

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Volume LXXXII, NO. 11, Issue 4205

\$ 2.00

The First English Language Armenian Weekly in the United States

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Karsh Exhibit Captures Spark ALMA Unveils Gallery

By **Daphne Abeel**  
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

WATERTOWN, Mass. – Anyone with a passing knowledge of 20th-century photography has seen an image shot by Yousuf Karsh. His photograph of Winston Churchill is possibly the most frequently reproduced photo portrait in the world.

Thus, it is no wonder that the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) has celebrated, with two events, its acquisition from Karsh's widow, Estrellita, of a group of images that will become part of the museum's permanent collection.

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ALMA Chairman Haig der Manuelian and Estrellita Karsh cut the ribbon to the new Bedoukian Gallery, which houses the Karsh show.

### Karabagh Sees 'Sobering Impact' From Azeri Drone Downing

By **Tigran Avetisian**

STEPANAKERT (RFE/RL) – The reported downing of an Azerbaijani spy drone over Nagorno Karabagh will restrain Baku's appetite for another war with the Armenians, the Karabagh Armenian leadership said on Thursday.

Bako Sahakian, the president of the Nagorno-Karabagh Republic (NKR), also said through a spokesman that the reconnaissance flight allegedly carried out by the destroyed unmanned aircraft constituted a serious ceasefire violation.

"First of all, the [Azerbaijani] aggressor will now feel more restrained because the

destruction of such military hardware also shows the extent of the technical sophistication of our army. That will certainly have a quite sobering impact on Baku's behavior," Sahakian's press secretary, Davit Babayan, said.

The NKR Defense Army announced on Wednesday that its forces shot down the Azerbaijani drone while it flew a reconnaissance mission over Karabagh's eastern Martuni district on Monday. The Armenia-backed army released several pictures of what it described as the drone wreckage.

The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry denied that information late on Thursday. In a short statement cited by the Trend news agency, it said "Azerbaijan has nothing to see DRONE, page 2

### Ambassadors to Armenia, Turkey Approved by Senate Foreign Relations Committee

WASHINGTON – On September 13, during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee business meeting to consider a slate of administration nominees for ambassadorial posts, Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) cited his loss of confidence in the US envoy to Turkey Francis Ricciardone given his careless response regarding minority rights in Turkey, reported the Armenian Assembly of America.

Specifically, Menendez stated: "his [Ricciardone's] response indicates that he either did not carefully review the responses that were submitted in his name or worse that he truly was unaware of the history of the Christian church in Turkey and the difficulties that Christian churches continue to face in that country. His response indicates a lack of focus or interest in issues affecting the Armenian community and sends a message to Turkey that the Armenia issue is not an 'A-list' issue. We need an ambassador in Ankara that can support, defend and advocate on behalf of all of the United States' interests vis-à-vis Turkey. Unfortunately, I've lost confidence in the ability of Mr. Ricciardone to undertake that task and will not be able to support his nomination."

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) followed up on Menendez's remarks, adding that Ricciardone's response was "unacceptable, incorrect and inappropriate."

The Armenian Assembly previously expressed its concerns with respect to Ricciardone's responses and, in its August letter to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, urged "immediate action" to correct Ricciardone's disconcerting statement which "in the context of the planned extermination of the Armenian people and the documented destruction of its religious and cultural heritage is as much offensive as it is shocking."

see AMBASSADORS, page 14

### Tehran Again Calls for Closer Armenian-Iranian Ties

TEHRAN, Iran (RFE/RL) – President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad reiterated Iran's strong interest in expanding its "historic, deep and friendly" relations with Armenia as he met with Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian here over the weekend.

Ahmadinejad reportedly called for a faster implementation of more Armenian-Iranian energy projects. Official Iranian sources quoted him as saying they will bolster peace and stability in the region.

"We can expand the existing relations by up to three times," Ahmadinejad told Nalbandian on Saturday, according to the Mehr news agency.

Another Iranian news agency, IRNA, quoted him as repeating his earlier remark that Tehran is placing "no limitations" on the development of bilateral ties "in all areas."

A statement by the Armenian Foreign Ministry said the two men agreed on the need for a "further development of the

mutually beneficial relations."

"The course of the implementation of joint economic projects was discussed during the meeting," added the statement. The projects include the construction of two



Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, left, with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, right

hydroelectric plants on the Arax river marking the Armenian-Iranian border and a pipeline that will ship Iranian fuel to Armenia. The two governments also plan to see IRAN, page 4

### Armenia, Diaspora Conference Begins

YEREVAN – The Armenia-Diaspora Conference has brought together this week 500 representatives from 50 countries.

As the Diaspora Ministry reports, President of Armenia Serge Sargisian and President of Nagorno Karabagh Bako Sahakian delivered addresses.

Patriarchal blessings were delivered by Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, and Catholicos of Cilicia Aram I.

The four themes are language and education; youth; the centennial of the Genocide and Armenian-Diasporan cooperation.

### Foreign Minister Receives French Parliament Group

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian received this week representatives from the France-Armenia Parliamentary Friendship Group, headed by Francois Rochebloine.

Nalbandian praised the personal contribution of the French parliamentarians to the development of Armenian-French relations and the expansion of cooperation between the two nations' parliaments.

Rochebloine noted that he has always been a friend of the Armenian people and will continue his activity directed toward strengthening the cooperation of the Armenian and French peoples.

### Expanded Matenadaran Inaugurated

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – President Serge Sargisian inaugurated on Tuesday a new, more sprawling building of Armenia's Matenadaran repository of ancient manuscripts.

