

## Spitting Attacks On Jerusalem Clergymen by Ultra Orthodox On the Rise

By Oz Rosenberg

JERUSALEM (*Haaretz*) – Ultra-Orthodox young men curse and spit at Christian clergymen in the streets of Jerusalem's Old City as a matter of routine. In most cases, the clergymen ignore the attacks, but sometimes they strike back. Last week the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court quashed the indictment against an Armenian priesthood student who had punched the man who spat at him.

Johannes Martarsian was walking in the Old City in May 2008 when a young Ultra-Orthodox Jew spat at him. Martarsian punched the spitter in the face, making him bleed, and was charged for assault. But Judge Dov Pollock, who unexpectedly annulled the indictment, wrote in his verdict that "putting the defendant on trial for a single blow at a man who spat at his face, after suffering the degradation of being spat on for years while walking around in his church robes is a fundamental contravention of the principles of justice and decency."

He added, "Needless to say, spitting toward the defendant when he was wearing the robe is a criminal offense."

When Narek Garabedian came to Israel to study in the Armenian Seminary in Jerusalem half a year ago, he did not expect the insults, curses and spitting he would be subjected to daily by Ultra-Orthodox Jews in the streets of the Old City.

"When I see an ultra-Orthodox man coming toward me in the street, I always ask myself if he will spit at me," says Narek, a Canadian Armenian, this week. About a month ago, on his way to buy groceries in the Old City, two ultra-Orthodox men spat at him. The spittle did not fall at his feet but on his person. Narek, a former football player, decided this time not to turn the other cheek.

## Scholars Discuss Armenian Genocide and Issues of Ottoman History in Amsterdam

By Aram Arkun  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

AMSTERDAM – The Eighth Workshop on Armenian-Turkish Studies (WATS) took place here October 27 to 30. Cosponsored by the International Institute of Social History and the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD) Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, both based in Amsterdam, the workshop included scholars from 11 countries. The European site of the conference made it easier for scholars from disparate locations to attend.

The theme of the workshop was "Ethnic Tensions and Violence at the End of the Ottoman Empire," which was broad enough to encompass a variety of topics,

## Global Protests Follow Imprisonment of Ragip Zarakolu, Director of Belge Publishing House

ISTANBUL (*Guardian*) – The international literary community is demanding the immediate release of Turkish publisher and free-speech activist Ragip Zarakolu, who has been arrested and imprisoned in Turkey under the country's anti-terrorism laws.

By Alison Flood

than 40 activists who were detained in Istanbul on Friday, according to PEN and the International Publishers Association. The arrests are part of a crackdown against Kurdish political parties, which has seen more than 1,800 supporters of the banned Koma Civaken Kurdistan party jailed since 2009. PEN said that if an appeal against the charges is unsuccessful, Zarakolu will be held through a trial process, which is likely to last over a year.

Zarakolu founded Belge in 1977 and has tested publishing restrictions in Turkey ever since by releasing books from Armenian, Greek and Kurdish authors in Turkish editions, including books documenting the Armenian Genocide. His office was firebombed by a right-wing extremist group in 1995, said PEN, he was banned from leaving Turkey between 1971 and 1991 and he has been the subject of repeated charges, most recently being fined for releasing Mehmet Güler's *The KCK File/The Global State and Kurds Without a State* in March.

Bjørn Smith-Simonsen, chair of the International Publishers Association's Freedom to Publish Committee, said that Zarakolu "does not belong [in] prison; he deserves a Nobel Prize." Calling him "the pride of publishing" and "the limelight of freedom to publish in Turkey," Smith-Simonsen demanded he be released immediately. "The trial is likely to begin in a year's time only. Ragip Zarakolu's health is not good. We fear that he will not stand his detention conditions in the terrible F-type

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Ragip Zarakolu

"I was very angry. I pushed them both to the wall and asked, 'why are you doing this?' They were frightened and said 'we're sorry, we're sorry,' so I let them go. But it isn't always like that. Sometimes the spitter attacks you back," he says.

Other clergymen in the Armenian Church in Jerusalem say they are all victims of harassment, from the senior cardinals to

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## Rice Brags about Killing Genocide Resolution in New Memoir

By Russell Berman

WASHINGTON (*The Hill*) – Condoleezza Rice displays little love for Congress in a new memoir of her years in the Bush administration, recalling incidents of political grandstanding, personal attacks and temper tantrums.

The former secretary of state's 766-page tome, *No Higher Honor*, hits bookstores this week, and her recollections of meeting Moammar Gadhafi and battling former Vice President Dick Cheney have already made headlines. But Rice also shares her frustrations with Congress over its interference in foreign policy and its failure to overhaul the nation's immigration system.

Rice voices frustration at Congress in many areas. She takes credit for averting a diplomatic crisis when negotiations with Turkey were almost "derailed" in 2007 by a move to hold a House vote on a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide. The vote was scrapped at the last minute, but Rice

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### US Appeals Court Revisits Armenian Genocide Lawsuit

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) – A federal appeals court on Monday took up the issue of whether California law declaring there was an Armenian Genocide in Turkey conflicts with US foreign policy.

At issue is a state law that labels the deaths as genocide, allowing heirs of Armenians killed in the Turkish Ottoman Empire to pursue a lawsuit seeking life insurance payments from three German insurers.

It is the third time in two years the Ninth US Circuit Court of Appeals has confronted the question. In a rare move, the court reversed itself last year after a judge changed her mind and turned a two-to-one ruling rendered in 2009 in favor of insurers into a two-to-one decision supporting the heirs.

On Monday, the court's chief justice announced that a majority of judges had voted to rehear the case – a move that wipes out the 2010 decision.

The insurers, which include Munich Re AG, argue California's law should be struck down because it conflicts with US foreign policy, which they say sides with Turkey in refusing to call the Armenian deaths genocide.

Lawyers for the heirs argue those presidential views are not official policy. They say the US lacks a formal position, which means the California law is not in conflict with any national policy.

Lawyers representing the heirs have filed similar lawsuits against New York Life Insurance Co. and French insurer AXA, which were settled in 2005 for a combined \$37.5 million.

### Iran Foreign Minister Says Armenia Small But Influential

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Iran and Armenia need to conduct consultations over regional and international issues, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said at a joint news conference with his Armenian counterpart, Eduard Nalbandian.

"Without exaggeration I can say that our viewpoints over a number of issues are very close," he stressed.

"Maybe in geographical respect Armenia seems small but it has a big status and impact," Salehi said. Salehi explained that many Armenians are living in more than 100 countries and are Armenia's unofficial ambassadors to these countries.

"Taking into consideration that Armenians in different countries are considered hard-working and honest people, they always have good image in the public; it promotes increase of Armenia's role in the international arena," he said.

The minister said this impact must be used for the establishment of stability and peace in the region.

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Yerevan Special Guest at Cairo Book Fair

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Praising the dissemination of Armenian books throughout the world, the Ministry of Culture of Armenia Hasmik Poghosyan continues actively participating in different international book exhibitions. The next participation will be in January in the international book fair in Cairo.

Poghosyan told reporters on Tuesday that Armenia will participate in the event as a special guest.

## Armenia Ranks 84th in 2011 Global Gender Gap

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – Armenia ranked 84th in the 2011 Global Gender Gap Report released on Tuesday by the World Economic Forum. Armenia ranked 84th in 2010 as well, a drop from 71st place in 2007.

The report surveyed 135 countries, which make up more than 93 percent of the world's population, and ranked each country based on the various levels of women's education, health, economic and political participation.

Armenia came in 27th in terms of "Educational Attainment" and 62nd place in the category of "Economic Participation and Opportunity" but lagged behind in "Health and Survival (131st) and "Political Empowerment" (108th).

## Japanese Film Festival in Gumri and Yerevan

YEREVAN and GUMRI (Arminfo) – A Japanese Film Festival was held in the two cities November 8-12, organized by the Embassy of Japan in Armenia and the Hikari Armenian-Japanese Scientific, Educational and Cultural Center with the support of the Armenian Ministry of Culture.

According to the Hikari Center, five feature films were presented.

The last Japanese film festival in Armenia was held in 2006.

## New Mayoral Election to Take Place November 15

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – A decision on the date of the Yerevan mayoral election in the wake of the resignation of the current mayor was reached at an extraordinary session of the Elders' Council on Friday.

As press service of the mayor's office reported, the vice mayor, acting mayor of Yerevan Taron Margaryan, said former mayor Karen Karapetyan had not only tendered his resignation on November 2 but also refused to take part in the Elders' Council.

On the basis of Karapetyan's resignation and local bylaws, the Elders' Council adopted a decision to hold the mayor's election on November 15.

Earlier, the ruling Republican Party had nominated Margaryan, the son of the late Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan, to the position of mayor.

## Ireland Supports Russia Effort for NK Settlement

STEPANAKERT (Armenpress) – In 2012 Ireland will assume the chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Ahead of the event, Ireland is intensifying the diplomatic efforts in the region.

On November 7, Foreign Minister Eamon Gilmore started a visit to Russia. Ahead of the visit he wrote an article in *Komersant* where he particularly stressed the importance of Russia's role in the Karabagh conflict settlement process.

"Russia is an important member of the OSCE and has active role in the organization. President Dmitry Medvedev and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov worked hard toward the settlement of the conflict. I fully support their efforts," Gilmore said.

## Yerevan Rules out Role for UN in Karabagh Talks

By Astghik Bedevian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The United Nations (UN) will not play a major role in international efforts to end the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict even after Azerbaijan became a member of its Security Council, Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian said on Thursday.

Nalbandian argued that the United States, Russia and France continue to share Armenia's view that the Organization for Security and Cooperation's Minsk Group, co-headed by the three, must remain the key international body mediating Armenian-Azerbaijani peace talks.

"The three co-chair countries and permanent members of the Security Council – the United Nations, France and Russia – have repeatedly stated that the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict must be solved within the framework of the Minsk Group and not moved to other structures," he told Armenian lawmakers.

"So I think there is no need to get emotional because of statements com-

ing from Azerbaijan," he said during parliamentary discussions on Armenia's state budget for next year.

Nalbandian referred to Azerbaijani leaders' reported plans to use their two-year membership in the Security Council for attaining a solution to the Karabagh conflict deemed favorable by Baku.

Opposition politicians and some analysts in Yerevan have expressed serious concern over this fact. They have also criticized the Armenian government for failing to scuttle Azerbaijan's election to the Security Council last week.

Nalbandian dismissed this reaction as too "emotional." He said Yerevan is not troubled by the Azerbaijani seat on the council and will carry on with its Karabagh policy without "nervous convulsions."

Armen Rustamian, the chairman of the parliament committee on foreign relations and a leader of the opposition Armenian Revolutionary Federation, rejected the minister's arguments.

"I absolutely don't share the view that we must not react emotionally to Azerbaijan's becoming a non-permanent member of the Security Council,"

he said. "That is not an adequate response to the situation."

Rustamian did not challenge Nalbandian when the latter addressed members of his and other standing committees of the National Assembly, though.

Capitalizing on strong support from many other Islamic nations, Azerbaijan pushed through the UN General Assembly in 2008 a non-binding resolution that demanded an "immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied Azerbaijani lands."

The Muslim world's overwhelmingly pro-Azerbaijani stance is a key reason for Armenia's strong opposition to any UN involvement in the Karabagh peace process.

## Karabagh Building New Road to Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Authorities in Nagorno-Karabagh have begun building a second highway that will connect the republic with Armenia.

Passenger and cargo traffic between the two entities has until now been carried out through a highway running across Lachin, one of the seven districts in Azerbaijan proper that were partly or fully occupied by Karabagh Armenian forces during the 1991-1994 war.

The Lachin road stretches for more than 80 kilometers from the Karabagh capital Stepanakert to the southeastern Armenian town of Goris. It was built in 1997 with the financial assistance of the Armenian Diaspora and US-Armenian billionaire Kirk Kerkorian in particular.

Officials in Stepanakert say the second overland link will also be roughly 80 kilometers long. It will connect Karabagh's northern Martakert district to Gegharkunik province in eastern Armenia through another Armenian-controlled district, Kelbajar.

"We will not depend only on the Goris-Stepanakert road," Ara Harutunian, the prime minister of Nagorno-Karabagh Republic, said as he inaugurated the start of the construction work earlier this month.

Harutunian estimated the total cost of the project at "several billion drams" (at least \$10 million). He said it will be financed by Base Metals, an Armenian company mining gold and copper in Martakert, and the Karabagh government.

Karabagh officials admit that the new road will greatly benefit Base Metals as it will significantly shorten the distance between the area and Armenia and thus reduce the company's transportation costs. They also anticipate a major boost to the socioeconomic plight of possibly thousands of Armenians who have settled in Kelbajar since 1994.

"You can't imagine how happy I was when they started the construction," one settler said on Friday. "It now takes six or seven hours to go to [to the nearest Armenian town of] Vartenis and get back here through the existing atrocious road. But after they rebuild the road, we will need only 30 minutes to reach Vartenis."

Work on the new road is due to be completed within two years. Karabagh officials say trucks and other vehicles will be able to use it already next March.

## Armenia ahead of Neighbors In UN Welfare Ranking

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia has moved ahead of three of its four neighbors in the United Nations' latest index of people's welfare around the world.

The UN's 2011 Human Development Report (HDR), released this week, rated 187 countries in terms of their gross domestic product per capita, life expectancy, access to healthcare and education standards.

Armenia occupies 86th place on the list, which is topped by Norway, Australia and The Netherlands and retains what UN researchers consider a high degree of "human development." It was 76th in last year's UN rankings which covered 169 countries, trailing neighboring Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran.

Iran and Azerbaijan fell slightly behind Armenia in the 2011 HDR, ranking 88th and 91st, respectively. Armenia's fourth neighbor, Turkey, is in

92nd place. Only Georgia (75th) remains ahead of it in the human development index.

According to the UN report, life expectancy in Armenia currently stands at 74.2 years while the per-capita average income, adjusted for purchasing power parity, at almost \$5,200.

Gevorg Poghosian, a senior sociologist at the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, described the country's performance in the global survey as satisfactory. But he cautioned that much of that results from its past demographic and social achievements mostly dating back to the Soviet era.

"We have long had a high level of education and a long-living population," Poghosian said. "This is the inertia of the past. As for the present, we have the lowest [human development] indicators there."

## Good Prices, Bad Wine: High Demand For Grape Prompts Early Harvest

YEREVAN (Armenia Now) – The price of grapes in Armenia rose this year, due to increased domestic and foreign demand.

On National Wine Day, November 7, Avag Harutyunyan, head of Armenian Winemakers Union, said the demand for wine in Russian increased by 65 percent. After the world economic crisis overall export of cognac (which accounted for about 96 percent of grape sales) decreased by about 70 percent he said.

The increased demand for wine prompted major brandy companies to start developing wine production and obtain new and modern equipment; as a result grape prices rose from about 32 cents per kilo, to about 35-45 cents.

Harutyunyan says, however, that the price increase led some villagers to take grapes to processing before the grape

was ready.

"Cognac production has always harmed the development of wine-making in Armenia. Cognac requires vine grapes with 17-19 percent sugar [of its total nutritious value], which ripen up in Ararat Valley from September 10. Meanwhile, wine needs 22-23-percent sugar and that level of sweetness cannot be reached unless grapes are left to ripen till October 5-10, however, villagers don't wait until the due time," Harutyunyan says, hoping that the problem will gradually be solved as brandy companies start producing high-quality wine.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture of Armenia, as of November 1, 128,504 tons of grapes were sold (as compared to 135,000 tons last year), whereas the demand was for 140,000 tons.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Armenian Couple Foiled Assassination Attempts on Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin

MOSCOW (Wikipedia) —

Gevork Andreevich Vartanian was born February 17, 1924 in Nor Nakhichevan (currently Rostov-on-Don). His father was an intelligence agent as well and was sent to Persia (presently Iran) in 1930, where he worked for 23 years under cover as a wealthy merchant. Vartanian was not even 16 when he went into intelligence. In 1930, he moved to Iran with his family and in 1940, he joined the Soviet Foreign Intelligence Service. In 1955, he graduated from the Institute of Foreign Languages, Yerevan. He and his wife, Gohar, were primarily responsible for thwarting Operation Long Jump, concocted by Adolf Hitler, headed by Ernst Kaltenbrunner and led by Otto Skorzeny, which was an attempt to assassinate Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt at the Tehran conference in 1943.

## Operation Long Jump Discovered and Aborted

Operation Long Jump was the code-name given to the unsuccessful World War II German plot to assassinate the “Big Three” Allied leaders, Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt, at the 1943 Tehran Conference.

The plot was approved by Hitler and headed by Ernst Kaltenbrunner. German intelligence had learned of the time and place of the conference in mid-October



Gevork Vartanian and his wife, Gohar

1943, after breaking a US Navy code.

Otto Skorzeny was chosen by Kaltenbrunner to head the mission. Also involved was German agent Elyesa Bazna (better known under the code-name “Cicero”), who transmitted key data from Ankara, Turkey concerning the conference.

However, Soviet intelligence quickly uncovered the plot. The first tip off came from Soviet agent Nikolai Kuznetsov. Posing as Wehrmacht Oberleutnant Paul Siebert from Nazi-occupied Ukraine, he got SS Sturmbannführer Hans Ulrich von Ortel — who was described as “talkative” and “a drinker” — to tell him about the operation while drunk.

Nineteen-year-old Soviet spy Gevork Vartanian had recruited a small number of agents in Iran, where his father, also a spy, was posing as a wealthy merchant. It was Vartanian’s group, which located an advance party of six German radio operators who had dropped by parachute near Qum, 60 kilometers (37 miles) from Tehran, and followed them to Tehran, where the German spy network provided a villa for them. They established that the Germans were in contact with Berlin via radio and recorded their communications; when decoded, these revealed that they planned to drop a second group of operatives led by Skorzeny for the actual assassination attempt. Skorzeny had already visited Tehran to reconnoiter and had been followed by Vartanian’s group.

Following that, all German transmissions were intercepted by Soviet and British intelligence. However, one of the Germans radioed a message with a secret code indicating that they were under surveillance and the operation was called off. Skorzeny himself considered the intelligence coming from Tehran to be inadequate and did not believe the complex scheme could have worked.

Vartanian was awarded with the Hero of the Soviet Union medal in 1984. He has met with Churchill’s granddaughter and been congratulated for his great service to the Allies. Al Gurnov of Russia Today interviewed Vartanian on the eve of the Victory Day parade, which was broadcast on May 9, 2008. It was revealed that Vartanian’s identity was kept secret until the year 2000, when he finally received full credit for putting a stop to the assassination plot.



From left, Joseph Stalin, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill on the verandah of the Soviet Embassy in Tehran during the Tehran Conference

## Ultra Orthodox Spitting Attacks on Old City Clergymen on the Rise

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the priesthood students. Mostly they ignore these incidents. When they do complain, the police don’t usually find the perpetrators.

