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Thousands Mark Genocide Anniversary at Times Square Program

By Taleen Babayan

NEW YORK – Thousands gathered for the Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Times Square on Sunday, April 28, as the 104th anniversary of the massacres was memorialized in a monumental event sponsored by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan.

Calls for recognition were made throughout the afternoon as speakers, guests and the general public paid homage to the holy martyrs of the Armenian Genocide. Over a century later, the vigor of the Armenian people was on full display as the program culminated in a symbolic circle dance inspired by the powerful singing of Elie Berberian as he performed the popular patriotic song *Kedashen* amid the backdrop of the city's skyscrapers and the buzzing motion of Times Square, one of the busiest and iconic districts in the world.

While Armenian songs, dances and voices echoed throughout New York and into the world, top US elected officials stood their ground in their unwavering support of Armenian Genocide recognition. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), who appears at the commemoration year after year without fail, conveyed his fond-



Senator Robert Menendez (D-N.J.)

ness for the “wonderful and compassionate Armenian people” and appreciated their presence in the country, stating that “the more Armenians we have in America, the better America will be.”

Following a moment of silence for the victims of 1915 and their descendants, Schumer urged the public to “call out evil.”

“A genocide that is not properly defined and remembered will certainly lead to another,” said Senator Schumer, who touched upon the Holocaust that succeeded the Armenian Genocide. “We have a moral obligation to always remember one of the most evil undertakings in the history of mankind, and that is the horrible Medz Yeghern.”

Turning to legislation in the US, Schumer expressed his disappointment that the leaders in the White House, both Republicans and Democrats, have not

stepped up to officially acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. He said he refuses to accept the excuse of politics and emphasized that in the face of denial, people should “stand together and remember the genocide, the 1.5 million victims and what the Armenians went through.”

He made the point that the Turkish government did not succeed in its plans to exterminate the Armenian people, noting see **COMMEMORATION**, page 10

April 24 Gathering At Heritage Park Has Global Flavor

By Alin K. Gregorian

Mirror-Spectator Staff

BOSTON – About 150 people gathered on Wednesday, April 24, at the Armenian Heritage Park to commemorate the 104th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, braving an unseasonably cold and blustery evening.

Speakers Stephen Kurkjian, Dr. Pamela Steiner and Ekhlas Ahmed addressed the crowd.

Kurkjian, a retired reporter who won three Pulitzers at the *Boston Globe*, spoke from the heart, as a descendent of a survivor of the Genocide. He tied history to the present, presenting it in a bright light. He said that from the loss of more than a million people, to the dispersion of many others, and their uprooting from lands “they had occupied since the Bronze Age,” their descendants are alive and well, halfway around the world, in a park named for them.

see **BOSTON**, page 11



Stephen Kurkjian with members of the Homenetmen Scouts behind him



The first (left) and last covers of the *Improper Bostonian*

Improper Bostonian's Closing 'Was a family decision'

BOSTON (*Boston Globe*) – For nearly three decades, the *Improper Bostonian* has showcased smiling faces: stars from near and far, athletes, and the city's bright young things.

By Mark Shanahan

and self-described media junkie. “I really liked it. I’d walk my dog in a certain direction every other week just to get a copy, and then I’d dive into it.”

Now thousands of faithful Improper readers will have to look elsewhere for photos of well-scrubbed men and women at sparkly affairs and the magazine's signature mix of buzzy restaurant reviews, celebrity interviews, fashion spreads, lifestyle features, and event listings. To the surprise of its own staff, the magazine announced Thursday, April 25, it is closing.

see **CLOSING**, page 20



NEWS IN BRIEF

Erdogan Says Deporting Armenians Was 'Appropriate'

ISTANBUL (Bloomberg) – Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the deportation of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century was “reasonable” at the time.

Erdogan made the comment on April 24 at a symposium where he slammed France for marking the Ottoman campaign against the Armenians as a genocide.

“The relocation of the Armenian gangs and their supporters, who massacred the Muslim people, including women and children, in eastern Anatolia, was the most reasonable action that could be taken in such a period,” Erdogan said in a Twitter post in English.

“The relocation of the Armenian gangs and their supporters, who massacred the Muslim people, including women and children, in eastern Anatolia, was the most reasonable action that could be taken in such a period. The doors of our archives are wide open to all seeking the truth.”

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan labeled Erdogan's speech “a new high in denialism” of the Armenian Genocide, and a “justification of nation murder.”

“Calling the victims of the Armenian Genocide, Ottoman Empire's entire Armenian population, which was sent to death marches, as ‘Armenian gangs & their supporters,’ killing 1.5 million [people] & justifying it by ‘most reasonable action’ is not just a new high in denialism, but justification of nation murder,” Pashinyan tweeted.

“Above all, doing this on April 24 is an ultimate insult to the Armenian people,” Pashinyan added.

Paylan Asks Turkey to Open Archives

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Turkish-Armenian Member of Parliament Garo Paylan has made an inquiry to vice president of Turkey Fuat Oktay over documents on the Armenian Genocide kept at Turkey's State Archive.

In his letter he said that in the April 24 speech of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, he said that “The doors of our archives are open before all those who aim to discover the truth. We have no secrets.”

Paylan wrote, “Hence, we inquire about the fate of the records of the Turkish court-martial that operated from 1919-1922 aimed at bringing to justice the perpetrators who committed crimes against the Armenian people. The researchers inform that those records are not available for them.

“Aren't the records of the court-martial kept in the state archive? Where and in which archive's catalogue were the data” for the genocide, he wrote.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Ambassador Participates in UN Diplomacy for Peace on April 24

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia's Permanent Representative to the UN participated in the Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace on April 24.

Permanent Representative Mher Margaryan, referring to the importance of multilateralism and diplomacy in advancing the agenda of peace, mentioned the special meaning that April 24 carries for the Armenian people in Armenia and around the world, as they commemorate and pay tribute to the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. Noting that it marks “one of the darkest pages in the history of mankind in the 20th century, when 104 years ago the Armenian people faced the ultimate crime, the crime of genocide”, he went on saying that the Armenian Genocide is a stark reminder to what extent humanity can degrade to in the absence of strong multilateral institutions and crisis of the international order.

The Permanent Representative of Armenia noted that “today, Armenia bears special duty of advancing the human rights agenda, in particular, prevention of crimes against humanity and mass atrocities”. He stressed that Armenia is resolute to contribute to efforts aimed at strengthening multilateral institutions to prevent exclusion, hatred and radicalism and protect human rights and human dignity worldwide.

‘We Should Never Forget Victims of Armenian Genocide’ Czech Lawmaker Says

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The delegation led by Marek Benda, Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Head of the Czech Republic-Armenia Friendship Group, on April 30 visited the Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial in Yerevan.

The delegation members were accompanied by head of the Armenia-Czech Republic Friendship Group Gayane Abrahamyan.

The Czech lawmakers laid a wreath at the Genocide Memorial and flowers at the Eternal Flame by paying a tribute to the memory of the 1915 Armenian Genocide victims with a moment of silence.

Thereafter, the Czech delegation visited the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute where they got acquainted with the exhibits.

Marek Benda left a note in the Honorary Guest Book which runs as follows: “The evil of humanity against humanity. We should never forget the victims of the Armenian Genocide.”

Kazakh President Visits TUMO Center

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Askar Mamin, who was in Armenia on a working visit to participate in the session of Eurasian Intergovernmental Council visited the TUMO center for creative technologies on April 30, accompanied by Minister of Transport, Communication and Information Technologies of Armenia Hakob Arshakyan.

The director of TUMO, Marie Lou Papazian, presented to the guests the four-fold plan of TUMO: digital media, creation of games, animation and development of websites. It was mentioned that young people aged 12-18 study hear and develop their skills, creating their own projects.

The guests toured the center and talked to the students.

Mamin got acquainted also with the robotics group activities. The achievements of the group were presented to the high ranking official. It was mentioned that there were international bronze-medalists among the students.

Papazian told the group that there are four TUMO centers in Armenia. Similar centers have been opened in Paris and Moscow.

2019 Aurora Humanitarians Announced in Yerevan

YEREVAN – The Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity's Selection Committee has named three outstanding 2019 Aurora Humanitarians, recognized for performing acts of exceptional courage and their commitment to saving human life. The 2019 Aurora Prize Laureate will be announced at a ceremony in Armenia on October 20, 2019. With a \$1 million award the Laureate will get an opportunity to continue the cycle of giving and support the organizations that have inspired their work.

The 2019 Aurora Humanitarians are:

* Dr. Mirza Dinnayi, Co-Founder and Director of Luftbrücke Irak (Airbridge Iraq), a humanitarian organization that flies Yazidi victims from Iraq to Germany for medical treatment. Dinnayi has helped several hundred women escape from the territories controlled by ISIS, personally taking part in missions to bring them back to safety, and delivered food and water to the Yazidis in isolated areas. Driven by his passion to save lives, he has found a way to overcome numerous bureaucratic and logistic obstacles to help the most vulnerable. Dinnayi has nominated three organizations that provide educational opportunities to underserved students and disaster relief: Air Bridge Iraq, SEED Foundation and Shai Fund.

* Zannah Bukar Mustapha, lawyer, director and founder of Future Prowess Islamic Foundation – a school that provides education to some of the most deprived children in Maiduguri, Nigeria. In October 2016, he secretly traveled to meet with Boko Haram rebels in their Sambisa forest hideout during a media blackout and left with 21 children. Thirteen months later, supported by ICRC, the Swiss government and the Nigerian authorities, he negotiated the additional release of 82 girls. Bukar Mustapha has nominated three organizations that aim to reduce conflict through strong community effort and good governance: Future Prowess Islamic Foundation, Adab Community

Renewal Foundation and Herwa Community Development Initiative.

* Huda al-Sarari, lawyer and activist. Al-Sarari is a brave and inspiring Yemeni human rights activist, who singlehandedly investigates, exposes and challenges a clandestine network of secret prisons run by foreign governments in Yemen, where thousands of men and boys have faced arbitrary detention. She has amassed incontrovertible evidence of the abuse that takes place within the prisons and succeeded in convincing Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to take up the cause. She has nominated an international organization that defends victims of extreme human rights abuse and two organizations that combat discrimination and promote equality: Reprieve, Equal Rights Trust and Wethaq Foundation for Civil Orientation.

“These are awe-inspiring humanitarians, fighting the good fight for our common humanity. The Aurora Prize acknowledges the immense humanitarian impact that can be made by the persistence and commitment of single individuals and deserves the world's gratitude for the way in which it highlights their achievement and maximizes their capacity. This Prize, like no other, gives these heroes the recognition they deserve and empowers them to continue their work,” noted Gareth Evans, Aurora Prize Selection Committee member and President Emeritus of the International Crisis Group.

The Selection Committee had chosen the three Aurora Humanitarians from 719 nominations for 523 unique candidates submitted from 72 countries.

Dr. Tom Catena, Inaugural Chair of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative and the 2017 Prize Laureate said, “The three heroes chosen by the Aurora Prize Selection Committee are extraordinary individuals who have worked to better people's lives at huge personal risk and cost. As an Aurora Prize Laureate, I have first-hand experience of the impact the Aurora Prize has

made on the lives of local actors pursuing humanitarian causes in places around the world that are often overlooked. Perhaps most importantly, the cycle of giving supported by the Prize – the opportunity to divide the award between other humanitarian organizations – is a true demonstration of gratitude in action.”

The 2018 Aurora Prize was awarded to Kyaw Hla Aung, a lawyer and Rohingya Muslim leader who, despite being imprisoned for a collective 12 years for peaceful protests against systematic discrimination and violence, uses his legal expertise to fight for equality, improvements in education and human rights for his community. Hla Aung has decided to support international organizations that provide medical aid and assistance to refugees in Myanmar.

The 2019 Aurora Prize ceremony will take place during the first Aurora Forum, an ambitious and sweeping week of activities, which will be held on October 14-21, in Yerevan, Armenia, highlighting the best of the world's social, scientific, educational and humanitarian practices.

Founded on behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and in gratitude to their saviors, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative seeks to empower modern-day saviors to offer life and hope to those in urgent need of basic humanitarian aid anywhere in the world and thus continue the cycle of giving internationally. The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative is Gratitude in Action. It is an eight-year commitment (2015 to 2023, in remembrance of the eight years of the Armenian Genocide 1915-1923) to support people and promote global projects that tackle the needs of the most helpless and destitute, and do so at great risk. This is achieved through the Initiative's various programs: The Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity, the Aurora Dialogues, the Aurora Humanitarian Index, the Gratitude Projects and the 100 LIVES Initiative.

UWC Dilijan Students and Staff in Commemoration of Armenian Genocide

DILIJAN, Armenia – On April 26 and 27, United World College (UWC) Dilijan students presented a play devoted to the victims of Armenian Genocide. The directors of the play are UWCD Theatre and Drama teacher Jason Lasky and UWC Dilijan student Boghos Boghossian.

The play, “A Journey of Angels,” was performed by UWC Dilijan students and staff from all over the world.

“The majority of our cast and crew is not Armenian by birth, and I think that's a powerful statement about how good theatre transcends socio-political and cultural boundaries,” said Jason Lasky, UWC Dilijan theatre and drama teacher, director of the play and added working with students on this project is a joy because my hope is that they go home to their countries and work to ensure that past mistakes will not be repeated.”

“Directing this theatrical piece has been a highly rewarding experience on many different levels. I believe that the sole act of recounting the



A scene from the play

events of such a tragic historical reality, does a great service to the attempts of bringing recognition to the Armenian Genocide, and the fact that we are doing it in the most

peaceful and artistic of ways makes me really grateful to participate in the act of diminishing denial and forgetfulness from this case,” said UWCD Student Boghossian



ARMENIA

Armenian Tycoon to Remain Under Arrest

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — The owner of Armenia's largest food exporting company accused of tax evasion warned through his lawyer of "severe consequences" for the domestic economy after the Court of Appeals refused to release him from custody on Tuesday, April 30.

The businessman, Davit Ghazarian, was arrested three weeks ago after the State Revenue Committee (SRC) charged that his Spayka company evaded over 7 billion drams (\$14.4 million) in taxes in 2015 and early 2016.

The accusations stem from large quantities of foodstuffs which were imported to Armenia by another company, Greenproduct. The SRC says that Greenproduct is controlled by Spayka and that the latter rigged its customs documents to pay lower taxes from those imports.

Ghazaryan has strongly denied any ownership links to Greenproduct. He said on April 5 that the SRC moved to arrest him after he refused to pay the alleged back taxes.

The Court of Appeals upheld a lower court's April 8 decision to allow investigators to hold Ghazaryan in pre-trial detention. It also rejected a separate petition to free him on bail.

The tycoon's lawyer, Arsen Sardaryan, denounced the ruling as baseless. He claimed by that keeping his client in custody the authorities want to "extort" large amounts of money from Spayka.

"His detention could lead to severe consequences," said Sardaryan. "That is, the compa-

ny could fail to continue its operations."

Spayka is Armenia's leading producer and exporter of agricultural products grown at its own greenhouses or purchased from farmers in about 80 communities across the country. The company employing about 2,000 people also owns hundreds of heavy trucks transporting those fruits and vegetables abroad and Russia in particular.

In a series of statements issued earlier this month, Spayka claimed that because of Ghazarian's arrest its mainly foreign creditors are withholding further funding for the company. It said it may therefore not be able to buy large quantities of agricultural produce from Armenian farmers this year.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan dismissed those warnings on April 9. He said he is confident that the food giant will carry on with the whole-sale purchases.

The SRC chief, Davit Ananian, said afterwards that the tax collection agency is now scrutinizing Spayka's operations in 2016-2018 and will likely impose even heavier tax penalties on the company.

Echoing Spayka's statements, Sardaryan insisted that the charges are based on an arbitrary "expert evaluation" cited by the SRC. The lawyer said Ghazaryan will be ready to pay up if the alleged tax evasion is proved by a more thorough audit involving "specialists trusted by him."

Spayka was already fined about 2.5 billion drams (\$5 million) for profit tax evasion in July



Davit Ghazarian, the official owner of the Spayka company, talks to reporters moments after being arrested in a courtroom in Yerevan, April 8, 2019.

last year. Ghazaryan said before his arrest that he agreed to pay the "unfounded" fine in order to have the company's bank accounts unfrozen.

The arrest came just two weeks after the tycoon inaugurated a new cheese factory in Yerevan built by Spayka. Pashinyan was present at the opening ceremony.

Spayka also planned to expand its greenhouses under a \$100 million project that was

due to be mostly financed by the Kazakhstan-based Eurasian Development Bank (EDB). Andrey Belyaninov, the EDB chairman, said on April 25 that the disbursement of its \$67 million loan to Spayka has been put on hold because of Ghazarian's arrest.

"We can't take such a risk if we are talking about [Spayka's] potential bankruptcy," Belyaninov was reported to say.