The Matenadaran, officially called the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, was founded in 1959 to house and maintain one of the world's richest collections of handwritten books spanning a range of subjects. It currently has 17,000 manuscripts, mostly in Armenian, and 30,000 other documents of interest to scholars.

A fraction of those manuscripts is put on display at a museum in the old Matenadaran building.

The government initiated in early 2008 the \$14-million construction of a new building adjacent to the existing one. It will now house the manuscript repository itself as well as other facilities of the institute employing hundreds of people.

The project was financed by Russian-Armenian businessman Sergei Hambardzumian and Maxim Hakobian, a shareholder in Armenia's largest mining company.

Sargisian paid tribute to both men as well as Artur Meschian, a prominent Armenian musician and architect who designed the building, in a speech at the inauguration ceremony.

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## World Leaders Offer Congratulations on Anniversary

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Messages of congratulation arrived from world leaders and dignitaries, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the independence of Armenia.

Among those sending messages were US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. “On behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States, I am delighted to send best wishes to the people of Armenia as you celebrate the 20th anniversary of your independence this September 21. The United States values our relationship with Armenia, rooted in mutual respect and interests. Together, we are working to reduce poverty, expand trade and investment, promote the work of civil society groups and broaden access to healthcare. As we celebrate the bonds between our two countries and honor Armenia’s rich cultural heritage, we reaffirm the commitment of the United States to strengthen the cooperation between our two countries.”

French President Nicolas Sarkozy similarly said, “On September 21, 1991, Armenia re-connected with its history to once again become the master of its destiny. The Armenian people must be proud of whatever they have achieved over the 20 years of independence, regardless of challenges faced. France will be at Armenia’s side to help the friendly republic resist the outward challenges.”

## Armenian-Latvian Economic Cooperation

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – This year’s meeting of the Armenian and Latvian presidents played a role in the development of Armenian-Latvian economic relations. A business forum including Armenian and Latvian development investment agencies was organized as a result of the meeting. One development has been the opening of a branch of the Latvian company, Interklin LLC, in Armenia.

Director General of the Armenian Development Agency Robert Harutunian said now the road is cleared for more Baltic companies to arrive here.

“With its working experience the company can become an impetus for companies of the TransBaltic states to enter the Armenian market,” Harutunian said.

Latvian ambassador to Armenia Gints Apals said, “We hope that the opening of this company will promote Armenian businessmen’s entrance to the Latvian market, too.”

## Local Elections Held in Karabagh

STEPANAKERT, Nagorno Karabagh (RFE/RL) – Voters here went to the polls on Sunday to elect local officials in the capital and many rural municipalities.

According to the Central Election Commission (CEC), 59 percent of Karabagh’s more than 93,000 eligible voters cast their ballots for individual candidates vying for top executive positions and local council seats. The CEC said it has received no formal complaints from any of those candidates.

Bako Sahakian, Karabagh’s president, hailed the elections as democratic after casting a ballot at a polling station in Stepanakert. “It can be said that elections have become an integral part of life in our country,” he said. “It’s already a culture.”

“It’s very good that once again elections were held in a civilized environment and within the framework of the law and moral norms,” said Sahakian.

As always, the main electoral race unfolded in Stepanakert. Official vote results there showed government-backed candidate Suren Grigorian winning 62.5 percent of the vote and becoming the town’s new mayor.

Grigorian’s main challenger, former Stepanakert Mayor Eduard Aghabekian, came in a distant second with over 24 percent of the vote. The third mayoral candidate, Marat Hasratian, got about 14 percent.

# Council of Europe Body Set to Declare Armenian Unrest Chapter ‘Closed’

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) looks set to declare that Armenia has essentially overcome the political fallout from the disputed February 2008 presidential election and the deadly unrest caused by it.

A draft resolution that will be debated at its forthcoming session in Strasbourg welcomes the recent release of the last Armenian opposition members remaining in prison and the resulting dialogue between the ruling coalition and the opposition Armenian National Congress (HAK).

The document drafted by the PACE co-rapporteurs on Armenia, John Prescott and Axel Fischer, also describes as “crucial” the proper conduct of parliamentary elections due next spring.

“The Assembly considers that the outcome of the latest general amnesty, the renewed impetus to investigate the 10 deaths during the March 2008 events and the resulting start of a constructive dialogue between the opposition and ruling coalition mean that the chapter on the March 2008 events can finally be considered closed,” reads the draft resolution made public this week.

It says that in order to avoid a repeat of the March 2008 post-election violence in Yerevan, which left 10 people dead, Armenia should hold “genuinely democratic parliamentary elections,” reform its law-enforcement

and judicial systems and create a “pluralist media environment.”

The proposed resolution is a major boost to President Serge Sargsian and his coalition government. They



Arman Grigorian, a senior member of the opposition Armenian National Congress, speaks to journalists.

have for years been under pressure from Western powers and structures to reverse a harsh crackdown on the HAK launched after the 2008 ballot.

Predictably, the HAK, whose leader Levon Ter-Petrosian was the main opposition presidential candidate in 2008, has condemned the document. Its representative to the Council of Europe, Arman Grigorian, on Friday accused the leadership of the Strasbourg-based assembly of siding with the Armenian government in its standoff with the Ter-Petrosian-led opposition.

“This is a manifestation of the fact that the PACE and the authors of this resolution have breached their impartiality and neutrality,” Grigorian said.