Martarsian left Israel about a year ago. He was sent back home by the church, as were two other Armenian priesthood students who were charged after attacking an ultra-Orthodox man who spat at them.

The Greek Patriarchy’s clergymen have been cursed and spat on by Ultra-Orthodox men in the street for many years. “They walk past me and spit,” says Rev. Gabriel Bador, 78, a senior priest in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. “Mostly I ignore it, but it’s difficult.

Sometimes I stop and ask the spitter, ‘why are you doing this? What have I done to you?’ Once I even shouted at a

few of them who spat at my feet together. They ran away,” he says.

“It happens a lot,” says Archbishop Aristarchos, the chief secretary of the patriarchate. “You walk down the street and suddenly they spit at you for no reason. I admit sometimes it makes me furious, but we have been taught to restrain ourselves, so I do so.”

Father Goosan Aljanian, Chief Dragoman of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem, says it is often difficult for temperamental young priesthood students to swallow the offense.

About a month ago two students marching to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre beat up an Ultra-Orthodox man who spat at them. They were sent away from the Old City for two weeks.

“I tell my students that if they are spat at, to go to the police rather than

strike back” says Goosan. “But these are young kids who sometimes lose their cool.”

A few weeks ago four Ultra-Orthodox men spat at clergymen in the funeral procession of Father Alberto of the Armenian Church. “They came in a pack, out of nowhere,” said Father Goosan. “I know there are fanatical Haredi groups that don’t represent the general public but it’s still enraging. It all begins with education. It’s the responsibility of these men’s yeshiva heads to teach them not to behave this way,” he says.

Father Goosan and other Patriarchy members are trying to walk as little as possible in the Old City streets. “Once we walked from the [Armenian] church to the Jaffa Gate and on that short section four different people spat at us,” he says.

## International News

### Ara Guler Exhibit Takes Place in Turkey

MARDIN, Turkey (hetq) — On November 3, the Sakip Sabanci Mardin City Museum launched a new exhibition of works by photographer Ara Guler.

The exhibit displays 114 works by Guler and will remain on display for one year at the museum’s Dilek Sabancı Art Gallery.

### Armenia Joins UNESCO Bureau of Education

PARIS (Tert.am) — At the 36th session of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference, Armenia was elected a member of the organization’s International Bureau of Education.

The country’s name was in electoral group II, which included the states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics.

Three other countries — Bulgaria, Slovakia and Latvia — had applied for membership. Armenia won seats with 108 votes.

Karine Harutyunyan a deputy minister of education and science will represent the country in the bureau.

### NKR President Arrives In Germany

COLOGNE, Germany (Armenpress) — On November 7, Nagorno Karabagh Republic (NKR) President Bako Sahakian arrived here on a working visit. On the same day, Sahakian met the leaders of the city’s various Armenian organizations as well as business professionals, to discuss carrying out different projects in the NKR.

The president’s press office reported that Sahakian later visited the headquarters of the German Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church and held a meeting with the Primate of the See, Archbishop Karekin Bekdjan, and later on met representatives of the Cologne-Armenian community.

Sahakian spoke about the daily situation in Artsakh (or Karabagh), its foreign policy and issues the state faces. He later answered questions raised by the attendees.

He noted that Armenians in Germany possess great potential, which can create promising cooperation. Within this context, he put special emphasis on the role of the Cologne-Armenian community, which is the biggest and most unified in Germany.

The leader of the Artsakh Diocese of the Armenian Church, Archbishop Pargev Martirosyan, Armenia’s Ambassador to Germany Armen Martirosyan, the head of the Central Information Department of the office of NKR President David Babayan and NKR Representative to Germany Harutyun Grigoryan also participated in the meetings.

### Armenian President’s Visit to Georgia Postponed

TBILISI (Arminfo) — Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister David Jalagania confirmed the postponement of Armenian President Serge Sargsian’s visit to Georgia.

The Armenian president’s visit to Georgia, planned for the beginning of November, was hampered because of President Mikheil Saakashvili’s statements about the ineffectiveness of Armenia during the devastating landslide near the Georgian-Armenian border. According to him, the Georgian side had coped with the situation more quickly.

“The visit is postponed, but I am not aware of the reasons,” Jalagania said and added that postponement of visits is an ordinary thing in diplomatic relations.

Earlier Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia Nino Kalandadze refuted the information about the postponement of Sargsian’s visit. “I want to emphasize that they have good relations — not only as counterparts and neighbors, but personal,” Kalandadze stressed.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Dutch Armenian Does Business While Helping the Motherland

AMSTERDAM, Holland – Entrepreneur and entertainer Aristakes Jessayan who, among others, owns two event agencies and for six years has run two travel agencies, was born in Athens, Greece in an Armenian family. In 2007 he traveled for the first time to Armenia, the land of his ancestors, and fell instantly under the spell of the country. There he saw a wealth of musical talent alongside lots of poverty. He has since set up a charitable foundation, par-



Above, Aristakes Jessayan. Right, Aristakes Jessayan with Dutch talk show host Tineke de Nooij

that these youngsters were in needy circumstances, I made a contribution toward their teachers' salaries and the acquisition of music instruments."

## Foundation Formed to Help Armenia

Back in the Netherlands, Jessayan, who has also been a singer for years, began a small charity to assist the deprived in Armenia. "The Aristakes Jessayan Foundation (AJF) aims to generate funds for children, orphans, war victims, the handicapped, elders and other needy people. We make sure to reach the recipients directly and not via middlemen or entities. This is done under the close scrutiny of local AJF staffers."

The AJF has been running for a couple of years and is making steady progress. Many young musicians unable to afford music lessons are helped to pay their teachers. The run-down heating at a home for elderly and an orphanage has been repaired and running. In March, Jessayan traveled again to Armenia where he

came upon Hakob Harutunyan, an expert in the garment trade, who had previously managed a fashion design school in the Netherlands. "Together with him we visited a diamond factory where we met another mutual friend. The factory

was housed within an enormous industrial complex dating back to the Soviet times." Wondering around they saw a large room full of machinery, as it happens 120 sewing machines, covered with sheets of plastic.

"Prompted by my entrepreneurial instinct I told Hakob: You are a fashion designer; these machines are left idle with no purpose. Let's put them to use." Aristakes says that this was the starting point of his fashion label, Charisma. "I became the investor and Hakob the label designer and factory manager. I like the substantive and hate an idle, excuse the expression, bull. When I established my travel agencies I had never done anything in the travel business. I just started and love doing it with great enthusiasm."

Meanwhile Charisma is up and running: the factory is inaugurated and prototype batches of high quality polo shirts, with a stylish fun

emblem on the collar or sleeve, are ready. Not long ago Hakob and I traveled to Istanbul to purchase a half ton of fabric. There are huge textile mills in Istanbul where one can find the best quality fabrics. In anticipation of the forthcoming European Soccer Championship we also purchased orange colored fabric. We have currently seven ladies on staff, but it should be many more. I aim for fifty to a hundred workers. In this way I am trying to help provide employment for my people. A polo shirt will cost roughly € 50.00. The underlying premise is that for each sold shirt one euro goes to the foundation, which assists needy people and institutions, in other words self-help. We are of a modest scale, but who knows what will pan out."

Charisma's future plans are to manufacture other types of clothing and accessories. But the textile and fashion industry is a hugely competitive one. How is Charisma going to stand out? "To begin with, we have an advantage that Armenians, especially in the diaspora, form concentrated communities. There are 15,000 Armenians residing in the Netherlands. When I showcase at a community event a shirt, which next to the Charisma logo carries the "Made in Armenia" label, it sells because each purchase helps folks back home. In Belgium there are 25,000 Armenians, which can be reached likewise. People who frequent these gatherings

bring with them the "Armenian spirit." There are large numbers of Armenians in the US; only in LA and environs about one-and-half million. I plan to reach such markets and attempt to expand and popularize the Charisma brand name via the web."

## Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy

Armenia is a country of stark contrasts between rich and poor and there are many obstacles due to entrenched corruption. Despite this realization Aristakes Jessayan is hard at work. "I owe it to my father, who has always actively helped our people. I have asked him why he did it. His response was: 'It is my duty,' all the while when there will always be people who try to take advantage when you start an undertaking, in Armenia for one. I learned that business and philanthropy are quite compatible. This is one of the reasons that I want to see eventually the workers become co-owners of the company. Then they would be even more motivated about its objectives."

(From the original Dutch language article published in the business periodical Geld & Beleggen: Informatieblad voor de Beleger, Number 3, September 2011, Wijs & van Oostveen Publishers, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Translated by Dr. Bedros Nersessian, Fort Wayne, Ind.)

tially funded by the proceeds of a garment factory, which started, in his words, "with a bit of struggle."

"During my trip to Armenia I came impressed by the country. Setting foot for the first time in my motherland felt as refreshing experience. The people are enormously friendly, but also I found it challenging; there is a sharp contrast between rich and poor and much corruption hindering further development. During my stay I visited a music academy. You see, besides being a businessman I am also a musician and music matters very much to me. Let me make a side note about a highpoint in my singing carrier: It was the 2005 invitation to perform the national anthem of Armenia at the opening ceremony of the Netherlands-Armenia European Soccer Championship game. The school director made sure that a number of kids performed during my visit. I was impressed by the great number of talented piano and violin players, especially one girl who was playing piano for already 12 years. As it became evident



## Protests Follow Imprisonment of Ragip Zarakolu, Director of Belge Publishing House

ZARAKOLU, from page 1 (high security) prisons," he said. The IPA is intending to meet the permanent representative of Turkey to the United Nations Office in Geneva as soon as possible to urge the Turkish government to release the publisher immediately.

Smith-Simonsen was joined in his appeal by PEN America's Freedom to Write Director Larry Siems, who called Zarakolu "an internationally-recognized defender of the right to write and publish freely." "It is essential not to confuse the efforts of those who, like Ragip Zarakolu, have worked to bring down barriers of censorship in Turkey with those who press political agendas through violence," said Siems. "We emphatically protest his arrest."

Poet and essayist Peter Balakian, whose memoir, *Black Dog of Fate*, was published in Turkey by Belge, called the arrest "a blow to Turkey's efforts to create a free and open society."

"Ragip Zarakolu has been honored by almost every leading publishing organization in the world for his courage, his patience, his intellectual rigor and his pursuit of genuine democracy," said Balakian. "For over four decades Ragip and his late wife and son have been at the cutting edge of social change in Turkey, publishing books on subjects that the government has deemed taboo – especially subjects dealing with minority issues in Turkey and the histories of minority cultures."

Zarakolu founded Belge with his wife Ayse Nur, who received the PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award in 1997, and died

2002. Goldsmith, a writer and historian, said that "if Zarakolu is not given his freedom, then all of us give up our freedom to write. If Zarakolu is not free, then none of us are free."

Zarakolu will be incarcerated at an F-type prison that hosts "dangerous convicts and prisoners" in the northwestern province of Kocaeli, alongside 17 other suspects who were also arrested for their alleged links to the KCK.

The publisher's lawyer, Özcan Kiliç, told the Hürriyet Daily News that they had issued a petition to the Justice Ministry for his client to be imprisoned in the same place as his son, Deniz Zarakolu, who is also under arrest in the Thracian province of Edirne.

Zarakolu, 65, suffers from various health problems, and there are difficulties regarding adequate medical treatment of patients in F-type prisons, Kiliç said, adding that they were worried by the prospect of the activist being forced to serve time in such a penitentiary.

"Every act can turn into a disciplinary matter. Bans could be issued on letters, books, journals and, even more importantly, on meeting with visitors. There are a great many lawsuits filed in the European Court of Human Rights for this reason," Kiliç said.

Zarakolu was arrested due to a public speech he gave in Istanbul in 2010 at the political academy of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), which is primarily focused on the Kurdish issue. An anonymous source informed on him, according to Kiliç.

(Hürriyet contributed to this report.)

## AGBU Youth France Carries out Student Mission in Armenia

PARIS – From August 1 to 30, AGBU Youth France (UGAB Jeunes) visited Armenia to implement a program, titled "Armenia, Land of Life." Thirty-two young volunteers of Armenian and French origin, ages 18-26, undertook a number of humanitarian, environmental, construction, healthcare and educational programs in different regions of Armenia and Karabagh. The group was led by AGBU Youth France head Raffi Der Agopian, an active AGBU member and a 2010 New York Summer Intern Program (NYSIP) participant.

The volunteers spent 10 days in Karabagh, where they renovated the two-floor youth center of Berdzor in the Kashatagh region. Originally built in 1999 by the Armenian Church, the center was later given to the youth of the region to serve as a cultural center. The AGBU youth also visited the region's only French-speaking club, situated in the Charles Aznavour School in the capital city of Stepanakert. During their visit to the school, the group donated more than 250 books in French, including dictionaries, textbooks and classics of French literature. The group also donated school stationery and paper to the children of the Haykavan Village School.

To raise awareness of environmental issues, AGBU Youth France, together with ACBA Credit-Agricole Bank, organized a cleanup of a Lake Sevan beach and the area around the medieval Armenian church on the shores of the lake. The young volunteers also distributed dental hygiene products to the children of Huys Orphanage in Gumri.

While in Armenia, the group also had the opportunity to meet with high-profile individuals who gave them a full picture of Armenia and its cultural and civic life, including Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, Armenian Parliament Speaker Hovik Abrahamian and Hayk Demoyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum.



AGBU Youth France volunteers during their cleanup of the shores of Lake Sevan, Armenia

## Merkel, Medvedev Open Gas Pipeline

BERLIN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The leaders of Germany and Russia are officially opening a 7.4 billion euro (\$10.2 billion) natural gas pipeline that directly links western Europe with Siberia's vast gas reserves.

Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Dmitry Medvedev met Tuesday, November 8, in the village of Lubmin on Germany's Baltic Sea coast, where the 1,200-kilometer (760-mile) Nord Stream underwater pipeline reaches land.

French Prime Minister Francois Fillon and his Dutch counterpart, Mark Rutte, also attended the ceremony as a sign of the political importance of Europe's newest energy link, meant to strengthen the security of the gas supply, the Associated Press reported.

The pipeline is to ferry the gas from near St. Petersburg under the Baltic Sea to Lubmin by circumventing traditional overland transit routes in Poland and Ukraine.



# Community News

## Keene State College Students Make Comparative Analysis of Armenian Genocide

KEENE, N.H. (PanARMENIAN.Net) — This past weekend, Keene State College hosted the prestigious Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) Northeast Undergraduate Research Conference.

The conference featured presentations, posters and performances from more than 150 students from Keene State College, as well as SUNY Geneseo, University of Maine Farmington, Eastern Connecticut State University, Ramapo College of New Jersey and Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

A total of 34 Keene State College students participated, featuring a broad array of research projects that explored subjects such as affects of toxins on frog embryos, a look at biodiesel versus diesel and a comparative analysis of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust, the college said on its website.

“Keene State College is a leader in undergraduate research. Our students are actively engaged in a wide range of research, which includes studies funded through the Office of Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) within the National Science Foundation, and IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) though the National Institutes of Health,” said provost of Keene State College, Emile Netzhammer. “This conference presented the opportunity for our students and faculty to exchange information about the work that is being done among leading liberal arts colleges in the Northeast. I look forward to following the progress that our students make and the wisdom they gain from their experience here at Keene State.”

## Der Mugrdechian and Students to Address ‘Discovering Armenia’ At Fresno State

FRESNO — Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, director of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, and 14 students who traveled to Armenia last summer, will speak about their trip in an illustrated lecture, “Discovering Armenia: A Student and Faculty Perspective” at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 16, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 101, on the Fresno State campus.

The presentation is the third of the Fall 2011 Armenian Studies Program Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State. The presentation is part of International Education Week at Fresno State.

Der Mugrdechian will present video excerpts from the trip and also show photos from the various sites visited. Students will discuss their impressions from the trip, discussing what were their most memorable moments.

In May, Der Mugrdechian led his sixth student group to Armenia for a two-and-a-half week stay. Fourteen Fresno State students joined him on the adventure, visiting many of Armenia’s historic sites, as well as learning about the people and culture of Armenia. Participants included: Denise Altounian, Phillip Der Mugrdechian, Kyle Gaede, Zachary Gavroian, Nishan Karagozian, Tamar Karkazian, Andrew Khasigian, Kristina Koroyan, Heidi Lea, Sarkis Manavazian, Michael Rettig, Kimberly Santikian, Ann Soghomonian and David Tataryan.

Admission to the lecture is free.



Osep Sarafian

## Osep Sarafian Presents Legacy Of Armenian Architecture in Ottoman Empire

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. — The Detroit-Armenian community responded in magnificent fashion to the lecture on Friday, October 21, by well-known area architect Osep Sarafian on the topic, “The Legacy of Armenian Architecture In the Ottoman Empire.”

The evening was co-hosted by the Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AES), Michigan Section, the Cultural Society of Armenians from Istanbul (CSAI) and the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA). It was held in the library of the Alex and Marie Manoogian AGBU School.

Sarafian has been an outstanding fixture in the Detroit area since his arrival here from Istanbul in 1980. Together with wife, Dr. Nadya Sarafian, retired principal of the AGBU Day School, the Sarafians are one of this area’s premiere couples. The generous giving of their immense intellectual talent for the enrichment of this community reaches beyond the boundaries of Michigan.

More than 125 people gave their rapt attention to the speaker, all anxiously wanting to know just who these Armenian architects who transformed the Turkish landscape with their amazing buildings were. Sarafian unfolded the no-longer secret details of the men who shared the same Armenian blood as those in the audience, bringing prestige to the word “Armenian” through their art of architecture.

Sarafian was introduced by fellow member in the Engineers and Scientists group, George Mouradian, who referred to him as a modest, energetic gentleman who began his career in Istanbul, operating his own firm there for 23 years. He stated, “Sarafian has won numerous awards for his professional endeavors which have been published in many professional books and magazines. He says he is retired but don’t believe it.”

Sarafian, 79, was born to Armenian parents in Istanbul. He graduated from the Technical University of Istanbul with a master’s degree as an architect/engineer in 1956. Following that he received a scholarship from University of Pennsylvania to study in the US, graduating with a second master’s degree, this one in urban planning.

Upon returning to Istanbul, for 22 years, he ran his own private architectural office. Primarily he designed hospitals, schools, university campuses, sports facilities, stadiums, governmental buildings and commercial and tourist facilities in Turkey.

In 1980 the Sarafian family immigrated to Michigan and Osep was offered a job at the renowned Minoru Yamasaki Association architectural firm where he worked as a vice president until retirement in 1994.

It was on a trip to Istanbul on his way to Armenia in the spring of 2010 that Sarafian was pleasantly surprised to find an extraordinary first-ever exhibition in Turkey. The subject was the works of Armenian architects during the Westernization period of the Ottoman Empire.