Solemn Ceremonies Mark April 24 Anniversary

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Tens of thousands of people marched to the Tsitsernakabert memorial in Yerevan and laid flowers there on Wednesday as Armenia marked the 104th anniversary of the 1915 genocide of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey.

As always, the annual procession began with a prayer service held by Catholicos Karekin II, the supreme head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, by the eternal fire of the hilltop memorial overlooking the city center. The ceremony was attended by President Armen Sarkissian, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and other senior state officials.

"It is the day to recall once again the tragedy of our compatriots who had suffered ferocities and had been expelled from the land of their ancestors ... to tell the world once again about the Genocide — the most hideous crime against humanity — and to call for soberness and a fight against denial," Sarkissian said in a written statement issued on the occasion.

"Impunity that followed the Armenian Genocide had opened the doors for other grave crimes against humanity and genocides: remember the Holocaust, the tragedies in Cambodia and Rwanda," he said.

A separate statement released by Pashinyan noted not only the slaughter of some 1.5 million Armenians but also the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage in



Dignitaries, including the prime minister and many members of his cabinet and the head of the Armenian Church, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II at the Tsitsernakabert memorial



Anna Hakobyan, left, and her husband, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan at the April 24 commemoration in Yerevan

the Ottoman Empire.

"We were consistently deprived of the land on which Armenian culture and Armenian identity were formed and developed over thousands of years," read the statement. "The cultural heritage that constitutes the Armenian identity — thousands of schools, churches and monasteries — was erased from the face of the earth."

Pashinyan also recalled the World War One-era massacres of hundreds of thousands of Greeks and Assyrians perpetrated by the Ottoman Turks. Armenia officially recognized them as genocide in 2015.

Both the president and the prime minister made clear that Yerevan will continue to seek greater international recognition of the Armenian genocide.

"The historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous and documented by overwhelming evidence," the International Association of Genocide Scholars said in 2007.

Pope Francis and his predecessor John Paul II prayed at Tsitsernakabert when they visited Armenia in 2016 and 2001 respectively. They both officially recognized the genocide, as did more than two dozen nations, including France, Germany and Russia.

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INTERNATIONAL

International News

Jerusalem Patriarch Meets Israeli President

JERUSALEM (Panorama.am) — On April 30, Archbishop Nourhan Manougian, the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, met with the President of Israel Reuven Rivlin, Chancellor of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem Hovnan Bagdasaryan wrote on his Facebook page.

They discussed the issue of the Armenian property of the Jordan River and other matters.

Artsakh Delegation Meets with Argentina Armenian Organizations

BUENOS AIRES (Armenpress) — The delegation of the Republic of Artsakh headed by Foreign Minister Masis Mayilian met with representatives of a number of Armenian organizations operating in Argentina. Representative of the Artsakh Central Committee of the ARF Dashnaksutyun, member of the National Assembly of Artsakh David Ishkhanyan and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Artsakh to the USA Robert Avetisyan are in the delegation.

The first meeting was held with members of the Argentine branch of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. Later, the members of the delegation held subsequent meetings with the leader of the Argentinean and Chilean Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church Archbishop Gisak Muradian, the leadership of the Armenian Organizations of the Argentine Republic (IARA), the senior staff members of the South American Central Committee of the ARF Dashnaksutyun, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and the Armenian General Athletic Union (Homenetmen).

During the meetings, issues of national significance, in particular, the current stage and the prospects of the Azerbaijan-Karabakh conflict peaceful settlement, the strengthening of the security of the Republic of Artsakh and its people, and further expansion of the Homeland-Diaspora relations were discussed.

A range of meetings of the delegation with the political and academic circles of the Argentine Republic is scheduled for the coming days.

Runaway Saudi Sisters Seek Asylum in Georgia

TBILISI (RFE/RL) — Two Saudi sisters, who say they fled their own country because of “oppression,” have applied for asylum in Georgia but still feared they could be reached by their family and forced back to Saudi Arabia.

The sisters, Wafa al-Subaie, 25, and Maha al-Subaie, 28, were offered assistance and protection by the Georgian government on April 18 after they plead for help via Twitter. They are currently being held in a shelter in a secret location, Georgian authorities say.

However, the sisters told the Thomson Reuters Foundation on April 19 that they would rather move to another country where Saudi citizens cannot enter without a visa.

The sisters told RFE/RL on April 18 that they chose to come Georgia only because Saudis don’t need entry visas to go to the country.

“We don’t know anybody in Georgia, we just decided to come here because there is a visa-free regime...we didn’t have any other option,” the sisters said, adding that they arrived in Georgia from Turkey.

The sisters had made their case for international help on Twitter under the account @GeorgiaSisters, posting video appeals and messages seeking “protection” from the UN refugee agency, UNHCR.

One of the women said: “We fled oppression from our family.” She claims that her “father and brothers arrived in Georgia and they are looking for us.”

This is the latest case of Saudi women fleeing the ultraconservative Islamic kingdom, where women need the permission of their male guardian if they want to work, marry, or travel.

In January, a Saudi teen holed up in a Thai airport hotel to escape her family and won asylum in Canada.

Young Talents Honor the Memory of Genocide Victims in Berlin

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN — The date was, as always, April 24, and the venue had not changed: the French Cathedral in Gendarmenmarkt, Berlin. But the organizers were many, the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia, the Diocese of the Armenian Church in Germany and the Central Council of Armenians in Germany, in cooperation with the Armenian Church and Cultural Community as well as the Armenian Community, both of Berlin; and Kammerton, a music initiative. The program presented one commemorative speech, delivered by Dr. Elke Hartmann, followed by a magnificent concert featuring four very talented young musicians from Armenia. The new Primas of the Armenian Church in Germany Archimandrite Serovbe Isakhanyan closed with prayers.

Dr. Hartmann, who is teaching as a guest professor at the Hamburg university this semester, is on the faculty of the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, in the department of Russian and Asian studies. In her address Hartmann spoke as a third generation Armenian, whose maternal grandparents transmitted Armenian culture to her, through language, music, cuisine and love. As that generation is taking its

es of the genocide resolution.

Reiterating the special place that music plays in Armenian life, Hartmann concluded her warmly received remarks with the invitation to the musicians to come on stage. If anyone in the capacity audience expected a few pieces by some world-class professional ensemble or vocalists, that person must be happily disappointed. The first to appear was

posers alternating with works from the classical European repertoire, a reflection of the range of musical culture the young instrumentalists are mastering.

After listening to one prodigious performance after the other, we were not surprised to read in the program notes that all four have won numerous prizes, both on the national stage and abroad. The two youngest pianists Gur



Dr. Elke Hartmann

Aida Avanisyan, age 12, who took her place at the concert grand piano and delivered Arno Babajanyan’s *Elegy*. Further on in the program, she would perform Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Partita No. 2 in C minor* and Franz Schubert’s *Impromptu in A flat, Opus 90, No. 4*. Her contemporary, Gur Sargsyan, also born in 2006, gave an energetic and convincing performance of Sergei Rachmaninov’s *Prelude in G*

Sargsyan and Aida Avanisyan, have both performed Bach piano concertos together with the State Chamber Orchestra of Armenia. With the exception of Zhora Sargsyan, who has been a student at the Berlin University of the Arts since 2014, the musicians came from Armenia for the event, and heartfelt thanks were in order to the Embassy for having facilitated their travel and to the KAMMERTON Project for the Promotion of International Musical Young Talents. This Berlin-based initiative supports the education of classical music talents, children and youth, and promotes international exchange. Before offering solemn prayers, Archimandrite Isakhanyan expressed his deep gratitude to the outstanding performers.

Hartmann had mentioned in her opening remarks that music has served Armenians throughout the ages as a means of affirmation of their continuing existence and development; the thoughtfully crafted program for this year’s commemoration, brilliantly executed by the young musicians, communicated this not only through their skills but also the pure joy they find in making music. It was a dignified commemoration of those who perished in the genocide and at the same time a celebration of the will to generate cultural excellence into the future.



Ani Badeyan, Gur Sargsyan, Aida Avanisyan and Zhora Sargsyan (left to right)

final leave, the descendants continue to fight for recognition of the genocide, especially on the part of the Turkish authorities today. Hartmann was direct and uncompromising in her demands for full recognition and her principled rejection of political exploitation through pseudo-acknowledgements and rhetorical lip-service to the suffering of the victims.

As a German, she emphasized the role that Germany must play, especially in the wake of the resolution passed in 2016 by the Bundestag (Parliament) officially recognizing the genocide. In that document, specific provisions are defined for implementation, among them the inclusion of study of the Armenian Genocide in history classes in the upper schools. Matters pertaining to school curricula are the responsibility of the federal state governments in Germany, and it is they who must transform the written commitments into facts. But, as she stressed, to do this involves more than a bureaucratic decision; for teachers to prepare classes and present the subject in a scientifically responsible manner, they need research tools and classroom materials. This requires adequate research, which in turn calls for the establishment of centers, institutes, associations within universities that are devoted to Armenian studies. Without such chairs established for Armenian studies it would be impossible to fulfill the challenges and promis-

minor, *Opus 23, No. 5*, which is a technically challenging piece. He was equally competent later in presenting *Shushiki* by Komitas, and *Widmung* (Dedication, A love song) by Robert Schumann in an arrangement by Franz Liszt.

The other two musicians were considerably older: pianist Zhora Sargsyan is 25 and violinist Ani Badeyan has just turned 16. As a soloist Sargsyan played *Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Opus 52* by Frederic Chopin, the *Phantasy in D minor* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and *Spring* by Komitas. In a duet together with Ani Badeyan, he performed *Krunk* by Komitas and the *Romance* from H e n r i k Wieniawski’s *Violin Concerto No. 2, Opus 22*. The program offered Komitas and other Armenian com-



Zhora Sargsyan and Ani Badeyan

Community News

Salpi Ghazarian Speaks at Genocide Commemoration in Connecticut

HARTFORD, Conn. — The historic Connecticut House of Representative Chambers was filled to overflow as the 104th commemoration of the Armenian Genocide took place on Saturday April 27.

John Geragosian, Connecticut auditor, served as Master of Ceremonies and Susan Shabazian led the audience in the singing of the American and Armenian national anthems.

Warm welcoming remarks were given by Rep. Edwin Vargas Jr., state representative from the Sixth District who has long served as the Committee's sponsor and who enjoys wide support from the Armenian community.

Keynote speaker Salpi Ghazarian, director of the University of Southern California Institute of Armenian Studies was introduced by Professor Armen Marsoobian, chairperson of the Philosophy Department of Southern Connecticut State University. Ghazarian gave a first-hand account of the recent changes in the Republic of Armenia which has been hailed worldwide as a "velvet revolution." She identified challenges facing the three million residents of Armenia and six million throughout the diaspora. She structured a scenario of hope and future continued progress for the Republic by synergistic efforts by those in Armenia and throughout the world.

The solemn commemoration took on colorful and meaningful overtones as young children in traditional Armenian garb distributed program booklets to the attendees and a skillful group of



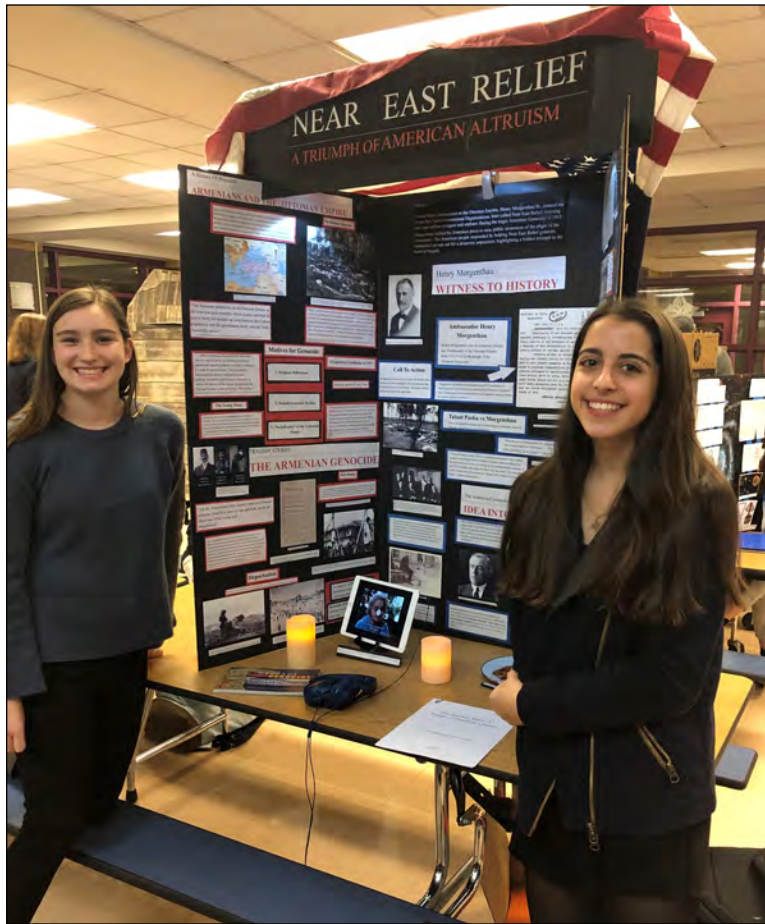
Keynote speaker Salpi Ghazarian

dancers, including Emma Lopez, Angel Zohrabian, Veronica Sardaryan and Hasmik Ohanyan from St George Armenian Church in Hartford presented a thoughtful and stirring memorial Dance to music by Komitas selected and choreographed by Sarkis Kaltakhtchian.

The committee honored the late Nancy A. Humphreys, former Dean of the UConn school of social work, for her groundbreaking work in establishing social work as a profession in Armenia and a legislative citation and recognition was presented to her family. Kristin Asadourian gave a poignant presentation on her interactions with Dean Humphreys and what she learned about herself, her background and her profession from being one of Dean Humphreys' students.

Committee chair Melanie Kevorkian Brown recognized the committee and gave warm appreciation to retiring committee chair Jack Krikorian who was also honored with a legislative citation. Brown also recognized Rita Soovajian, committee secretary, and Diana Dagavarian Colpitts, treasurer, for their tireless efforts. Other committee members acknowledged were : Rev. Untzag Nalbandian, Rev. Archpriest Aram Stepanian Rev. Kapriel

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Lily Jebejian and Alice Vranka of Bronxville High School north of New York City with the first phase of their school project.

New York Students Win State Accolades for History Project that Highlights Armenian Genocide Testimony

NEW YORK — Two students in New York state have risen through the ranks of the National History Day Competition with a project that highlights one testimony from the University of Southern California (USC) Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive.

After being selected as finalists from their high school early this year, freshmen Lily Jebejian and Alice Vranka of Bronxville High School north of New York City placed second in the Lower Hudson Regional Competition in March. They'll go on to compete in the New York State Competition in late April, after fine-tuning their display commemorating one segment of the American response to the Armenian Genocide.

"As we dug deeper into the Armenian Genocide, we found a hidden triumph in the story of Near East Relief and the many unsung heroes of the genocide," Jebejian and Vranka said in a statement to USC Shoah Foundation.

Addressing this year's National History Day theme of "triumph and tragedy in history," the girls looked into the work of American charity Near East Relief, which sent humanitarian aid and raised millions of dollars to help those affected by the Armenian Genocide. The organization set up refugee camps, clinics and hospitals to attend to those displaced by the genocide, and is credited with having cared for 132,000 Armenian orphans from Yerevan, Constantinople, Beirut, Damascus and Jerusalem, among other places in the Near East, a region that includes western Asia, Turkey and Egypt.

"We felt that the triumph of the work of Near East Relief during the horrific tragedy needed to be shared in this year's contest," the girls said.

Part of their project, which displays a sample of the typical meal eaten by an orphan in a Near East Relief orphanage, features a clip of testimony from Arpine Terlemezian, who worked as the director of an orphanage in Kirovakan (now Vanadzor) shortly after Armenia was established in 1918. Terlemezian's story is preserved in USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive.

"Arpine Terlemezian's testimony offered a story of personal triumph and tragedy for our project," the girls said. "While she witnessed the horrors of the genocide in her work at an Near East Relief orphanage, she helped the orphans learn skills that would benefit them for their entire lives."

They add that she also found love while working at the orphanage. Dajad Terlemezian was a young war hero and fellow employee of Near East Relief.

"Dajad came to the orphanage every day," she said in her testimony, which was recorded by the late documentary filmmaker J. Michael Hagopian in the early 1980s. (Hagopian entrusted all of his 300-plus Armenian Genocide interviews to USC Shoah Foundation in 2013.) "He captivated me. So, we got married."

The girls first heard of the Visual History Archive during an interview with the Chairman Emeritus of the Near East Foundation, Shant Mardirossian. They immediately started scouring the archive for a story to set their project apart.

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Colorado Senate Recognizes Artsakh, Commemorates Armenian Genocide

DENVER, Colo. — Colorado's State Senate unanimously voted on April 24 to designate the day as "Colorado Day of the Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide" through a strongly-worded resolution that also recognized the Republic of Artsakh and the recent cultural genocide in Nakhichevan.