“In essence, this is yet another carte blanche to Armenia’s authorities to continue the policy that they

have long pursued,” he said.

Grigorian argued that the authorities are still investigating the deaths of eight opposition protesters and two security personnel on March 1-2, 2008 and have not identified anyone responsible for them.

Responding to HAK demands, Sargsian ordered a “more meticulous” inquiry into the killings in late April. Law-enforcement bodies have reported no major progress in the renewed probe so far.

While praising Sargsian’s order, the draft resolution reiterates PACE concerns about “the lack of results of the inquiry into the ten deaths” and urges Armenian investigators to operate more transparently.

Fischer visited Yerevan shortly after the start of the government-HAK dialogue in mid-July. “I am very satisfied with the start of this dialogue,” he said at the end of his fact-finding trip, which included meetings with Sarkisian and Ter-Petrosian.

The HAK subsequently suspended talks with the ruling coalition in protest against the controversial arrest of one of its activists. The draft resolution does not mention this fact.

“Even if the dialogue continued, the dialogue is not a solution in itself but a method of solving things,” said Grigorian. “The two things must not be confused.”

The HAK representative acknowledged that despite the opposition criticism, the PACE will almost certainly adopt the document without major changes at its next session scheduled for October 3-7.

## ARF in US Changes Position On Anniversary Celebration

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – A major diaspora branch of the opposition Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) has reversed its decision to boycott an upcoming banquet here to be attended by President Serge Sargsian.

The September 25 event is organized by the Armenian Consulate there and dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Armenia’s independence. Sargsian will attend it as part of a visit to the United States that will involve meetings with representatives of the influential Armenian-American community.

The ARF chapter in the western US said on August 18 that its leaders will boycott the banquet in protest against Sargsian’s track record in office. It said his presence there will “cast a shadow on the idea of independence and denigrate the struggle of our people for the restoration of justice.”

ARF’s supreme decision-making body based in Yerevan, the Bureau, was quick to criticize the move.

In another statement circulated over the weekend, ARF’s Western US Central Committee claimed that the “nature” of the celebration has been misunderstood and that it is not aimed at honoring Sargsian.

## Karabagh Sees ‘Sobering Impact’ From Azeri Drone Downing

DRONE, from page 1  
do with an unmanned aerial vehicle that crashed in Armenian-occupied Nagorno Karabagh.”

The ministry also reported that an Azerbaijani army officer was seriously wounded at an unspecified section of the Armenian-Azerbaijani “line of contact.”

Armenian and Azerbaijani forces have previously not claimed to have shot down air targets since a May 1994 truce that halted their bitter war for Karabagh.

Babayan described the drone destruction as “factual evidence” of truce violations by Azerbaijan. He said field representatives of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe should consider expanding their monitoring of the ceasefire regime in the Karabagh conflict zone after this inci-

dent.

The incident was reported by the Karabagh Armenians six months after an Azerbaijani-Israeli joint venture began assembling Israeli-designed drones for Azerbaijan’s armed forces. The Azerbaijani military has also reportedly purchased such aircraft from Israel and Turkey.

According to Col. Nikolay Babayan, commander of Armenia’s air-defense forces, Karabagh army units used special “radioelectronic” equipment to shoot down the spy plane.

“It is very difficult to hit and even locate unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) because they are made of special composite materials,” Babayan told Panorama.am on Wednesday. “But we managed to do that by using special devices.”

The official did not specify the type of anti-aircraft weapon that was reportedly used to down the UAV. He said only that Azerbaijani drones regularly carry out reconnaissance flights near Karabagh.

“This time, the UAV violated the border, as a result of which its flight was ended by the joint work of our air-defense troops and radioelectronic forces,” added Babayan.



Wreckage of what Karabagh-Armenian forces say was an Azerbaijani drone shot down on September 12



## ARMENIA

# Leaked Document Reveals US Fury with Ter-Petrosian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Opposition leader Levon Ter-Petrosian urged the United States to take the lead in the Nagorno-Karabagh peace process in late 2008, less than a month after accusing Washington of seeking excessive Armenian concessions to Azerbaijan, according to newly-disclosed US diplomatic records.

In a classified 2008 cable released by WikiLeaks, Marie Yovanovitch, who was US ambassador in Yerevan then, said Ter-Petrosian also told her that he publicly branded US policy on Armenia “immoral” as part of his efforts to placate radical supporters demanding a new opposition push for power.

Yovanovitch rejected this explanation as “dishonest,” deploring the former Armenian president’s “lack of integrity,” saying he is willing to “sell out his own policy views for the sake of personal political expedience.”

The leaked cable recounts the former ambassador’s first meeting with Ter-Petrosian that took place on November 4, 2008. It reveals that the meeting was scheduled for October 20 but that Yovanovitch postponed it to demonstrate Washington’s “displeasure” with his speech at an opposition rally held on October 17, 2008.

Speaking at that rally, Ter-Petrosian charged that the US and other Western powers are turning a blind eye to a continuing government crackdown on his opposition movement in their quest for a “unilateral” resolution of the Karabagh conflict. Such a settlement, he said, would spell a “national disaster” for Armenia because it would exclude Russia.

Ter-Petrosian also claimed at the time that in return for strong Western support for his regime, President Serge Sargisian is ready to “put Karabagh up for sale” and renounce Armenia’s political and military alliance with Russia.

