. Children under 16 no charge

JUNE 23 – The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church (Providence) will present the first in a series of talks, “Meet with Armenian Doctors,” on Sunday, June 23, at 12 noon, in Hanoian Hall of the church complex. (70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI). Dr. Stephen S. Kasparian, obstetrician-gynecologist will speak and take questions. Admission is free and open to the public.

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.

TEKEYAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

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COMMENTARY

A Year after the Velvet Revolution

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The first anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in Armenia has triggered a flood of media commentaries and evaluations of the achievements of that salutary event. Although it is too early to expect any major changes in the lives of ordinary citizens, anticipation and hopes are very high and the public mood continues to be positive.

One thing which people have realized is that the revolution has to run its course and yield its rewards. There is no alternative course and no room for hesitation.

Under the previous corrupt regime, people were so depressed that they were loath to perform and move the country toward prosperity. Today, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's rating is still high, people breathe easier and therefore are more amenable to making further sacrifices to take the movement closer to achieving its goals.

There is an intangible air of confidence which may yield tangible results. Except for the first year of independence, popular support for the government has never been as strong as it is today. That is one valuable asset which will help the government to shoulder all the challenges that may come its way.

Armenia is not located on an island on which it can recover and develop its economy unhampered.

In assessing the achievements of the revolution, one has to take into account the restrictive parameters within which the

two different ball games.

Armenia's cabinet is expecting 5-percent annual economic growth and in order to reach that it has undertaken some reforms, including changing state regulations and installing anti-corruption measures. Also, they are making plans for expanded regular tax collection, which in the past left the oligarchs untouched and laid the burden of the collection on the ordinary citizens.

Prime Minister Pashinyan held a seven-hour press conference at the State Gallery of Art to present the achievements of his administration. He presented 100 areas where progress had been recorded, boasting that tax collection would be boosted by a whopping 62 billion drams (\$129 million). Another area he spoke about was that he and his family have decided to wear only clothing made in Armenia.

Recently, a US-Armenia strategic dialogue session took place in Yerevan. The US will support Armenia to carry out reforms in the judicial and legal arenas and develop the energy, IT and environmental sectors. A pledge of \$16 million is already on its way for economic growth and effective governance. In addition, the US Agency for International Development will provide \$6 million for democratic reforms. Given the largesse of the US government toward third-world countries, the above amounts seem trivial, particularly in view of Armenia's immense needs. But, the reason behind this caution seems to be the criticism that the Pashinyan administration is tilting towards the West at the expense of Armenia's traditional relations with Russia and its regional allies.



new government has to operate.

To begin with, there are two potential wars looming on its borders; at any given moment, the trigger-happy US National Security Advisor John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo might launch Tomahawk missiles from the warships cruising the Persian Gulf to strategic targets in Iran, which will certainly create terrible fallout over neighboring Armenia. Or else, the patience of a desperate leader in Baku may run out, driving him to commit an act of aggression similar to the one of April 2016. All these are real possibilities that may impact the functioning of the new government in Yerevan. These are external forces that need to be taken into account.

There are also challenges on the domestic front. The Republican Party is severely wounded, but not out of the picture. It has regrouped its forces for a vengeful comeback. Former President Robert Kocharyan, although incarcerated and currently on trial, has vowed to lead a powerful opposition. Kocharyan and the survivors of the former regime are in a frenzy of buying news outlets and inundating social media, realizing belatedly that it was the well-coordinated media blitz that catapulted Pashinyan's movement to power. Kocharyan himself and Serzh Sargsyan's son-in-law, Mikael Minasyan, are on their way to become media moguls.

In the meantime, Pashinyan himself and the members of his young team are learning fast from their mistakes to keep the government honest and serve the needs of its citizens. Pashinyan has already realized that hurling caustic slogans at public rallies and running the machinery of a government are

During the press conference, the prime minister justified the grants received from Western agencies to the tune of \$200,000 to achieve the revolution. This confession has already met some criticism that his administration is beholden to those agencies.