"We are grateful for Colorado's ongoing remembrance of the Armenian Genocide and we are so proud of this year's courageous resolution that recognizes the ongoing genocidal repercussions faced by the Armenian homeland," remarked the Armenian National Committee of America Western Region (ANCA WR) chair Nora Hovsepian, Esq. "The resolution is particularly commendable for referencing and effectively recognizing the Republic of Artsakh," continued Hovsepian. "This success, which builds upon the Sardarapat Highway and the Capitol Khachkar Memorial, is another testament to the effectiveness of the determined and persistent activism pursued by Colorado's vibrant Armenian American grassroots."

Championed by Democratic Sen. Dominick Moreno and Republican Sen. Jack Tate, Senate Resolution 19-012 recounts the historical background of the Armenian Genocide, recalls Colorado's WWI-era efforts in support of the Armenian Nation, and references the ongoing consequences of the Armenian Genocide that impact the Armenian homeland on a daily basis. In particular, the resolution states that "The ongoing consequences of the Armenian Genocide and its impunity include the Turkish-Azerbaijani blockade of the already-landlocked sister states of the Armenian homeland, the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh." This recognition increases the number of American states that have recognized Artsakh to nine.

SR 19-012 also cites the recently-exposed cultural genocide in Nakhichevan as an outcome of the impunity for the Armenian Genocide: "Turkey's unpunished denial of the Armenian Genocide and ongoing desecration of Armenian sacred sites without accountability has inspired and enabled the recent execution of an unparalleled cultural genocide of the entire indigenous Christian Armenian heritage in the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhichevan, where between the years of 1997 and 2006 the Azerbaijan Government eradicated every trace of the region's ancient Armenian past of an estimated 90 churches and 6,000 intricately-carved cross-stones, including the celebrated Julfa khachkars, one of which was replicated in 2015 for the Colorado State Capitol Armenian Genocide Memorial Garden."

First introduced in 2002, Colorado's annual Armenian Genocide resolution, as it has done previously, concludes by expressing support for "constructive and durable relations between the country of Armenia, the homeland for the Armenian people, and its neighbors, based upon acknowledgment of the facts and ongoing consequences of the Armenian genocide, and a fair, just, and comprehensive international resolution of this unpunished crime against humanity."

SR 19-012 was voted on in the morning of April 24 in the presence of ANCA activists and Armenian American community leaders. The introduction and vote was broadcast live on ANCA-WR's Facebook page and aired on The Colorado Channel. Due to time consideration, only parts of the resolution were read on the floor.

In addition to SR 19-012, the Armenian Genocide has been commemorated this year through a gubernatorial proclamation. Colorado Governor Jared Polis recently proclaimed April as "Genocide Awareness Month," stating that "Coloradans find it important to

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Genocide Awareness Week at Scottsdale Community College

By Dr. Alan Haroian

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — For two weeks, beginning on April 10, Scottsdale Community College in Arizona hosted a series of lectures, films, and ceremonies as part of its annual Genocide Awareness Week. Armenians were among the groups represented during this program of events, all of which were dedicated to genocides and how to prevent them.

St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church provided funding to obtain the services of internationally renowned speakers Dr. Taner Akçam and Professor Barlow Der Mugrdchian. Dr. Akçam's presentation focused on the Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide. His extensive research included Ottoman archival documents clearly showing evidence of the Turkish cover-up. He is often referred to as the Sherlock Holmes of finding evidence to prove the premeditation and planning of the 1915 genocide. Much of this material is discussed in his latest book *Killing Orders*.

Professor Der Mugrdchian's lecture title was Genocide in the 21st Century: Turkey and Armenia. Both scholars' talks were delivered on Monday, April 15 and were very well attended, with many students asking thought-provoking questions.



From left, Andreh Janian, Eleni Smiaris, John Liffiton, Fr. Zacharia Saribekyan, Dr. Taner Akçam, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Vatche Megerdichian and Dr. Alan Haroian.

New York Students Win State Accolades for History Project That Highlights Armenian Genocide Testimony

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USC Shoah Foundation Education and Outreach Specialist Sedda Antekelian says she's proud that Jebejian and Vranka have chosen to include testimony from the Archive.

“Testimony is a primary source,” Antekelian said. “It provides value to the historical record and humanizes the experience of tragedy and resilience.”

Antekelian also credited the students for sharing the voice of Terlemezian, who is “a great example of an Armenian survivor who actively worked for the survival of thousands of Armenian orphans.”

Both girls say they are excited to present their project in the next stage of the competition. They say their family connection to the genocide has motivated all of their work. In fact, both are currently in Armenia, visiting Near East Relief orphanages like the St. Arsenije Church in the Kazachi Post in Gyumri, Armenia.

“Luckily, our ancestors escaped the persecution of the Ottoman Empire and were able to thrive in America,” they said. “We are so passionate about researching this topic because of our personal connections, and we have discovered so much about our family history through the research process. We hope to share the story of the Armenian Genocide and Near East Relief with as many people as possible, so that our history will not be lost.”

The following week on Wednesday, April 24, a memorial prayer service was held at the Armenian Genocide Monument, which is located in the courtyard at Scottsdale Community College. Impassioned addresses were given by

US Rep. David Schweikert and Scottsdale Mayor Jim Lane. Solo musical selections were performed by flutist Diana Tovmosyan and violinist Levon Zarasian. Father Zacharia Saribekyan, pastor of St. Apkar Armenian

Apostolic Church of Arizona, spoke of never forgetting the events of 1915.

The ceremony ended on a somber note as attendees lined up to place red roses on the Genocide Monument.



Fr. Zacharia Saribekian addressing the attendees



Attendees laying roses on the Armenian Genocide Monument

Colorado Senate Recognizes Artsakh, Commemorates Armenian Genocide

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remember and commemorate the 20th-century genocides perpetrated against Armenians, Jews, Cambodians, Bosnians, and Rwandans, among others, as well as the 21st-century genocide against Darfuris in Sudan, the ongoing brutalities against the Rohingya minority in Myanmar, and the crimes against the indigenous Christians and Yazidis in the Middle East.” Notably, the proclamation issued by Gov. Polis at the request of the Coalition Against Global Genocide condemned genocide denial and other genocidal policies, as well as underlined the importance of teaching Colorado school-children about genocides and crimes against humanity.





COMMUNITY NEWS

Youth Leaders Visit Parish on ACYOA Day

NEW YORK – This past Palm Sunday—April 14, 2019—the Eastern Diocese marked ACYOA Day. The annual observance highlights the Christian youth group of the Armenian Church.

Members of the ACYOA Central Council spread out across the Diocese to speak in local parishes about the importance of ACYOA and its ongoing effort of ministry and outreach. Nora Knadjian visited St. Sarkis Church, in Charlotte, NC; Sona Dagley visited St. Hagop Church, Pinellas Park, FL; Ronnie Malconian visited the Church of Our Saviour, Worcester, MA; Mallory Maslar visited the Armenian Church of Jacksonville, FL; Melissa Mardoian visited St. John the Baptist Church, Greenfield, WI; Arsen Yelegen visited St. Mary Church, Washington, DC; and Nick Tashjian visited St. George Church, Hartford, CT.

ACYOA Central Council chair Nora Knadjian said: “In my visit to Charlotte, I met with local ACYOA members on Saturday to lead a Chapter Connections workshop. It was beautiful to reunite with them on Sunday to celebrate Jesus’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem. During the Divine Liturgy, Fr. Samuel Rith-Najarian called the children of the church to gather at the chancel, to be part of the ‘Opening of the Doors’ ceremony. The local ACYOA members are entering into a new, exciting era. They have great ideas and are looking forward to the rest of the year.”

“I enjoyed visiting the Jacksonville community on Palm Sunday,” said Mallory Maslar. “I was welcomed with open arms by the entire community. I was able to share my camp experience and share stories about my ACYOA adventures. I loved seeing the community support this chapter. They are small, but they are mighty. The boys all shared their ACYOA experience over the years. I really enjoyed hearing that one of them is planning to attend the St. Nersess Deacon’s Training seminar this summer.”

Nick Tashjian said: “The St. George Parish is a great community with Armenian families from

different parts of the diaspora. They were all willing to introduce themselves and welcome the central council to their parish. I spoke to the parish about the ACYOA; it was very informal, to the point where I ditched my written speech and just spoke to the parish. There was great interest in a senior’s chapter and several parents approached me about their kids in col-

lection to their church community. I want to thank the Church of Our Saviour for having me!”

For Arsen Yelegen, visiting the St. Mary in Washington, DC, gave him “the opportunity to serve on the altar, and it was wonderful to see all of the young faces also serving. After the badarak, the ACYOA Juniors prepared and

adults that were present served on the altar during the service and made a point to engage with their church. They have something special at their church: a familial mindset that makes them a strong community.”

Finally, at the St. Hagop parish in Pinellas Park, FL, Sona Dagley noted that “the Sunday School did a wonderful job hosting the lun-



ACYOA members serving food

lege. I spoke to the Juniors and Seniors once the lunch was over. I look forward to being in communication with St. George.”

“I loved being able to visit the Church of Our Saviour in Worcester, MA,” said Ronnie Malconian. “I saw that there were young adults on the altar as well as in the choir. I was happy to see that most of them also took part in the luncheon after church, showing a real

served a luncheon accompanied by a musical performance by a few of the members of the Juniors. It was heartwarming to see the St. Mary community come together and celebrate the youth of the church.”

Melissa Mardoian “had the pleasure of visiting St. John Church in Greenfield, WI. I was welcomed by many old friends of my parents from their time in the ACYOA. The young

cheon under the supervision of the ACYOA Seniors. I am excited to watch the youth in this area continue to grow and prosper in celebrating their faith and fellowship.”

Jennifer Morris of the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries coordinated the ACYOA Day parish visits and continues to work with the ACYOA Central Council on all of their programming and initiatives.

ASA’s Sixth Annual Journalism Internship Program Set for 2017

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 for 2016 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 2017. 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.

Salpi Ghazarian Speaks at Genocide Commemoration in Connecticut

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Mouradjian, Rev. Dr. Vahan Kouyoumdjian, Rev. Arman Galstyan, John Abrahamian, Richard Arzoomanian, John Avedesian, Dr. Svetlana Babajanyan, Evelyn Mukjian Daly, Prof. Mari Firkatian, John Geragosian, Sonia Gulbank, Kit Kaolian, Richard Hamasian, Professor Armen Marsoobian, Attorney Harry Mazadoorian, Attorney Gregory Norsigian, David Paparian and Christopher Wright.

Also in attendance and offering prayers were the Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair, S.T.D., Archbishop of the Catholic Diocese of Hartford and Rev. Pouls Namrood of St Thomas Assyrian

Church of New Britain.

Committee member Attorney Harry Mazadoorian read a number of legislative citations introduced by Representatives Richard Lopes and Edwin Vargas Jr. which were presented to the Keynote Speaker and honored guests and Committee member Attorney Gregory Norsigian led the audience in a solemn moment of silence with Diana Dagavarian Colpitts.

The Commemoration was followed by a reception featuring sumptuous Armenian foods.

The flag of the Republic of Armenia flew over the Connecticut State Capitol from April 21 through April 27.



Children in traditional Armenian costumes at the State Capitol



COMMUNITY NEWS

Public Links Legend Archie Dadian Isn't Quite Ready to Call it Quits

By Gary D'Amato

SOUTH MILWAUKEE, Wis. (*Wisconsin Golf*) — In the early 1970s, decades before the 24/7 news cycle, smartphones and social media conspired to ruin the myth-building of our sports heroes, Archie Dadian might as well have been Arnold Palmer to a bunch of teens learning to play golf at Grant Park in South Milwaukee.

We knew of Dadian's exploits only through newspaper stories and word of mouth and imagined him to be a giant who could pummel a golf ball out of sight, knock down flagsticks with his irons and dare birdie putts not to fall. We knew he lived nearby and frequented Grant Park.

But over two long summers we never saw him, which only made the very idea of an Archie Dadian seem more romantic.

Then, one day, after getting kicked off the course at dusk by a vigilant maintenance worker who knew from experience that we'd sneaked on, we were headed back to the parking lot when something made us stop dead in our tracks. There, in the setting sun, was a solitary figure hitting balls in the little practice area across the street from the first hole.

His swing was short and quick, like the crack of a whip, and the ball came off the club face with a sound unlike anything we'd ever heard. Every shot traced the same perfect parabola in the sky, the balls landing softly and within feet of each other, 120 yards away.

Nobody had to tell us.

We knew who we were watching.

Archie Dadian is 85 and hasn't played competitive golf since 2012. He's had his left hip replaced three times, his right hip once. Arthritis in his index finger, a remnant of the metacarpal he shattered when he hit a rock in the fairway at the 1965 Azalea Open Invitational, prevents him from completely closing his hand. He says he hasn't played more than a dozen rounds over the last five or six years.

But he's thinking about entering a tournament or two this summer.

What a treat that would be. Not for Dadian, but for Wisconsin golf.

He's a connection to a glorious past in our



Archie Dadian

state, a connection to names such as Dick Sucher, Steve Caravello, Bobby Brue, Walter Atwood and Butch Schlicht. He's a connection to a time when public links players were looked down upon as inferior, a time when only a handful could enter the State Amateur.

His father, an Armenian immigrant, owned a tavern in blue-collar South Milwaukee. Like some of the men against whom he competed, Dadian worked in insurance. But they were salesmen, many with their own successful businesses. He was an examiner.

As a Saturday morning dew-sweeper who plunked down his green fees at Milwaukee County courses with the rest of the working stiffs, Dadian, his dark complexion turned mahogany from hours in the sun beating balls, couldn't enter the locker room at some private clubs, even during tournaments he would win. In the 1950s and '60s, he often changed into his spikes in the parking lot.

You don't think that put a chip on his shoulder?

Once, in the Milwaukee District Match Play Championship, Dadian was standing over a bunker shot when he heard a woman in the gallery say, "I sure hope the public links player loses." He backed off, instructed his caddie to pull the flagstick and defiantly holed the shot. Take that, he thought.

When he briefly played on the PGA Tour in 1964 and 1965, he was paired with the great Jack Nicklaus and two-time major champion Doug Ford at a tournament in Indianapolis.

"Jack hits his tee shot on the first hole and Ford hits his tee shot and now I'm getting ready to hit and all of a sudden I hear a voice in the gallery: 'Who the hell is that guy?'" Dadian says. "I back off and I say, 'I'll show you who I am.' I belted it and it had to be close to 70 yards past Ford's ball and maybe 20 yards past Nicklaus' ball."

By his own count, Dadian won more than 100 tournaments, including one-round qualifiers. He won the State Amateur twice, in 1963 at match play and in 1974 at stroke play. He won the inaugural Wisconsin State Golf Association Match Play Championship in 1975 and repeated in '76.

There was some nice symmetry to his career: He won the Wisconsin Public Links Association's Ray Fischer 72-Hole Amateur Championship, the WPLA 36-hole Championship, the Milwaukee District and the old Milwaukee Sentinel and Milwaukee Journal tournaments five times each.

"Five seems to be my number," Dadian says.

Unless it's 10. That's how many times he won the WPLA Billy Sixty Best-ball title (with three different partners). He also was a 10-time WSGA Senior Player of the Year, taking the honor every year from 1989 to 1998 (sharing it with Sucher in 1992).

Dadian was the first public links player to win the State Amateur and the first to win the Milwaukee District title. He was named the national public links player of the decade for the 1970s, after finishing runner-up to Eddie Mudd in the 1976 U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship and reaching the semifinals on three other occasions.

At South Milwaukee High School, he won the old Suburban Conference title in 1951. Sixty-one years later, at age 79, he tied for 18th in the WSGA Senior Amateur. How's that for longevity?

He did it all with a home-made swing, short and quick in the takeaway, fast and violent in the downswing. Often, both feet came off the ground at impact.

"I went once to Manuel de la Torre," Dadian says of the late Milwaukee Country Club professional, a nationally known teacher. "He looked at my swing and said, 'Archie, you've got the worst golf swing I've ever seen.' But he said, 'I wouldn't change a thing about it.' I said, 'Why?' He said, 'Because you're able to repeat everything you do, all the time.'"

He was blessed with great natural strength; his grandfather was the Turkish heavyweight wrestling champion and went by the nickname "No Neck." "I could lift 100 pounds just like this," Dadian says, raising one arm. "Up until about five years ago, I could still do one-arm push-ups."

He also had superior hand-eye coordination, another genetic gift. He was a multiple-time

South Milwaukee city marbles champion, back when every kid shot marbles, and once ran 121 consecutive balls in straight pool. His brothers excelled at racket sports and his niece was a U.S. table tennis champion. He's a charter member of the Wisconsin Dartball Hall of Fame.

Dadian discovered golf by accident in the ninth grade, when a friend dragged him to Grant Park, less than a mile from his boyhood home.