According to Yovanovitch, Ter-Petrosian made diametrically opposite statements when they met three weeks later. She quoted him as saying that the US should hijack the initiative in the Karabagh conflict mediation from the Russians by dispatching then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to the region to negotiate a final Armenian-Azerbaijani agreement and having it signed in Washington in the presence of outgoing President George W. Bush.

“LTP [Levon Ter-Petrosian] said the US would be doing Armenia and its people a great favor by intervening to achieve a balanced settlement that would leave neither Armenia nor Azerbaijan with ‘a loser’s complex,’” Yovanovitch wrote. She said Ter-Petrosian assured her that his Armenian National Congress (HAK) alliance “will not do anything to complicate Sargisian’s settlement efforts” in the coming months.

The envoy told top US State Department officials that Ter-Petrosian also justified his harsh verbal attacks on the West voiced at the October 2008 rally. She quoted the HAK leader as saying that he simply sought to sell his decision to suspend anti-government demonstrations in Yerevan to “the radical elements in his opposition movement.”

Explaining that decision in his 45-minute speech at the rally, Ter-Petrosian asserted that further street protests would “weaken Serge Sargisian’s positions and thereby increase possibilities of exerting external pressure on him and clinching concessions from him.”

Throughout the summer of 2008, senior HAK figures told supporters to get ready for renewed “decisive” actions against the Sarkisian administration. One of them stated that the October 17 rally will mark a “turning point” in the opposition movement’s struggle.

According to Yovanovitch, Ter-Petrosian said that the protest suspension carried “great risks” for him and that he had “no other way to get people off the streets and back in their homes.”

Yovanovitch, who completed her three-year tour of duty in Armenia last June, dismissed the alleged explanation. “Painting the United States in an immoral light on resolving [the Karabagh conflict] is intellectually dishonest no matter the motive,” she told the charismatic opposition leader, according to the cable.

Yovanovitch suggested the following motives behind his “dishonest rhetoric.” “Our read is that LTP saw support for public rallies dwindling with each passing month, and was desperate to find a face-saving tactic,” she told officials in Washington. “Empty-handed after months of a stridently rejectionist strategy, LTP chose to cloak himself in nationalism and con-



**YEREVAN — President Serge Sargisian this week handed out medals to Armenians who have contributed to the republic and to the betterment of the Armenian people. Among those was Harout Khatchadourian, one of the founders of KOHAR Symphony Orchestra and Choir, which is based in Gumri. Khatchadourian and his brothers, all of whom live in Beirut, Lebanon, pay all the costs associated with KOHAR, as a way to pay tribute to their parents. Above, President Serge Sargisian, left, presents the medal to Harout Khatchadourian.**

coct a conspiracy theory of great power machinations to cover his political retreat.”

Levon Zurabian, a close Ter-Petrosian associate coordinating the HAK’s day-to-day activities, insisted on Thursday that there were no contradictions between what the ex-president said at the rally and the conversation with the US ambassador.

In particular, Zurabian, who was also present at that meeting, strongly denied her claims that Ter-Petrosian admitted misleading his most loyal supporters. “Ter-Petrosian never said such a thing, I refute that,” he said. “And Marie Yovanovitch also refutes herself in that report.” But Zurabian would not comment on whether Ter-Petrosian indeed urged the US to aggressively push for an Armenian-Azerbaijani peace deal.

Ter-Petrosian was quoted as questioning Russia’s commitment to Karabagh peace in another leaked cable which Yovanovitch sent to Washington in August 2009. The confidential document also publicized by WikiLeaks gives details of his meeting in Yerevan with Matthew Bryza, then US deputy assistant secretary of state.

“LTP worried that Russia does not actually want a solution, but rather a lingering problem that leaves both Armenia and Azerbaijan dependent on Russia,” reads the document.

Ter-Petrosian’s alleged concerns contrasted with his exceedingly positive public statements on the Russian government. The HAK leader has been far more critical of the Western powers in his public pronouncements made since the disputed February 2008 presidential election. He has repeatedly accused them of tolerating human rights abuses in Armenia for “geopolitical considerations.”

Zurabian claimed that relations between American diplomats and the HAK began worsening in September 2008 because Armenia’s leading opposition force refused to unconditionally back Sargisian’s policy of rapprochement with Turkey.

“We were angry that for the sake of geopolitical aims the United States can turn a blind eye to the trampling of democracy,” he said. “We were angry with the United States for that reason, while the United States probably had motives to be angry with our position.”

“But over time – when it became obvious that our evaluations are correct, that Turkey will not delink relations with Armenia from the Karabagh issue, that Serge Sargisian is exploiting the normalization process to keep political prisoners and destroy the opposition – the same Marie Yovanovitch learned to respect Levon Ter-Petrosian,” added the HAK coordinator.

## Chess Becomes Mandatory School Subject

YEREVAN (RFE/RL and Reuters) – Chess has become a mandatory school subject across Armenia for every child over the age of 6.

School officials in Armenia say the move is aimed at fostering independent strategic thinking among future generations at school, at work and in society.

The plan took effect beginning with the current academic year. More than 40,000 children in about 1,500 Armenian schools already have received chess textbooks and chess pieces. They are now receiving formal lessons twice a week from 1,200 specially-trained and selected teachers.

Vachik Khachaturian, who has been teaching mathematics at school for years, decided to teach chess, too. He says the game is interesting and useful for his young students at Yerevan’s Secondary School No. 125.

“First of all, chess is a game and it is fun. At the same time, it is an intellectual game,” Khachaturian says. “Along with mastering the game the children learn to think independently. This [independence] makes the game interesting for them, especially at their young age.”