To run a new government against daunting odds is challenging enough. But the government has also to face some critics, most of them acrimonious, but some offering constructive advice. One such critic seems to be David Arakelian, who believes that the prime minister has thus far failed to surround himself with more capable cadres. Indeed, we have seen the results of that failure in the scandal of conductor Constantine Orbelian, the artistic director of the Armenian National Opera.

The other criticism that goes beyond the above writer is the issue of the role of prime minister. Pashinyan's predecessor, Serzh Sargsyan, had altered the constitution to allow greater powers for the office of the prime minister. Pashinyan was one of the critics of that change. The Velvet Revolution arrived, denying Sargsyan from wielding that power, which Pashinyan himself inherited. During his press conference, when journalists asked whether he had any intention of trimming some elements of that power, Pashinyan's answer was that the revolution had already taken care of that issue.

As Armenia steps into the second anniversary of the revolution, many challenges still remain. But Pashinyan's robust administration has already adapted to calibrate its course in uncharted waters and move Armenia cautiously but surely towards a more promising future.

COMMENTARY

Why Turkey Is Building a Wall around Afrin

By Paul Iddon

Last month, Turkey quietly began building a wall around the northeastern Syrian Kurdish enclave of Afrin, which it has occupied since early 2018. Amid increased attacks on its soldiers and Syrian militiamen proxies in the enclave, one purpose of the wall is to provide additional security.

Yet there are fears the wall could be a major step by Turkey to annex Afrin and prevent the return of the tens of thousands of Kurds who had to leave their homes there as a result of the Turkish invasion.

“Sources on the ground in Afrin see this as another step of Turkey’s annexation of Afrin into its own borders,” said Mutlu Çiviroglu, a Syria and Kurdish affairs analyst. “Since last year Afrin has been controlled by Turkey and its Syrian proxies. The civilian affairs are run by Turkey’s Hatay Governorate.”

Çiviroglu also pointed out that the wall cuts Afrin off from the rest of Syria, in particular areas around the nearby city of Tal Rifaat, where well over 100,000 of Afrin’s displaced are currently living. This may indicate that one of Turkey’s primary aims is to prevent these Kurds from returning and reclaiming their homes.

“Locals are worried that this wall is another step by Turkey to annex Afrin,” he said. “At the same time they expect the Syrian government to give a tougher reaction, but so far we haven’t seen that.”

Çiviroglu also pointed out that “some other sources say that this wall is designed to prevent the increased number of Afrin Liberation Forces (HRE) attacks, which have recently afflicted serious losses on Turkish soldiers and Turkish-backed forces in Afrin.”

The HRE – the Afrin branch of the Syrian Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) – has targeted Turkish troops and Turkish-backed forces in both Afrin and the town of Azaz, which is part of the Syrian territories Turkey captured from Islamic State (ISIS) in its 2016-17 Euphrates Shield operation. Ankara invariably responds to these attacks by firing artillery at alleged HRE targets in the Tal Rifaat area.

Professor Joshua Landis, head of the Middle East Studies Department at the University of Oklahoma, said Turkey’s wall

serves several purposes. “The cement wall around Afrin represents a visual reminder of Turkish control,” he said. “It is meant to indicate to both inhabitants of Afrin and the world that the border is permanent; Ankara is serious about staying in north Syria. On a more practical level, the wall provides security against insurgents and those who seek to return Afrin to Kurdish control and expel the Turks and Arab militias.”

Notably, the Syrian and Russian governments have not severely criticized Turkey for this action, indicating there is some acquiescence on their part.

“There is a perception among the Syrian Kurds, activists and journalists, that Russia is trying to appease Turkey on this matter so the deal to sell Ankara S-400 missiles is finalized and Moscow gets what it wants in Syria’s Idlib province,” said Çiviro lu.

THE CEMENT WALL AROUND AFRIN REPRESENTS A VISUAL REMINDER OF TURKISH CONTROL..... IT IS MEANT TO INDICATE TO BOTH INHABITANTS OF AFRIN AND THE WORLD THAT THE BORDER IS PERMANENT....