He guessed his first score was around 150. "I thought it was a terrible game," he says. But a second trip to the course yielded some solid shots and a much better score, and he quickly became hooked. Within months, he was shooting in the 80s with a \$6 set of mismatched, wood-shafted clubs.

Because his home course was Grant Park, a short layout with par-4s mostly in the 280- to 350-yard range, Dadian never learned how to hit long irons. He didn't need them because he could drive the green on all but a handful of holes. And Grant had no bunkers, so he never developed sound technique in the sand.

"My strength was 5-iron and in," he says. "I was almost automatic. If I would have had someone teach me how to hit a longer iron and a bunker shot, nobody would have beat me. I had those two major defects."

After high school, Dadian enlisted in the Navy and after two years was transferred to the Marine Corps, where he befriended Tony Lema, who would go on to win the 1964 British Open. Lema and Dadian were the top players on a talented all-Marine Corps golf team.

"But we could never beat San Diego Naval Base," Dadian says. "They had (Billy) Casper and (Gene) Littler."

Dadian won the Wisconsin State Amateur in 1963 and the next year shot a course-record 59 at Grant Park.

"On the third hole, I had a three-foot birdie putt and I missed it," Dadian says. "The ball was on the other side of the cup and I reached over and jabbed it and it bounced over the hole. So, I three-putted and bogeyed the hole. Otherwise, it could have been 57."

Dadian turned pro in 1964, joined the PGA Tour and won a car for making a hole-in-one at the Buick Open. In what turned out to be a brief career, he got paired with some of the game's greats, including Nicklaus. In his first round with the Golden Bear, a nervous Dadian developed a case of the shanks.

"I must have shanked the ball four times," he says. "Nicklaus comes over to me and puts his arm around me. He says, 'Hey, Arch, I know you're nervous, but you see all these people following us? If any of them were better than you are, they'd be playing and you'd be a spectator.'"

Whether Dadian would have had a successful career is a matter of conjecture. It ended when he hit that rock in the fairway in Wilmington, North Carolina. By the time he got to the green, his hand had swelled to twice its normal size and he was forced to withdraw.

The broken bone eventually required surgery and Dadian applied for amateur reinstatement. In the first State Amateur he entered after regaining amateur status, he lost to a young Andy North in the finals in 1969. The championship switched to stroke play in 1971 and Dadian won his second title in '74.

How many more would he have won if he hadn't turned pro, broken his hand and basically missed five years in his competitive prime?

"In my mind," he says, "there's no question I would have won it more times."

He remained a dominant player until developing a case of the putting yips. It all started, he says, when he missed a short putt on the 36th hole of the championship match in the 1976 U.S. Amateur Public Links. He then lost on the first extra hole to Mudd.

"I thought about that putt all winter," he says.

By the end of the next summer, every short putt, even a tap-in, was an adventure.

"Ask Dave Miley how I lost the (Milwaukee) District," he says. "I was 2-up with three holes to go. I never had more than a 5-foot putt for birdie and I lost every hole. On the 17th hole, I double-hit a putt. Then I did it again on 18.

"It got so I literally could not take the putter back. If somebody would have bet me a million dollars that I couldn't make a one-foot putt, I would have lost. There was no way I could have made the putt. Absolutely none."

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Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston and Armenian
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Present

*Literary Evening with
California novelist*

Aris Janigian

and

Susan Barba

poet, author and editor

May 15 7:30 pm

AGBU Building
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Free admission, reception to follow
Books will be on sale
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Healthy Mind and Spirit Energized by New Spiritual Leadership

BOCA RATON, Fla. — Since the arrival of Rev. Gomidas Zohrabian to the St. David Armenian Church in Boca Raton, FL, he has initiated many projects and programs including the great success of the Lenten lectures series which were organized by Sonig Kradjian and Marieta Agopian.

All the lectures were given by physicians emphasizing different aspects of health.

The lectures started with Dr. Richard Berjian, author, musician and physician. He spoke about risks in today's medical system. Obviously in the richest country in the world our health care system needs improvement. During the question and answer a very wise person in the audience observed that here in United States of America, we have an excellent sick care system, but a mediocre health care system.

This was followed by Dr. Thomas Varbedian, well known philanthropist, and ophthalmologist, who gave an excellent lecture which made

a very complicated subject clearly understood in simple terms, and he certainly got the audience involved in his very amicable presentation.

The next topic "You and your kidneys," was presented by Dr. Armen Margaryan from Armenia, who was eloquent, competent and very up to date with his audio visual presentation.

Dr. Wisam Zakko who comes from a great family of Armenian doctors, graduated from Baghdad, Iraq medical school and then had extensive training both at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts

General Hospital. He has the American Board of Internal Medicine and the Board of gastroenterology. He has a very successful practice in Ft. Lauderdale in gastroenterology and he explained the careful diet to protect against colon cancer.

Dr. Gregory Boyajian, born in Aleppo, immigrated to West Virginia and trained in den-

tistry and prosthodontics, excelled in both fields and established a very high class and successful practice in West Palm Beach. In addition to his expertise in all fields of dentistry, he is a man for all seasons with solid expertise in history, ancient and Middle East History, photography, art and on and on. His lecture on "Blood" was a well calibrated mixture of the histology of blood, with clinical significance of the various blood components spiced with humor that kept the audience attentive and mesmerized.

The last lecture was by Dr. Ernest M. Barsamian on the "Human Heart." During his almost five score years, Dr. Barsamian has received innumerable honors and awards including the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, the Plaque of Valor from the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and the Mekhitar Heratsu Medal from the President of Armenia. For the past 30 years, the best surgeon of the year at the VA Medical Center outside Boston receives the Ernest M. Barsamian Award. He built one of the first heart-lung machines at MIT, was a pioneer heart surgeon and Professor Emeritus of Surgery and Faculty Dean at Harvard.

The lecture ended via a telephone call facili-



Dr. Thomas Varbedian, Rev Fr. Gomidas Zohrabian and Sonig Kradjian

Public Links Legend Archie Dadian Isn't Quite Ready to Call it Quits

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He tried everything — left-hand low, claw grip, putting with his eyes closed, putting with his driver. He finally went to the long putter, which turned out to be his salvation. The broomstick at least allowed him to be competitive, but he never again was the same on the greens.

"Not even close," he says.

Asked what he considers his greatest accomplishment in golf, Dadian doesn't mention any of the dozens of tournaments he won.

"Probably just the people I've met," he says. "I've made a lot of acquaintances, a lot of friends through golf. And it's nice to be considered one of the better players in the state, you know? Most of the good players come from private courses. It's that simple.

"Had my folks been wealthy enough where I could have been a member of a private course and learn how to hit a long iron and sand shots, I think my career would have been a whole lot better.

"As to how much, who knows?"

In May 2017, I arrived at Blue Mound Golf & Country Club well before my tee time and when I pulled into the parking lot, I saw a solitary figure on the range. It was Dadian, warming up for the round we'd play with retired WSGA executive director Gene Haas.

I'd written many stories about Archie over the years but had never played golf with him. Before we teed off, he warned us not to expect much, explaining that it was his first round of the year and that he'd played only twice in 2016.

He double-bogeyed the first hole and bogeyed Nos. 2 and 3. I distinctly remember thinking, "Poor Arch, he's lost his game."

Then ... boom, a 225-yard drive down the middle. Par. Boom, a 230-yard drive. Birdie. A string of pars followed. By the end of the round, he was hitting his driver 235-plus. He played the last 15 holes in 6-over par. He was 83 years old.

Nobody had to tell me. I knew who I was watching.

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OBITUARY

Biatris Bogossian

Born in Romania



FRAMINGHAM, Mass. — Biatris Bogossian of Framingham died peacefully on April 23. She was 81 years old. She was born in Bucharest, Romania.

She was the wife of the late Levon Bogossian. She leaves her children Armen Bogossian and his wife Piruza of Burlington and Satenik Kotsiopoulos and her husband Victor of Framingham; grandchildren Deanna and David Bogossian and Ariana Kotsiopoulos. She was the sister of the late Haigouhi Ohanian and Mkritch Demirchian and sister-in-law of Mari Demirchian of Saugus and the late Makruhi Bogossian. She was also survived by two generations of nieces and nephews.

Services were held at St. Stephen's Armenian Church, 38 Elton Avenue, Watertown on Monday, April 29. Interment followed at Forest Hill Cemetery, Lynnfield.

Setrak Iskandarian

Member of Knights of Vartan

WATERTOWN — Setrak Iskandarian of Watertown passed away on April 26. He was 86 years old. He was the husband of Sonia (Khalarian) Iskandarian.

He had been born in Tripoli, Lebanon in 1933.

He was the father of Vera Iskandarian and her husband Dan Sandler of Belmont and Seta Iskandarian and her husband Robert Nalbandov of Watertown and grandfather of James and Garen Sandler and Gabriel and Patrick Nalbandian. He was the brother of the late Nishan Iskandarian, Elizabeth Iskandarian and Nazareth Iskandarian. He also leaves two generations of loving nieces and nephews.

He had been a member of Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge Number 1 since 1997.

Funeral services were held at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St. Watertown on Tuesday, April 30. Interment was at Highland Meadow Cemetery in Belmont.





COMMUNITY NEWS

Thousands Mark Genocide Anniversary At Times Square Program

COMMEMORATION, from page 1

that now 1.5 million people of Armenian ancestry live in America.

"The Armenian nation has not just endured, but it has prevailed," said Schumer, who is a co-sponsor of Senate Resolution 150 that calls for the US to commemorate the Armenian Genocide through official recognition and remembrance. "The three pashas are gone, the Ottoman Empire is gone, but the Armenian people live on and continue to inspire the world."

A tireless advocate for the Armenians, Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), who earlier this month admonished US Ambassador to Turkey nominee David M. Satterfield for failing to refer to the 1915 atrocities as Genocide, stated that everyone has "come together in remembrance, in reflection and in solidarity."

The Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who along with Sen. Ted Cruz (R-T.X.) recently sponsored Senate Resolution 150, is ensuring that the foreign policy of the US "reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning the Armenian Genocide."

Menendez stated that the Turkish authorities began a systematic campaign to exterminate the Armenian population through "killings, starvation, forced deportation and untold brutality" and remarked that "such intentional horrific violence targeted towards one people has a name and one name only and that name is

TALEEN BABAYAN PHOTO



Co-MC Armen McOmber, Esq. honored for his decade of service to the Annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Times Square

genocide."

He acknowledged the 1.5 million victims who perished and also appreciated their contributions to Armenian history and culture that "lives on today and there can be no denying them."

Taking a stand "in support of the unshakable truth," Menendez outlined how the Turkish government has spent "countless millions of dollars on lobbyists willing to trumpet lies and make excuses for the atrocities that its predecessors committed."

"Portraying the extermination of 1.5 million Armenians as nothing more than a consequence of World War I is a distortion of history at best and at worst a contrived excuse for an unthinkable crime against humanity," he con-



A child lays a carnation at a model of the Armenian Genocide memorial Tsisernakapert

tinued.

He spoke of the suppressive Turkish government that has "undermined the fundamental right of freedom of speech" and how the country's leaders have initiated prosecutions, smear campaigns and even resorted to violence

TALEEN BABAYAN PHOTO



Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)

against historians and journalists who have studied the Turkish treatment of the Armenian community, remarking that "such actions are reprehensible and speak volumes both about the crime and the cover up."

Recalling the words of Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, US Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during the Armenian Genocide, who described the Turkish authorities of deporting Armenians as a 'death warrant' to a whole race, Menendez asserted that today's diplomats should "not be any less frank when engaging with the Turkish government."

"We refuse to see the truth suppressed, the facts denied and history revised," said Menendez. "We will not rest until it becomes the official policy of the US government to recognize the Armenian Genocide here and any place else in the world."

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Frank Pallone (D-N.J.), pledged that he will continue to push for recogni-

TALEEN BABAYAN PHOTO



Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ)

tion of the Armenian Genocide and reaffirmed that there has been "tremendous progress" around the world as 30 countries now officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, along with 49 out of 50 US states.

"We will continue our efforts and demand that the Turkish government recognize the Armenian Genocide and pay reparations," said Pallone, who also called for ongoing support of the Republic of Armenia as well as Artsakh. A longtime supporter, he has made trips to both Armenia and Artsakh, where he has advocated for the people's right to self-determination.

He urged the public to persist in their fight and hold rallies such as the annual commemoration in Times Square in order to achieve official recognition.

"Please understand how important it is for you to be here today and how important it is for all of you to continue to support your Armenian advocates and Armenian organizations like the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, because with-



Singer Elie Berberian

out your help, we wouldn't be able to make progress on the issues you care so much about," concluded Pallone.

New York Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, remarked that the US should "join the chorus of voices across the globe" and recognize the genocide and the "calculating elimination of an entire population."

"We mourn the 1.5 million Armenians murdered by the government that was supposed to protect them," said Maloney. "We must honor their memory and we must come to the day that Turkey's President Erdogan recognizes the genocide instead of denying it."

She said she is proud to support resolutions that recognize the "systematic plan to extinguish the ancient, dignified and accomplished Armenian people" and the lessons that must be learned in order to prevent future tragedies from occurring again.

"We must teach ourselves and our children the abuse of state power that allows these crimes to go unpunished," said Maloney. "On this solemn day of remembrance our message remains united and clear: the US and Turkish governments must formally acknowledge the terrible genocide that occurred 104 years and I am with you as we keep fighting and pushing for recognition."

Headlining the event with a special cultural performance, Berberian curated an artistic concert that included a rendition of *Ils Sont Tombes* (They Fell), by Charles Aznavour, the poetry of the Hovhannes Shiraz set to music *Intz Guh Moranam* (I Forget Myself) and *Dle Yaman* by Komitas.

"Even though many years have passed since the Armenian Genocide, it does not stop me from remembering it and instead it gives me more drive," said Berberian. "We are paying tribute to the ultimate cause that concerns every Armenian in his or her heart."

Grand Commander and Matron of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, Dr. Gary Zamanigian and Diana Tookmanian, elaborated on the significance of commemorating the Armenian Genocide. The Knights and Daughters of Vartan have sponsored the Times Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration since 1985. This year the event was co-chaired by Tigran Sahakyan and Ari Minnetyan, under the guidance of Chairman Emeritus Hirant Gulian.

Armen McOmber, Esq. and Prof. Nvair Beylerian compellingly led the program. McOmber was recognized for his decade of service to the Times Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration and was presented with a special certificate of recognition and a Knights of Vartan medal.

The results of the 2019 Knights and Daughters of Vartan International Armenian Genocide Essay Contest were announced: first-place, Andrew Panosian of La Crescenta, CA, who is a freshman at Glendale Community College; second-place, Garine Kamajian of Indian Shores, Fla., who is a junior at University of South Florida-Tampa; third-place Lilit Arsenyan of Yerevan, Armenia, who is a freshman at Yerevan

TALEEN BABAYAN PHOTO

Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences.

The Astghikner Junior Ensemble of St. Gregory the Illuminator Mission Parish in Brooklyn sang the Armenian and American anthems and *Hayr Mer*, under the leadership of Maria Sahakyan, as the students of the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day

School of Bayside, NY and the Hovnanian Armenian Day School of New Milford, NJ sang a medley of Armenian patriotic songs, under the guidance of their principals, Seta Tavitian Megherian and Shakeh Tashjian, respectively. The Yerevan Dance Ensemble of St. Gregory the Illuminator Mission Parish made a special appearance.

The opening remarks and prayer were delivered by Zaven Khanjian, executive director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). The invocation was made by Archbishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America, and the closing prayer by Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian, representing Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. Other clergy in attendance included representatives of the Roman Catholic Armenian Eparchy of America and Canada.



COMMUNITY NEWS

April 24 Gathering At Heritage Park Has Global Flavor

BOSTON, from page 1

He then spoke about visiting his ancestral homeland, Keghi, with his father, a quarter-century earlier. Once, he said, the Kurkijans were among the 3,000 families living there. His father, Anooshavan, survived the 300-mile trek to safety as a 3-year-old.

Kurkjian wrote about this trauma in a cover story for the *Boston Globe Magazine*, titled “Roots of Sorrow.”

In spite of the many plaudits and awards that he has received for his great body of work exposing wrongdoing, he said that *Boston Globe* article is his favorite. “That was the most

Woodrow Wilson had ignored the cables from US Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Robert Morgenthau spelling out the government treatment of the Armenians, and it was not until a frustrated Morgenthau shared those cables with the New York Times that the story exploded.

“A free press is a predicate for a functioning democracy,” he said, before reciting the motto of the Washington Post, “Democracy dies in the dark.”

Next, he praised the Velvet Revolution in Armenia, citing that it was won by a reporter, Nikol Pashinyan, and his wife, Anna Hakobyan, also a reporter.

He urged those present to help Armenia. “Bring your energy and idealism to Armenia.”

Since leaving the *Boston Globe*, he has also written the book *Master Thieves: The Boston Gangsters Who Pulled Off the World’s Greatest Art Heist*, about the perplexing robbery of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston in



Speaker Stephen Kurkjian

important, inspiring article I wrote,” he said. He added, however, that he has since realized that the headline needs to be expanded to include the positive changes that have happened.