Armenia already is one of the world’s leading chess nations. The country boasts more than 30 grandmasters and gold-medal winners at the International Chess Olympiads in 2006 and 2008.

President Serge Sargisian presides over Armenia’s Chess Academy and the national Chess Federation. He also has been involved during the past three years in developing the plan to teach chess in the nation’s schools.

The director of Armenia’s Chess Academy, grandmaster Smbat Lputian, initiated the project to introduce chess as a mandatory school subject. He says he strongly believes in the positive impact that playing chess can have upon children of a young age.

“Chess is an amazing game, amazing as I see only positive things in it,” Lputian says. “It is a very fair game and this is the most important thing.”

Sitting amid chessboards in the academy’s tournament room, Lputian explains that he sees chess as a way to develop the ability of children to think independently.

“It makes you think and map out a strategy and while working on it, you need to assess your every move in advance and find the right one,” Lputian says. “And with every move you need to make a decision, the whole game is about making decisions and these decisions should be primarily correct. The game makes you more accustomed to making serious decisions in difficult situations.”

Chess also is regarded by most Armenians as an inclusive and universal activity, capable of uniting people of different ages and physical abilities.

## Government Reports Rise in Armenian Wheat Output

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia’s aggregate output of wheat will rise by almost 20 percent this year mainly because of more favorable weather conditions, a senior government official announced on Friday.

Deputy Minister of Agriculture Samvel Galstian said farmers across the country will collect at least 217,000 metric tons of wheat in 2011, up from 183,000 reported by his ministry last year.

“The weather this year has been favorable for the republic,” he said.

Galstian also noted a “certain contribution” to the better harvest from more than 1,000 tons of high-quality grain seeds that were imported by the Armenian government from Russia last fall.

The government distributed them to about 150 farmers as part of a plan to gradually raise domestic wheat production to 350,000 tons by 2014.

According to government statistics, the mountainous country of 3 million consumes an estimated 650,000 tons of wheat each year.

Armenian wheat output steadily declined until 2011, with many local farmers switching to other crops due to poor yields and modest income generated by them. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that the total area of

grain fields has shrunk by roughly one-third to 80,000 hectares since 2004. It hopes that the seed distribution program will help to reverse this trend.

According to Galstian, the government has already purchased a second 110,000-ton batch of “elite” Russian seeds this year.

Farmers willing to receive them must meet a number of stringent requirements, including ownership of at least seven hectares of land. More importantly, they are not allowed to plant wheat and other cereal seeds in those plots for two consecutive years, a condition which is proving particularly controversial.

Galstian faced protests from villagers in the Shirak region as he met them in the regional capital Gumri to select those eligible for seed allocations. He said that only 74 of several hundred Shirak farmers who applied for the scheme would receive elite seeds and be able to pay for them in kind in 2012.

Many in the audience walked out of the meeting in protest against what they see as a government policy that favors well-to-do farmers.

“They are now saying that all seven hectares must be planted with other crops or not cultivated at all [for one year.] But there are 20 persons in my family. What should we do to get by until next year?”



## INTERNATIONAL

## International News

## Ayvazovsky Exhibit Opens at Stockholm History Museum

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (Tert.am) – An exhibition of the works of Armenian artist Ivanb (Hovhaness) Ayvazovsky has kicked off here.

According to the Russian-language news website Kp.ru, the exhibit will be open for 75 days at the Stockholm History Museum.

“Ayvazovsky is almost unknown among private citizens [in Sweden]. I realize it by seeing how the majority of Swedes are reacting to canvases,” said Maria Ekbal, a guide at the museum.

Further, the website said that Ayvazovsky traveled a lot, including Stockholm, and it is reflected also in his works.

“During his stay in Stockholm he painted the well-known canvas picturing the Royal Castle,” said Swedish artist Borge Fridland.

## Armenian Community in Uzbekistan ‘Loses’ Native Tongue

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan (PanARMENIAN.Net) – About 75,000 Armenians live in Uzbekistan, of whom 30,000 reside in the capital. The community faces a range of challenges, including the preservation of the Armenian language, according to Sergey Andriasov, head of the Armenian community in Uzbekistan.

“Despite the availability of Armenian-language textbooks, the problem is pressing,” he said, adding that the main obstacle in proper teaching of the Armenian language is that it is not spoken in many Armenian households.

“The lack of textbooks and the lack of practicing the language worsens the situation. In fact, children speak the language only in class,” Andriasov said.

He said the Armenian population has made many achievements there, particularly the state-award winning dance ensemble, Urartu, as well as the cultural center, Arvest, and a Sunday school.

## Prime Minister Pays Visit to Romania

BUCHAREST, Romania (Armenpress) – A delegation headed by Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian paid a working visit to Romania on September 22.

The government press service said that the Sargsian participated in “Right Center Oriented Response to Economic and Social Crisis: Program for Europe,” an expanded session of the European People’s Party (EPP). Here he delivered an opening speech, after which he had a speech at the first session of “Black Sea Region: Growth of European Influence” conference. The prime minister also met with Wilfried Martens, president of the European People’s Party.

Within the frameworks of the visit, Sargsian met with Romanian Prime Minister Emil Boc and Moldavian Prime Minister Vlad Filat. Sargsian also met with representatives of the Romanian community.

## Turkish University Desperately Seeks Armenian Language Instructor

ISTANBUL (Hetq) – This year, Erciyes University, located in Kayseri, Turkey, launched an Armenian language department.