The same exhibit was displayed at three different galleries in Istanbul, later traveling to Ankara, and because of popular demand it was then transported to Yerevan where it was welcomed with great enthusiasm.

What a wonderful tool for building friendly relations between the Turkish and Armenian peoples, giving recognition to Armenians who built magnificent structures.

see ARCHITECTURE, page 7

## AUA 20th Anniversary Celebration in Silicon Valley Hosted by Synopsys Corporation

SUNNYVALE, Calif. — On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the American University of Armenia (AUA), the Synopsys Corporation hosted a special evening, bringing together AUA’s leadership and many of the dedicated supporters who have helped AUA to flourish. The event highlighted the role of higher education and technology in securing Armenia’s future. It was a very informative and enjoyable evening that witnessed the exchange of many valuable ideas. The attendees had the opportunity to meet the AUA president, members of its Board of Trustees and other officials from AUA and Synopsys.

Bruce Janigian, AUA vice president of development and government relations, opened the evening: “Tonight you will join with the American University of Armenia, a dream which became reality 20 years ago and which is now helping the youth of Armenia to achieve its dreams. Tonight you are standing on the bridge to the future of Armenia.” He emphasized that AUA is helping a new nation to realize a future of progress and achievement that extends all the way to the Silicon Valley, where the intellect and enterprise of young Armenians are helping to design the future of information technology.

Synopsys CEO, Art de Geus, welcomed the guests and highlighted his company’s business relationship with Armenia and the vital access to qualified professionals that the AUA produces. He noted that being technically strong is not enough. For a corporation like Synopsys, which employs 550 scientists and engineers in Armenia, the Western-style management skills provided by AUA are essential to its workforce and future.

Dr. Judson King, the chair of the Board of the American University of Armenia Corporation, former provost and senior vice president of the University of California (UC) Office of the President, and currently the director of the University of California’s Center for Studies in Higher Education, introduced the trustees to the guests and highlighted the importance of the relationship between UC and AUA.

AUA’s President Dr. Bruce Boghosian spoke about AUA’s accomplishments, its recent growth and future development. “Looking to the future, AUA is proposing to expand its impact by adding an undergraduate program, with approximately 300 students in each year of a four-year program, beginning in September 2013 and graduating our first class in June of 2017. At that point, we will have 1,200 undergraduate students, along with 400 graduate students, for a total student body of 1,600 — four times our current size,” he said.

Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian, founding dean and current interim provost and trustee, shared the perspectives of a founder and remarked that the university is a purposeful and mature institution moving ahead with major substantive growth and expansion.

AUA Trustee, AGBU Central Board member and chief architect of Synopsys, Yervant Zorian, put AUA into the context of global education for Armenian communities around the world.

The direct participation of AUA’s dean of the College of Engineering, Dr. Aram Hajian, and associate dean of the Department of English Programs, Dr. Catherine Buon, along with graduates and students from the campus via video-conferencing, made the evening unique.

The event was enriched with the presentation of a cultural program. The Mazmanian Family quartet performed a series of Armenian musical pieces, followed by the performance of the Bay Area Arax dance group.

The evening closed with the song *Erebouni Yerevan* and the applause of the audience, who left the reception with eagerness to learn more about AUA and its ongoing and future successes, as well as the work it does to shape the future of Armenia’s youth.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# St. James Church Celebrates 55th Anniversary in Virginia

**By Aram Arkun**  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

RICHMOND, Va. — Approximately 100 guests gathered to celebrate the 55th anniversary of St. James Armenian Church with a musical program, speakers and dinner.

Master of ceremonies Linda Sharigian reminisced about the early days of the church, and Parish Council Chairman Rob Norris praised the efforts of all those who contributed to the foundation and development of the church. Particular attention was paid to the hardworking members of the Ladies Auxiliary, now called the Women's Guild, and awards of appreciation were bestowed upon Roxie Kricorian, secretary of the church, though she was absent that day due to health reasons, and Lucy Grey, chair of the Women's Guild.

Armine Khachatryan, a graduate of the Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory, per-

formed various Armenian classical and folk pieces on the piano, while Vivian Chakarian, an editor of the Central News Division of the Voice of America and member of the choirs of Sourp Khach and Saint Mary Armenian Churches in the Washington, DC, area, sang a number of traditional Armenian pieces.

Prior pastor Fr. Hovsep Karapetyan, now the pastor of St. Mary Armenian Church, came to extol the efforts of the local community, while the present pastor, Fr. Mesrob Hovsepian, expressed his thanks for the active participation of the local Armenians. Fr. Simeon Odabashian, the vicar general of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), who came from New York to participate in the festive evening and to celebrate the Divine Liturgy the next day, expressed his admiration at the way the small community had come together to put on a major event as a four-day food festival. He also emphasized that being part of the larger worldwide Church of Armenia gave the community extra support and strength.



Fr. Mesrob Hovsepian with Melanie Kernekian

## AMAA Gala Honors Judge Marvin R. Baxter

**By Phyllis Hamo**

LOS ANGELES — The October 15 gala banquet of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), titled "Nine Decades of Christian Faith and Service," and held at the Sheraton Universal Hotel, assembled together in one room Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia; Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, prelate of the Western Prelacy; Archbishop Hovnan Derderian,

Primate of the Western Diocese; Fr. Krikor Chahinian, pastor of Glendale's St. Gregory Armenian Catholic Church; a large assemblage of Armenian Evangelical pastors from Armenia, Europe, the Middle East, the US and Canada and keynote speaker Marvin R. Baxter, associate justice of the California Supreme Court.

After a welcome by Executive Director of the AMAA Levon Filian, the Master of Ceremonies team of Ken Kevorkian and Joe Stein alternated introductions. In his keynote address, Baxter, who was appointed to the court by Gov. George

Deukmejian in 1991, chronicled the story of a California Supreme Court Justice during the Gold Rush era.

AMAA President Dr. H. Steven Aharonian recognized Rev. Rene Leonian for his 17-year mission of service in Armenia and also thanked his wife, Sylvie Leonian, a pharmacist, who worked at the AMAA's Yerevan Medical Clinic.

The musical program was coordinated by Rev. Nerses Balabanian, who accompanied tenor Raffi Kerbabian and soprano Salpi Keleshian.

Derderian delivered an uplifting spiritual message to the audience.

Rev. Mgrditch Melkonian, moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, introduced Catholicos Aram I who was in California from Antelias, Lebanon for a 20-day official Pontifical visit.

Joyce Stein, on behalf of the AMAA and in honor of Aram I, announced that the AMAA has established a special fund for Haigazian University to offer a course for two years through its Center for

Continuing Education to seminary students of the Great House of Cilicia at Antelias.

She commended Harry and Cheryl Nadjarian who made a \$10,000 contribution to support the continuing education of priests at Haigazian University in Beirut.

Currently there are 145 Armenian Evangelical churches and fellowships worldwide, Haigazian University, 25 Armenian Evangelical schools, the Children's Milk Fund, summer and day camps for 5,800 children in Armenia and Karabagh, medical and dental clinics, sponsorships of needy children and tuition aid through the AMAA Child Education Program.

Rev. Joe Matossian of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America asked all of the clergy to approach the stage and was surrounded by priests and pastors from near and far as he offered the closing benediction.



Judge Marvin Baxter

## St. David Armenian Church Women's Guild Holds Meeting to Discuss Upcoming Events

BOCA RATON, Fla. — On Saturday, October 22, the Women's Guild members of St. David Armenian Church held a general meeting to discuss the upcoming events and activities in the community, such as the Annual Food Festival, Variety Show, Monthly 50/50 Dinners, Women's Guild Christmas Party, Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show, etc. The meeting was chaired by Carol Norigian. She stressed the importance of the Christian Education Program in the community initiated by Fr. Nareg Berberian, which created great enthusiasm among the community members.

More than 35 people participate each week to learn about the faith and the theology of the

Armenian Church. Later, Berberian joined the Guild meeting. He thanked the parishioners for responding positively to the Christian Education Program and stressed the importance of the education of lay ministers in the church. Besides organizing activities for the church, he recommended a day retreat on Friday, March 16 through 17, during the Lenten Season, to strengthen their spiritual lives, which will take place at the Duncun Conference Center in Delray Beach.

Berberian was invited to deliver a lecture on the importance of the main vessels on the Holy Altar. He explained in details each item placed on the altar: its origin and history.

### OBITUARY

## Barry Kolgian

WATERTOWN — Barry Kolgian died suddenly on November 1. He was born on November 22, 1931 to John and Arpeny (Caragulian) Kolgian in Watertown. He was 79.

He was the brother of Lois Kolgian of Watertown and the late Joanne Guleserian. He is also survived by niece, Joy Guleserian Foley, and her husband Michael of Waltham and nephew, Tad Guleserian, and his wife Kelley of Sudbury and great-nephews and niece Liam Kolgian Foley, Ava Joanne and Luke Aram Guleserian.

He was a member of Pequossette Lodge AF & AM in Watertown and he was a member and past commander of the Knights of Vartan, Ararat Lodge #1.

Kolgian ran a family business in Brookline for many years along with his sister, Lois, continuing the business that their father began in the 1920s. The Kolgian Oriental Rug Galleries has been a community fixture in the area for more than 80 years.

Funeral services were held at St. James Armenian Church in Watertown on Friday, November 4, followed by interment in the family plot at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in his



Barry Kolgian

memory to St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472.

Arrangements were by the Giragosian Funeral Home in Watertown and condolences may be written at giragosianfuneralhome.com.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Osep Sarafian Presents Legacy of Armenian Architecture in Ottoman Empire

ARCHITECTURE, from page 5

Sarafian recalled during the 1970s, Para Tuglaci had published a book on the life and works of the renowned and well-respected Ottoman architect, Mimar Sinan, and had revealed with documents and verifications that Sinan was the son of an Armenian family from Gesaria who was taken from his family when he was a young boy and was raised as a Moslem Turk.

Art historian Professor Suheyi could not bear to think of Sinan as an Armenian and he took Tuglaciyan to court for making false Armenian propaganda, but he lost his case.

The word "Armenian" often became a derogatory adjective and creative people were never given credit for their accomplishments as often their names were changed of their Armenianism.

The shooting of Hrant Dink caused an awakening in Istanbul in the Armenian youth who are now researching their pasts and courageously writing about it. Some intellectual Turkish writers now admit that "Without Armenians the Ottoman Culture would have been rather plain."

Turkish architect Hasan Kuruyazici decided to publish a book highlighting the input of Armenian architects during the Westernization period of the Ottoman Empire, corresponding

to the 18th and 19th centuries. The books created a sensational surprise because it showed all the beautiful architecture was designed and built mostly by Armenians, a reality no one could deny.

With Kuruyazici and with the sponsorship of the Hrant Dink Foundation and Haycar Association (The Association of Armenian architects and engineers), the pictures of the book are made into large panels and are traveling from city to city. They are making public all the Armenian architects whose names before were not revealed.

The exhibition was the topic of Sarafian's lecture. He expressed his gratitude to Nazaret Binatli and to Kuruyazici who did not hesitate to give him a copy of the pictures he had taken.

Sarafian introduced 40 Armenian architects and showed a slide presentation of their best-known works which were included in the exhibition.

The photos took one's breath away with their symmetry and beauty. Exterior and interior views were offered, leaving the viewer to wonder in amazement at the talent of the architects who in the beginning had no formal school to attend to learn their craft.

The Balian were certainly among the most prominent figures among these architects, according to research conducted by Kevork

Pamukciyan. Their genealogy starts somewhere back in the late 1700s. Nine architects carried this family name. They continued a productive and effective professional life for almost a century.

The Balian were involved in the design and construction of numerous large-scale buildings. Apart from a few Armenian churches, the entirety of Balian designs belong to palaces and state institutions.

Architect, Prof. Afife Batfur writes in her book, *An Influential Name in the 19th Century Ottoman Architecture: The Balian*, "The architectural style and practices of the Balian provide important clues to comprehending the content and program of Westernization in the Ottoman Empire."

The Balian operated as a private architectural office although they were not given the title of "Chief Architect." They were called "kalfas, chief builders. They had learned their skills through practice since no formal schools of training were available at the time."

The Balian were community leaders presiding over the Istanbul-Armenian community

reaching the peak of their power in the early part of the 20th century. They engaged in rebuilding churches, monasteries, supporting preachers, printing books and establishing



Osep Sarafian, right, and Mike Arzoumanian

schools thus revitalizing the Armenian community.

Garabed Balian is the architect of Dolmabahce Palace. Some of Krikor Kalfa's important works include the Imperial Mint, the Valide Sultan Palace, St. Mary Church in Kumkapi and Taksim Artillery Barracks.

Garabed Balian sent his sons, Nigoghos, Hagop and Sarkis, to Paris for formal professional studies. Bafur states that: "The architectural style of Sarkis Bey and his brothers displays a rich background of knowledge and unique interpretations in a spectrum extending from a classical concept to the diversity of the eclectic approach. These architects' designed buildings should be considered touchstones in the study of late Ottoman architecture."

It is important to note the Balian hired thousands of Armenians in the construction of their designs, even bringing men from outside villages to work. Factories were built where Armenians manufactured furniture and fabric for the structures. All in all a remarkable, well-organized machine incorporating design, construction and fine furnishings. Predominately Hye all the way.

Since retirement, Sarafian has devoted all his time to speed up the recovery of Armenia. He has made 40 trips there for that purpose. He has focused his efforts to raise funds for specific projects through the World Bank. So far he has raised \$660,000, enabling projects in 83 villages with a construction cost of \$9,000,000.

His related mission is to assist architects in Armenia to improve the quality of their new construction by using International Codes and Standards, as Armenia is located in an earthquake-prone location.

Sarafian is a member of the International Union of Architects. He is an honorary member of the AGBU and a member of the Liturgical Arts and Architecture Commission of the Eastern Diocese.

He also has membership in a number of non-profit and charitable organizations. He is on the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Academy of Sciences as well as on the Board of Directors of AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School, St. John Armenian Church in Southfield, Armenian Apostolic Society, Armenian Assembly of America, Friends of Yerevan State University, Board of Trustees of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, Cultural Society of Armenians from Istanbul and AESA.

Sarafian is devoted to extending a helping hand to the rebirth of Armenia. Sharing the excitement, the joy and the happiness of the local people gives him a fulfillment that helps him to stay young, healthy and happy. What a remarkable human being.

It was an impressive group of slides attributed to these Armenian architects. A visit to Istanbul would surely be a worthwhile investment to tour these magnificent structures attributed to the talent and vision of Armenian architects.

The Sarafians are the grandparents of six. An older daughter is an obstetrician and gynecologist, the second daughter is an architect, with a master's degree, and their son is an economist with a MBA who works for Citigroup in New York.

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## New York METRO

# Women's Guild Hosts Annual Fall Symposium at Diocesan Center

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK — “The Women’s Guild Central Council (WGCC) has always been the backbone of the church,” said Rita Oscherician, coordinator and chair of the organization’s 25th anniversary fall symposium, which took place at the Diocesan Center on Saturday, October 29.

She pointed out that the more than 30 women from parishes in the Eastern Diocesan who attended this symposium, and the day’s “Crosses + Icons” art exhibition, “have been the leaders in our church community for many years.”

Titled “God’s Call, Your Response: Lay Leadership Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow,” the daylong gathering drew a number of participants despite the season’s first snow storm that Saturday. The day began with a prayer, led by Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian, followed by the presentation of flowers to the current Executive Board members from the first Women’s Guild Central Council in 1986 under the chairmanship of Lucy Dabagian.

Elizabeth Sahagian, one of the original members, paid special tribute to the founding mem-

### A Dynamic Panel Discussion

A dynamic panel discussion was held later in the afternoon, moderated by Arda Haratunian, who has had a 25-year career in communications, public affairs and public policy analysis. She outlined a package for leadership which includes imagination, thought and communication, collaboration, credibility, true commitment, sincerity and leading by example.

Carol B. Aslanian, senior vice president of Aslanian Market Research, the research division of Education Dynamics, related that though she did not grow up in the Armenian Church, she grew up in a loving Armenian family. She said that her life was “turned around” when she went to Armenia, and when in 1991 she met Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) President Louise Simone. “As I get older, I want to do more with my Armenian heritage,” she said, adding that she is currently mentoring a young Armenian.

Dr. Lynn T. Cetin, a pediatrician, instructor and full partner at Pro Health Care Associates, LLP, in Lake Success, spoke about the role of the choir and the ACYOA in her young adult life. For four consecutive years, she was the youngest female chair of the Holy Martyrs Church parish council in Bayside. She noted that she was “not very Armenian” when she attended the University of Pennsylvania, but said that three women — Lillian Chapian, Lynn Jamie and Mary Selvinazian — helped her learn about her Armenian heritage. “You don’t have to be at the helm to lead,” she said. “You lead by example.”

Goshgarian, in her comments as a panel member, emphasized that the focus of the Armenian people should extend beyond tragedies like the Genocide to include a rich cultural experience, such as Armenian language lessons and the arts. “A community becomes stronger with these attributes,” she said. Vartanian added that the pool of lay leaders should be expanded so that the same people are not always called upon to serve.

In the question-and-answer session, it was pointed out that there should be more outreach programs in the community, including help to the elderly and more opportunities for the youth. In conclusion, Haratunian said “there’s a role for every one of us in our church. It’s much easier now to be Armenian than it was 20 years ago.”

The Very Rev. Simeon Odabashian, diocesan vicar and WGCC clergy advisor, brought greetings from the Diocesan Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, who was away on a pilgrimage to Diarbekir (Dikranakert), Turkey, for the re-consecration of St. Giragos Armenian Church. Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian, addressing the participants, said, “You are the arms of our church. Bring that light and your Christian values to our community.”

### Crosses + Icons: Celebrating Spirituality

At the conclusion of the symposium, participants attended the opening of the “Crosses + Icons” art exhibition in the Diocese’s Gulbenkian Hall. The exhibition — curated by Vicki Hovanessian, collector and director of VH Contemporary Art, with the collaboration of Raphy Sarkissian, a faculty member at the School of the Visual Arts in New York — featured works by four Yerevan-based artists addressing the idea of “spirituality through individually developed visual methods.”

The artists and their artwork included the iconic mastery of Sarkis Hamalbashyan, the abstract works of both Hamlet Hovsepian and Mariam Khachatryan (Moko) and the khachkars of Ararat Sarkissian. Both Hamalbashian and Sarkisyan have received medals from the Armenian government.

“Crosses and icons as powerful metaphors of our transient, material bodies connect us to our immaterial, spiritual selves,” said Hovanessian.



Art exhibition curator Vicki Hovanessian (third from left) with members of the Women’s Guild

Sarkissian said that this exhibition “is a slice of Vicki Hovanessian’s resolute commitment in spreading the art creativity of Yerevan around the world.”

Hovanessian said that the WGCC asked her to organize the art exhibition. “The reason I accepted was because I really believe in the work and mission of this selfless and dedicated group of women,” she said. “My mission in showcasing

these artists from Armenia, with whom I’ve been working for 15 years, is to keep them on the soil of their homeland.”