“We need to continue to insist on and demand recognition,” he said, adding, “the arc of the universe bends slowly but it does bend toward justice.” Standing on the spot called the Armenian Heritage Park in Boston was a reason for optimism.

He also touched on the city of Boston and its history of immigrants, from the Italian and Irish to the Haitians, Cambodians and Brazilians who make up so much of the more recent immigrant population.

“It is the immigrant experience that makes our city richer and more diverse,” he said.

In addition to speaking about immigration, he stressed the importance of the free press, noting that the administration of President

(DAVID MEDZORIAN PHOTO)



Dr. Marina Kavlakian performs.



Dr. Pamela Steiner

1990, during which 13 priceless works were stolen, never to surface again.

The next speaker was Dr. Pamela Steiner, a Senior Fellow with the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health, as well as a therapist in private practice in Massachusetts. She is also the great-granddaughter of Ambassador Morgenthau.



Members of the audience at the Armenian Heritage Park

Steiner spent the duration of her talk comparing and contrasting two books which have not been part of recent discussions, *Deep Mountain, Across the Turkish-Armenian Divide* (2010), by Ece Temelkuran and *There Was and There Was Not: A Journey Through Hate and Possibility in Turkey, Armenia, and Beyond* (2014) by Meline Toumani.

Both books made a lot of noise when they were published. In both cases, the writers were journalists trying to



Homenetmen Scouts march to the Armenian Heritage Park.

present their understandings of history. Neither book received much support in its native group.

Temelkuran, a veteran journalist, wanted to explore why Armenians hated Turks and how the Turks could be so ignorant of their plight and impassive toward them.

Toumani, a reporter for the *New York Times*, left her job and moved to Turkey for two years, fed up with the anti-Turkish sentiments of her community. She wanted to see for herself what the Turks were like and how they would react to her, knowing she was Armenian.

Steiner praised the efforts of the two journalists for engaging in a dialogue with the other group, helping her on her journey of understanding.

In addition, both were written in anticipation of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide and both knew the assassinated Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, she added.

“Each traveled outside their country to the other,” she said, adding that both writers found being Armenian or Turkish full-time exhausting.

She also noted that only Toumani went on her journey with the acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide while Temelkuran did not.

While “Each book is flawed, and in some regards, painfully so,” Steiner said, each writer tried to “free herself from preconceived notions,” she said.

Steiner was an early proponent of the

(DAVID MEDZORIAN PHOTO)

and Turks together. They [the Turkish government] particularly failed the fact test and respect test,” she said.

The third speaker was Ekhlas Ahmed, a survivor of the Darfur Genocide, who lived as a refugee in Egypt before her family was able to move to Portland, Maine. From the 12-year-old Sudanese refugee who could not speak English,



Speaker Ekhlas Ahmed

she went on to graduate high school with honors and has since received her master’s degree in education from the University of Southern Maine, and even found herself on the “Ellen” show.

Ahmed was particularly moving, reciting a poem titled “Sounds of Gunshots,” which captured her hometown in the wake of the genocide.

“I wrote the poem to tell the story of my motherland,” she said. “I love my homeland. I needed to protect my family and my stories.”

She thanked the organizers and the Armenian community for reaching out to her, noting that what the two genocides have in common is that neither is really spoken about in the mainstream media.

“I am bringing the voice of the voiceless to the young children. Our voices are the best weapons we have. We need stories of justice and peace. We must not forget our history and our roots and peaceful ways,” she said.

The crowd, whose members were dazzled by her poem and speech, all recited without consulting notes, erupted into a thunderous applause at the conclusion of her talk.

Also on stage that night were members of the Sayat Nova Dance Company, performing two numbers, “Giligia” and later the high-energy “Nareh-Nareh.”

Marine Kavlakian, a piano teacher, performed twice, once playing the piano solo, while also accompanying the young students who sang the Armenian and American anthems.

Master of ceremonies for the program was Sevag Khatchadourian.

Michael Demirchian offered closing remarks, thanking all the young committee members and urging the community to remember their canonized martyrs and to celebrate their heritage.

“Being at the Armenian Heritage Park makes me feel inexplicable gratitude that we are a nation that survives,” he said. He urged more united programs for the community.

Arts & Living

AMAA's Child and Orphan Care Luncheon And Fashion Show Raises Funds for Children in Armenia, Karabakh

LOS ANGELES — The Crystal Ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel was the beautiful setting of the Armenia Missionary Association of America's (AMAA) Child and Orphan Care Luncheon and Children's Fashion Show on March 23. The theme of "Wish Upon A Star..." signified the important work that is being done by the AMAA to help dreams come true in Armenia and Karabagh. The Luncheon Co-Chairs, Diane Cabraloff, Gina Felikian and Sandra Kalemkarian worked tirelessly to make every aspect of the Luncheon enjoyable for over 450 guests and supporters who attended. They warmly welcomed the guests and introduced the dynamic emcee for the day, Jacqueline Sarkissian, who is the morning news reporter for "Good Day Austin" on Fox 7. Before lunch, Sara Kalemkarian Cipolla delivered an inspiring devotional and prayer about gratitude.

The Ballroom was decorated by flowers donated by Zareh David Ghoukasian of David Z Design, who continues to support the event every year. This year's Silent Auction featured more than 100 items. Nicole Nishanian and Leslie Shahinian, Silent Auction co-chairs, procured many items, including several designer bags, beautiful jewelry, and much more. There were many opportunities to help the children by sponsoring a child, providing meals at the day care centers, or by purchasing a Bible for them to read. This effort was coordinated by Maro Najarian Yacoubian and Tina Segel who organized the Child Sponsorship table and encouraged everyone to make a difference in the life of a child in Armenia. Many children were sponsored at the luncheon.

Joyce Stein, national co-chair of the Orphan and Child Care Committee, and her daughter Tina Segel introduced a video which showed the continuing need in Armenia and how AMAA's important ministry has helped dreams



AMAA Child and Orphan Care National Committee Co-Chair Joyce Stein with her husband Joseph Stein

come true for thousands of Armenian children and their families.

This year, the committee was thrilled that the talented Armenian designers of Closh traveled from Istanbul, Turkey to provide the fashions for our first runway show. The Closh designers, Serli Keçoglu and Selvin Parunakyan Özgül, have deep connections with the Armenian Church and surrounding community in Turkey and have always been dedicated to the Armenian cause. They hand made all of the dresses for the show and donated their time, energy and talent to create a memorable experience for all.

see AMAA, page 14



Diana Agabeg Apcar in a long gown, about 1915

Story of Two Women Through Art and History At Armenian Museum

WATERTOWN — The Armenian Museum of America unveiled a new exhibit on April 24 called "In the Shadow of Branches."

The exhibit, in the Adele and Haig Der Manuelian galleries, presents the work of two women, a diplomat and an artist. The diplomat, Diana Agabeg Apcar (1859-1937) helped save the life of the artist, Berjouhi Kailian (1914-2014), when the latter was a child refugee from the Armenian Genocide. The aftereffects of genocide continued to reverberate in Kailian's life and art for decades. The motto for the Armenian Museum exhibit is that "individuals who take a stand can impact history exponentially."

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

Jennifer Liston Munson, executive director of the museum, provided a press briefing during the morning, while the exhibit opened that evening to the public. Michele Kolligian, president of the museum's board, welcomed guests at the formal event and Munson spoke about the preparatory work for the exhibit. Questions were then taken from the audience.

Visitors to the newly refurbished and bright third floor galleries of the museum first encounter a display on Apcar, including juxtaposed timelines of events in her life, Kailian's life, and major international turning points. A projection on a pedestal of the trailer of "The Stateless Diplomat: Diana Apcar's Heroic Life," a film being prepared by Apcar's great-granddaughter Mimi Malayan, makes scenes from Apcar's life come alive (see it at <https://dianaapcar.org/>).

Apcar, born in Rangoon, Burma, grew up in Calcutta, India and moved to Yokohama, Japan in 1891 with her husband, who died unexpectedly in 1906, leaving her to run the family trading and shipping business. The museum exhibit showcases a number of her personal effects on loan from the Armenian Cultural Foundation (ACF) in Arlington, Mass., including her watch, fountain pen, cup, card box, letter box, makeup box, and bud vases, as well as a kimono and dress. Her modest Edwardian-style dress and a kimono strikingly point to two of the cultures Apcar managed to bridge.

Several of her official documents on loan from ACF are framed. They include the July 22, 1920 letter from Foreign Minister Hamazasp Ohanian appointing Apcar honorary consul, her diplomatic credentials, diplomatic passport, her draft letter to a Japanese governor, and a copy of her baptismal certificate. There are also some photographs of Apcar and her family loaned by Project Save Armenian Photograph Archives for this exhibit.

see WOMEN, page 13

Novelist Janigian And Poet/Editor Barba Presented by Tekeyan and AGBU

WATERTOWN — The Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter and the Armenian General Benevolent Union New England District present a literary evening on May 15 with California novelist Aris Janigian and Susan Barba, poet and editor, as discussant.

For his first novel, *Bloodvine*, Aris Janigian was hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as a "strong and welcome new voice," and in four subsequent novels he has plumbed the American experience, from the struggle of 1920s Armenian immigrants to the fields of California to the neuroses and decadence of contemporary culture. His 2012 novel, *This Angelic Land*, set during the 1992 Los Angeles Riots — and which featured a Lebanese Armenian protagonist — was called "today's necessary book" by critic D. J. Waldie. Janigian's *Waiting for Lipchitz at Chateau Marmont*, about a screenwriter who goes from riches to rags, spent 17 weeks on the *Los Angeles Times* bestseller list.

Janigian holds a PhD in psychology from Claremont Graduate University and was formerly Senior Professor of Humanities at the Southern California Institute of Architecture and a contributing writer to West, the *Los Angeles Times Sunday* magazine. He was a finalist for Stanford University's William Saroyan Fiction Prize and the recipient of the Anahid Literary Award from Columbia University. In addition to his five novels, Janigian is co-author, with April Greiman, of *Something from Nothing*. He lives in Fresno, the city of his birth.

Susan Barba is the author of *Fair Sun*, which was awarded the Anahit Literary Prize and the Minas and Kohar Tölöyan Prize. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The Yale*



Aris Janigian, Susan Barba

Review, the *New York Review of Books*, *Raritan* and elsewhere, and she has received fellowships from the MacDowell Colony and Yaddo. She has a doctorate in comparative literature from Harvard University, specializing in Armenian, Russian, and English poetry, and she works as a senior editor for *New York Review Books*. Her new book, *geode*, is forthcoming in 2020.

The discussion with Janigian promises to touch upon the Armenian Diaspora; Armenian-American identity; the form(s) of the novel; the relationship between memory, art, and trauma; nostalgia and post-memory. "What I am struck by as I read Janigian's work," Barba says, "is how he gives shape and vitality to these terms, probing and troubling them, and thereby renewing them."

The event will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the AGBU Building at 247 Mount Auburn St. in Watertown. Admission is free, with a reception to follow the formal portion of the evening. Books will be on sale. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com or call 617 924-4455.

Story of Two Women through Art and History at Armenian Museum

WOMEN, from page 12

Apcar became a voice for the oppressed Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and began to write in various journals. By 1920, she had published nine books, many of which dealt with the Armenian question politically, including *On the Cross of Europe's Imperialism: Armenia Crucified* (1918), and thanks largely to her efforts, Japan recognized the independence of the first Republic of Armenia in 1920. In turn, the new republic appointed her as its honorary consul in Japan. She thus became the first female Armenian diplomat (during the same year that the US finally gave women the right to vote), though she lost this post in a few years with the Sovietization of Armenia.

Prior to receiving this distinction, Apar helped Armenian refugees make their way to safety, including many who came via Siberia to

to take a ship, the “Mexico Maru,” to Seattle, Washington.

Ultimately, the Kailians traveled to Weymouth, Mass., to join Berj's mother's two brothers. Berjouhi graduated from Weymouth High School and then the Vesper George School of Art in Boston in 1936. After marrying, she lived in Paris with her husband Vahan Kailian and attended the Julien School of Fine Arts. When she returned to the US, she ran an art gallery in Hingham, Mass. and after selling her store, went back to school again at the age of 65 to study art at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and then Tufts University, where she obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1984. She kept on creating art throughout her life.

Munson pointed out that Apcar and Kailian's lives only briefly intersected in 1919 and they never saw one another again. Kailian's descen-

dants were not even aware of Aparcar and her key role in helping their ancestors. However, Kailian's paintings and prints, many of which were donated to the Armenian Museum by Kailian and her family, often deal with the events of her early life. Munson suggests that the earth tones Kailian uses might have some connection with her father's fate. He was forced to dig his own grave and was buried alive.

A painting with many arches may reflect Kailian's experience as a child of getting lost and again in St. Sarkis Church in which he only visited Armenia again, three times.

Munson paired quotes from Kailian's interviews with her art works to try to give viewers greater insight into Kailian's world view. In some way, Kailian at one point had implied, her approach of gouging and scratching might be a way for her to get out the pain of her childhood.

Most of her works displayed are mixed media on Masonite, and have complex colors, either very bright or earth tones. Munson finds they

Chronology of the exhibit, with Executive Director Jennifer Munson of the Armenian Museum of America, and Diana Apcar's kimono in the foreground

are similar to other works of Abstract Expressionism of the 1970s. However, many symbols and shapes are connected to meanings for Kailian.

Her son once said that the starbursts in his mother's work were associated with the genesis of the creation, like thunderbolts of divine spiritual light. An artist friend of Kailian, on the other hand, said that the starburst was a symbol of never forgetting tragedy.

Kailian, Munson said, does not want to overly describe her work, her history and her past. She wants you to look for yourself. Munson said, "The idea of art work and the creative impulse which works against the destructive impulse is central for her work...the idea that she needs to make these things in order to make sense of her own story, her sense of history, and to deal with the darkness that she has."

Kailian was an artist-in-residence at the museum in the 1980s and also volunteered there. Jackie Abramian interviewed Kailian in her book, *Conversations with Contemporary Armenian Artists* (Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1990). She also has been interviewed by her on video as part of the Artists at War multimedia project (see <http://www.artistsatwar.net/berj-kailian.html>)

After her experience as a refugee, Kailian went on to have a family and make many art works, and lived to 100, and yet, Munson said, was only one of the fruits of Apar's work. Her great-granddaughter Malayan documented over 600 people that Apar helped get passage to the United States.

The title of the Armenian Museum's show, "In the Shadow of Branches," refers to a quote from a letter Apcar wrote to US President William H. Taft in 1910, prior to the Armenian Genocide, comparing the United States of America with the sheltering branches of a tree

which she hopes will protect the Armenians. Aparcar herself, Munson said, extended those branches over many Armenian refugees. The show makes clearer the implications of that shelter for at least one family, the Kailians.

The family was in evidence not only through Berjouhi's art works; the artist's cousin came to the opening night event and the Kailian family sponsored the reception afterwards.

Japan in order to emigrate to the United States. She vouched personally for them and helped them obtain travel papers. This is where the connection with Berjouhi Kailian begins, for Kailian, born with the last name Siroonian in Kghi in the Ottoman Empire, fled the genocide as a child on her mother Alem's back to Yerevan. Her siblings were lost on the way, but her mother then took her via the Trans-Siberian railroad to a refugee camp in Vladivostok, Russia. Apar helped bring the two to Yokohama and then arranged for them

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Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro Los Angeles Chapter

Presents

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Berj Kailian in her studio

Untitled, Mixed media on Masonite, by Berj Kailian, c. 1970, 13 ¼ x 12

BERJ KAILIAN

"It is said that an artist's work will reflect that which is put into it, and that, passing from the heart will, in any way or another, reach those who take the time to look and read and understand. There is a great place within all of us, my friend, and that is what I have tried to reach."

— Berj Kailian, 2001

Berjap Kailian was born on October 25, 1914 in Kaghig, Armenia. Berj and his brother escaped the Armenian Genocide, surviving through the arduous border crossings and deportations that took them from Kaghig to Fresno (present-day capitalist city of America). On the way, Berj's brother and sister were lost—the parents only because the way led to their mother's lack. In Fresno, the young Berj captured in her mind's eye the distinct images of the ancient Armenian church windows, which later surfaced as repeated themes in many of her paintings.

Berj's undeniable relationship to earth, soil, and rocks is evident in almost all her paintings. It was a soil before her came on, she confidently stated. Her reflections later on her travels: "her creative search and movement was the purest of art, on the edges of it, as the dust of a group moving the closer close to her last days—her last gasp."

This selection of Berj's work stems from the generous donation by her sons, Vaghar and Gregory, in 2018. We are grateful to them and their father and friend, Jackie Abrahamian, for helping to bring this work to IAP. The first show is followed from subsequent writings for her project, *Artists at War*, in 2021.