The classes were designed for all those wishing to learn Armenian.

But it seems that the school has yet to find a suitable instructor for the Armenian language course financed by Turkey’s Ministry of Education and Science.

The job pays \$2,400 per month for instructors and \$3,500 for a professor.

Aris Nalji, an Istanbul Armenian manager with the IMC TV station, told Hetq that government financing would dry up if an instructor were not found soon.

## Merkel Hosts Turkey’s President for Talks in Berlin

BERLIN (Deutsche Welle) – German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Turkish President Abdullah Gul met in Berlin on Tuesday for talks aimed at airing issues touching on integration, EU accession and ties with Israel.

A raft of complex issues was on the table Tuesday when German Chancellor Angela Merkel held talks with Turkish President Abdullah Gul in Berlin. Up for discussion was the sharp deterioration in relations between Turkey and Israel, as well as the long-standing conservative unease in Germany over Turkish integration.

According to a message from government spokesman Steffen Seibert sent following the talks over the networking site Twitter, the Turkish president agreed with Merkel that good German language skills were necessary for successful integration in Germany.

Seibert tweeted that both Merkel and Gul acknowledged “that the German language should be learned early and as well as possible,” according to the AP news agency.

Earlier this year, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called on the some 3 million Turks living in Germany to integrate but not assimilate. He advised Turkish immigrants to teach their children the Turkish language before German.

Gul touched on the subject ahead of his three-day German tour, telling public broadcaster ZDF that German immigration law violated human rights. He said the legislation was unfair because it prohibited Turkish citizens from joining a spouse in Germany unless they could prove knowledge of the German language.

### Contentious UN report

Also on the table at the chancellery was the recent flare-up in tensions between Turkey and Israel over a raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla last year which ended in the deaths of eight Turkish activists and one Turkish American.

Turkey has expelled the Israeli ambassador to Ankara and suspended military ties with the country in the wake of a United Nations report certifying that the Jewish nation’s deadly raid was legal, despite it being heavy-handed.

The issue is of particular importance to Germany as both Turkey and Israel are key regional partners.

### EU Accession

The closed-door talks were also thought to have touched on relations between Turkey and the European Union. From the start of the visit, Gul has reiterated Turkey’s desire to join the 27-nation bloc. Merkel opposes Turkish accession and has only offered what she calls a “strategic partnership,” which

Turkey rejects.

Complicating matters, Turkey over the weekend threatened to freeze relations with the EU if it went ahead with allowing the divided island of Cyprus to take over the rotating six-month presidency of the bloc next year.

Cyprus joined the EU in 2004 and was due to be handed the presidency in July 2012 after Denmark. But Turkey said it first wants to see a resolution to a standoff between Cyprus’ Turkish north and its Greek south, adding that a Cypriot EU presidency would “cause a major disruption” in relations. Turkey does not recognize Cyprus as a sovereign country.

Following the talks with Merkel, Gul was to travel to the western city of Osnabrück for a second meeting with German President Christian Wulff. There he was scheduled to visit the provincial city’s historic town hall, at which the 1648 Peace of Westphalia was signed, bringing to a close the Thirty Years’ War in Europe.

## EU Ready to Increase Financial Aid to Armenia in Case of Successful Reform

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – European Union is ready to increase the financial assistance to Armenia in case of successful reform, Gunnar Wiegand, European Co-Chair of the EU-Armenia Cooperation Committee, European External Action Service (EEAS) Director for Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Regional Cooperation and OSCE, made such statement in Yerevan before opening the 12th session of the Committee, Tuesday.

We are ready to increase the financial aid to Armenia, he said, the more reforms Armenia carries out the more financing it will receive from Europe.

Wiegand said that Armenia now receives more than 50 million euros annually while five years ago it received 20-25 million.

He said that Armenia has succeeded in certain reforms in the legal sector and visa facilitation. Wiegand said that EU has adopted a decision to start negotiations with Armenia for visa facilitation. For his part, the Armenian Co-Chair of the EU-Armenia Cooperation Committee Tigran Davtyan said that Armenia has achieved success also in the talks for the Association Agreement. He said that the Association Agreement requires solution to a number of tasks in the sphere of.

“I hope we will complete the preparation stage and start formal implementation of the agreement on free trade,” Davtyan said.

The committee was scheduled to discuss a broad spectrum of issues related trade, security, justice, transport, energy, medicine and human rights. The Committee convened behind the closed doors.

To recall, Armenian and EU signed the Agreement for Partnership and Cooperation on April 22 1996. The Agreement came into effect on July 1 1999. The Cooperation Committee was set up in line with the Article 83 of the Agreement. The 11th session on Sept 17 2010 resulted in the agreement to set up a subcommittee to discuss energy, nuclear safety, transport and environmental issues.

## PACE to Ban Gender Prediction during Pregnancy

STRASBOURG (Voice of Russia) – European parents might be prohibited from getting to know the sex of their child during pregnancy. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has taken this initiative in order to put an end to the malpractice existing in several countries where women terminate pregnancy when they come to know that they would give birth to girls.

PACE Committee for Gender Equality has decided to ban European physicians from informing the future parents of the sex of the child. According to the committee, who will be born in the family, a boy or a girl, is a crucial question in several countries of the former Socialist camp. Consequently, many women perform abortions fearing that their men will be disappointed with the birth of daughters rather than sons as heirs.