PROFESSOR JOSHUA LANDIS
HEAD OF THE MIDDLE EAST STUDIES DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

At an April 29 press conference, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said he was unaware of the project.

“To be honest, I have never heard anything about a wall around Afrin,” he said . “But I proceed from the fact that the Turkish leadership was adamant in confirming a number of times that Turkey’s anti-terrorist activities in Syrian territory are temporary.”

Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mikdad recently reaffirmed Damascus’s opposition to Turkey’s military presence in Syria and reiterated the government’s determination “to liberate every inch of Syrian territory”, but did not mention the new wall in Afrin.

“The Syrian and Russian governments have been silent about this latest Turkish provocation because they are busy

pushing north from Hama against HTS and Turkish control in the Idlib enclave,” Landis said, referring to the jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which controls parts of the northern Syrian province.

He pointed out that there have been suggestions “that Turkey and Russia have come to an agreement in which Turkey will be allowed to extend its control over the north Aleppo in exchange for Syria extending its control over Idlib.”

“While the Turks push south against the Kurds, the Syrians will push north against Arab rebels,” said Landis.

Landis concluded by pointing out that there is some possibility that Damascus “may also be reluctant to stand up for the Kurds in north Aleppo province as a form of revenge against the Kurds of Rojava [Syrian Kurdistan] who have asked for a permanent American presence in northeast Syria.”

Güney Yıldız, a non-resident scholar at the Middle East Institute, thinks the walls main purpose has more to do with security than any long-term Turkish plan to annex the enclave or permanently alter its demographics.

“I think the primary purpose of the wall is to prevent the ongoing YPG – or HRE as the YPG in Afrin calls them – attacks in Afrin,” Yıldız said. “The attacks have increased in the last few weeks and Kurdish officials indicate that they will intensify their attacks during the summer.”

“Cementing demographic changes or annexing Afrin to the Turkish territory doesn’t necessarily require constructing a wall,” he said. “Having said that, I believe that Afrin will be the last place Turkey will withdraw from in Syria.”

Yıldız noted that Turkish officials value the country’s continued occupation of Afrin more than its occupation of the other, much larger, northwestern territories Turkey captured from the Islamic State in the aforementioned Euphrates Shield operation.

“For Turkish officials, agreeing to give back Al-Bab, Jarablus or Azaz or working with Russia to return Idlib back to the regime control is more preferable than ceding control in Afrin,” Yıldız said. “Turkey wants to keep the Kurds as far away from the Mediterranean as possible.”

(This commentary originally appeared in Ahval on May 13.)

LETTERS

Illegal Immigration Needs to Be Stopped

To the Editor:

Atty. Robert H. Tembeckjian’s passionate – and perhaps understandable given his grandparents’ experiences – defense of illegal immigration in his April 25 speech to the Armenian Bar Association in New York City (“In Defense of Illegal Immigrants and Public Servants,” Commentary, Mirror-Spectator, May 4, 2019) raises certain concerns and questions in my mind.

The situation on America’s southern border is dire.

Every month, thousands of illegal migrants cross into the US without being apprehended. Others are apprehended and released into the general population under our “Catch and Release” policy. Immigration officials can’t always determine whether they’re criminals and/or whether their asylum claims are genuine. www.cis.org, whose executive director is Mark Krikorian, contains worthwhile immigration information.

Mr. Tembeckjian calls for “due process.” I believe that immigration officials generally follow due process. But it’s difficult when huge migrant caravans arrive that are often trying to “game” the American system. Frankly, some American political groups want lax border security because the illegal migrants will someday become voting citizens.

Most “Catch and Release” migrants do not appear later for their scheduled court dates. It is they who don’t follow “due process.”

Far too many illegal migrants are also

involved in drug/child/sex trafficking, gang/criminal activity, or worse. Moreover, they unfairly jump ahead of people who apply legally for admission into the US but must wait for years or are turned down. Mr. Tembeckjian’s speech did not address these problems.

Though America and Armenia have different needs, each requires secure borders. Turkey and Azerbaijan have closed their borders with Armenia, but those borders will probably open someday.