Some of Berjouhi Kailian's works on display



ARTS & LIVING

AMAA's Child and Orphan Care Fashion Show Raises Funds for Children in Armenia, Karabakh

AMAA, from page 12

As in previous years, there was a wonderful Children's Fashion Show which was introduced and coordinated by Aleen Oruncakci. The Fashion Show was sponsored and produced by Bloomingdale's Sherman Oaks. The Bloomingdale's Sherman Oaks team, along with the Committee, worked together to make the Fashion Show a complete success.

Sandra Kalemkarian, who coordinates finances and reservations, works tirelessly every year to efficiently close out the Auction. "We are grateful for the very generous donations we receive each year," said Sandra, "and especially for all the children who were sponsored."

The guests left the event with a bag full of goodies, including amazing nail care products donated by Jessica Vartoughian of Jessica Cosmetics, dried fruit from LindaKay Abdulian, cookies from Leslie Kevorkian, devotional



LA AMAA Child and Orphan Care event Co-chairs Sandra Kalemkarian, Diane Cabraloff and Gina Felikian

books from Sandra Kalemkarian and book-marks from Arpi Krikorian. The children each received a gift bag donated by Ani Zakari. The



The beautiful Closh models

beautiful bags for the goodies are donated each year by Arsine Seraydarian.

In closing, Lori Muncherian and Arsine Phillips, West Coast Child and Orphan Care

Committee Co-Chairs, thanked the Chairs, the entire Committee and all the donors for their continued support of this event for the children in Armenia and explained that "We are working

BOOK REVIEW

Turkey's Killing Fields

By Bruce Clark

Using the word "genocide" to describe an episode of mass killing has consequences. If the horrors are unfolding now, it invites other countries to intervene and punish the perpetrators. If the unspeakable events are in the past, the word's use can affect the way they are discussed, by historians or ordinary people. Once the term "genocide" has been established, it can seem tasteless or morally impossible to talk in much detail about the context in which mass murder occurred. Any speculation about precise motives or catalysts can sound like making excuses.

But one merit of *The Thirty-Year Genocide*, about the agonies suffered by Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire immediately before and after its collapse, is that the authors overcome that problem. Their narrative offers a subtle diagnosis of why, at particular moments over a span of three decades, Ottoman rulers and their successors unleashed torrents of suffering.

The book examines three episodes: first, the massacre of perhaps 200,000 Ottoman Armenians that took place between 1894 and 1896; then the much larger deportation and slaughter of Armenians that began in 1915 and has been widely recognized as genocide; and third, the destruction or deportation of the remaining Christians (mostly Greeks) during and after the conflict of 1919-22, which Turks call their War of Independence. The fate of Assyrian Christians, of whom 250,000 or more may have perished, is also examined, in less detail.

The authors are distinguished Israeli historians. Benny Morris, a chronicler of the fighting that attended Israel's birth, has written bluntly about incidents in which Arabs were killed or expelled. He also argues (contentiously) that it would have been better if the result had been total separation between Jew and Arab. His co-author, Dror Ze'evi, is a fellow professor at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Each of their chosen episodes occurred at a particular historical moment. The first unfolded in an Ottoman Empire that was at once modernizing and crumbling, while in chronic rivalry with the Russians. The second took place when the Turks were at war with three Christian powers (Britain, France and Russia) and were concerned about being overrun from west and east. During the third, Greek expeditionary forces had occupied the port of Izmir, with approval from their Western allies, and then marched inland.

An impressive chapter explains the buildup to the 1894-96 massacres. It describes the strain

imposed on rural Anatolia by newcomers fleeing Russia's march through the Caucasus, and the transformation of the Armenians from a religious minority into a political community feared by the Ottomans.

This story is told with a feeling for shading and nuance. Yet there is a paradox about the book. As diligent historians, Morris and Ze'evi acknowledge many differences between the three phases of history they recount. (For example, different regimes were involved: in the first case, the old guard of the empire; in the second, a shadowy clique of autocrats; in the third, a secular republic.)

But their self-imposed mission is to emphasize continuity. As they argue, the Armenian death marches of 1915-16 are by now well documented, and their status as a genocidal crime, with one million or more victims, well established. By contrast, they feel, things that hap-

pened at the beginning and end of their chosen 30 years need to be better known, so that all the travails of the Ottoman Christians over that time can be seen as a single sequence.

Between 1894 and 1924, they write, between 1.5 million and 2.5 million Ottoman Christians

perished; greater accuracy is impossible. Whatever the shifts in regime, all these killings were instigated by Muslim Turks who drew in other Muslims and invoked Islamic solidarity. As a result the Christian share of Anatolia's population fell from 20 percent to 2 percent.

Well, all those statements are accurate as far as they go, and they reflect one aspect of the multiple tragedies that attended the region's lurch toward modernity. Yet it remains difficult to express the authors' core case in a single true-or-false proposition. Are they suggesting that Islam is intrinsically violent? No, they reject that view. Are they implying that a 30-year plan was formulated and then implemented, albeit by different regimes? At times, they hint at something like that. But their skill as historians holds them back from saying anything so crude.

In one of their best passages, Morris and Ze'evi carefully discuss possible interpretations of the 1915-16 blood bath, and offer comparisons with debates about Hitler's Holocaust. As they note, historians have disputed how far in advance the mass annihilation of Jews was dreamed up. Regarding the Armenians, they say, there is no doubt that the death marches that began in April 1915 were centrally coordinated. But there have been reasonable arguments over how long in advance they were planned, and whether it was always intended that most victims would die.

Sifting the evidence, Morris and Ze'evi conclude that the Ottoman inner circle began planning deadly mass deportations soon after a Russian victory in January 1915. However, Ottoman policy was also shaped and hardened by the battle of Van, in which Russians and Armenians fought successfully, starting in April 1915. These conclusions rest on careful analysis.

But they are less confident about the fate of the Greek Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman

see REVIEW, page 16

The Thirty-Year Genocide: Turkey's Destruction of Its Christian Minorities, 1894-1924

By Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi

Illustrated. 656 pp.

Harvard University Press. \$35.



Members of the organizing committee



**TEKEYAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION
DETROIT CHAPTER**

Book Presentation

A bi-lingual program



My Times and My Contemporaries
Literary memoirs and philological studies

by Edmond Azadian

Saturday, May 4, 2019 at 7 pm

AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School Library
22001 Northwestern Hwy.
Southfield MI 48075

Program

English Speaker

Professor Kevork Bardakjian

Alex & Marie Manoogian Armenian Chair,
Armenian Language & Literature
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Musical Interlude

Ms. Narine Ghambaryan

Master Kanon player & instructor

Armenian Speaker

Monsignor Andon Atamian

Vicar General of the Armenian Catholic Eparchy in the U.S.

Reception to follow

Public is invited



C A L E N D A R

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

MAY 5 — Mathew Karanian, “The Armenian Highland: Western Armenia and the First Armenian Republic of 1918,” 4 p.m.at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, 15105 Mission Hills Road, Mission Hills, CA. Co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Kharpert Cultural Association, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

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

MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 4 — Guests and Members, join us at the First Armenian Church Nahigian Hall, 380 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA, for NAASR’s 65th Annual Assembly of Members , Luncheon, and Program, on Saturday, 12-3:30 pm. Registration and Check-in at 11:30 am. Featured Presentation on NAASR’s new global headquarters by the architectural, engineering & design team of Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates – Ara Krafian, CEO. Luncheon: \$18 per person. Please register by April 26, 2019. To register, visit <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/ weblink.aspx?name=E332049&id=22>

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

May 5 — NOTE VENUE CHANGE:Back by popular demand! One of Armenia’s most popular stars, ANDRE, will appear in a concert with Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston. Don’t miss out on this energetic evening of song and dance. Reserve your seats now! To be held at Armenian Cultural and Educational Center (ACEC), 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown, MA. Light refreshments to be provided.Doors open at 4:30, concert begins at 5 pm. Donation: \$45, \$60 and \$80. For tickets please call Vrej - 339-222-3429, Meghri - 617-932-9237 or email SNDC.ANDRE@GMAIL.COM ! Tickets are also available online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/andre-in-boston-with-sayat-nova-dance-company-tickets-59460537067>.

MAY 6 — St. James Men’s Club Dinner Meeting - social hour and mezza at 6:15 PM and dinner at 7:00 PM, St

James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA. The speaker will be Dick Flavin, poet laureate of the Boston Red Sox. He is the senior ambassador of the Boston Red Sox and voice of Fenway Park, serving as public address announcer for Red Sox day games. His television commentaries won seven New England Emmy Awards. He is a nationally known speaker and is a member of the Massachusetts Broadcasters Hall of Fame. 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.

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

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

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

MAY 11 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church Presents “Battle of the Bands,” 7 p.m., doors open; 7:45 p.m., music and dancing, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. All are welcome to join us for a night filled with vibrant music, great food and dancing. Featuring the musical styles of Classic Groove (R & B, Soul, Motown, Jazz), Hye-Kef-G Band (Armenian) and Black Sea Salsa (Salsa, Latin American). Saturday. Donation: \$40 per person, includes dinner buffet from each genre of music. Cash bar available all night. Tickets can be purchased at the door or by calling the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, by May 3. Tables of 8 can be reserved with payment in advance. For further information, log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/694/.

MAY 13 — Trinity Men’s Union 10th Annual Tavloo Tournament and Dinner, Monday, 6:15 p.m., Social Hour and Dinner, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Open to all. Donation for Losh Kebab and Kheyma dinner is \$15 per person. RSVP requested by May 10 to the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email tmuhtaac@gmail.com. Tavloo Tournament to follow dinner; entry fee, \$5. All levels welcome. To sign up, please contact David Dorian atmuhtaac@gmail.com or call 617.501.4300. For further information, log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/692/

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

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.

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 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 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 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 much more. Weekly sessions at \$250/week, begin June 17 - August 16, 8 am - 3 pm. Late stay available upon request. Please register at www.abakadanceacademy.com. For more information or questions, 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 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, continued on next page

Turkey’s Killing Fields

REVIEW, from page 14

Empire from 1919 to 1922. They document many horrifying incidents but these do not add up to a fluent story.

Morris and Ze’evi vigorously challenge the Turkish argument that after World War I Greek separatism in the Black Sea region posed a danger to the emerging Turkish state requiring deportation. The authors maintain that agitation for a state on the Black Sea was never serious, and that Greeks in that region never offered much resistance to the Turkish regime. Neither of those statements is completely accurate. Greek Orthodox guerrillas held out in the Black Sea hinterland with tenacity.

What is more, by challenging the Turkish justification for the Black Sea deportations, Morris and Ze’evi almost imply that if there had been a military threat in that region, the marches and deportations might have been morally right. This leads to a wider point about the book as a whole.

The reader is left wondering what the authors ultimately feel about the treatment of civilians in situations of total war. Nothing in the United Nations conventions implies that military expediency can justify the removal, whether by ethnic cleansing, killing or both, of populations whose presence is inconvenient. But by weighing up arguments for and against certain acts of expulsion, Morris and Ze’evi seem at times to be taking a less purist view.



There is no doubt that during the Ottoman collapse, millions of Christians died or suffered because humanitarian principles were grossly violated. But they were not the only victims. Consider the wars that drove most Muslims out of the Balkans, starting in the early 19th century and arguably culminating in the genocidal acts suffered by some Bosnian Muslims in 1995. Hundreds of thousands of Islam’s followers were killed and millions displaced, often finding refuge in Turkey. If the era that gave birth to homogeneous post-Ottoman states is to be told as a single narrative, it must surely look on both sides of the mirror.

(Bruce Clark writes on religion and society for *The Economist*. He is the author of *Twice a Stranger*, a study of the Turkish-Greek population exchange. This review originally appeared in the *New York Times* on April 23.)

Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Celery, Avocado and Cucumber Salad



INGREDIENTS

6 cups sliced celery, tender leaves included, sliced on an angle
2 large avocado, cut into pieces or sliced
2 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded, diced
2 cups fresh tomatoes, diced or 2 cups cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 cup canned garbanzo beans, washed, drained
1/2 medium red onion, sliced thinly
6-8 radishes, chopped or sliced thinly
1/2 cup each chopped flat-leaf parsley and mint
1/4 cup marinated black olives
Olive oil and fresh lemon juice (or red or balsamic wine vinegar to taste)
2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and black pepper
1 teaspoon sumac (or lemon zest)
Olive oil
Crumbled feta cheese, ricotta cheese or queso fresco
Toasted pine nuts, pecans or walnuts as garnish

PREPARATION

Combine the celery, avocado and cucumbers with the remaining vegetables and toss. Add the olives, olive oil and lemon juice, and toss.

Season with salt, pepper and sumac, and toss again. Check seasonings, cover, and marinate for one hour in the refrigerator.

When ready to serve, transfer salad to a serving plate with a slotted spoon (leaving behind any excess liquid), then garnish with cheese and more pepper, if desired. Top with toasted nuts.

Drizzle with a little olive oil, and serve with fresh lemon or lime wedges.

Note: Choice of orange or grapefruit segments, diced apple, dates, pomegranate seeds, dried cranberries, golden raisins, pears, marinated artichoke hearts or mushrooms, or fresh grapes may be added to this salad. Toss with a citrus poppy seed dressing or other dressing instead of oil and lemon juice, if desired. Serves 6.

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

CALENDAR

from previous page

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 Vosebikians are coming to the Merrimack Valley. The Armenian Friends of America proudly present their Annual HYE KEF 5 Dance, featuring The Vosebikians. The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Andover, MA. Tickets Purchased before 9/13/19 will include the Great Venue, Outstanding Buffet, The Vosebikian 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, Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting, NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, at NAASR’s new world headquarters, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA. Saturday, 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

MAY 5 — Tekeyan Cultural Association Detroit Chapter presents My Times and My Contemporaries: Literary Memoirs and Philological Studies by Edmond Azadian. Saturday, 7 p.m. AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School Library, 22001 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield. Program will feature Prof. Kevork Bardakjian speaking about the book in English, and Monsignor Andon Atamian will discuss the book in Armenian. Musical performance by kanon master Narine Ghambaryan. Reception to follow. Free and open to the public.

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 orlynnbeylerian@gmail.com. More info at www.stnersess.edu.

OCTOBER 25 — Honoring Dr. Taner Akçam. Abajian Hall St. Leon Armenian Complex, Fair Lawn.

Sponsored by Knights and Daughters of Vartan, Under the Auspices of Primate Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan.

PENNSYLVANIA

MAY 4 — Save The Meher Statue Dance/Fundraiser - Saturday, 8 p.m. Sponsored by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Knights & Daughters of Vartan. Santerian Hall - 101 Ashmead Rd, Cheltenham. Live entertainment with Anto Vartanian and the Artsakh Band, Full Mezza, Dessert Table, Cash Bar; For tickets, visit phillykov.com or call 610-389-4633

RHODE ISLAND

MAY 5 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church will present the first in a series of talks, “Meet with Armenian Doctors,” on Sunday, at 1 pm., in Hanoian Hall of the church complex. (70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI). Dr. Sevak Stepanian, anesthesiologist 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.



COMMENTARY

Mirror
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In Defense of Illegal Immigrants
And Public Servants

By Robert H. Tembeckjian

(Editor's note: The following are the remarks that the author delivered at the Armenian Bar Association Dinner Honoring Public Servants, April 25, 2019, at the Yale Club in New York City, at an event he was being honored, as was Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. He is a frequent critic of President Trump and continuous defender of public servants.)

Your Eminences, members of the Armenian Bar Association, my fellow honoree Rod Rosenstein, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure for me to be at an Armenian event, where the names are pronounced as easily as they are spelled, and where "Rosenstein" is harder for people to get right than "Tembeckjian."

Thank you, Judge Acosta, my esteemed colleague and friend, for your kind introduction. Listening to you, I realize just how old I am. I guess this ceremony demonstrates that if you hang around long enough, you will eventually be recognized for something more than a passing resemblance to Mr. Bean.

I am somewhat bemused, given my line of work, that so many judges are here tonight. Perhaps they think this is a valedictory and they came to celebrate my departure. Sorry. This is not my retirement dinner.

On the other hand, Rod Rosenstein has been leaving his job for months. I can tell by the absence of Secret Service that the one person most anxious to see him leave for the past two years is not here. Perhaps he was intimidated by today's date. It is, after all, the 25th, and the last person he'd want to hear on the 25th is Rod Rosenstein.

Rod and I have different relationships to the Armenian-American community. He chose to join it, having the good sense to marry Lisa Barsomian. I had no choice in the matter. Marrying into such a tight-knit community can be challenging. Just ask Kanye West. But growing up Armenian has its own confusions and burdens, from trying to understand why people jokingly called us "starving Armenians" when every meal at our house looked like Norman Rockwell's Thanksgiving, to the unrelenting sense of responsibility not just to make the family proud but to perpetuate a five-thousand-year-old civilization that was nearly obliterated by Genocide in 1915.

It seems fitting to make a few observations on the twin themes of tonight's program, which happen to reflect two arcs of my own life: public service and Armenian ancestry.