Oscherician said the event was characterized by “warm fellowship, friendship and dedication to future goals. It strengthened our organization’s resolve to mentor young women and bring them into the mainstream of church activities.”



Women’s Guild fall symposium participants pose for a photo during lunch.

bers of the Primate’s Women’s Advisory Council, the precursor to the WGCC, including Lucy Dabagian, Ruth Bedevian, Katherine Papalian, Sarah Kapikian, the late Dovie Tilbian and Anne Ajamian.

Following lunch, Dr. Roberta Ervine, professor of Armenian Studies at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, started the symposium with an inspiring address celebrating the women saints throughout the history of the Armenian Church. “Forty-three days of the church year are devoted to celebrating women,” she said. “This is one of the uniting themes of the church.”

She pointed out that these women saints came from royalty, wealthy and middle class families, as well as from the military, business and clergy groups. The majority were virgins or married, but there were also widows, prostitutes and children among them.

“We celebrate them because each made a choice, a decision not to let society decide their life, not to be like everyone else, but to decide what they wanted to be,” she said. “They made the choice to be an Armenian Christian. They have inspired Armenians and non-Armenians alike.”

Dr. Rachel Goshgarian, formerly director of the Diocese’s Zohrab Information Center and currently an assistant professor at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, spoke about increasing youth participation. She stressed that the most successful programs are “innovations in an established organization that push our church in a new direction. We need to encourage the youth on how to participate.”

Dr. Nicole E. Vartanian, senior advisor for policy and program development in the provost’s office at Hunter College, spoke about last summer’s Diocesan youth pilgrimage to Jerusalem. “The trip was dedicated to the concept of encouraging the youth to serve their communities. The future of the church depends on passing the torch to the youth and bringing young women to these conferences,” she said.



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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# George and Archie Mathosian: Brothers in Arms

ADVANCE, N.C. — America's WWII veterans are in their 80s and 90s and dying off at an alarming rate. Today, there are several organizations rushing to preserve the personal accounts of those brave American veterans who risked their lives to assure the world would be free from Nazi domination. When our country needed volunteers to fight the Nazis and Japanese, many American Armenians volunteered for the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force. This article is the story of two brave American Armenians who risked their lives to assure future generations would live free. In the introduction we can suggest to all American Armenians that it is not too late to document the histories of their brave relatives from the WWII so they too can be remembered for their role in preserving democracy.

The years 2008 and 2009 were not good years for the Mathosian family. My father, George Mathosian, and his brother, Archie Mathosian, passed on within months of each other. Both were in their 80s. Both were much loved and respected by family and friends. They were easygoing people with a gusto for life and a kind word for all. George and Archie served America during World War II by entering US military service. George was in the US Army and Archie was in the Army Air Force.

The two brothers saw much action; George through the windshield of his military command car while driving over the bombed out roads of France, Belgium and Germany and Archie from his rocky seat in a B-17 bomber flying high over European cities and countryside.

Like many of their generation they didn't ask for praise or accolades for serving their country. When asked about their military days they replied by simply saying they had done their duty for their country. It always took a little pressure to get details, which we were anxious to hear. This is their story and I hope it sparks an interest in readers to retrace the steps of soldiers in their families, America's citizen soldiers.

**George Mathosian, Tec 5 749th Tank Battalion Service Company, by Joseph (Joey) Steuber, George Mathosian's grandson:**

For years our family has heard war stories told by one man time and time again. The stories never alter, yet the high-level of our attention to his words never fails. How is it that these stories that we have heard so many times can still captivate our minds every time he tells them? The answer is simple: courage. The courage that is personified in those stories is overwhelming, and knowing that the courage belongs to one of our beloved family members makes it that more captivating. That family member is George John Mathosian. Although the family has heard his many stories of the war, many don't know the full story of his journeys during the war, only bits and pieces of where he was and what he did. Luckily, George Mathosian took time out of his busy schedule to sit down and talk with me to clear up some of these mysteries.

Drafted into the military in 1943 at the age of 21, George first applied to serve in the Navy. "I applied to the Navy first, but I was denied because I did not have enough molars in my mouth," George said with a loud laugh. "Can you imagine that, I couldn't join the Navy because I didn't have enough molars in my mouth." Soon after George joined the United States Army.

He started off his journey at Camp Bowie, Texas, where he had basic training. For six weeks of that training George was sent to school to learn the skills of a high-speed radio operator, which would be his position for the duration of the war. After basic training, George remained in Texas for about seven months, waiting for when he would be called to action. Finally, he was called to duty and was shipped off to Europe on a weeklong boat ride to England on a 5,000-man troop ship.

When he finally arrived in England, George got to see the beauty of England. "It was a beautiful place, real country-like, with beautiful homes. The first thing I noticed were the pretty hedges." But soon George would have to leave England. He was assigned to the 749th Tank Battalion, attached to the 4th Armored

**Text by Mark Mathosian and Joey Steuber**



George Mathosian, left, and Archie Mathosian

Division, Third Army; led by General George S. Patton. His company was composed of 150 men.

From England George was shipped to France, on June 26th, 1944, 20 days after D-Day. After that George's company was sent north to Belgium, where their objective was to suppress German soldiers. After Belgium his company moved south to France, and then entered Northern Germany. Throughout Belgium, Germany and France George's company saw combat day in and day out. His company received many casualties, and also had many soldiers taken prisoner. In such conditions one would think that a soldier would be under extreme stress, but not George. "I actually didn't have much stress. I was too busy, too

most feared German tanks because of their incredible strength) were spotted approaching George's immobilized company. "We were all scared," said George. "Death or capture awaited us, and there wasn't a thing we could do about it." Then the company's prayers were answered. "Suddenly we see three American airplanes (P-40's) fly overhead," said George with a wide grin on his face. "They bombed the hell out of those tanks, thank God. That was a close one."

Although George was put in harm's way in that case, one of the other events that George encountered that may have been even scarier was the disappearance of his younger brother, Archie. George was first told that his brother was missing just as his company entered

heard about the capture of Archie, I felt feelings of revenge towards the Germans because they got my brother," said George.

A normal day of work for George consisted of basically listening. He listened to all of the radio signals that came in on the company's radio. Once he received a proper signal he would then write out the Morse code by hand, and then give the code to the decoders, who would pass it along to the superior officers. After receiving a reply from the officers, George would then type back the response message to the corresponding company. His job lasted 24-hours a day, since the signals could/would come in at any moment. George even had to sleep with his earphones on his head, since he was the only radio operator in a company of 150 men.

There were many different aspects in the lifestyle of George during World War II. Communication back to his family went through V-mail (the soldiers mail service), but he rarely wrote to his family, for he was constantly on the move. And what about food? As far as the quality of food, well, it was not the Armenian cuisine George loved. He described the food as "terrible, but you had to eat something." In addition to rations, George was lucky enough to be accompanied by one of his long-time "friends" during the war, cigarettes. And what kind of entertainment did George have during the war? "Dog fights," he said, the kind between airplanes, where enemy planes attempt to shoot the other down. "I never saw the Americans lose, not once." Besides the dog fights, George and his fellow soldiers also listened to the radio, mostly the BBC.

Towards the end of the European campaign, George's company was steadily moving closer and closer to Berlin, the capital of Nazi Germany. With only 20 miles to go until Berlin, George, along with all of the American forces, stopped and let the Russians capture the city. The war was over and George would finally get his chance to go home.

While waiting to get picked up to go back to the United States, George stayed for two months in Marseilles, France. Close to Marseilles was a city with a group of Armenians, who fed George many classic



Archie Mathosian flew most missions in a B-17 bomber named Heavenly Days.

busy on the radio."

It was in Germany that George encountered his "closest call" with enemy Germans. Stranded (along with tanks and automobiles) without gas or ammunition, George was the first man of his company to spot dust rising from the valley below his company. The company's fears would soon come true, when three German Royal Tiger Tanks (which were the

Germany. For a whole week George had no idea of the state of his brother, yet his responsibilities to his company and nation did not fail, for George still did his job in the diligent and precise way that his superiors and fellow soldiers had known him to do. Finally George received news of the status his brother, who had been captured by the Germans after his plane had been shot down. "Whenever I first

Armenian dishes. But soon George was shipped back to Fort Dix, NJ, where he was discharged. He was now back in the Bronx, working as the assistant manager at Woolworth's. In fact, when George visited Woolworth's corporate office, he was shocked to see his name on a bronze plaque for "Woolworth's Service Men."

When asked whether his military experience





COMMUNITY NEWS

has influenced his views about war, George answered in his typical, passive form. "I don't care. The way I see it is if the country needs you, you do your share. You don't have to be a hero, just do your share."

Part Two

**Archie Mathosian, S/SGT  
US Army Air Force 100th Bomb Group, 351st  
Bomb Squadron**

Archie Mathosian volunteered for the US Army Air Force in February, 1943. He received basic training in Miami, Florida, followed by radio school in South Dakota and gunnery school in Yuma, Ariz.

Archie's plane took enemy fire and was shot down at 30,000 feet.

According to Archie, "We lost four planes from my squadron alone. Two members of my crew, the ball gunner and tail gunner, went down with the plane. The left waist gunner, the one who bailed out before me from the only exit available (the cannon hole), was never heard from again."

Archie said he was the only survivor from the rear of the B-17. He recalls that the jets hit the bombers from the back and below. The tail gunner fired back at the jets on their tail. To the crew it felt like "all hell broke loose."

The right wing had a gaping hole in it. Burning fuel poured into his gun position



George Mathosian received basic training at Camp Bowie in Texas.

Archie recalls that while in gunnery school he had an accident that caused him to be hospitalized. While feeding ammunition into a 50-caliber machine gun during an aerial mission the gun dislodged from its holder and began spraying bullets in the plane. Archie received shrapnel wounds in his left thigh as a result of the mishap.

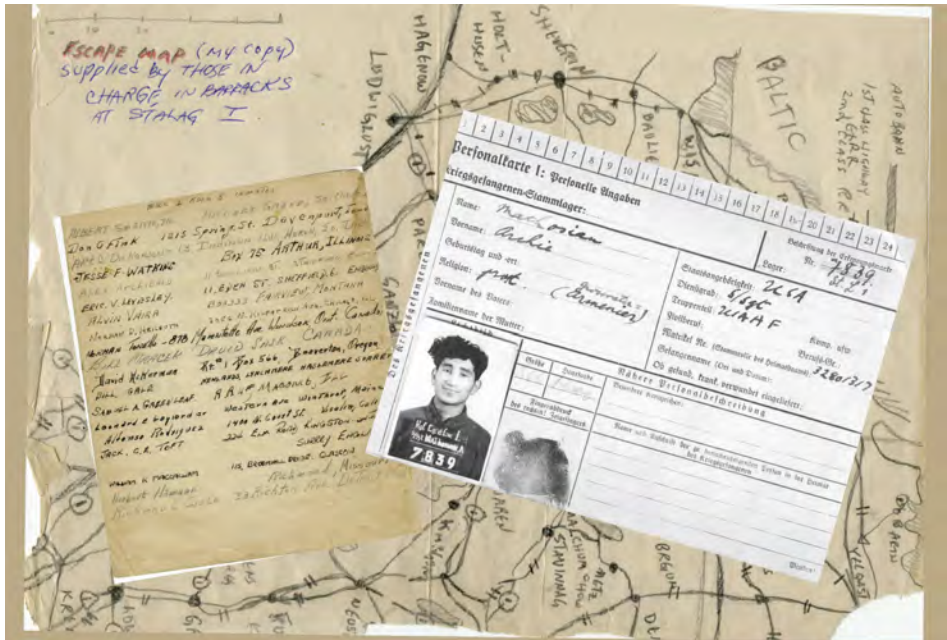
After gunnery school he was assigned to a crew on a B-17 bomber stationed in Thorpe-Abbott, England. He and his crew flew 17 missions without an incident. Then, they went out on the 18th, a fateful mission, and the crews last.

While on a bombing run over Berlin on March 18, 1945 they were attacked by German jets. The jets were ME-262s and M-410s.

through shattered Plexiglass. The explosion catapulted him back against the opposite wall. His flak jacket was still on and he owes his life to the protection it afforded.

The plane took a severe pounding and was descending in a slow spin. The roaring noise caused by the wind and fire was loud enough to suppress the buzzer signal to abandoned ship.

Archie recalls that the left waist gunner was pale and motionless. Archie took the initiative to reach the only escape route at the rear of the plane, the rear door. He tried to release the hinge pins, but to no avail. The left waist gunner looked down at the cannon made hole, put his hand on his ripcord on his chute and disappeared through the hole. The hole in the



Archie Mathosia, POW No. 7839, Stalag Luft 1, Barth, Germany, as well as an escape map

plane was just big enough to permit an exit with a chute on. Archie followed suit and jumped through the hole, ripcord in hand.

Archie does not remember how he felt when leaving the plane. He does recall feeling excruciating pain in his groin caused by the chute strap. Then, he dropped into a small river. Before he hit the river he realized his boots were gone. As he was descending he observed several people running to the edge of the river in his direction.

The river turned out to be a small, very cold stream. When he landed the German citizens immediately began beating him. However, in a short while a single German soldier came along and took him in custody.

The soldier quieted down the crowd and Archie feels he owes his life to that soldier. He was then ushered into a barn where he was reunited with five of his crew members who had successfully parachuted from the plane.

The next part of his journey put him on

route to Stalag Luft 1, a German prisoner of war camp. On route to the camp they rode in a wood burning truck. After a while they disembarked from the truck and they were forced to drop their wet garments. This was almost cata-



Painting by captured US airman of Stalag 1

strophic because of the brutally cold winter weather. The thin garments the crew was wearing was barely enough to survive the bitter cold.

The B-17 crew were forced to walk with their hands above their heads. They were soon met by three burly men on bicycles dressed in black uniforms. They got off their bikes, whip in hand and began beating them.

After receiving a painful slash across his cheek Archie's sense of rage overtook caution. He grabbed the man's arm and forcefully shoved him back. To Archie's surprise, the man stopped whipping him. He later learned that there was a soldier standing behind him with a rifle pointed in his back of his head. Archie and the other crew later surmised that the reason the soldier didn't shoot Archie was because the man with the whip was directly in front of Archie. Had he been shot, his blood and guts would have splattered all over the German.

During his trip to the POW camp he developed large blisters on his feet. He had to be supported by other crew members to get around. Eventually they reached Stalag 1 where they were interned.

Archie and the crew remained POW's from March 18 to May 7, 1945. Stalag Luft 1 prisoners were mostly officers and noncommissioned officers. They were not made to work, however, hunger continuously plagued them.

One day, they heard aircraft. It was the Germans departing from the area. The Russians had arrived. By all reason they were now free. However, they were kept confined for their own protection.

A lone horseman, a Russian colonel, came by and set them free. The barbed wire around the camp was pulled down. Soon, a freedom plane transported them to a tent city in France and eventually they boarded a plane for the United States. Archie became a civilian once more on November 8, 1945.

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# Arts & Living

## Getty Fails to Derail Armenian Church Lawsuit Over Manuscripts

By Mike Boehm

LOS ANGELES (*Los Angeles Times*) — The J. Paul Getty Trust failed Thursday to derail a lawsuit by the Armenian Orthodox Church that accuses the museum of harboring stolen illuminated medieval manuscripts, 755-year-old works that are masterpieces and, to the church, spiritually — and historically — sacred.

After a brief hearing, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Abraham Khan denied the Getty's motion to dismiss the claim. The Los Angeles museum's attorneys argued that the deadline for filing the suit had passed decades ago under the statute of limitations. But the judge said that is "not clear" and ordered four months of mediation, scheduling a March 2 resumption if the case is not settled.

At that point, the judge said, he might focus on the complicated history of the pages' journey from the Turkish region of Cilicia to America during and after the World War I-era Armenian Genocide, in order to determine whether the suit filed last year meets the six-year statute of limitations.

The West Coast branch of the Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America — acting on behalf of the Lebanon-based Holy See of Cilicia — hopes to recover the eight folded pieces of painted parchment that once formed the front pages of a larger work called the *Zeyt'un Gospels*.

The Getty Museum bought the pages in 1994 for \$950,000. The church wants to send them to a museum in Yerevan, capital of the Republic of Armenia, so they can be reunited with the rest of the *Zeyt'un Gospels*, housed there since the 1960s.

Though disappointed with the ruling, the Getty said in a statement, "we are confident that we hold legal title." Lee Boyd, heading the church's legal team, said after the hearing that the Getty failed to investigate the pages' provenance — or ownership history — when it bought them from Armenian American heirs of a man the church says stole the pages in 1916. The *Zeyt'un Gospels* briefly had fallen into his hands amid the upheaval of the Turks' expulsion of the Armenian community from Cilicia, then a region of the Ottoman Empire and now part of Turkey.

Boyd said that the Getty also failed in 1994 to consult with officials of the Matenadaran, the museum in Armenia whose collection includes the rest of the *Bible* created in 1256 by T'oros Roslin, whom the Getty's website describes as "the most accomplished master of Armenian manuscript illumination."

The head of a leading manuscript archive said this week that instead of falling back on legal arguments, the Getty should be addressing ethical issues — and conclude that returning the pages would be proper.

Fr. Columba Stewart, a Benedictine monk and executive director of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minn., said that a whole work of art is better than a divided one, and that when a museum has the power to turn a fragmented manuscript into a complete one, it should do so.

"It's better from an artistic perspective ... it can (then) be studied by scholars as a whole object," said Stewart, whose museum is creating a comprehensive digital archive of Christian manuscripts from around the world, and last month won the National Medal for Museum and Library Service — the federal government's highest award in the field.

Acquiring individual sheets of a manuscript is improper, he said, unless the original work see GETTY, page 17



Writer/director Eric Nazarian directing Jacky Nercessian

## Eric Nazarian First Filmmaker to Use 'Genocide' In a Turkish Movie

ISTANBUL — The name of Armenian-American film director Eric Nazarian is not unknown to Armenia's film audiences. For three consecutive years, 2008-2010, he participated in the Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival. His first feature film as writer/director, "The Blue Hour," won four prizes in 2008: The Golden Apricot for Best Film in the Armenian Panorama, The Ecumenical Jury Award, The Prime Minister's Award and the Diaspora Ministry's Special Award for Directing.

It was a nice surprise to learn that Nazarian's next movie has been made in Turkey, as part of an international omnibus project, titled "Do Not Forget Me, Istanbul." The premiere of this film took place at the Istanbul Film Festival last April

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

and is currently on the festival circuit. In this film, seven different filmmakers present some scenes from the life of various ethnic minorities of Istanbul.