When that happens, there will be law-abiding Turks and Azeris who have legitimate reasons for entering Armenia. Other Turks and Azeris may resemble some illegal migrants entering America: drug/child/sex traffickers, mafia, spies, or other types of criminals.

Would we want Armenia’s borders to then be as porous as America’s? Would we want Armenia to have a “Catch and Release” policy like America’s? Would we want migrants to be no-shows for their court dates in Armenia as they are in America?

One would hope the answers are no.

Perhaps Mr. Tembeckjian would say that he favors “comprehensive immigration reform” by Congress. Fine. But America’s borders must first become as secure as we would hope Armenia’s are and will be.

David Boyajian

(The author is a freelance journalist whose articles are archived at Armeniapedia.org/wiki/David_Boyajian.)

Statement by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia on 25th Anniversary of Ceasefire Agreement

May 12, 2019 marks the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of a ceasefire regime between Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia. The Bishkek Protocol, signed earlier on 5 May 1994 between the Heads of Parliaments of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia paved the way for the cessation of hostilities and the conclusion of subsequent trilateral ceasefire agreements in 1994 and 1995.

On this 25th Anniversary we reiterate our deep appreciation and acknowledgment of the efforts of the mediators and first of all the Russian Federation, who played a critical role in achieving these agreements. They were subsequently endorsed, and their validity reinforced by the international community, particularly at the OSCE Summit in Budapest in 1994.

The people of Nagorno-Karabakh have manifested their unwavering capacity to defend and counter the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan and the threat of ethnic cleansing and annihilation at the beginning of the 1990s, to establish firm foundations for a democratic society and to freely determine their political, economic, social and cultural development in pursuit of the full realization of their right to self-determination. Armenia has been and remains the guarantor of the security of Nagorno-Karabakh and of its people.

Against the background of continued ceasefire violations by Azerbaijan, and particularly of the aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh in April 2016, the 1994-1995 ceasefire agreements remain valid and constitute the only solid foundation against the use of force and the resumption of hostilities, which will entail devastating consequences for all the people in the region. In their joint statement of 16 May 2016 the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs reiterated their support to and insisted on the importance of respecting the 1994-1995 ceasefire agreements.

Armenia remains committed to firmly respecting the letter and the spirit of the 1994-1995 ceasefire agreements. Furthermore, these agreements remain the backbone of denouncing the use of force and securing a conducive environment for a genuine progress in the negotiations for the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the internationally agreed format of mediation by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

The agreements reached in Dushanbe in September 2018 on respecting the ceasefire regime demonstrate the importance of political will in sustaining ceasefire and reducing risks of escalation. There were recent instances of ceasefire violations by Azerbaijan, which resulted in heavy injuries to two soldiers of the Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army and one soldier of the Armed Forces of Armenia on the line of contact and across border respectively. These deplorable incidents call for recommitment to the respect of the ceasefire regime and its reinforcement. Specific measures, particularly those agreed during the 2016 summits in Vienna and St. Petersburg should be implemented.

The 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the ceasefire regime attests to the validity and sustainability of the trilateral format of the 1994-1995 agreements, and to the importance of full engagement of Nagorno-Karabakh in the settlement process in order to achieve a lasting resolution of the conflict.

This Anniversary is also an encouragement for the renewed commitment of all the parties to the peaceful settlement of the conflict under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs. Armenia remains fully committed to achieving lasting peace, as has been numerously reiterated by the Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan, including during the latest summit in Vienna on March 29, 2019.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

US Federal Agency: Turkey Among Most Egregious Violators of Religious Freedom

Last week, I reported on Azerbaijan's violations of religious freedom as documented in the most recent Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). My article this week covers religious violations in Turkey as reported by USCIRF, a US Federal government agency.