A study conducted by Swiss scientists for the PACE has shown that unborn children have been subjected to selection in four member countries of the Council of Europe. In Armenia, Azerbaijan and Albania, only 100 girls are born for every 112 boys. In Georgia, this proportion is 100 to 111. The committee urged these four countries to investigate the situation. These experts have drafted a document that will be tabled at the next PACE plenary session that will run October 3-7.

Politicians suggest banning physicians in state-run hospitals from sharing information with parents about the sex of the child after ultrasonic scan-

ning. They wanted to introduce this rule in all 47 member countries of the Council of Europe. PACE is a consultative body and has no right to impose its recommendations on the governments.

Meanwhile, Britain, as a member of the Council of Europe, has vigorously opposed a possible imposition of a ban on baby gender identification. Future parents should know in advance who will be born from the practical standpoint because they must know whether they should prepare a separate room for the new child or he or she will be of the same sex as other children, representatives of parents’ organizations and physicians say. Dr. Gillian Lockwood, former vice-chairman of the ethics committee of the Royal Collage of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, believes such directives will be hardly beneficial for Britain. Traditionally, physicians at state-run local hospitals inform parents of the child’s gender during the 20-week pregnancy period when an abortion can be performed from the medical standpoint, says Lockwood.

By virtue of religious and public traditions in Europe, the problem of unequal attitude towards the sex of children is a relatively new one. However, in some other countries, such as India, physicians are categorically prohibited to inform future parents of their baby’s gender. This preventative measure is taken to stop women from receiving abortions upon learning the sex of the baby, in a culture where girls are viewed as a burden.

## Tehran Calls for Closer Armenian Ties

IRAN, from page 1

build a third high-voltage transmission line connecting their power grids.

The Armenian government has repeatedly said that work on these facilities will start this year. However, there have been no official announcements to that effect yet.

Ahmadinejad spoke of “technical and financial problems” hampering the implementation of those projects. According to Mehr, he said they should be overcome “as soon as possible.”

The unresolved conflict over Nagorno Karabagh was also reportedly on the agenda of Nalbandian’s talks with Ahmadinejad and Iranian Foreign Minister Ali-Akbar Salehi. The Armenian minister again praised the Islamic Republic’s “balanced” stance on the dispute.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry said Salehi asked Nalbandian to brief him on the latest developments in Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations mediated by the United States, Russia and France.

# Community News

## TRIBUTE:

# Nishan Parlakian, Educator and Dramatist

(1925-2011)

By **Aram Arkun**  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

NEW YORK – Educator and dramatist Dr. Nishan Parlakian was one of those larger-than-life figures who seem to abound among the Armenians. A physically large man, he had a gregarious personality to go with his size. When he liked someone, whether or not that person was younger than him, he would begin to call his friend “my son” (or “my daughter”). He had a great following among actors and lovers of drama both among Armenians and non-Armenians, and was generous with his time, helping both institutions and individuals he felt were deserving of it.

Parlakian was professor emeritus at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (part of the City University of New York), where he taught drama, speech and English literature from 1970 to 1998. He received his doctorate in drama



Nishan and Florence Parlakian at Nishan's 80th birthday surprise party

from Columbia University in 1967, after earning two master's degrees (in theater and drama) from the same school and a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University in 1948. During a long and distinguished career as an educator, Parlakian also taught at Pace University, New York University and Bronx Community College of CUNY.

Parlakian has translated and published a number of classical and modern Armenian plays into English, usually adding his own introductions. Two such translations of plays by Alexandre Shirvanzade – “For the Sake of Honor” (Badvi Hamar, 1976) and “Evil Spirit” (Char Voki, 1980) – were published by St. Vartan Press (the publishing imprint of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America) and later produced by New York's Classic Theatre. The same press also published Parlakian's version of Aramshot Babayan's “Be Nice, I'm Dead” (Kna Meri, Ari Sirem) in 1990. Griffon House published his translation of Asadour's “The Bride” in 1987.

As a dramatist, Parlakian wrote more than 30 plays. Several of these were produced in New York; others – like “Last of the Mohigians,” published in *The Armenian Review* in 1959 – appeared in various periodicals. In 1988, New York's Classic Theatre presented his ethnic drama, “Grandma, Pray for Me,” which went on to win the Columbus: Countdown 1992 International Arts Award and was published in 1990.

see PARLAKIAN, page 6



Art instructor Ella Pepanyan helping campers create Armenian-inspired crafts

## More than 240 Youths Attend 48th Season of AGBU Camp Nubar

CATSKILL MOUNTAINS, N.Y. – On August 13, AGBU Camp Nubar concluded its 48th season here, located in the scenic Hudson Valley of upstate New York. The summer camp opened its doors to youth from around the globe on July 2 and was organized into three two-week sessions. More than 240 campers and counselors from Canada, France, Germany, the UK, Turkey and all across the United States attended the camp at the state-of-the-art facility. Campers and counselors, both old and new, rekindled friendships and created new bonds throughout the six-week program.

Under the guidance of returning director Jennifer Omartian and assistant director Daniel Antreasyan, the staff introduced new activities this year, including camp-wide hikes and the revival of popular Camp Nubar songs and campouts. With the staff's expertise, they offered an array of activities in which campers could participate, including horseback riding, arts and crafts, tubing, tennis, archery, creative writing, digital media and technology and vocal classes.