Josephina Markarian, a Greek-Armenian currently living in Istanbul, is also a part of the project. Nazarian, who was born in Armenia and has lived in the US since childhood, presents a personal story of his compatriot who is the descendant of the one of oldest communities of the city on the Bosphorus. In 18 minutes, Nazarian's film, titled "Bolis," captures through images of everyday life, the conversations and brief encounter between a Diaspora-Armenian musician and a Turkish widow. Through their encounter, the tragic history of one nation is unraveled through the musician's story. This is a simple story reminding us about the presence of the past within the modern-day psy-



Jacky Nercessian in a scene from "Bolis"

che of Armenians worldwide and the responsibility of the inheritors on both sides to never forget and speak openly about a history that has been buried but refuses to be forgotten. My conversation with Nazarian intends to reveal some aspects of this unprecedented Armenian-Turkish collaboration.

**Artsvi Bakhchinyan:** Well, Eric, nowadays all kind of Armenian-Turkish see NAZARIAN, page 13

## Violinist Sergey Khachatryan Makes Remarkable Chicago Debut at Mandel Hall

By Michael Cameron

CHICAGO ([chicagoclassicalreview.com](http://chicagoclassicalreview.com)) — Violinist Sergey Khachatryan made his belated Chicago debut Friday night at Mandel Hall.

If you are an area concertgoer, you can be forgiven your probable unfamiliarity with violinist Sergey Khachatryan, even though the young Armenian has amassed an impressive body of credentials that include a victory in the prestigious Sibelius competition at the astonishing age of 15, and a subsequent win at the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels.

His tours of North America have included concerto appearances with most major orchestras, with the notable exception of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. A Ravinia appearance a few years ago has been the only local one before Friday night's long overdue Chicago debut at Mandel Hall at the University of Chicago. There he presented illuminating performances of three sonatas of Beethoven and Shostakovich with his equally-gifted sister, pianist Lusine Khachatryan.

The 26-year-old Armenian seems determined to shed the stereotypical prodigy label, bearing a repertoire almost entirely constructed from



Sergey Khachatryan

the established canonical masterworks. One hopes his seriousness of purpose will one day extend beyond preservation of the canon to its expansion, much like his heroes Oistrakh and Rostropovich.

The duo's program seemed designed to bypass the composers' most commonly acknowledged attributes, while highlighting contrasts between the three pieces in the starkest possible terms. The two early sonatas of Beethoven avoid the bold and heroic posture of many of his best-loved works in favor of high spirits and youthful vigor. The brash, mocking Shostakovich is nowhere to be found in his *Violin Sonata* of 1968. This birthday present for David Oistrakh is one of his late, bleak masterworks, a moving portrait of seething anger and exhausted resignation.

In recordings and in this concert, Sergey Khachatryan's sound is sweet and beguiling, though the volume is not particularly substantial. Fiddle aficionados might be surprised by his sonic footprint, given his current use of the renowned 1740 Ysaÿe Guarneri-owned see DEBUT, page 15





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Eric Nazarian: First Filmmaker to Use ‘Genocide’ in a Turkish Movie

NAZARIAN, from page 12

collaborations do not surprised anyone anymore, but how did you become involved in this project?

**Eric Nazarian:** My friend Cigdem Mater introduced the project to me. Huseyin Karabey, the producer, invited me to participate in the omnibus. The theme of what we remember and what we force ourselves to forget is important for me as an Armenian and as a filmmaker. The goal of the project that was initially pitched to me was to remind Istanbul through these films of the past cultures that contributed to what the city is today. These past cultures have over time been “forgotten,” hence the title “Do Not Forget Me Istanbul.” I felt my story of Armenak’s journey to Bolis (Istanbul) fit thematically. The film is based on my feature screenplay “Bolis” that follows Armenak from Los Angeles to Istanbul to find his grandfather’s oud shop and a family heirloom that disappeared during the Armenian Genocide.

**AB:** You were born in Armenia, your parents came from Iran and now you live in US. What is Armenian Bolis for you?

**EN:** When I was a child, I went to American school on weekdays and Armenian school on weekends. Everything I learned about cinema, literature and art I owe a tremendous gratitude to my beloved father, Haik, Aunt Parik, Uncle Haso and my entire family who raised me to appreciate the cultures and arts of all nations. My first recollection of this term “Bolis” is from my beloved grandfather, Hovhannes, who would tell me these beautiful and textured stories of all the writers and poets of Constantinople, as Istanbul was called, in the days of black-and-white Daguerreotype photographs. He introduced me to Daniel Varoujan, Siamanto, Krikor Zohrab. My Aunt Parik introduced me to Komitas Vartabed. My father, Haik, who was a photographer introduced me to the timeless images of Ara Guler. My grandfather, father and aunt taught me about the amazing Armenian heritage and culture of Bolis. When I went back to make my film, I wanted to pay tribute to this world of “Old Bolis” through music

the archive photos of the Near East Relief during the time of the Genocide: the deportations, Komitas, Siamanto, Daniel Varoujan and all the intellectuals and members of society arrested on that awful day. I arrived tensed up and angry but thanks to my friends and *Bolsa-Hyes*, I soon realized that a part of my cultural DNA truly hails from there. There are certain streets in Istanbul that inspired an extremely uncanny sense of déjà vu. I still don’t know how to describe this feeling. It felt as if I was coming home yet I knew I was still a stranger in this city. It was a very bizarre but also very poetic state of mind to be drifting in. I realized in this state that not Genocide, not persecution, not politics can ever dilute or diminish the extraordinary contributions of the Armenian people to the architecture, culture, history, heritage, music and society of Istanbul. From Mimar Sinan and the Balian brothers, the high priests of architecture in Istanbul to Udi Hrant, Hrant Dink and beyond, some of the greatest minds and spirits of the Armenian people hail from Bolis. Yes, as much as I felt an “ambivalence” as the character Armenak says in the film, I also felt that the city was very “addictive.” Between “ambivalence” and “addictive” I think these two words come close to describing this paradox that Istanbul is for me.

**AB:** In our days it seems to be in fashion to depict a “return to the roots.” But the return of your hero, Armenak Mouradian, seems to be quite different.

**EN:** Journeying to our roots does not begin or end with one or two or three journeys. I think every day, we journey a little bit into the past of our families and collective culture of humanity, be it Armenia or Greece, Mexico or Russia. I love world culture so for me every day is a journey to my roots as an Armenian, but more importantly, as a human being capable of being touched by artists from around the world. The character of Armenak in my film feels a foreboding uncertainty, at the same time, he feels a duty as an Armenian to face the past and go in search of it, like any mythological character on a quest to find a place or a person. I’m realizing more and more that whatever we end up looking for in the “outside” world, ends up becoming an “interior” journey to discover our souls and what our calling

in life is. For Armenak, the search for his grandfather’s oud shop that was destroyed on April 24, 1915 is a part of his calling. The discovery of this place unleashes the pain and the transcendence he needs to be able to fully accept what happened in 1915. It is my hope that audiences will start to realize, especially in Turkey, that the vast majority of what we call the Western Armenian Diaspora was created because of the Genocide. Why else would Hadjin-tsis end up in Argentina or Musa Ler-tsis in Port Said or Cilician Armenians in Marseilles? They boarded the first ships that would carry them away from the massacres and deportations. And now, almost a hundred years later, for the descendants of the Genocide like Armenak, April 24, 1915 is still yesterday.

**AB:** For the first time the word “genocide” has been used in a Turkish film. How did it happen? What was the reaction during the premiere in Istanbul?

**EN:** For me, it was absolutely fundamental that my film would clearly and openly use the word “genocide.” It is a part of my character’s psyche and history. It is what happened to my people, so of course I will speak about it very clearly. It was also a condition of my participation that I speak freely about the Genocide. I was not there at the premiere in Istanbul as I

was finishing a dear friend’s film. My *jigerov* actors, Jacky Nercessian and Serra Yilmaz, were present. They told me that the entire audience was rapt in silence during the monologue scene. When Armenak’s character says, “...my grandmother’s entire family from Aintab and

purposely? Generally, the shadows play an essential role in film, they seems to symbolize that lots of things are shadowed in this city.

**EN:** My background is in photojournalism and cinematography so naturally everything begins with making the right images tell the



Writer/director Eric Nazarian on the set of “Bolis” with Serra Yilmaz and Jacky Nercessian (right)

Arabkir disappeared during the Genocide,” Jacky painted a nice picture of the audience sitting in front of him. Nearly every head turned to its neighbor in disbelief over hearing the word. I was very moved to hear that the film resonated with a lot of people. My friends from Golden Apricot were present in the audience that night and wrote a very beautiful email to me, saying how touched the audience was. I really want to make films that can bridge the gap between Armenians and Turks. It is time to shake things up and find new ways to communicate through cinema. We have the potential to understand our common humanity through dialogue and discuss the past with whoever is open and willing to listen and share stories. This is one of many ways forward. Politicians will continue to argue, shake hands, sign documents and smile for the cameras. They are the international diplomats. Artists on the other hand, are the cultural diplomats and bridge builders between cultures. Let politics take its course and let the artists create freely. I must say how proud I am of the Armenian Turkish Cinema Platform at the Golden Apricot International Film Festival in Yerevan for continuing to push this dialogue by inviting Armenian and Turkish filmmakers to exchange ideas and make films together.

**AB:** The acting of two main characters is quite impressive. There could not be a better choice than Jacky Nercessian, but it was a surprise to see a Turkish actress, Serra Yilmaz, whom I have seen previously in two Italian films on gay issues.

**EN:** Jacky Nercessian I remember from when I was in junior high school from Henri Verneuil’s *Mayrig* film. I met him in Paris some years ago when I was screening my first feature film, “The Blue Hour.” I’ll never forget what an impression he made on me. He looks like the Armenian Ben Kingsley. Full of so much life. I am very grateful to Atom Egoyan who recommended Jacky at the Golden Apricot Film Festival. I reconnected with him and we pledged to work together. Also, my dear friend Vahe Berberian was a great inspiration. I initially wrote the role of Armenak for Vahe. My aunt, Parik Nazarian, was my hero and talisman throughout this entire journey, inspiring me with the music of Komitas and the song, *Surp Garabed Em Gnatsel* that opens the film. Serra Yilmaz is a *barekam*. She is a natural-born actress with such an incredible soul. I hope I will be making films with Jacky and Serra for years to come. We had an amazing working relationship on set. This experience would not have been the same without their total support of the story I needed to tell.

**AB:** I noticed that the bright and dark scenes are juxtaposed in your film. Have you done it

story. I wanted to make “Bolis” an intimate and panoramic vision of the story. That’s why there are so many locations from the Bosphorus to the amazing antique shops in Kadikoy to the Zincirlikuyu cemetery to the back alleys of Cukur Cuma to a nightclub in the heart of Istanbul to the Armenian cemetery in Sisli. The entire city is light and shadow. In a color film shot on HD, I wanted to let the shadows sink into Jacky’s face when he talks about the dark chapter in his family’s history in the basement of the antique shop. Serra has such an evocative and expressive face. We tried to light her as minimally as possible because her eyes do all the talking; Jacky has such an incredible presence on screen. With HD, you can get away with not lighting too much which means you can shoot faster. That’s a blessing, especially if you have so many locations. I really enjoyed working with my production crew. We were zigzagging all over Istanbul making a movie about a Turk and an Armenian finding a common bond. I knew this was a special project and wanted it to be an ode to my family who inspired me to create cinema and a love letter to the heritage of Old Bolis.

**AB:** One of the important components in the films is music.

**EN:** Music is central to the film. I wanted to open with *Surp Garabed* over Jacky’s journey from the European side of Istanbul to the Anatolian side where he goes to an authentic *oud* shop to get his *oud* re-stringed. Then we cut to a haunting Turkish blues song by an Armenian lady from Erzeroum or Kayseri. We discovered the song on a very old LP that the gentleman who owned the antique store introduced me to. He was a rare collector of antique gramophones and Coca Cola knick-knacks from the ’40s and ’50s. I love the antique shops in Kadikoy. I could easily spend a month roaming through them in search of that lost past of the city that somehow never goes away. It is present on every corner in the city. Thanks to my dear friend Maral Aktokmakian from the amazing Aras Armenian publishing house in Istanbul, and her husband Arto Erdogan, they introduced me to Taniel Akhbareeg (little brother) who is the *oud* player from the wonderful band, Knar. Taniel Akhbareeg hails from Dickranagerd. He performed the solo of *Sari Sirun Yar* that closes the film. I am indebted to Maral, Arto and Taniel for their love and support during the making of this film. This film and my experience in Istanbul would never have been the same without them.

**AB:** And when we can see your film in Armenia?

**EN:** Hopefully we will screen it this year during the wonderful Golden Apricot International Film Festival.



Eric Nazarian and Aida Begic on the set of “Bolis”

because cinema is an audiovisual medium. For me, cinema is my wife. Music is my mistress. The music of Udi Hrant Kenkulian is the essence of Istanbul Armenian blues. What Ray Charles was to soul and blues, Udi Hrant is to Armenian/Turkish music...a true legend. When I first heard him in college, I didn’t know he was blind. When I read more about his life, his music resonated with me even more. *Srdis Vra Kar Muh Gah* is every bit as pure and powerful as the great blues spirituals of the Mississippi Delta of the ’30s and ’40s. The first day I docked in Istanbul, I told my assistant to take me straight to the Sisli Armenian Gregorian Cemetery where I visited Udi Hrant’s family plot and later shot a pivotal scene in the film there. It was an honor and deeply humbling to be standing by the ground where he rests.

**AB:** I completely agree with your hero that Istanbul is a kind of opium; that city is very addictive.

**EN:** Istanbul for me is a paradox and a mystery. It’s an onion I peeled everyday knowing I would never get to its core. The city is too complex and full of so much history. I’m not sure if it is possible to uncover even a fraction. I arrived in Istanbul with extremely mixed emotions. When the plane docked, my mind fluttered with all the images of Armin Wegner and





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Bishop Balakian's Memory Upheld by His Descendent in France

The following is a speech that writer Peter Balakian delivered at the National Center for the Book in France earlier this fall on his book, *Armenian Golgotha, the memoirs of his great-uncle, Bishop Grigoris Balakian*.

MARSEILLES, France — First I want to express great thanks to the National Center for the Book for making this week-long Armenian writers festival possible. It is an impressive part of the French government's commitment to culture and intellectual life (I wish we had such an institution in the US) and affirms the importance of the book as knowledge and artifact, and as act of imagination and scholarship, and it celebrates the book as primary vehicle in bringing people and cultures together across the planet.

For this festival which you have so aptly-called Arménie-Arménies, I'm grateful for your bringing together the complex Armenian Diasporan culture in its 21st century form. And I'm grateful to

1920s. This passion to rebuild Armenia is expressed repeatedly in his memoir *Armenian Golgotha* — even during the death march experience, the idea of Armenia emerging out of the ashes as he put it, “like the phoenix,” kept him alive through despair and anguish.

About 20 years ago my friend, the scholar and longtime editor of *Ararat* magazine, Leo Hamalian, sent me an article from a French magazine about a gathering that your community had at the Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church in honor of Bishop Balakian. And, I want to quote a bit of the speech given that day by M.J. Chamanadjian because reading his words more than 20 years ago I was gripped with emotion and spurred to action. Reading that article I learned more about how important my great uncle was to pre- and post-Genocide Armenian culture, and I learned for the first time of his monumental memoir, *Armenian Golgotha*, which I immediately ordered and began to translate with various collaborators, and then finally with the superb translator Aris Sevag. Our collaborative translation of *Armenian Golgotha* was published in 2009 — by a major publisher in the US — and received major reviews in the US and around the world including Jerusalem, Montreal, London and Toronto. Here are Mr. Chamanadjian's words of that day in Marseilles:

“Here it is a half a century since an Armenian of such an exceptional quality died in Marseilles, and here we are today gathered before this sepulcher in order to pay homage to him. This Armenian's name was Monseigneur Balakian. But who still remembers Monseigneur Balakian? Doubtless, very few among us, because even the stone cross that used to rise above his grave lies on the ground. That cross which is nonetheless the symbol of our national identity. Monseigneur Balakian was during the 1930s the bishop of the Armenians of the south of France, which is to say at a moment when the Armenian nation was still under the shock of the first genocide of the 20th century and of the great

diaspora that followed. A man of conviction, animated beyond any doubt by the spirit of God, he obstinately refused any submission or giving in, and this is precisely what explains the sad ups and downs on his mission. He was the very image of the obsidian of Ararat. To all those who were full of despair he brought hope, showing through his actions that to souls that are noble the word impossible is not an Armenian

their courage and become themselves once more, he was also a witness in the most noble and Christian sense of the word; in fact he was one of the very rare survivors of the 250 martyrs arrested on the night of April 24 in Constantinople... this is why the flame of memory that we have just lit all together must be transmitted to our fellow citizens in Marseilles for the years to come.

Bishop Balakian, sleep in peace; those whom you loved so well will never more forget you.”

My great-uncle was found dead alone in his home at the age of 56, apparently having died of a heart attack, penniless, having quit the church shortly before his death because of various issues of community infighting. He seems to have driven himself beyond the limits; how could one bishop plan and oversee the building of eight churches (including Nice) in five or six years? His passion to rebuild Armenia seems to have defined his zeal; perhaps his ideals were impossible to fulfill, and his vision unachievable, but his intelligence and skill, and iron will resulted in a new Armenian province here in the south of France. I see him more clearly now as a deeply-traumatized Genocide survivor who turned his life into what the psycho-historian

Robert Jay Lifton has called a “survivor mission,” which is defined by the survivor's need to turn grief and trauma into a life mission focused on ethical service to the world.

In my memoir I devote a chapter to my discovery of Bishop Balakian and how the French magazine article about the ceremony you held here in 1990 deepened my understanding of my family and of the experience of the Armenian Genocide.

If there were more time I would discuss that chapter, but I would rather spend the remaining time saying a few things about Bishop Balakian's memoir *Armenian Golgotha*, which I first learned about from M. Chamanadjian's speech in 1990. I believe *Armenian Golgotha* remains the most comprehensive, richly-layered and complex survivor memoir of the Armenian Genocide. When it appeared, the American literary critic Adam Kirch in a review called it “an Armenian equivalent to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors like Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel.” I hope you in France and Armenians around the world will continue to read it carefully and make sure that it finds its way into the mainstream culture and curriculum wherever you live.

A talk about *Armenian Golgotha* followed.



Peter and Jim Balakian at Bishop Balakian Tomb, St. Pierre Cemetery, Marseilles

France for valuing the Armenian intellectual voice and the richness of Armenian history and culture, and the richness of that history between Armenia and France. I'm delighted to be with so many Armenian writers from the Republic and from around the world, as we make this trip together for the next week by train to various cities, ending in Paris on the weekend.

I want to thank the Armenian communities of Marseilles for their hospitality and St. Sahag and Mesrob Cathedral for hosting me, and to Father Dertad of St. Thaddeus church for taking me and my wife Helen and brother Jim and aunt Lucille to Bishop Balakian's tomb at the St. Pierre cemetery, and to Sahag and Mikael Karalekian of the AGBU for their hospitality.