The Annual Report revealed that "in 2018, the state of religious freedom in Turkey remained deeply troubling, raising serious concerns that the country's current trajectory will lead to the further deterioration of conditions in the year ahead. The lack of any meaningful progress on the part of the Turkish government to address longstanding religious freedom issues was continued cause for concern. Many serious limitations on the freedom of religion or belief continued, threatening the continued vitality and survival of minority religious communities in the country; in addition, increased demonization and a smear campaign by government entities and pro-government media contributed to a growing climate of fear among religious minority communities. The Turkish government continued to interfere in the internal affairs of religious communities, disallowing patriarchal elections for the Armenian Apostolic Church and main-

taining its requirement that Greek Orthodox metropolitans obtain Turkish citizenship in order to participate in the church's Holy Synod."

Furthermore, the USCIRF stated that "followers of US-based cleric Fethullah Gülen," who was the political supporter of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan earlier in his career, "continued to be dismissed from public service, detained, and arrested in the tens of thousands for alleged complicity in the July 2016 failed coup attempt or involvement in terrorist activity. The Turkish government has indiscriminately designated those affiliated with Gülen as part of a terrorist organization. Government officials also continued to engage in anti-Semitism in the form of public statements and comments made on social media platforms, while pro-government newspapers and media outlets propagated hate speech directed against both Christians and Jews."

In the past three years, since the failed coup attempt of July 2016 to overthrow President Erdogan, the Turkish government dismissed over 150,000 public servants, and arrested tens of thousands accusing them of plotting the coup and being involved in terrorism. In addition, 68 journalists – the most in any country – have been jailed, over 150 media outlets were closed down, and most independent media companies were controlled by the government.

Furthermore, the USCIRF reports the following religious violations in Turkey:

1) Students in public schools, including Alevis, are forced to take the Islamic course of "Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge." Armenians, Greeks, Jews and atheists have been given exemptions. Students and their parents seeking exemption have to undergo a long arduous process or pursue their claims in court.

2) The Turkish government interferes in the internal affairs of both Greek and Armenian communities by restricting the ordination of clergy to Turkish citizenship. Since the Armenian Patriarch of Turkey was incapacitated in 2010, the Turkish government has not allowed the Armenian commu-

nity to elect a new Patriarch.

3) "Alevis constitute the largest religious minority in Turkey [estimated 10 to 25 million]. However, the government has long classified Alevis as Muslim and subsequently failed to recognize them as a religious community distinct from majority Sunni Muslims. Despite a February 2015 ruling issued by the European Court of Human Rights, the government has yet to take steps to exempt Alevi students from attending compulsory religious classes that are based primarily on the Sunni understanding of Islam," according to the USCIRF Annual Report.

4) There is widespread anti-Semitism in the pro-government print and social media. According to the Hrant Dink Foundation, there were 427 instances of anti-Jewish hate speech from January to April 2018. Turkish politicians also frequently make anti-Semitic comments.

5) The Protestant community also continued to be the target of hate speech. The European Court of Human Rights found Turkey violated the rights of the Foundation of Seventh-day Adventists. In addition, "Jehovah's Witnesses are denied the right to conscientious objection to military service and face prosecution, fines, and imprisonment for the exercise of their beliefs," USCIRF reported.

6) "The Armenian Patriarchate has been seeking the return of the Sanasaryan Han in Istanbul – a property previously used for the education of Armenian children – that the government seized in 1935. The Greek Orthodox Foundation on Bozcaada Island has also yet to receive the title deeds for 11 properties, despite a September 2014 decision rendered by the Council of Foundations to transfer the deeds. The Greek Orthodox Theological School of Halki, also known as Halki Seminary, has been closed and unable to educate or train clergy since 1971," according to the USCIRF.

The USCIRF urged the US government to pressure Turkey to comply with all provisions of religious freedom and take appropriate corrective measures.

Worshipping Genocide...

By P. A. Murad

I AM CURIOUS about a minor point. Why do Armenians seem to worship the Armenian Genocide?

Is this all that Armenians stand for? A genocide that occurred over a century ago? Is this all anything means to Armenians where they were slaughtered and murdered by the Turks in a collapsing Ottoman Empire? How dare I say any of these thoughts! What do I know about Genocide? Who am I to raise this issue in the first place?