Let me express special appreciation to the Armenian Bar Association for this meaningful personal recognition and, more significantly, for recognizing the value of public service in a political age poisoned by cynicism, narcissism and greed.

These are not easy days to be in public service. Our national leadership has strayed so far from the idealism embodied in the call of our 35th President to ask what we could do for our country. It has now become a daily routine of the 45th President to denigrate the devoted men and women of our civic institutions: a respected court is derided as "disgraceful" for disagreeing with him, an honorable public servant is disparaged for directing a "witch hunt," a dignified United States Senator is ridiculed for having become a prisoner of war, ancient cultures are denigrated in malicious stereotype, and an entire gender is devalued and abused. The contempt is all the more frightening for being so casual, and enabled by those in a position to stand up to it but who instead prove Edmund Burke's point: "All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to remain silent."

And yet, despite this dark and pessimistic state of affairs, I remain optimistic about our country and its resilience, for two reasons.

First, I am fortunate every day to see the best of what state government can achieve. I am surrounded by dedicated, principled professionals who do the hard, unheralded work of justice, day in and day out. It is not and should not be easy to discipline or remove any officer of constitutional government. But if the rule of law means anything, we must not shy away from holding a powerful official accountable, when circumstances demand it. This is what my colleagues at the Commission on Judicial Conduct do, and I am honored to be associated with them.

Second, I am Armenian. Let me explain.

All of us here are the descendants of immigrants, many of whom were grimly acquainted with persecution. But there is something in my family history that is profoundly pertinent to deeply disturbing events in our troubled country today.

I am the grandson of illegal immigrants to the United States.

Imagine the irony. Here at the Yale Club, whose very name signifies privilege, the grandson of swarthy, non-English-speaking, impoverished undocumented aliens, is addressing an audience filled with law enforcement officials, at the very moment a continuing immigration tragedy is playing out on our southern border.

Now, before any ICE agents get excited: I was born in Brooklyn. And as Ruth Bader Ginsburg would attest, despite our strange sounding native accents, Brooklyn is still part of the United States, and the 14th Amendment's guarantee of birthright citizenship has not yet been repealed.

Still, I am and always will be the grandson of illegal immigrants. All of my grandparents were born in Turkey in the 19th Century and miraculously survived the Genocide that claimed a million and a half Armenians in 1915. My mother and her brother were born to displaced persons. The couple that later adopted them, when their par-

ents died, had also met as refugees. My father was five years old in 1915 and had vivid memories of the Genocide all his life. His parents were stateless for years and tried without success to migrate legally to the United States. But immigration quotas were small, and you might say the country was full. So, exiled from their homeland, they got to Canada on forged papers, took a ferry from Windsor to Detroit in 1926 and never looked back. Within a year, my grandfather was dead, and my widowed grandmother and two of her children were arrested and detained at Ellis Island for deportation hearings.

But 90 years ago, my grandmother was not separated from her children. She was not forced back across the border, or held incommunicado. She and her children were promptly released on bond, pending trial. Although she and the boys were ordered deported, she argued that returning to Turkey was a death sentence. For its part, the Turkish government would not take them because it did not acknowledge that Armenians had a right to return. So, her expulsion from the US was postponed for six months, then another six, again and again. She returned to her linen factory job and cared for her family.

In other words, my illegal immigrant grandmother was reprieved by a government that understood it could both uphold the law and postpone its consequences for humanitarian reasons; a government that took time to examine and differentiate among the many who sought its refuge, that did not invoke scripture to promote exclusion at the expense of decency or justice.

That is the country to which my grandmother was faithfully devoted for 60 more years - working hard, paying taxes, raising children and eventually becoming a citizen in 1955. It is the nation her three sons grew up and joined the army to defend in World War II, each returning home to build a successful small business - two dry cleaners, one a photo engraver. It is the country in which her grandchildren serve today - my sister Renée as an Episcopal priest, I as New York's chief judicial ethics enforcement officer.

What incalculable multigenerational gifts America gets when it acts justly and humanely toward people who seem to have nothing but dust in their mouths and dreams in their hearts. How sadly different from the message anyone watching our country would get today.

Separating desperate families, demanding that people be thrown back across the border without due process and threatening to move refugees like pawns to sanctuary cities as political punishment, devalue our national character. They mock a defining promise of our nation as illuminated by the Statute of Liberty. They undermine the rule of law imbued by our Constitution. And they deprive us of people like my grandparents, and very likely many of yours, who infuse our country with renewed purpose and vigor, who remind us by their misfortune not to bask in our own material comforts. Not everyone seeking entry is angelic and should stay, but demonizing everyone only makes us the devil in this story.

We are so much better than this. America is full, but not in the way the president means. It is as full as this room is full of honorable people who believe in and promote our nation's founding principles by their daily actions, who believe as I do that we are still the admirable country my grandparents struggled to reach. I even believe the United States will someday do right by their memory and actually call the Armenian Genocide they survived by its name; that our government will finally appreciate that words matter; that presidential proclamations euphemistically referring to the "terrible events" and "past tragedy" of 1915 are no more descriptive of Genocide than "starving Armenians" was funny or about food.

Yure vor k'ayel etsink (Wherever we have walked)

Yev vor degh hasank (Whatever we have achieved)

Partavor enk, mer hajoghut'unneri, mer nahatakneri yev mer ver-apratsnerin

(We owe our good fortune to our martyrs and our survivors)

Mer dznognereh yev mer tatignereh yev paper-eh

(Our parents and grandparents)

My grandparents were much too modest to appreciate how heroic they were. Their names may not be on buildings, no marble statues or bronze plaques commemorate their courage. But they made it possible for me to succeed and appreciate just how lucky I am to be an American and how important it is to contribute to my country. And they do have monuments. Let me introduce some of them.

My daughter Sarah, a music supervisor; My cousin Anahit, a trade show organizer; My nephew James, a lawyer; my sister Renee, an Episcopal priest; the people my sister and I were so lucky to marry, my brother-in-law Thomas, a psychologist, and my wife Barbara, a journalist; my cousin Claire, an Assistant US Attorney; my Aunt Araksi, a retired dress shop owner; and my Uncle Onnik Dinkjian, who last year was honored by the Library of Congress and the Kennedy Center for a lifetime of preserving and spreading Armenian folk music all over the world.

If my grandparents could not have imagined an evening such as this, they surely could not have imagined their own names would be uttered in such a citadel of privilege and acceptance as the Yale Club. Allow me to resurrect their memory. Garabed and Zora Milliyan. Nishan and Oghida Dinkjian. Hagop and Rose Tembeckjian. And my parents, Edward and Arpine Tembeckjian, whose love endures in the good hearts of my daughter Sarah and my nephews James and William. I love all of them, and I thank all of you.

(Robert H. Tembeckjian is Administrator and Counsel to the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct.)



COMMENTARY

Turkey Is Back to Hard Denial

Is It a Deadlock or an Opportunity?



By Philippe Raffi Kalfayan

Facing official commemorations of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2019 and new resolutions or political declarations of third-party countries (France, Italy, Portugal), Turkey adopted an aggressive

tone and a denial with tones that were thought to have disappeared. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has outdone all his predecessors in denial and lies. He is known for his unparalleled boldness, especially when he argues with an extraordinary aplomb that the existence of an Armenian diaspora is proof that there has been no genocide. The Armenian Diaspora, of course, exists because of the policy of extermination and forced deportation perpetrated by Ottoman Empire. The successor state, Turkey, does not ignore it. Hence, this declaration may be interpreted as the expression of regret that the Young Turks did not execute their sinister plan “properly.”

The street commemoration that was to take place in Istanbul, as in previous years, was banned this year by the police. One of the leaders of the Nor Zartonk movement has even been arrested. Now the attitude is back to a harsh denialist discourse and measures aimed at nipping in the bud any hint of public support for the memory of the victims of the genocide or the evocation of the latter. The activists who braved the ban on the commemoration avoided saying the “G” word publicly. The forced alliance with the MHP, the ultranationalist and racist party with which Erdogan formed a coalition government, and the general situation of rights and freedoms in Turkey, could have only led to such a result.

The purpose of this article is to present and analyse the content of the official speeches or media reactions, and to draw conclusions not from the point of view of morality, where Armenians do not have rightly anything to hope for in the current state of Turkey, but on the politico-legal plane where everything is possible and everything remains to be done. It is indeed suggested that the situation thus created should not lead the Armenian government to remain lax, as it has announced, but on the contrary it offers new opportunities to act. The Armenian state must not be content with denouncing “hate speech,” as the Armenian Prime Minister did. The denial and lies discredit the whole of the Turkish Republic in regard of the reality of the genocide of Armenians and the facts of general knowledge that constitute it, regardless of their legal qualification.

The Good Armenians

The official declarations and articles speak for themselves. President Erdogan castigates third-party states for recognizing or commemorating genocide. He argues that the archives are open, invites researchers from around the world to come and work there, and calls on Armenia to create a joint commission of historians in the presence of international experts to study the events of the past. The Turkish human losses during this period would have equalled the Armenian human losses. Hence this April 24 should commemorate all the sufferings of the past; a wording echoed by President Trump in his April 24 statement: “We welcome the efforts of Armenians and Turks to acknowledge and reckon with their painful history.”

In a letter addressed to the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, with a significantly different tone, Erdogan mentions “the massive humanitarian crises” that occurred during the last period of the Ottoman Empire.” He implores the mercy of God for those who are “dead as a result of epidemics and migrations.” He recalls the great contribution of the Armenians to the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic and its continuity today. He calls for healing the “wounds of the past” and to look to the future by strengthening ties. Cynicism reaches its climax when he claims “we will continue to defend you,” because it specifies immediately after that the Armenians of Turkey must choose between the good Armenians, those who accept this vision, and the bad, those who “seek to create hatred, resentment and hostility by distorting our common history.” The threat is barely veiled: your protection is conditioned by the rejection of these bad Armenians.

Western Archives

The statements of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in response to the French, Italian and US statements, referred to the “Armenian fiction,” the suffering of the 500,000 slaughtered Muslims (adding a religious dimension that Turkey had carefully eluded so far) and the proposal of a joint historical commission to shed light on all the events that took place 104 years ago. Foreign Minister Mehmet Çavuşoglu said on April 15: “We are proud of our country because our history has never had any genocide.”

In reality, Turkey does not need third parties to undertake the performance of its obligation to investigate past events. The seriousness of the violations and the fact that the fate of hundreds of thousands of Armenians who were deported in 1915 is still unknown today creates a legal obligation to investigate according to international law.

The liberal newspaper *Milliyet* published an article by journalist Mert Inan (source: Embassy of France) refuting the thesis of a “genocide” committed by Turkey in 1915 against Armenians, and citing several professors in support of his statement. Under the headline “Documents contradict the allegations of genocide,” the journalist notes that “despite the Armenian theses that are echoed by the West, there are also theses of foreign specialists who claim that Turkey is accused wrongly and that mutual massacres were perpetrated in 1915 by the two communities.” He cites Justin McCarthy: “It was a war between two fraternal peoples and the words related to genocide [fall under] the political slogan” and uses extracts from Ronald Suny’s 2015 book out of context: “The massacres of thousands of Turks committed by the Armenians between 1916 and 1917 and the mutual massacres committed by the two populations.” Finally, he quotes the former head of the Institute of Turkish History, Metin Hulagu: “The allegations of Armenian genocide are used as a threat against Turkey by Westerners. Our archives are open. On the other hand, those of Armenians and Europeans are closed. We call on the world to come and do research and analysis in order to set up a negotiation.”

Turkish Archives Are Open?

The archives of the Ministry of the Interior of the Ottoman period are accessible. This fact made possible, among other things, finding evidence of orders of deportation, extermination, and numerous statistics on the victims. As for the Republican period, there are very few documents available. The access to other relevant archives, and in particular for the Republican period which followed the genocide and which saw the establishment of official denial policy, are restricted. For example, if the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Ottoman period are open (the documentation is questionable) those of the Republican period are still closed. The records of the Department of Justice are not available for either period, making it impossible to access the proceedings and detailed documents of the martial courts (1919-1920 CUP trials). Garo Paylan just asked for precisely for this from the Turkish Vice-President, Fuat Oktay. Finally, with regard to the Ottoman Army archives, which are held at General Staff Headquarters, only researchers obtaining a special permit can access them but under very strict conditions: the archivists select page by page the requested documents to make available. One may add to this list the land and real estate records prior to 1924. They are not open to foreign natural or legal persons, members of populations that have been listed as “exchanged,” “emigrated,” “fugitive,” or “disappeared.” The government circular, issued the first time in 1983 and renewed since, requires cadastral services not to respond to requests for information and documents from these populations. In other words: it is difficult to claim that these archives are open.

Invoking Perinçek Judgment

The national-Kemalist daily *Aydınlık* quotes an academic lawyer criticizing the Turkish state for “failing to make sufficient use of the ECHR’s [European Court of Human Rights] decision in support of Doğu Perinçek’s denial of the Armenian lie.” This judgement is, according to him, strengthening the hand of Turkey.

In sum, the tone is globally aggressive, threatening, and the goal is clearly to divide the Armenian nation, especially Armenians from its diaspora, the good Armenians from the bad. The re-election of the Armenian patriarch of Istanbul is clearly shaping up to be a stage under threat. The claims are based on historical untruths, especially the alleged civil war and equal casualties.

The landmark book *Genocide Denials and the Law* by Ludovic Hennebel and Thomas Hochmann recalls that “the denial of Armenian Genocide is government policy in Turkey and part of the essential duties of its diplomatic missions. Denial occurs in a network of organized political attempts to rewrite or un-write the history across international borders” (David Fraser). It adds: “the denial of the Armenian genocide is a proof of a state of denial of its own past. Turkey has tried to deny the burden of guilt that the genocide represents for an emerging nation that is trying to build itself a different past. Here the debate is created by the Turkish state itself: it revolves around the definition of genocide and its applicability to the crimes committed against the Armenians rather than on the massacres ever actually occurred” (Martin Imbleau). And “in the Turkish successor state to the Ottoman Empire, genocide is not only tolerated, it is flourishing (Robert Kahn).”

Hochmann argues that state denialism fabricates good-faith deniers because of educational programs, but that the higher the intellectual level of these deniers, the more bad faith can be established. It is for this reason that the Lausanne Tribunal found that Perinçek’s remarks about Armenian Genocide were similar to qualified denialism: justification of the massacres, reversal of responsibilities, and glorification of the authors. Perinçek was a doctor of law and a historian, and he could not thus ignore the contradictory arguments.

In an article, Güven Gürkan Öztan and Ömer Turan (“Armenian Genocide: Turkish society and state united in denial”), the authors stress that the Turkish Republic’s will to wipe the slate clean is accompanied by a number of legal measures aimed at covering up the footsteps of 1915, especially on the question of “abandoned properties” which is corroborated by the embargo on the pre-1924 cadastral registers.

They conclude that “The AKP has maintained the denialist policy of the Turkish state on many points, whether on the question of archives, historical commissions or the use of their power in international relations. We have simply gone from a criticism of the Young Turk ideology to one that refuses to consider that civilization (Islamic-Ottoman) could have been guilty of such a crime.”

State Denial and International Law

State denial is an integral component of genocide. State responsibility has no statute of limitations; what matters is the existence of acts giving rise to such responsibility, namely internationally wrongful acts. It is established that Turkey has committed serious violations of international law. The legal sources of these violations are the 1878 Treaty of Berlin, an international treaty still in force in 1915, which required the Ottoman Empire to protect its Armenian population. Moreover, the Ottoman Empire violated the laws and customs of war of the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 [the Turkish Ottoman State had ratified the 1899 one] which protected civilians in time of war as well as in times of peace, especially through the Martens Clause. Based on this legal basis, France, Great Britain and Russia condemned the Ottoman Empire for “crimes committed against humanity and civilization” on May 24, 1915.

The Genocide Prevention Resolution adopted by the UN Human Rights Council notes “with concern that attempts to deny or to justify the crime of genocide, as defined in the Convention and established as such under international law, may risk undermining the fight against impunity, reconciliation and efforts to prevent genocide.” By making the fight against state denial a means of preventing genocide, this provision obliges all States to ensure its respect.

In the UN Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Through Action Against Combat Impunity, the Principle 3 provides that “A people’s knowledge of the history of its oppression is part of its heritage and, as such, must be ensured by appropriate measures in fulfilment of the State’s duty to preserve archives and other evidence concerning violations of human rights and humanitarian law and to facilitate knowledge of those violations. Such measures shall be aimed at preserving the collective memory from extinction and, in particular, at guarding against the development of revisionist and negationist arguments.”

It should be noted, however, that international judgments clearly condemning individuals for genocide do not prevent Holocaust deniers from proliferating. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has established the facts beyond a reasonable doubt to prevent any denial or revisionist enterprise. But the facts were rejected by both parties as were judgments. Time does not solve this problem, especially because the official thesis is biased and subject to propaganda. For another example, Japanese society denies vigorously the wrongs committed against “Comfort Women” during WWII by the Imperial army despite the official apology of Japan in the framework of a bilateral agreement with South Korea.