It is of deep personal significance for me to be here with you tonight. In coming to Marseilles for this Armenian cultural celebration in France, and for the recently published French edition of my memoir *Le Chien Du Destin [Black Dog of Fate]*, I am also making a personal and familial pilgrimage to the site of my great-uncle Bishop Grigoris Balakian's life and work — during the final phase of his career as an international figure among Armenian clergy in the first part of the 20th century, and as a leading Armenian writer and cultural figure.

Under the directorship of Bishop Balakian, the entire cultural foundation of the region of southern France was planned and built during those difficult years following the Armenian Genocide in the 1920s and '30s. Out of the ruins of lost historic Armenia, Bishop Balakian had as his central vision a rebuilding of Armenian culture here where he was assigned as prelate in the late



Peter Balakian with 104-year-old Armenian Genocide survivor, Mrs. Kalousdian, after the lecture at St. Sahag and Mesrob Cathedral, Marseilles

word. And so it was that though he was as much without resources as anyone, he succeeded in the fabulous enterprise of building within the single region of Marseilles six churches including the St. Mesrob Cathedral. No one more than this man merits the title Gregory the Builder.

But Bishop Balakian was not only the person through whom Armenians were able to recover

## Subversive Tourism? Diaspora Armenians Visiting Turkey



### A Photographic Voyage and Discussion with Anny Bakalian, Ph.D.

This presentation explores the experience of Diaspora Armenians that return to historic Armenia to trace the footsteps of their parents or grandparents.

Anny Bakalian's first pilgrimage was to Cilicia in 2009. She returned in 2011 to witness the refurbishing of the Sourp Giragos Church in Diyarbakir. Dr. Bakalian has visited Sis, Adana, Musa Dag, Marash, Ainteb, Kayseri, Kharpert, Van, Ani and the eastern coast of the Black Sea.

Dr. Bakalian is Associate Director of the Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center, Graduate Center, CUNY. She is the author of *Armenian Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian and Backlash 9/11*.

**Date:** Friday, November 18, 2011  
**Time:** 8:00 P.M.  
**Place:** St. Leon Armenian Church  
Charles & Grace Pinajian Youth Center  
12-61 Saddle River Road  
Fair Lawn, NJ  
201-791-2862

Jointly Sponsored By:  
St. Leon Armenian Church  
Armenian National Committee of NJ

The Knights of Vartan  
Tekeyan Cultural Association

*The Event is free and open to the public. A reception will follow the presentation.*

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ARTS & LIVING

# Violinist Sergey Khachatryan Makes Chicago Debut at Mandel Hall

DEBUT, from page 12  
previously by Isaac Stern and Pinchas Zukerman, violinists not known for introversion. His range of sonority in quieter dynamics is remarkable, but over long stretches it can sound thin and vaguely anemic. Yet once the ear adjusts to the subtleties, his appropriation of color illuminates his musical purposes with remarkable nuance and sophistication.

**Lusine Khachatryan**

Anyone who has suffered the trauma of Thanksgiving political discussions with relatives knows that gene sharing is no guarantee of conciliation. Happily, from the opening pages of Beethoven's *A Major Sonata* (op. 12, no. 2), the pair made it clear that they were of a single mind, a true dual collaboration of equals. With Lucine Khachatryan's shapely and transparent passage-work and her brother's feathery touch and diaphanous sound in accompanying phrases, the two tastefully shifted the focus between them as the score dictated. Tempos were brisk but organic to the source, and the score's structure was clear and unforced.



Lusine Khachatryan

Much the same can be said of the *Spring Sonata* (op. 24), where the violinist's limpid tone and the pianist's gossamer scales suited the cheery score perfectly. Both broadened their sound for the finale as the dramatic discourse was ramped up a few notches.

Lucine Khachatryan has spoken of the parallels between Armenia's tragic history and the profound despair so central to Shostakovich's later years. Still, no comparison could have prepared the audience for the duo's deeply penetrating account of the Soviet composer's *Sonata for Violin*. The siblings were ideally suited to the skeletal textures and whispered dynamics of the opening *Andante*.

Suddenly, all earlier restraint was thrown to the wind in a dizzying account of the gut-wrenching middle movement. This knife-edged reading was almost frightening in its ferocity, with severed horse-hair, aggressive pizzicatos that nearly pulled the strings off the violin's bridge, and thick resonant piano chords that seemed to conjure a chilling and deathly primal scream. The pale, evaporating final bars sounded not so much like a creation by Shostakovich as an act of musical surrender.

The duo consented to an encore with a brilliant and blistering *Moto Perpetuo*, composed by an unnamed Armenian. As if to not completely surrender the theme of the previous piece, the ancient *Dies Irae* was embedded midway.

## Nine Armenians Presented By Wellesley College

WELLESLEY, Mass. — On November 13, a special performance dedicated to the Nish Boyajian Memorial Foundation will take place at Wellesley College, Ruth Nagle Jones Theatre.

Proceeds from the ticket sales will benefit the Nish Boyajian Memorial Foundation.

Performance begins at 6:30 p.m. For ticket information, contact Richard Boyajian or Peggy Hovanessian.

This three-generation drama about inescapable ethnic legacy tells the story of an American college student choosing to visit Armenia after the death of her grandfather, heeding his call to seek her ancestral history.

# Critics Applaud Publication of *Journey to Virginland* by Armen Melikian

LOS ANGELES — Few books are ever expected to earn acclaim as dramatic as *Dog vs. God*. In an iconoclastic story, *Dog* demolishes the foundations of Western civilization" from a top literary publication. Such is the praise with which Publishers Weekly, the leading US publishing-industry magazine, introduces the groundbreaking novel *Journey to Virginland*, by the California-based author Armen Melikian.

*Journey to Virginland* has already garnered a string of prestigious American awards, which were announced in the months following a limited pre-publication run earlier this year. Currently the novel is available in the US and worldwide in both hard-cover and e-book editions.

"An engrossing, brilliantly crafted read... A searing commentary on the world and its inhabitants," ForeWord Reviews wrote. "Melikian's prodigious writing talent and ability to show the world's history in a different, sometimes humorous, sometimes tragic, air creates an entertaining ride into warring religions, warring cultures, warring sexes and the histories and raisons d'être behind each."

ForeWord's assessment was echoed by *Midwest Book Review*, which wrote: "*Journey to Virginland* follows young Dog as he embarks on a journey through America and the chaos of the post-9/11 world, where he looks for what it means to be human and the constant changes one must undergo to maintain a connection to one's sanity through it all. With plenty to ponder and plenty to entertain, *Journey to Virginland* is a fun and enlightening read and is quite the recommendation."

To date, awards and honors earned by *Journey to Virginland* include the Pinnacle Book Achievement Award for Best Fiction. The novel was selected by the Next Generation Indie Book Awards as one of the year's top books in the Humor/Comedy category, and received the only Honorable Mention at ForeWord Reviews' Book of the

BOOKS

Year Awards.

*Journey to Virginland* has also been compared to some of the masterpieces of contempo-

rary literature, among them the politically explosive works of George Orwell.

"*Journey to Virginland* is one of the most creatively, philosophically, culturally, semantically and thematically ambitious novels I've ever read in my 35 years of professional life," wrote critic and professor of English Paul McCarthy whose lifelong career has included the position of senior acquisitions editor for 25 years at three of the largest publishing houses in the world. "In the best sense, I'm reminded of George Orwell's classics, and other authors of similar stature, though there is no true parallel possible with a novel as unique in concept and execution as *Journey to Virginland*."

In his review of Melikian's novel, author Curt Finch touched on its significance as a powerful tract of political and social commentary. He wrote: "Reading it, I was reminded of Notes from Underground and the narrator's assertion that 'reason is nothing but reason and satisfies only the rational side of man's nature.' In other words, the only way to survive the post-9/11 world is to be a child of unreason. Luckily we've got Dog for that, a kind of Céline for modern times, setting off every moral compass and hypocrisy like a stick of dynamite... It's difficult for people to see the truth, but sometimes a work of literature holds up a mirror and forces us to look. I believe *Journey to Virginland* is one of those works."

Also comparing the novel to some of the tours de force of modern literature was author and sculptor Kardash Onnig from New York, who wrote, "It is not every day that one is shaken to the core, and ultimately enlightened, by a particular work of literature. I owe experiences of this order to Malraux's *Metamorphosis of the Gods*, Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*, Lao-tzu's *Tao* and now *Journey to Virginland*."

# ARMENIANS IN THE NEWS

Dancers from the **Carlene Nazarian Dance Center**, in Salem, NH, entertained spectators at Faneuil Hall with a performance featuring 16-year-old Nicole Kocur, while they were judged by Rockettes for a



Carlene Nazarian Dance Troupe

chance to perform at the Radio City Christmas spectacular in Boston, according to the September 18 issue of the *Boston Globe*.

In another issue of the *Boston Globe*, **Michael Vartabedian** is mentioned in a story about Machinists Union District 5, who picketed outside a concert hosted by Ernie Boch Jr., owner of one of the largest car dealerships in New England.

Vartabedian is the business representative for the union.

To promote literary awareness, WGBH hosted "Read Romp + Rock," which benefited Reach Out and Read, a national program that encourages early reading. The event raised \$250,000 and pictured at the event within the pages of the *Improper Bostonian* is **Joanne Melikian-Cate**, event co-chair.

In another issue of the magazine, on the Improper Sightings page, are **Pamela** and **Sophie Gechijian**, shown near the Sardarabad Memorial in Armenia, which is well-known for using giant-winged livestock as a motif. Also spotted in the glossy rag is **Andre Agassi**, former Grand Slam champion, who participated in the Staples Champions Cup, which featured other big tennis stars as well at the TD Garden, on October 1.

Often, people with an unfortunate sense of style are warned they might be arrested by the fashion police, but perhaps a gentler intervention might be a medical one. **Marianna Toroyan** is the owner of Fashion Doctors, a service which assesses people based on income, hobbies and lifestyle and then makes fashion suggestions. In general,



Marianna Toroyan

however, Toroyan suggests as staples: an A-line black dress, a simple clutch, ankle boots and a lace or sheer top, according to the September 20 issue of *StuffBoston*.

Also in the pages of *StuffBoston* is **Oliva Muradian**, pictured with friends on the Flash page, for having attended Fashion's Night Out After-Party at Cafeteria. In an earlier issue of *Stuff*, on the Flash page, is Dolly Bilzerian, attending the Deuxave's First Anniversary Party.

In the fall issue of the *Lantern*, the

newsletter for the Perkins School for the Blind, **Michael Gayzagian** and **Cynthia Gayzagian** are pictured, in a story about a gate at Perkins Pond being dedicated to Al Gayzagian, a champion of the blind community. Al Gayzagian, who was blind, attended the school and passed away last year.

In *StuffBoston* is a story on **Naz Kupelian**, owner of an eponymous salon in Lexington as well as the founder of the Emergency Elegance Team, a group of stylists who are on call 24/7 attending to hair and style emergencies, including cuts, colors, makeup, facials, manicures and pedicures. Some basic tips Kupelian gives are to wash hair every other day, use a leave-in conditioner and try a side braid instead of a boring ponytail.



Naz Kupelian





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Helene Pilibosian Keeps the Written Words Flowing

By Tom Vartabedian

WATERTOWN – Retirement is not an option for Helene Pilibosian, not when she has been churning out prose for 60 years, editing newspapers, writing stories and cultivating the literary scene.

Recently, Pilibosian addressed an enthusiastic crowd at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) with a presentation, titled “From Journalist to Poet and Memoirist.”

Her resume reads like a “Who’s Who” with a host of published works in many esteemed publications, editorships and reviews. Among the more prestigious was a first-place award from *Writer’s Digest* for her collection, titled *At Quarter Past Reality: New and Selected Poems*.

At an age when most people take it easy, Pilibosian continues to write, submit poems to competitions and magazines while working on three manuscripts and operating a family-run micro publishing house called Ohan Press.

Below is a question-and-answer session with Pilibosian:

**Tom Vartabedian:** Personal data, please.

**Helene Pilibosian:** My journalism career began in 1964 when I became the first woman editor of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and later served as a writer/editor there for many years, joined as a casual proofreader in the Harvard University Publisher’s Office. Since 1983, I’ve been publishing books, some of which are my own writing. Others were written



Helene Pilibosian

by my father-in-law or my father and translated by my husband (Hagop Sarkissian), who also wrote one of the books.

**TV:** Involvement with the Armenian community?

**HP:** Somewhat limited and now focused on the Armenian Memorial Church and National Association for Armenian Studies and Research. I’ve continued to help and enjoy my children and grandchildren as well as my husband’s extensive family. Parents on either side are deceased and were all affected by the Armenian Genocide.

**TV:** How do you spend your days?

**HP:** Still trying to get my writing into literary magazines. They usually don’t pay. So you might say this is voluntary in some way. The recognition means as much to me as money would. I also work at advertising and distributing my books which has been very difficult in this recession.

**TV:** What got you started in writing and where has it taken you?

**HP:** I actually started writing poetry when I was 19, influenced by a class in American literature. However, I dropped it for many years after that and only began writing occasional poems for *Ararat* magazine before branching out to the American literary journals. In 1964, the business manager of Baikar Press asked me

to edit the *Mirror-Spectator*. I learned a great deal about Armenian affairs as well as journalism because I had no training or experience in that field. It was simply my ability to write a decent article for publication that interested the people in charge. It’s taken me to starting my own micro press, which I call Ohan Press, after my father-in-law. Obviously, he is affectionately remembered. I love writing poetry and prose as well. When I get tired of one, I switch to the other. There’s also the side of me that writes memoirs, including my father’s – *They Call Me Mustafa*. My own came out a few years later. There has been a great increase in the number of books published every year. Competition has been staggering. That is why self-publishing is an option.

**TV:** Where do you get your energy and inspiration to continuing pushing out copy?

**HP:** I always have the idea I haven’t done enough or become known enough. So much thought and emotion seem to pour out of my mind that I must express somehow. And since I have the setup, why not write and publish more? I manage to cover the cost of one book, then go on to the next. The personal satisfaction when I see that some prominent people and libraries have bought the book makes it worthwhile. As for inspiration, that comes from the people who have believed in me and make me believe in myself. As long as I can do the work, why should I let age stop me?

**TV:** What’s Ohan Press all about and how has it evolved?

**HP:** I gathered my early poems about Armenians together in 1983. Many were based on interviews with my parents about their early life in the village of Ichmeh in Historic Armenia. I had avoided asking directly about genocidal experiences because I knew they would be very painful to answer. I thought of publishing them myself to see what I could do with them. That book, *Carvings from an Heirloom*, sold well. And my husband Hagop added a few, some in Armenian and others in English. So we have a constant presence like a much-loved third child in our house. We both enjoy the work we have been trained to do.

**TV:** Your personal list of favorite Armenian writers in the diaspora?

**HP:** I’ve enjoyed reading the works of many contemporary Armenian-Americans like Diana Der Hovanessian, David Kherdian and Peter Balakian. However, my first exposure to the writing of an Armenian-American was Leon Surmelian’s book, *I Ask You Ladies and Gentlemen*, which was a bestseller when I was in high school. First impressions are seldom forgotten.

**TV:** What advice can you give to young, aspiring journalists and poets?

**HP:** There is only one way to achieve even limited success in either field. That is to work and study constantly, except for some necessary free time for recreation. I emphasize this because without some social time, one tends to stagnate emotionally. I can certainly suggest travel in America or other countries to broaden the mind with previously unimagined vistas.

**TV:** What about you might surprise readers?

**HP:** My surprises have been written in my recent book, *My Literary Profile: A Memoir*. Also, graduating from Harvard University with a degree in humanities; two visits to Europe and Lebanon; various illnesses and a cardiac arrest and a complete cure for depression.

**TV:** As a community, what can we do to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide?

**HP:** We should have a number of unified commemorative activities throughout the diaspora and Armenia. These should involve explaining to the rest of the world what the Armenian Genocide was all about and the need for its recognition. Obviously, many of us feel this deeply.

**TV:** Future plans?

**HP:** I have three manuscripts of poetry waiting for publication, along with some individual poems waiting to find themselves in magazines. If the crunch of the competition is too much, I may try to publish another one or two others.



## Party at the Other Park!

Benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment



Thursday, November 17, 2011

7:30 - 9:30pm

### Fenway Park

State Street Pavilion  
Boston, Massachusetts

Armenian Heritage Park in Lights

John Baboian Quartet

Informal Sports Talk with Bob Lobel

Open Bar & Hors d'oeuvres

Tour of Fenway Park at 7pm for Party Supporters of \$1,000 and above  
Brief Program: Extending Thanks to former Transportation Secretary Jeff Mullan

Casual Business Attire

Lots of Fun!

RSVP by November 12, 2011

Advance Reservations required.

For a Reply Form, please e-mail

fenway@armenianheritagepark.org

or call Charles Guleserian 617.484.6100

Funds raised support the Endowment for Armenian Heritage Park under construction on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, Boston.

The Park commemorates lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides, and celebrates the immigrant experience and contributions made to American life and culture.  
www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net



AGBU Detroit Chapter  
Knights of Vartan, Detroit Chapter  
U of M Dearborn, Armenian Research Center  
Tekeyan Cultural Association  
present

Renowned Historian & Professor

**Dr. George A. Bournoutian**

To discuss his recent book

## The 1823 Russian Survey of the Karabagh Province: A Primary Source on the Demography and Economy of Karabagh

Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> • 7:30 PM  
AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School  
22001 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield MI 48075

Open to the Public / Presented in English

The author will be available to sign copies of his book

For more information you may call

David Terzibashian at 248-229-0903

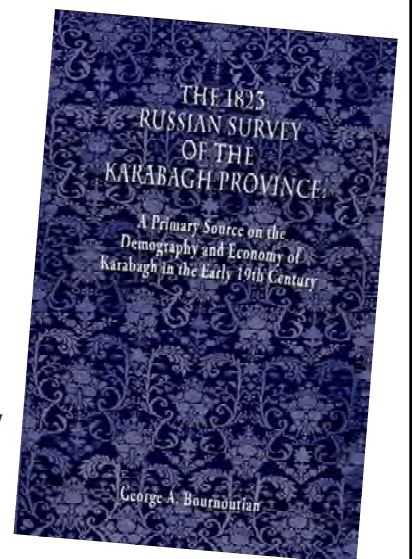


In 1823, following the flight of the last Muslim Khan to Iran, the Russians conducted a thorough survey of the Karabagh Province (which included the region of Zangezur as well). The survey listed every village and nomad camp, enumerated the number of its inhabitants in 1822, lists the various taxes paid to the treasury in 1822, and most importantly, listed every village according to the ethnicity of its inhabitants: Armenian or Tatar (the term Azerbaijani) did not exist until the 20th century. For the last 20 years the Azerbaijani government and its historians have claimed that Armenians arrived in Karabagh only after 1828. They have even deleted material on the Armenians from the new editions of their own primary sources written in the 19th century. The Russian survey proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that in 1822 (six years before 1828) the Armenians formed the overwhelming (95%) of the population of the villages in Zangezur, as well as in the districts which form the territory of Nagorno-Karabagh today.