Well, I put together several issues about the Armenian Genocide in two books at Amazon.com. One is *America at Armageddon*, and *The Long Lost Forgotten Genocide Trials*. I have taught a course titled: "A Century of Genocide Trials." The most notable saying in these subjects are:

"Genocide has no conscience. Genocide has no morality, it has no memory. Genocide has no ethics. Genocide has no culture; it has very little remembrance of history. Genocide takes advantage of innocence by cheapening the cost of human life. Basically, genocide has no soul and is an evil avenue used to exercise hatred where a minority can be eliminated with some semblance of legality." "Genocide killed Armenians, Ukrainians under Stalin, the holocaust killed Jews, Poles, and gypsies. The killing fields of Indochina slaughtered Cambodians. The Rwandan genocide had killed 125,000 people in just over a single weekend, the Serbs killed Bosnians, and the Sudanese have killed Africans in Darfur. Genocide does not discriminate based upon religion; it swallows whole Christian Armenians, European Jews, Cambodian Buddhists, Bosnian Muslims, and those with no religious preference. Genocide knows no color; it devours whites, yellows, or blacks. Genocide is mindless; it devours the educated and uneducated. It thrives on ignorance and if it is not recognized for what it really is, it will continue to propagate because those that perpetrate this monstrosity will realize they will not be held responsible for their actions. If it is not stopped, it will continue. Who will be next? Are these new victims the Turkish and Iraqi Kurds who want their own nation or is Africa ready to shed some more blood and tears? Have we learned nothing from this anguish of history?"

Again, why would Armenians worship the genocide? Because of this, how do we teach our children what value exists for

being an Armenian? Could we get out of this gravity well or are we like St. Gregory trapped into a pit? Would our children understand the tragedy that occurred during these murderous events?

What is the response of the Turkish government? Enver Pasha grew up as an "A" student in military academies. He and Kemal Pasha was also a military man. However, they both supported the genocidal notions under Talaat Pasha's fervent wishes. Why was it so easy to kill so many people? Clearly after the trials convicting these three Pashas, denial became the Turkish policy since 1925. Why? Well, if they had the courage to morally respond and recognize their own history, claims would have to be provided for property and funds due to damages that would be required. By procrastinating for these events, those that would challenge the Turkish Government over time would no longer exist.

The Turks probably feel justified as the Japanese did in WW II. In the West, we do not really examine what occurred with other genocides. It was not unusual for the code of the warrior, where samurai swords were liberally used. This included women and children as well as men. In these incidents, victims were generally tied behind their back and forced to kneel before the beheading. The rape of Nanking was uncalled for costing the death of a quarter of a million people. Let us not ignore the

GENOCIDE HAS NO CONSCIENCE. GENOCIDE HAS NO MORALITY, IT HAS NO MEMORY. GENOCIDE HAS NO ETHICS. GENOCIDE HAS NO CULTURE; IT HAS VERY LITTLE REMEMBRANCE OF HISTORY. GENOCIDE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF INNOCENCE BY CHEAPENING THE COST OF HUMAN LIFE.

'Comfort Women' as well. These acts clearly met the requirements of genocide. At the trials during the end of the war, the Japanese defense demonstrated 'historical amnesia' concerning their activities. These things never happened! Denial was prevalent. Their defense rationale was 'Victor's Justice' in that they, as the victors, could do literally whatever they wanted.

Other genocides have used similar logic to achieve objectives that resulted in Genocide. Stalin killed 7 to 12 million Ukrainians in the 1930s, Mao Tse Tung's efforts are not even able to determine the enormous totality of what he did. Some put the numbers as high as 80 million people. And this goes on and on as if most of these genocidal plans followed a blueprint created by the Armenian genocide as a prototype.

What is the role of Armenians? I would recommend that we are going nowhere with the immorality of the Turkish people. They are blinded and buried by their own past and have a bias for their own self-preservation. The cost is they have no morality and they have to live immersed in their lies. Armenians have to seek a higher goal. What is that goal?

Several years ago, I went to a Diocesan Assembly. Somehow I got involved in a table discussion with several priests and old men. We were to talk about specific topics. This table was to

discuss the immorality of war. From my view, it was a clear-cut conclusion of the results of this group. I was uncharacteristically quiet during these dialogues. After some discussion, one of the priests asked that we seem to be all agreed and would I present the results? The priest would in later years become the Primate.