Mr. Perinçek won his case against Switzerland thanks to a controversial requalification of the meaning of the words he used. As a consequence, the criminal sanction was considered disproportionate to the act; a civil proceeding would have not, said the Court. This distinction made, we fully agree with Aydınlik’s journalist: let’s exploit the Perinçek case! The judgement and Turkish government memoir to the Grand Chamber are in total contradiction to the recent statements from the Turkish Executive.

The ECHR Section judgment (17 December 2013) referred to the “atrocities” that were committed in 1915 and subsequent years.” The Court recalls that the Turkish Government considers it essential to recall that the applicant has never denied that massacres and deportations took place on the territory of the former Ottoman Empire in 1915. In the Turkish Government’s submission, a significant difference is made between ongoing

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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Trump: A Coward on the Armenian Genocide Like Obama, Bush Jr., Clinton, and Bush Sr.

President Donald Trump issued last week his third April 24 statement “on Armenian Remembrance Day.” And for three years in a row he did not muster the courage to use the correct term – genocide – to describe the annihilation of 1.5 million innocent Armenian men, women, and children by the Ottoman Turkish government.

President Trump basically repeated the same words that he used in the past two years, with very minor changes. Again he used the Armenian term “Meds Yeghern” (Great Crime) to avoid calling the mass killings a genocide. Meds Yeghern is simply a description that Armenians used before the word genocide was coined by Raphael Lemkin in the 1940s, whereas genocide is a term of international law and has legal consequences. Besides, if President Trump insists on using an Armenian word, he should have said “Tseghasbanoutyoun” (genocide).

Many Armenians had been hoping ever since his election that President Trump would rely on his unpredictable impulses to describe the Armenian mass killings as genocide, ignoring the counsel of his advisors and the position of his predecessors. Unfortunately, President Trump knows very little about Armenian-Americans and can care less about their interests. The only time President Trump will pay attention to

the genocide issue is when Armenian-Americans gain more political clout.

It should not take much courage for President Trump to use the term Armenian Genocide since President Ronald Reagan already used it in his Presidential Proclamation on April 22, 1981. In fact, Armenian-Americans do not need President Trump to say anything on April 24, if he cannot call it genocide. The Armenian Genocide has been already recognized by the United States several times. In addition to President Reagan’s statement, the US House of Representatives adopted two resolutions in 1975 and 1984 acknowledging the Armenian Genocide, and the US government sent an official document to the International Court of Justice (World Court) in 1951 recognizing the Armenian mass killings as a case of genocide.

Nevertheless, President Trump’s inadequate statement has a couple of secondary benefits to the Armenian Cause:

1) It irritates the hell out of Turkish leaders who seem to be ashamed and outraged that the President of the United States is reminding the world of “one of the worst mass atrocities of the 20th century,” and asserting that “beginning in 1915, one and a half million Armenians were deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths in the final years of the Ottoman Empire.” Both Turkish President Erdogan and Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavusoglu reacted with indignation and denial to President Trump’s April 24 statement.

2) The statements of President Trump and his predecessors cause each year a major political reaction around the world, generating mass publicity in the international media which is further fueled by the Turkish leaders’ denials.

On April 24, 2019, Armenia’s Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan issued an important statement on the 104th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Surprisingly, his statement did not mention Turkey or the Ottoman Empire as the perpetrator of the Armenian Genocide. This must have been an unfortunate oversight on the part of the Prime Minister and his aides. I do not think it was done intentionally, partic-

ularly since the statement does include a strong reference to Armenians losing their homeland in addition to the human losses. In the past, Armenia’s leaders have refrained from raising the issue of Armenian territorial demands from Turkey.

Meanwhile, President Erdogan issued a particularly disgraceful statement on April 24, speaking at a Symposium in Ankara: “The relocation of the Armenian gangs and their supporters, who massacred the Muslim people, including women and children, in eastern Anatolia, was the most reasonable action that could be taken in such a period.”

Erdogan is shamefully accusing the Armenian victims of committing a mass crime against the victimizing Turks. This is an outrageous lie which is the equivalent of accusing Jews of killing Germans during the Holocaust. Erdogan must be suffering from a serious mental illness.

In a surprising development, Prime Minister Pashinyan responded forcefully to Erdogan’s pathetic lies. Pashinyan described Erdogan’s statement as “hateful” and called on the international community to respond: “On the day when Armenians around the world mourned the innocent victims of the Ottoman Genocide, Turkey, this country’s president Recep Tayyip Erdogan reiterated a statement denying the greatest crime of the 20th century, calling it only, ‘the deportation of Armenians.’ To call the extermination of the entire Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the massive forced deportation of Armenians (death caravans) ‘Armenian bandits and their accomplices,’ and the massacre of 1.5 million indigenous people, ‘the most logical behavior’ is not only a new level of denial of the Armenian Genocide, but also an excuse for the destruction of an entire nation. Such a statement on April 24, on the day of the anniversary of the Genocide, is a deep insult to the Armenian people and all of humanity, and an expression of extreme hatred personally by Erdogan. The world should not be silent.”

We are heartened that Prime Minister Pashinyan raised the issue of the Armenian territorial demand from Turkey, a demand that the Armenian government should pursue officially at the International Court of Justice.

Turkey Is Back to Hard Denial

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debate about the legal aspects of the events of 1915 and denial of “clearly established historical facts.” The Turkish government submits further: “The position of the [Turkish] Government on this issue is long-standing. The Government acknowledge the strength of feeling about this terrible episode of history and recognise the massacres of 1915-16 as a tragedy.” This position is reiterated by the Turkish Government before the Grand Chamber. In its judgment (October 15, 2015), the Grand Chamber refers that Turkey has also admitted that these crimes constituted “a source of deep affliction for the Armenian people.” The judgement does not record any justification or mention of common suffering from the Turkish government.

In addition, the Court saves the possibility for national courts to consider genocide.

The Perinçek judgment could therefore in many aspects be positively interpreted as constituting at least recognition by an international court (the ECHR), that, in the light of international law, international crimes were committed in 1915 by the government of the Ottoman Empire.

Should Armenians Engage to Protect Their Dignity?

As noted by the European Court in Perinçek, “these were the rights of Armenians to respect for their and their ancestors’ dignity, including their right to respect for their identity constructed around the understanding that their community has suffered genocide.” Freedom of expression stops where it harms the “rights of others.” The Court retains a construction that makes genocide an element (not questionable, since the Court has recognized it) of the identity of the Armenian community worth of protection under Article 8 of the Convention. Such a right presupposes that there has indeed been genocide. It gives considerable credit, in any case, to the Armenian claims, in the form of a right opposable at any time and any place and the breach of which may give rise to reparation.

At any rate, all the inconsistencies and contradictions of the Turkish authorities’ stance deserve dissemination to chancelleries, public authorities, be they national, regional or international.

[Philippe Raffi Kalfayan is a Lawyer, Lecturer in International Law and a former Secretary General of FIDH (International Federation of Human Rights). He is a regular columnist for the *Mirror-Spectator*.]

The Forty Martyrs of Sebastia

By Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD

The Armenian Church observes the martyrdom of the Forty Roman Soldiers who became among the earliest witnesses of Christ in their youthful years as the members of the eastern battalion of the Roman Empire in 320 AD under co-emperor Licinius. Emperor Constantine the Great of the Byzantine Empire in Constantinople was in power (306-337), who in his deathbed later in 337 converted into Christianity being baptized by Eusebius of Nicomedia. The Armenian Church venerates the martyrs as “Karrasoun Mangounk” (Forty Warriors), “mangounk” meaning in classical Armenian as “soldiers,” besides meaning also “children.” The tragic mistake is that sometimes I read about them in English publications as “the Forty Children” in reference to the Forty Martyrs, to the extent that an Armenian church dedicated to them was recently identified in English as “The Armenian Church of the Forty Children.” It is truly a gross mistake to translate a word without checking its alternate meaning, leaving the impression as if children of age ten or below were thrown in the frozen lake in Sebastia. How possibly could have children even heard the name of Christ at that age, let alone witnessing their faith! In fact, the names of those Forty Soldiers are miraculously revealed on a stone pillar found in Sebastia, as also verified by our 10th century Armenian historian Ukhtanes, Bishop of Sebastia who had read them on stone tablets.

Timing and Persecutions

The date of their martyrdom is as early as 320, only 19 years after Armenia adopted Christianity as its national state religion in 301 AD by the edict of King Terdat III of Armenia, and under the pontificate of our first Catholicos of Armenia St. Gregory the Illuminator, both still living at the time and witnessing the martyrdom of the Forty in their homeland. While reading the names of the Forty Roman soldiers, one can easily identify each one of them either as Greeks or Romans, not any one of them to be Armenian as one might anticipate. The connection with Armenia is definitely the location, the region of Sebastia in historic Armenia presently Sivas in Turkey, as well as the encouragement those soldiers received from the newly converted Armenia into Christianity. The Roman Empire under Constantine the Great proclaimed the Edict of Milan in 313, declaring religious tolerance for Christianity

in the Empire, not adopting the new religion officially as yet as the state religion of the Empire until later in the century.

The torturous death of the Forty eulogized by the earliest panegyrics of Sts. Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa, was ordered by the impious Licinius, following many attempts for them to apostatize sending back and forth emissaries to deliver the orders until their eventual death sentences, providing even at the same time baths of hot water on the banks as incentives for temptation. As their Christian faith remained unshaken, the imperial orders were given to execute all those forty soldiers by throwing them naked in the icy lake, where they died, keeping alive their belief in Christ and receiving the luminous crowns from above. One of them, fearing death, had jumped out of the lake to reach the hot baths where he died, and instead a Roman guard believing in Christ threw himself in the frozen lake to complete the number. Their ashes were recovered by Empress Pulcheria later in the century.

Historian Ukhtanes Bishop of Sebastia

The 10th century Armenian historian Bishop Ukhtanes of Sebastia was born in Urha, but was known all his life as the Bishop of Sebastia quoted by subsequent historians. He wrote his two-volume book, the first part as an ancient history of Armenia leading to the Christianization of Armenia, and the second part a documented history of the schism of the Georgian Orthodox Church from the subjection to the Armenian Church in 607 AD. Chapter 61 of his first volume is entirely devoted to the Forty Martyrs of Sebastia, where he served the rest of his life as the Bishop of the Armenian Church in that region. Decades ago I took upon myself to translate Ukhtanes’ two volumes into English for the first time with additional notes and commentary. Because of the poor and the only original edition in the classical Armenian, numerous errors of all kinds were left unanswered. I had to make those amendments painstakingly, over 400 words and names, proper as well as grammatical, all listed on the front pages in each volume, the errors and the corrections.

The historian Bishop Ukhtanes records the event of the martyrdom of the Forty Warriors, saying: “we hereby record about the martyrdom of the Holy Forty [Soldiers] who perished by the orders of the impious Licinius, who raised persecutions under his jurisdiction.” He carefully relates the respective districts where the Forty were sent, some places as the loyal members of the Roman army, and others to hide for safety, always holding the true faith in Christ, naming distinctly the mountains and the fortresses by their geographic sites and their proper names.

Next, the Bishop adds information about their persecution and the eventual martyrdom, saying: “many churches were built in Sebastia on the site where they perished, called Yegueghetsator (Valley of churches), to honor and glorify God by the inhabitants of our land.” As for the Forty warriors who met their destiny in the frozen lake, the historian Bishop captures place names very carefully where the Forty tried to hide, such as on “the bank of the river called Halys, where there was a fortress presently called Kach Vahana (the fortress of the Brave Vahan), where still exist

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Improper Bostonian's Closing 'Was A Family Decision'

CLOSING, from page 1

"After nearly 28 years in business, we are closing The Improper Bostonian effective today," publisher Wendy Semonian Eppich wrote in statement posted on the magazine's website. "While this news might be surprising, the company has had a great run and we're hopefully leaving this incredible city better and brighter since our inception in 1991."

In an interview later in the day, Semonian Eppich said it was a difficult decision to stop publishing, and even more difficult to deliver the news to the staff.

"It's a family business and so it was a family decision," she said, before adding that some "very big names in Boston" contacted her Thursday expressing interest in resurrecting the magazine in some form.

"We'll see what happens," Semonian Eppich said.

Begun by her brother, Mark Semonian, in a loft in Brookline Village, the Improper published twice a month, reaching an audience of more than 350,000 readers annually. Often with a celebrity's cheerful face on the cover — singer Joelle James graces the final issue — the Improper was available in blue news boxes throughout the city, at restaurants, hotels, and colleges, and on the doorsteps of thousands of residences from the Back Bay to the North End.

Editor Matt Martinelli said the magazine had been operating at a loss "for a little while," and the Semonian family had made an attempt to sell it. Four years ago, Martinelli said, the Improper's per-issue circulation was 87,500, but that dropped to 60,000 lately. He said the magazine had about two dozen full-time employees, including editorial, sales, and marketing staff, and another dozen or so freelancers.

"We were a lifestyle magazine, but we'd upped our arts coverage a lot in recent years," said Martinelli. "We'd also tried to be a little more heady about things. The city is smarter than it used to be, more educated."

The current glossy, ad-heavy incarnation of The Improper Bostonian bears little resemblance to the magazine that first hit the street. Bankrolled by patriarch Leon Semonian, then a broker at Smith Barney, the first issues were on newsprint, with a lot of tantalizing gossip and attitude. Announcing itself as feisty and fearless, one early Improper included Catherine de Castelbajac's X-rated notes to her lover, billionaire Bill Koch, who later kicked her out of his condo at the Four Seasons.

There was also a revealing interview of then-congressman Joe Kennedy II by former WBZ-AM radio host David Brudnoy, and a provocative piece by Chris Lydon, former host of the longtime WBUR show "The Connection," that promoted the idea that chef Julia Child was the preeminent feminist of her time.

"Yes, it's changed," says Jonathan Soroff, the Improper's rococo columnist whose dispatches from the party circuit were a must-read for fans of the magazine. "When we started, we wrote some very [gutsy] news stories, absolutely. But our arts-and-entertainment coverage became super strong, and that's hard to do as a biweekly because we were thinking two months out."

Soroff, who's been with The Improper from the beginning, said there were many tears shed at the magazine's Back Bay office Thursday morning.

"It's like a death in the family. Everybody's crushed," he said. "A lot of companies don't survive 28 weeks, let alone 28 years, and I'm grateful for every second of it. I got to interview everyone from Maya Angelou to the 'Real Housewives.'"

Longtime humor columnist Ezra Dyer fondly recalls dancing onstage at a Flaming Lips concert in a bunny costume for one of his pieces — a column that led a reader to introduce Dyer to a woman who later became his wife.

John Spooner, the famed financial guru and nationally recognized novelist, has written a column for The Improper since 2005. He said the magazine's masthead gave him "the freedom to express thought and snarkiness," and he took full advantage. He said he's terribly sad, but not surprised that the doors are closing.

"Media is a challenging landscape," Spooner said. "Whether it's writing or dance or painting or acting or singing, if you choose the creative life, you're doomed. I can't tell you how much I hate that The Improper is closing. It's been a wonderful refuge for me and a great thing for the city."

Among its competitors, The Improper's sudden demise was met with the opposite of glee.

"While it may be good in some sense for @DigBoston, I am not here to gloat," tweeted Chris Faraone, editor of the alt weekly Dig Boston. "With very few exceptions, I don't like to see any publications go out of business."

That sentiment was shared even by folks at Boston magazine, despite the fact that the two publications had periodically jostled. (To the editors of Boston magazine, The Improper's annual "Boston's Best" issue was just a confusing copycat of Boston magazine's "Best of Boston" issue.)

"It's always a sad day to see a publication close its doors," said *Boston magazine* editor Chris Vogel, "especially one that has been around for so long."

Asked what he'll do now, Soroff sighed.

"I don't know," he said. "My calendar just became incredibly empty."

The Forty Martyrs of Sebastia

SEBASTIA, from page 19

the sites of the saints and their individual names inscribed on stone tablets." In addition, he saw the sign of the victorious cross engraved on stone columns, and "as of today the places of their refuge are being venerated by church edifices and clerics."

Western Scholarship

Historians in the West have discovered many details about the Forty Soldiers as they have written in different reference sources, especially the names of the Forty Martyrs individually and related matters. They had however little knowledge what the tenth century Armenian historian Bishop Ukhtanes, who was the active religious leader of Sebastia, and whose eye-witness accounts are indispensable as I could see. Those evidences now available in English should be added to the general knowledge of those first martyrs of Christianity, the much later (10th century) nature of the findings notwithstanding. On the other hand, the Armenians should not mix the title of those Roman Soldiers with the Armenian designation of "Karrasoun Mangounk," leaving the impression of forty "children" by way of translating the word "manoug" as it sounds in the vernacular. Moreover, it implies "the congregation of believers" when read as "oukhdi mangounk" in classical Armenian, applied in the prayer books of the Armenian Church.



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