The survey is a very rare document of some 350 pages. No copies exist in the US and only a handful of copies exist in the former USSR. Dr. Bournoutian has managed to locate a copy from the Moscow Central Library and has translated the entire survey, with extensive notes and commentary, into English.

Note:

Note: The University of Michigan Dearborn does not necessarily endorse the speaker's views.







## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## C A L E N D A R

## CALIFORNIA

**NOVEMBER 19 — The Armenian EyeCare Project will hold its ninth Annual Newport Gala, honoring Gov. George Deukmejian, on November 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Balboa Bay Club, Newport Beach. For info and reservations, call (949) 675-5611.**

## MASSACHUSETTS

**NOVEMBER 10-20 — St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School online auction** at [www.biddingforgood.com/ststephensschool](http://www.biddingforgood.com/ststephensschool), will last until November 20, 9 p.m. Click, shop, win. Help a worthy cause and have fun shopping from the comfort of your home. For more info, e-mail [auction@ssaes.org](mailto:auction@ssaes.org).

**NOVEMBER 13 — Nine Armenians Presented by Wellesley College, at the Ruth Nagle Jones Theatre, in the college, at 6:30 p.m. Dedicated to the Nish Boyajian Memorial Foundation, which will receive the proceeds from tickets sales. For ticket info, contact Richard Boyajian (617) 328-6881 or Peggy Hovanessian (781) 863-6273.**

**NOVEMBER 17 — Party at the Other Park!** Benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment. Thursday, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Fenway Park, State Street Pavilion, Boston. Featuring the John Baboian Quartet, informal sports talk with Bob Lobel, open bar and hors d'oeuvres. Tour of Fenway Park at 7 p.m. for supporters of \$1,000 and above. RSVP by November 12. Reservations required. For a reply form, e-mail [fenway@armenianheritagepark.org](mailto:fenway@armenianheritagepark.org) or call Charles Guleserian (617) 484-6100.

**NOVEMBER 19 — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston presents 25th anniversary performance, "Journey Through Time,"** with new choreography and music. Robinson Theater, Waltham High School. For tickets, [www.itsmyseat.com/sayatnova](http://www.itsmyseat.com/sayatnova) or Apo: (339) 222-2410. [www.sayatnova.com](http://www.sayatnova.com).

**NOVEMBER 19 — Holiday Kef, featuring Richard Hagopian and his Kef Time Ensemble. Saturday, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. Adults, \$45, students, \$25. UMass Lowell Conference Center, 50 Warren St., Lowell, (978) 934-6920. Cash bar only. Mezza, coffee, dessert. Sponsored by Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe. For info call Mike (978) 682-3946 or Richard (978) 374-0687.**

**DECEMBER 2-3 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, Friday, 3-9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Lunch and dinners offered. Booths include: farmer's market, country store, candy, gourmet, pastries, wreaths and poinsettias, jewelry, second-time around, sports silent auction and more. Santa's Playland, Saturday 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

**DECEMBER 11 — Christmas Holiday Concert: Erevan**



**On Thursday, November 17, 7:30 p.m., Party at the Other Park, a benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment, will take place at Fenway Park (pictured above), State Street Pavilion, Boston, featuring the John Baboian Quartet, an informal sports talk with Bob Lobel and open bar. For a reply form, e-mail [fenway@armenianheritagepark.org](mailto:fenway@armenianheritagepark.org) or call Charles Guleserian (617) 484-6100.**

Choral Society and Orchestra, 3 p.m., church sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Conductor Konstantin Petrossian. For further info, contact the church office at [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org) or (617) 354-0632.

## MICHIGAN

**NOVEMBER 16 — Armenian Genocide Recognition: A New Approach, a free lecture by international lawyer and former diplomat Sandra L.B. Livingstone, PhD. St. John Armenian Church, St. Vartan Room, Wednesday. Refreshments, 7:30 p.m; program, 8 p.m. RSVP to Pam Coultis at (248) 646-7847 or [Hagopian@aol.com](mailto:Hagopian@aol.com).**

## NEW JERSEY

**NOVEMBER 13 — St. Stepanos Armenian Church Women's club invites you for an Armenian concert by**

**the AREKAG Children's Choir, conducted by Vago John Ohanyan, following church services, 1184 Ocean Ave., Elberon, Thanksgiving Lunch will be served. Tickets: \$30, adults; \$10, children, 10 and under. Call Linda Patruno (732) 449-5249, Norig Buchakjian (732) 929-0776.**

**NOVEMBER 16 — St. Mary Armenian Church Sunday School presents "Tricky Tray" at Hanover Manor. 16 Eagle Rock Ave., East Hanover. Doors open at 6 p.m.; dinner, 7:30 p.m. \$40 donation, includes dinner and free tickets. Contact Laura at (973) 663-2357 or [schilz@msn.com](mailto:schilz@msn.com).**

**NOVEMBER 18 — A Photographic Voyage and Discussion with Anny Balakian, PhD, at 8 p.m. St. Leon Armenian Church, Charles and Grace Pinajian Youth Center, 12-61 Saddle River Road, Fair Lawn. For info, (201) 791-2862.**

**NOVEMBER 18-19 — St. Vartanantz Armenian Church 54th Annual Food Festival & Bazaar. Live music Friday and Saturday nights. Boutique booths, Chinese auction. Pre-packaged food, at 461 Bergen Blvd., Ridgefield. For info, (201) 943-2950.**

## NEW YORK

**NOVEMBER 15 — AGBU Young Professionals present Dr. George A. Bournoutian to discuss his book, *The 1823 Russian Survey of the Karabagh Province*, at 7:30 p.m. AGBU, 55 East 59th St., New York City. Seating limited. For more info and RSVP, call (212) 319-6383 or visit [www.ypgny.org/Yp/bookreading2011](http://www.ypgny.org/Yp/bookreading2011).**

**NOVEMBER 23 — Seventh annual Thanksgiving Eve celebration and fundraiser. Doors open, 10 p.m. 21+ with valid ID to enter. Le poisson rouge, 158 Bleecker St., New York City. \$20 with RSVP. \$25 at door. To sign up for guest list, [www.tinyurl.com/tdayeve11](http://www.tinyurl.com/tdayeve11).**

**DECEMBER 3 — The AGBU/NYSEC presents the fourth annual AGBU Performing Artists in Concert, at 8 p.m. Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. 154 W 57th St., New York City. Tickets, \$65. For info, call AGBU at (212) 319-6383, ext. 124. To purchase tickets directly through the Carnegie Hall Box Office: [carnegiehall.org](http://carnegiehall.org). Carnegie charge: (212) 247-7800. Box Office: 57th Street and Seventh Avenue.**

**DECEMBER 3-4 — St. Peter Armenian Church Women Guild present their Holiday Bazaar. Gourmet Pantry and Bakery. St. Peter Armenian Church, 100 Troy Schenectady Road, Watervliet. For info, (518) 274-3673.**

**DECEMBER 11 — Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs presents Shnorhali Choir. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of Armenia's independence at 4 p.m., Madison Theater of Molloy College, 1000 Hempstead Ave., Rockville Centre. For info, (516) 678-5000, ext. 7715.**

**MAY 19, 2012 — HMADS Gala Dinner Dance. Details to follow, June 25. HMADS 30th Commencement Exercise at 8 p.m., Kalustyan Hall.**

# Getty Fails to Derail Armenian Church Lawsuit Over Manuscripts

GETTY, from page 12

already is so fragmented or scattered that there's little chance it can be made whole. Museums must avoid "contributing to an improper fragmentation of a work. In this instance, it would not be a terribly complex matter to restore the whole."

Beyond that, Stewart said, the Getty, which in recent years repatriated more than 40 artifacts to Greece and Italy after evidence showed they had been looted from archaeological sites, should consider that these works are still venerated: "Here's a living, breathing religious community, as opposed to classical antiquities."

Responding in writing to Stewart's criticisms, Elizabeth Morrison, the Getty's acting senior curator of manuscripts, said that "well-regarded ... collections around the world" contain individual manuscript sheets. "The Getty in no way condones the practice of taking apart manuscripts, but we continue to collect individual leaves after careful examination proves that they have not recently been removed ... with motives of financial gain."

The Republic of Armenia and the govern-

ment-run Matenadaran are not parties to the dispute, although the museum's director, Hrachya Tamrazyan, last year sent a letter to church attorneys, confirming that "we have asked you to represent ... the interest of the Republic of Armenia ... including the Matenadaran, using your best efforts to obtain the return of these treasures ... to their rightful owners."

In an interview Wednesday, Grigor Hovhannissian, the Armenian consul general in Los Angeles, said that the museum director was speaking for himself, not the government, which is taking "a wait and see position. ... There are issues we need to understand better."

Hovhannissian said this is the first cultural patrimony case to have emerged since Armenia became an independent nation 20 years ago.

The case has been reported in the Armenian media, he said, and "there's quite a bit of emotion, an emotionally charged atmosphere when talking about this piece of art."

Vartkes Yeghiayan, an attorney for the church, said that its legal team has identified at least 60 other Armenian manuscripts in

American collections — at Yale, Harvard and the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, among others — that may have been stolen. Further suits may result, he said, if church authorities give the go-ahead.

The suit against the Getty says that before the Armenian Genocide, the *Zeyt'un Gospels* resided at a church in Cilicia, where the work was venerated and believed to possess holy powers that would protect the community in times of war. In 1915, as Armenians in Turkey were being killed or expelled, the suit says, the Bible was paraded through the streets "to create a divine firewall of protection around the city."

It began to change hands for safekeeping, and in 1916, the suit says, the disputed sheets were removed, resurfacing with an Armenian American immigrant family in Massachusetts that sold them to the Getty.

The pages emerged in 1994 as an anonymous loan from the family to an exhibition at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City, which traveled to the Walters Art Museum, where a critic for the *Baltimore Sun* described the *Zeyt'un* pages as a "tour de

force ... with their elaborate trees, scrolls, cornucopias, columns, vases and pitchers and no fewer than 26 pairs of birds wearing brilliant plumage."

The Getty bought them at that time — a period when it was also acquiring antiquities despite clear evidence they had been recently looted.

Under California law, suits to recover allegedly stolen artworks from a museum or art dealer must be filed no later than six years after the owner learns of their whereabouts. The Getty contends that articles published in 1943 and 1952 prove that the church knew that the Massachusetts family had the pages and should have sued for their return back then.

Boyd, the church's lawyer, disputed that, adding that the Getty is ignoring the historical reality then facing the Holy See of Cilicia, which ministers to Armenian Orthodox adherents in North America and the eastern Mediterranean. As church leaders tried to help persecuted refugees rebuild shattered lives, she said, "cultural objects were the last thing on their mind."





## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

# No Monopoly on the Armenian Cause

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Armenian-Turkish relations have been historically complex and in recent years they have been further complicated. In the past, Armenians have been under foreign domination and their overlords – Ottoman, Russian or Soviet – have determined and shaped those relations, leaving no room to maneuver for the subject Armenian nation. Therefore, logic and expectation have been for Armenians to determine and shape their relations with Turkey and Turks upon gaining independence.

Now that Armenia is independent, it looks like the situation has further deteriorated. It has become more contentious, since no one knows who can speak with the Turks on behalf of the Armenians. As always, we have more chiefs than Indians.

Legally, only a government can handle international relations. However, since Diaspora Armenians are the direct descendants of the Genocide survivors, they have the moral right and the duty to participate in the dialogue.

But it seems some groups claim to have a proprietary position when it comes to pursuing the Armenian Case, the recognition of the Genocide or claims for restitution. Indeed the Dashnag party (ARF), its affiliates and some of its leaders believe that they have the monopoly on the Genocide issue or Armenian-Turkish dialogue.

Admittedly, the ARF has contributed significantly to the Armenian Case, beginning with delivering justice to the perpetrators of the Genocide and steering Armenia to independence in 1918.

Even today, their lobbying work in the US and Europe has been commendable.

The ARF activities in pursuing the Genocide recognition and fighting for Armenia's independence cannot be denied, some blunders of historic proportions notwithstanding.

But all that does not warrant monopoly on the Armenian Case, especially now that we have an independent Armenia.

Also, the ARF's contribution to the cause will be diminished directly in proportion to the party's ignoring or underestimating contributions from other Armenian groups and parties.

Granted, we all are entitled to our opinions and can express them freely. And as Voltaire has said, "Your freedom ends where my nose begins."

Since Armenia's independence, many attempts for Armenian-Turkish rapprochement have been undertaken, some through diplomatic channels, others through academia or civil society institutions within the two nations. The ARF leadership has been adamantly opposed to the process when they have been left out of it, but, on the other hand, the party has been engaged in dialogue with the Turks and Turkey unilaterally, for example, during the Prometheus movement opposing the Soviet Union. The position caused a split among the groups seeking justice from the Turkish leaders (Shahan Natalie was one of the casualties).

The ARF opposed the Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC) initiative, the Protocols and now is in competition with other groups, such as the Armenian Assembly, instead of reinforcing and coordinating the efforts, notwithstanding its imperfections.

TARC at least yielded one positive result – the conclusion of the International Court for Transitional Justice, which ruled that Turkey had indeed committed a Genocide against the Armenians. On the other hand, if the Protocols did not yield any tangible results, at least they scored a diplomatic victory for Armenia; today the ball is in Turkey's court, as was stated by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

All we can expect in Armenian-Turkish relations is incremental success. Turkey has become an economic powerhouse, a member of the G-20 countries. It is also a military power to be reckoned with. All our political activities as Armenians – inside and outside Armenia – register globally as little more than a mouse's roar, and we should be careful not to become a laughing stock in the world community. Armenians have very limited resources to force down any position on Turkey. Therefore, our best bet is to get an internal change in Turkey.

Turkish leaders will never admit that the Ottoman-era government committed a genocide against Armenians, unless Turkish society itself comes to terms with its history. Fortunately, that process has already begun.

The Kurdish minority in Turkey can set the trend for us. The Kurdish Workers' Party's (PKK) acts of violence only hardened the resolve of the Turkish government to strike back. But the Kurds today have established a political parallel track in order to pursue their quests for human rights

and maintaining their identity. They are engaged in the political process and they have been advocating for their cause in the Turkish parliament. Additionally, they have been calling for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Turkey is undergoing a tremendous process of transformation. Intellectuals, journalists, scholars and ordinary citizens have been making amends to the Armenian people for the crimes their ancestors had committed. A few years ago that was taboo. Granted, Article 301 of the Turkish Criminal Code is still on the books, the Grey Wolves are still active and the military brass is not toothless yet, despite all the arrests and legal actions.

Our hope lies in the transformation of the Turkish people, waiting for the day when quantitative changes will bring a corresponding qualitative change which will compel the government to alter its course and drop its denialist policy.

One of the most significant changes was the government's decision to return confiscated religious and community assets. A most symbolic case was the dedication of St. Giragos Church in Diarbekir. Some 2,000 Armenians converged on that city from different regions of Turkey, the Middle East, Armenia and Europe. A delegation of 26 Armenians, headed by the Primate of Eastern Diocese, also attended the celebration, to the dislike of an ARF party organ that indulged in wild assumptions and uncalled-for attacks on the characters of the Primate and the participants. Again, one of the reasons is a petty case of ignoring the name of Catholicos Aram I of Cilicia during the liturgy. Another reason for the attack in the October 26 issue of the Los Angeles-based *Asbarez* is that there was virtually no Dashnak participation in the entire celebration.

Then the writer allows himself the liberty of taking the role of inquisitor and blames the clergy and lay people, without the smallest shred of proof. Quoting the Turkish daily, *Hurriyet*, the *Asbarez* writer accuses the delegation of engaging in business negotiations with the Turks and then jumps to the following wild conclusion: "Given that such a series of business meetings could clearly not be scheduled at the last minute, one can conclude that in planning this pilgrimage to the historic St. Giragos Church, doing business with Turkish businessmen – effectively Turkey – was always on the agenda for those on this religious journey."

The writer seems to be a clairvoyant to "conclude" what was on the mind of the religious delegation.

Then the writer twists a statement by Oscar Tatossian, chairman of the Diocesan Council, writing: "One of the members of Archbishop Barsamian's delegation, a senior Diocese lay leader, Oscar Tatossian," has stated that "our people should come together and enjoy a cup of tea. The dialogue starts with arts, culture, academic cooperation and trade. The rest will follow." And the writer concludes: "That sadly is Ankara's narrative." As if Mr. Tatossian in stating that "the rest would follow" has meant – let's drink tea, conduct business and we will give up our claim for Genocide recognition and restitution.

Since we are in the realm of guessing games, one could perfectly surmise that "the rest will follow" means that "let's drink tea now and one day will come and take back our historic homeland."

Although neither *Hurriyet*, nor *Asbarez*, for that matter, has given any proof that the Primate engaged in any kind of business talk, the writer asks, "his new role as a deal maker begs a larger question: What business do religious leaders have in commerce, especially in Turkey?"

We think the question must also be put to those grocery store owners in Watertown, Glendale, New Jersey and Bourj Hamoud in Lebanon – most of them ARF members and sympathizers – who sell Turkish products. They should also be asked whether they "fall in Turkish traps" and give up the Genocide issue in return for doing business with Turkey.

All this amounts to the hegemonic justification of the ARF leadership that they are the only ones who can conduct dialogue with Turkey and all the rest are so naïve that they will forget the Genocide and forgive the Turks for having occupied our historic homeland.

The Turks have let the genie out of the bottle and they cannot put it back. The Genocide issue is on the agenda of many Turks. People-to-people contacts will only accelerate the process of bringing the Genocide issue to the broader segments of society.

The Turkish government will certainly manipulate situations to divide Armenians and pit them against each other. But similar articles are equally divisive and they will play into the hands of the Turks, especially when they come with a patronizing tone and proprietary pretensions.

The tragedy is shared by all Armenians. No one has monopoly over the Genocide issue.

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## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Genocide Denier Condoleezza Rice Unworthy to Teach at Stanford

In her newly-published 750-page book, *A Memoir of My Years in Washington: No Higher Honor*, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice proudly describes her efforts to defeat Armenian Genocide resolutions on two separate occasions. With great relish, she brags about her success in undermining the acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide by the US Congress in 1991 and 2007.