I mentioned I could not agree that war was immoral. He was perplexed and asked why? My response suggested I was a paratrooper in the Dominican Republic in the mid-1960s. We invaded the island because 400 beheaded bodies floated down the Duarte River and into the sea where they were discovered by an American destroyer. After a second night of this, America invaded to stop the Communist killings. Moreover, at the Department of Defense, I worked to support the Pentagon in two Iraqi wars, the Serbian war, and Afghanistan. One claimed to me that the American troops in Iraq may have killed as many as 100,000 innocent civilians. He claimed this was terrible and immoral. My responses were that this may have been the case which I doubt, but Saddam Hussein killed Iraqis this amount not once but every year.

My point was that in all of these wars, there was some commonality. That common thread was these American interventions prevented genocide. Thus, based on this logic, I cannot agree that war is immoral. The Priest and others surprisingly agreed and the table provided no meaningful response for the Assembly.

Have there been other situations where a war stopped genocides? The Vietnamese stopped the Cambodian Killing Fields. There is an interesting point in history that Present Wilson wanted to send a Marine Expeditionary Force to Stop the Turks during the Armenian Genocide. The isolationist Congress said no.

For those against American intervention, let us not forget the Obama era with Hillary Clinton's guidance as Secretary of State during the Arab Spring. If an American Brigade of soldiers was sent to several countries, 100,000 Egyptians would not be killed. Moreover, let us forget at that time period, 250,000 Syrians would not have been killed and finally, this would have also prevented the death of 100,000 Libyans. The Arab Spring seeking freedom threw havoc at most of the Middle East. Imagine how this would have prevented the Caliphate from ever being created with all of its chaos!

So where do we go from here? The Turks are still dreaming in the realm of Victor's Justice. With denial, they are living in a world of 'Historical Amnesia' in search of a dead dream. The situations in the genocides of the twentieth century have literally taught us nothing. Genocides are prevalent and can occur in a flashpoint resulting in easy killing.

I am proposing that Armenians have to grow beyond our capabilities, continue current efforts regarding justice of the Turkish murder crimes. But we need to look past this and need to treat all genocides as events that would lead toward evil and should be stopped! Can we meet this moral challenge?

Why Is Armenia Angry?

The world is an increasingly angry place and Armenia is the angriest place of all, a recent survey of international emotions found.

Gallup's Global Emotions 2019, a poll that gauges the planet's emotional geography by measuring feelings like anger, joy and sadness, also found that Armenia's Caucasian neighbors, comparably sized Georgia and Azerbaijan, appear to be in far better spirits

Fully 45 percent of Armenian respondents – the highest national percentage anywhere in the world – said that they had been angry in the past day. To Armenia's north, in Georgia, the positive response rate was 27 percent, while the moneyed neighbor to the east, Azerbaijan, is the calmest in the Caucasus region, with only 18 percent reporting having been angry recently.

Nearby Iraq and Iran are nearly as angry, respectively coming second (44 percent) and third (43 percent) on the global ire chart.

The poll offers little explanation for the Armenian chagrin, which may seem surprising to an outsider. The last time the world turned its gaze toward Armenia, people were having the time of their lives there, dancing and making kebabs to celebrate the overthrow of their hated longtime leader, Serzh Sargsyan. But even Sargsyan was not averse to a little dance, and neither is the man who brought him down, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

Since the revolution, Armenia has been the most dynamic place in the Caucasus. Meanwhile, Georgia appears to be in a rut by comparison, while Azerbaijan has been politically and economically stagnant for years.

One famous syncopated depiction of peculiarities of national characters in the Caucasus, a performance by an Armenian musician in a restaurant that became a minor viral hit, depicts Armenia being more prone to drama than Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Gallup also found that the stress level is fairly low in Armenia, though not the most stress-free in the former Soviet world. That honor goes to Turkmenistan, which also happens to be the least free country in the region, so perhaps residents don't have a choice.