A close scrutiny of Rice's arguments exposes her flawed judgment and ethical lapses. In her memoir, she relates that her first experience "with this problem" was in 1991, when she worked in the White House as acting special assistant to President George H. W. Bush. Her task was "to mobilize an effort to defeat the resolution in the House of Representatives." Gloating over her triumph, she depicts herself as battling "the powerful Armenian American lobby" that "has for years pressured Congress to pass a resolution branding the Ottoman Empire's mass killings of Armenians starting in 1915 as genocide." In reality, she had no need to counter what had already been acknowledged by the House of Representatives in 1975 and 1984, and by President Ronald Reagan in 1981.

Rice proceeds to maintain that "there are many historical interpretations of what happened," which is totally untrue, as there are no historical disputes on the Armenian Genocide – a universally acknowledged fact. Furthermore, Professor Rice does not seem to realize that when she describes the Armenian "killings" as "clearly a brutal, ethnically motivated massacre," she in fact is recognizing them as genocide, as defined under Article 2 of the UN Genocide Convention.

In her memoir, Rice attempts to justify her obstructionist maneuvers by explaining that the Turks "were outraged at the prospect of being branded for an event that had taken place almost a century before – under the Ottomans!" Instead of behaving as the spineless official of a banana republic, Rice should have sternly admonished the Turks that the United States would not distort historical facts to appease the paranoid leaders of an autocratic state.

Boasting about how well she "had succeeded" in her "assigned task," Rice callously describes her appalling efforts in "fighting off the dreaded Armenian Genocide resolution." She makes a half-hearted attempt to minimize her ethical transgression by stating that no one denies "the awful events or the tragic deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent Armenians," which even Turkish officials acknowledge. If she was aware that no one was denying the mass murder of Armenians, why was Rice so fervently determined to kill the resolution? She then parrots the nonsensical Turkish propaganda that this issue should be left to "historians – not politicians – to decide how best to label what had occurred." Rice should have known that reputable historians the world over have already declared that the Armenian killings constituted genocide.

As secretary of state in 2007, Rice once again battled against the adoption of an Armenian Genocide resolution. She reports that she "begged" House Speaker Nancy

Pelosi to prevent the House from voting on the resolution, but the Speaker rejected her request. Rice and Defense Secretary Bob Gates then delivered a press statement against the resolution, standing in front of the White House. She also got eight former secretaries of state to sign a joint letter opposing the resolution.

Rice proudly states in her memoir that she managed to block the vote on the resolution, in keeping with her promise to the Turks. Once again, instead of defending the noble values and high principles on which America was founded, the secretary of state of the most powerful nation on earth caved in to the dictates of a third-world bully.

Concluding her narrative, Rice makes false accusation against Armenia's leaders, claiming that "the democratically-elected Armenian government had little interest in the resolution. In fact, it was engaged in an effort to improve relations with Turkey, and it didn't need it either." Rice is contradicting the US government's public announcement that the 2003 Armenian presidential elections did not meet international standards. Furthermore, the then-President Robert Kocharian did not oppose the Genocide resolution and was not seeking to improve Armenia's relations with Turkey. In fact, a State Department official reported that during his meeting with Kocharian in Yerevan, the Armenian president was "in a foul mood" because the White House had just blocked the Genocide resolution.

Rice is now a professor at Stanford University. Ironically, another Armenian Genocide denier, former Secretary of State George Shultz, is also at Stanford. Faculty members, students, alumni and donors should advise Stanford University officials that Genocide deniers are not welcome at one of America's most distinguished institutions of higher learning.

Readers are urged to fax Professor Rice at (650) 721-3390, expressing displeasure at her appalling efforts against US acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide.

# Can Germany Mediate Armenian-Turkish Reconciliation?

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

In 2005, the German Bundestag passed a resolution calling on the German government to facilitate a process of Armenian-Turkish understanding and reconciliation. Now, six years later, scholars and civil society activists are asking: what has been achieved since then? This was the subject of a one-day seminar on "The Armenian Genocide and German Public Opinion" on September 22, organized by the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin. That all-party resolution called on Berlin to contribute to such a process by encouraging an honest examination of the historical record. This included demands for the release of historical documents both from the Ottoman archives and copies of documents given by the German foreign ministry to Turkey and the establishment of a historians' commission with international experts. The aim was to encourage the Turkish authorities to deal with the 1915 Genocide and move towards reconciliation and normalization of relations with the Republic of Armenia. Guaranteeing freedom of opinion in Turkey, especially regarding the Armenian question, was stressed.

International historians presented updates on the status of genocide research: Prof. Raymond Kevorkian of Paris gave an overview of the history of genocide studies; Swiss historian Hans-Lukas Kieser and German researcher Wolfgang Gust discussed the German role on the basis of official documents and considerable discussion revolved around whether the Germans, allied to the Young Turks in World War I, were co-responsible or complicit, what they knew when and what they did or failed to do to stop it. One important point made by Gust was that, contrary to official Turkish propaganda that the Armenians constituted a military threat to the Ottomans, the German archives do not support this assertion.

The seminar then heard reports by civil society activists involved in engaging members of the Armenian, Turkish, Kurdish and German communities in a dialogue process about their common tragic past. Among the initiatives mentioned were the Hrant Dink Forum in Cologne (and now Berlin), the Association of Genocide

Opponents in Frankfurt, the well-known study excursions to Berlin organized by Turkish-born German author Dogan Akhanli and others of Recherche International in Cologne and the grass roots movement of Toros Sarian, an Armenian journalist and editor from Hamburg who publishes the online magazine ArmenienInfo.net.

If such grass-roots initiatives have contributed significantly to educating citizens about the Armenian Genocide, there remains much to be done, especially on the level of formal education. Here, the issue of history textbooks becomes critical.

In Germany the state governments are responsible for curricula, but so far, only Brandenburg has succeeded in presenting the Armenian Genocide to pupils in history classes. Opposition to such teaching by informal Turkish lobbyists has thus far prevented other states from addressing this subject, among other controversial issues.

Two other projects presented at the seminar illustrated the power of dialogue in seeking understanding among members of former adversary populations.

### I am not the Murderer, not I

One exciting project is a special attraction for student audiences, which could fill an important gap in curricula regarding the Genocide of 1915. This is not a classroom lesson but a theatrical reading presented by actors and actresses, to musical accompaniment. The piece, titled, "I am not the Murderer, not I," is the brainchild of Heinz Böke, from the German Bundestag. Böke said, "Until four years ago, I knew nothing about the Armenian Genocide, simply nothing."

He responded by delving into the history, which included a visit to Armenia. In the course of his extensive research in Germany, he came across the court records of the trial held on June 2-3, 1921 of the young Armenian, Soghomon Tehlerjan (also Soghomon Tehlirian), who gunned down Young Turk leader Talaat Pasha in Berlin on March 15, 1921. Böke saw the educational potential in the case, and, in collaboration with others, put

together a play, "The Talaat Pasha Trial – A Theatre Project for Intercultural Studies," which debuted in 2010.

Talaat had escaped to Berlin with German help after the end of the war. Tehlerjan had been deployed by the Armenian commandoes known as "Operation Nemesis," to hunt down and assassinate Young Turk criminals. The trial examined not only the crime but also the assailant's motivations: why did he kill Talaat? What had Talaat done? The assassin later explained his action with the words, "I killed a man, but I am not a murderer." Talaat, he meant, was the mass murderer. The court ruled that Tehlerjan was of unsound mind and could not be considered guilty and acquitted him.

The performances open with a short introduction by Böke on the historical background followed by an Armenian song. This is not theatre in the conventional sense, certainly not theatre as entertainment, but rather theatre as an educational medium. Students watching the play are thrust into the historical context and must think through the choices that historical personalities at the time faced.

In the discussions held at the end of the play, three main themes emerge: the problem of violence as a political tool; the enhanced readiness for violence among some layers of youth in Germany today, for example, in right-wing extremist milieu; and the question of guilt. The theatre group has taken care to stress that it is not a question of attributing guilt to Turks or Turkish immigrants in Germany, but to document that the 1915 Genocide was the work of the Young Turk regime in power at the time.

### Speaking to One Another

The other institutional initiative, presented by Matthias Klingenberg of the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (dvv), was the research project, "Adult Education and Oral History Contributing to Armenian-Turkish Reconciliation." This project, financed by the German Foreign Ministry, brought together ten university students from Turkey and ten from Armenia who received training in October 2009 in conducting oral history interviews from qualified social scientists. From October 2009 to February 2010, two teams did field research into the events of 1915, hoping to facilitate a dialogue among members of the Armenian,

Turkish and Kurdish communities about their common past. The interviewees were second and third generation survivors who had learned of the 1915-related events from parents and grandparents. They came from the Armenian Diaspora, many in Turkey, and also from the Republic of Armenia.

Well over 100 interviews were conducted and a selection (13 in Turkey and 35 in Armenia) was then published in Turkish, Armenian and English, in a volume titled, *Speaking to One Another*. What emerged from the study was a wealth of specific information about the Genocide – the executions, the deportations, the abduction of women, the expropriation and/or destruction of land and buildings, emphatically including places of worship and so forth – presented in a trans-generational dialogue between the interviewers and interviewees.

The book starts with testimonies from Armenians, Kurds and Turks living in modern-day Turkey. And yet to identify them in such ethnic terms is deceptive; for, as their family histories reveal, the overriding question for them is precisely what their ethnic/religious identity is. There are those Turks who discover that their grandmothers were Armenian, others, presumably Turks, who discover Armenian, Kurdish and Arab ancestors. This quest for identity is not only a human drama as depicted in the interviews; it plays a powerful part in the process now unfolding in Turkey where the citizenry is asking fundamental questions about the past, particularly related to 1915. Although official Turkish policy has obscured the historical record and criminalized anyone daring to call it genocide, the assassination of Hrant Dink in 2007 "was a significant milestone which transformed relations within the Armenian community, as well as between the community and Turkish society" (p. 19). Armenians became more willing to talk about 1915 and Turks sought to learn about the history of Armenians in their midst.

One Turk who had attended primary school in the 1960s in Akshehir in central Anatolia, told his interviewers how he had pestered his grandfather back then with the question, "Grandpa, who were the gavurs?" (heathens or Armenian Christians). As an adult, he learned about the Armenians who had once lived there

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anecdotes about his own travels to Turkey and the development of the WATS process. He was followed by Dr. Ugur Ümit Üngör of Utrecht University, who spoke on "Confiscation and Destruction: Genocide and the Confiscation of Armenian Property." This was basically a Power Point illustrated summary of the contents of his new book, coauthored with Mehmet Polatel, on this topic.

The two talks were followed by questions

During the following two days, 18 academic papers or talks were delivered. The papers were all previously posted on a website and participants were expected to have read them ahead of time, so that presentations were generally only on highlights of the papers. There were also two presentations about books, on *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, which is a newly-published collection of papers from the first five WATS

conferences, and Prof. Fatma Müge Göçek's forthcoming work, *The Transformation of Turkey: Redefining State and Society from the Ottoman Empire to the Modern Era*.

The general format of these sessions consisted of a panel of speakers followed by commentators who tried to point out interesting or debatable points of the articles, or raise questions. Then the floor was opened for the remainder of the participants to ask questions of the speakers. Finally, the speakers had a chance to reply to

criticism or questions. A number of the speakers were young scholars hitherto uninvolved in WATS, with a wide range of useful language and research skills, including several from Turkey. There were no new scholars from the Republic of Armenia.

The workshop ended with some discussion of the direction that WATS might take in the future.



From left, Erik Jan Zürcher (Leiden University; director, International Institute of Social History), Fatma Müge Göçek (University of Michigan) and Ronald Grigor Suny (University of Michigan)

from the audience of over 100. Interestingly, the questions were of a varying nature and only included several which were of a denialist nature, perhaps prepped by representatives of the Turkish government. This is telling of changed times, as in the past, such a public event would have had a large number of hostile questioners, and would have required security to be present.

## Rice Brags About Killing Genocide Resolution in New Memoir

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writes that it "was just one example of how the tendency of the Congress to grandstand on hot-button issues can severely interfere with the conduct of foreign policy."

According to a 2007 story from *Forbes*, Rice said to the members of the House Foreign Relations Committee, "This is a very delicate time with Turkey. We have extremely important strategic interests with the Turks. ... This was something that was a horrible event in the mass killings that took place, but at the time of the Ottoman Empire. These are not the Ottomans."

Rice saves her harshest assessment for her fellow Californian, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D), whom she accused of turning any policy difference into "a personal assault."

After noting her close relationship with the state's senior senator, Dianne Feinstein (D), Rice writes: "My relationship with the other senator from California, Barbara Boxer, was, to put it mildly, less cordial."

She writes that Boxer "should have been more careful" in suggesting Rice was dishonest in presenting intelligence in the run-up to the Iraq war, and she speculates that the "angry exchanges" the two had during Rice's frequent testimony to Congress stemmed from Boxer's concern that Rice would one day try to unseat her in the Senate.

"Barbara Boxer and I had a history," Rice writes. "She knew that I'd worked for every California Republican who'd tried to defeat her. And perhaps she bristled at speculation that I'd one day take her on for that seat. She needn't have worried, but it was never just a policy difference for Senator Boxer; she always managed to descend into a personal assault."

Boxer was one of the Senate's sharpest critics of the war in Iraq, and she aggressively questioned several members of the Bush administration's foreign policy team over the conflict.

Rice also took Boxer to task for her suggestion, during a 2007 hearing on President George W. Bush's proposed "surge" strategy, that Rice could not understand the sacrifices of soldiers killed in combat because she had no children herself. "Not only was it a dumb thing to say, it was deeply offensive," Rice writes.

Boxer explained at the time that she was referring to the fact that neither she nor Rice had relatives in combat and said she did not intend to single out Rice for not having children.

In a response to Rice sent to *The Hill*, Boxer said: "I wish Condoleezza Rice well, but history will record her role in an unnecessary war that led to thousands of dead and wounded Americans, while taking our eye off those responsible for 9/11."

Rice offers a much warmer recollection of Boxer's colleague on the Foreign Relations Committee at the time, a "wiry junior senator" named Barack Obama.

"His questions were sharp but not rude, and he actually seemed interested in my answers," Rice recalls in the book. "We volleyed back and forth a few times, and I was really impressed. That was my first encounter with then Sen. Barack Obama. He'd vote for my confirmation despite objections from some in his camp, and we would become friendly. We didn't always agree, but I always knew that our exchanges would be without personal animosity or rancor."

Rice writes that she and Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), the 2008 GOP presidential nominee, were "old friends," but she said he lit into her on one occasion about a perceived lack of support from the State Department for the war effort in Iraq.

"I let him finish the tirade because I knew that he could be emotional," Rice writes.

(Additional material used from *Forbes*.)



WATS panel with, from left, Raymond H. Kévorkian (University of Paris VIII Saint Denis; director, AGBU Bibliothèque Nubar), Hans-Lukas Kieser (University of Zurich), Roger Heathcock (Birzeit University), Vangelis Kechriotis (Bosphorus University), Matthias Bjørnlund (Danish Institute for Study Abroad) and Hakem Rustom (London School of Economics)

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and that it was they who had worshipped in a church whose ruins remained; and, he learned that after the Armenians were "gone," the local economy suffered from the absence of their skills. Then there is Mete, a 24-year-old, who began in 2009 to make video recordings of conversations with family members in an attempt to answer the question: "Who am I?" When, in high school, he first heard about the Genocide, he couldn't believe it, thinking only the Nazis had committed such crimes. For Adil, born in 1983 in Diyarbakir, the question was: why did he have blond hair and green eyes? He was to learn that he had inherited these somatic features from his grandfather's mother, Sosi, an Armenian who, as a 13-year-old survivor, had been "sold" and married off. For Adil, exploring the story of his Armenian ancestor helped overcome the sense of guilt felt by many Turks and Kurds about 1915, in that they can identify with the victim. The 77-year-old Ruhi reported that when he discovered his mother was Armenian, it robbed him of his identity. Like so many other young girl survivors, she had been "taken away" in 1915 at the age of 8 and married to a Turk.

The second part of the book features citizens of the Republic of Armenia. Many were descendants of survivors who had fled to Russia, or orphans who reached the USSR after transit through Arab countries. In the context of friendly Russo-Turkish relations, public discussion of the Genocide was nil. But in the 1930s, as those orphan survivors reached adulthood, they began to talk, at least to one another. What the researchers found was that, although the overwhelming majority of the Armenians had never had any contact with Turks over the past 90 years, they all had "memories of memories," passed down through their families. In the 1960s public consciousness of the Genocide matured, with public rallies and campaigns to build commemorative monuments, as well as ceremonies to remember the resistance at Musa Dagh and April 24.

The stories told by Armenians in the new republic are full of gruesome details of the Genocide: decapitations, incinerations, drownings and deportations. A recurring motif is that of "beautiful young Armenian girls," who are "taken away" and forced to marry Turks or Kurds. Many mothers preferred to have their daughters die than suffer such a fate. One Armenian woman, forcibly married to a Turkish man, strangled all the children she bore over seven years, because "she did not want to have children from a Turk..." (p. 109).

The enormity of the suffering, no matter how difficult for a reader to face emotionally, is crucial to provide insight into the attitude of many Armenians today towards the Turks and

Turkey. The emotions that they related to the word "Turk" included "hatred," "hatred, revenge," "they are cruel, cruel," "enmity" and so forth. When asked whether they had even encountered a Turk, most said no. Some feared such atrocities could recur, saying they thought that if Turkey did not acknowledge the Genocide, in the future Turks might repeat the Genocide. Asked to explain why it occurred in the first place, most thought that the Turks wanted to expropriate the Armenians, take their gold, their land, their possessions. Many found no rational reason, saying simply, "I don't know" (p.133).

Yet, and this is the most important feature of the oral history project, there is a readiness to overcome the hostility, to forgive and to forget. Aram, a doctor from Istanbul, stressed the shared culture of Turks and Armenians: "I don't think I am culturally different. Because you belong to the same land. You belong here.... Even if you killed each other, even if you don't look at one another's face, the same thing makes you happy." Many Turks expressed nostalgia about the time before 1915 when the two peoples lived together peacefully and guilt about the Genocide. Speaking of the pain, Aram went on: "It can be forgotten through forgiving. Discussing is something, questioning is another thing, but eventually you have to love. And they have to love you in return" (p. 30). The precondition for such forgiveness is acknowledgement of having done wrong. The researchers write: "[F]orgiveness starts from demeanor of the one who acted wrongly. The one who acted wrongly would be prepared to avoid repeating the wrong action again; to avoid repeating the wrong action he should understand, should acknowledge that he did wrong. Then, forgiveness would make sense. Forgiveness makes no sense without repentance. To forgive who? To forgive what?" (p. 134).

Thus the need for Turkey to recognize the Genocide, a key point made in a public round table discussion concluding the day's proceedings. Keynote speaker Cem Özdemir, chairman of the Green Party in Germany, whose family comes from Turkey, stressed his view that, although he understands the desires of the Armenian Diaspora for recognition on the part of many parliaments, he considers the only "solution" to lie in action by the Turkish parliament. "Healing the wounds lies in Turkey," he said.

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