The world's most stressed country is Greece, and some half-jokingly blamed the Armenian anger and Greek stress on the country in between, Turkey, which has long-running disputes

with both neighbors. (Though Turkey itself is fairly stressed out, Gallup found.) Being sandwiched between two enemies, Turkey and Azerbaijan, probably does not make Armenia particularly happy, but, geopolitics aside, Armenians might be ticked off partly because they are not getting enough rest. The nation is among the three least well-rested countries in the world, the Gallup poll found. The poll also found Armenia to be the Nervous Nelly of the post-Soviet space, as measured by level of worry expressed by respondents. The Central Asian countries appear to be the most carefree in the region.

The world's calmest nation also is a former Soviet republic: Estonia. This might offer grist for common Russian jokes that portray Estonians as phlegmatic and slow – “only Estonians can spend hours in the zoo watching sloths frolic and dart around” – but Estonia gets the last laugh as it ranks as the wealthiest (per capita) and the most democratic country to come out of the Soviet Union, far ahead of Russia on both counts.

Some questioned the poll's findings, saying that some nations are more open about their emotions than others and that the word “anger” has different connotations in different languages. One case in point: the question “how are you?,” which is mainly a ritual greeting in English followed by a mechanical “great” or “good,” while in places like the Caucasus it is a genuine question that could result in an honest response about family, job or digestion-related problems.

One analysis, by Armenian economist Hrant Mikaelian sought explanations in other, past surveys. One Gallup poll published in 2017 showed that Armenia was among the top 10 countries that citizens wanted to leave, with all Armenia's neighbors feeling far less a yen to emigrate. A 2013 poll rated Armenia as the most Soviet nostalgic among former members of the Union, with 66 percent of interviewees saying that the breakup of the USSR brought more harm than good. (Azerbaijan and Georgia leaned toward “good,” though by tight margins.)

Mikaelian also tied his country's unhappiness to its poor economy – Armenia has the lowest per capita GDP in the Caucasus and one of the lowest in the post-Soviet space – and relative deprivation, the gap between the expected quality of life and reality.

Whatever confluence of factors may be ultimately at play, be it cultural relativism, political instability, or economic insecurity, Armenia's new, revolutionary government has a lot of work to do if it wants to keep all that anger in check.

(Giorgi Lomsadze is a journalist based in Tbilisi, and author of Tamada Tales. This column originally appeared on eurasianet.org on May 10.)

By Giorgi Lomsadze

California Governor Increases Investment in Armenian American Museum

MUSEUM, from page 1
of Glendale, with a mission to promote understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Armenian American experience. The museum will serve as a cultural campus that enriches the community, educates the public on the Armenian American story, and empowers individuals to embrace cultural diversity and speak out against prejudice.

“The museum board was very pleased and honored to welcome Mr. Williams to Glendale on Saturday and we are very thankful to Governor Newsom for validating our effort by increasing the State's investment to further our efforts. This is wonderful news for our community and the State of California. We are again grateful to Senator Portantino for helping us share our vision for the museum direct-



Gov. Gavin Newsom

ly with the Governor's office and the Governor for responding so positively to what we are

endeavoring to do,” concluded Shant Sahakian, executive director Armenian American Museum.

Ten Armenian American cultural, philanthropic, and religious non-profit institutions are represented on the museum's board. They include the Armenian Catholic Eparchy, Armenian Cultural Foundation, Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, Armenian General Benevolent Union Western District, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Relief Society Western USA, Nor Or Charitable Foundation, Nor Serount Cultural Association, Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, and Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The city of Glendale has leased the proposed location for the museum for a nominal 99-year lease.



State Sen. Anthony Portantino

“The City Council was eager to help bring this museum to fruition. We can't thank the Governor enough for recognizing and grasping the importance of this effort and stepping up with additional funds to make it a reality,” concluded Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian.

The Governor's May revised budget will be reviewed by both houses of the legislature before the mid-June constitutional deadline for passage. Generally, the Governor's budget priorities successfully make it through that process. Today's action is a very positive step for the museum.



Shant Sahakian

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