Each session had its own activities and events. During the first session, camp staff organized a counselor hunt, hayrides, a July 4th carnival and the return of Camp Nubar's Armenian nights. The second session welcomed ballet master Arman Julhakyian and art instructor Ella Pepanyan, both from the AGBU Children's Centers in Armenia, for a series of cultural lessons. Julhakyian led campers in various Armenian dances, while campers learned to create pieces of art under the guidance of Pepanyan. Campers also participated in an Olympics competition, a basketball game against Lake Delaware Boys Camp and a dance at Lake Arax.

On July 24, AGBU Camp Nubar opened its gates to parents, grandparents, alumni and friends at its 31st annual Open House. The Catskill Mountains offered a backdrop for families to visit campers and for alumni to reminisce about their time at the camp. The day started with Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), celebrating the Divine Liturgy in the Nazarian Center. Following the church service, campers participated in horseback riding and waterfront shows, as well as playing the finals of the camp-wide tennis tournament. Throughout the day, Armenian-inspired ceramics

see CAMP NUBAR, page 7



Campers enjoy horseback riding.

## Turkish Government Ignores Armenian Property Right Lawsuit

LOS ANGELES – The Turkish government is now in default after ignoring a lawsuit brought against it and two Turkish banks over reparations for land in southern Turkey seized from Armenians during the Armenian Genocide (Alex Bakalian et al vs. Republic of Turkey, the Central Bank of Turkey, and T.C. Ziraat Bankasi et al., Case Number 2:10-CV-09596, December 15, 2010). The default notice was entered on September 1, 2011.

The land in question is currently home to the Incirlik Air Base, which houses the United States 39th Mission Support Group and 39th Medical Group. The air base is located near Adana, Turkey.

After refusing to accept service of the lawsuit under governing rules of the 1906 Hague Convention, Turkey was served through US embassy channels on June 20. Service was confirmed and the court was notified. Turkey had 60 days (by August 19) to answer the complaint but did not. The two bank defendants, Central Bank of Turkey and T.C. Ziraat Bank, requested and were given an extension to respond by September 19.

“The US Department of State had sent a diplomatic note to Ankara warning that the country is bound by law to defend against the lawsuit,” says Vartkes Yeghiayan, with the Yeghiayan Law Firm and one of the attorneys representing the plaintiffs. “Choosing to ignore the lawsuit won't make it go away.”

The plaintiffs are arguing that their Armenian relatives owned land now occupied by the Incirlik Base. Their complaint includes documents showing legal ownership. When their relatives were forced to flee the then Ottoman Empire, their property was subsequently seized and then sold without their permission.

By refusing to respond, Turkey risks having the court rule against it in absentia. Damages could be as high as \$100 million.

Representing the plaintiffs are the Yeghiayan Law Firm in Glendale, Schwarzc, Rimberg, Boyd & Rader, LLP in Los Angeles and Michael Bazylar from Chapman University School of Law in Orange.

For a copy of the default notice, contact Diane Zakian Rumbaugh at [diane@rumbaughpr.com](mailto:diane@rumbaughpr.com), Vartkes Yeghiayan at [varkesy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:varkesy@sbcglobal.net) or Diane Zakian Rumbaugh at [diane@rumbaughpr.com](mailto:diane@rumbaughpr.com).

## Low-Income Housing Topic of Talk at St. James Men's Club

WATERTOWN – On Monday, October 3, Dana Boole, president and CEO of Community Affordable Housing Equity Corporation (CAHEC) in Raleigh, NC, will be the speaker at the dinner meeting of the St. James Armenian Church Men's Club. The topic will be “Insiders view of public/private low income housing.”

Boole manages CAHEC's operations and oversees its fund-raising efforts throughout the US, with primary focus on the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern states. Created in 1992 to help finance the development of affordable rental housing in North Carolina, CAHEC is now a non-profit equity provider operating in 10 states.

Boole came to CAHEC from Edison Capital Housing Investments in Boston. As acquisitions director at Edison, he focused primarily on equity syndication in the eastern US. Before joining Edison, he held positions as vice president of acquisitions for National Partnership Investments Corp. and as commercial real estate consultant for the Leggat Company.

The social hours starts with mezza at 6:15 p.m., followed by a complete Armenian dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$12 per person. The dinner meeting will be at the St. James Armenian Charles Mosesian Cultural & Youth Center Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn St. Ladies are welcome.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Lay Leadership Program at St. David Armenian Church

BOCA RATON — As part of programs dedicated to “The Year of Lay Ministry,” as announced by the Diocesan Assembly, Very Rev. Nareg Berberian initiated a Religious Education Program for the lay leadership of the church so that the participants would closely study the faith, history and theology of the Armenian Church. This seven-week course is designed to enhance the knowledge of the lay leaders in the faith and theology of the Armenian

Apostolic Church, while serving as “lay ministers” of St. David Armenian Church.

The Religious Education Program will offer the following themes: The Sacraments of the Armenian Church, the Apostolicity of the Armenian Church, the Divine Liturgy, the Understanding of the Holy Trinity, the Theology of Death and Dying, the Holy Bible and Contemporary issues the Armenian

Church faces today.

On Thursday, September 15, more than 25 lay leaders of St. David Armenian Church participated in the first lecture series. Berberian spoke about the sacraments of the Armenian Church and its impact in our lives. He emphasized that the sacraments of the Church are the means to enter into the vineyard of the Lord and enhance our faith by maintaining its divine mystery in our lives.

“Since we are offered to the altar of God during our baptism, we are called for the first time to become lay ministers of the Church and live through faith, hope and love,” stated Berberian.

In his remarks to the participants, Berberian noted, “To be a successful and effective lay minister, it is prerequisite to gain knowledge of the basic teachings of our Church so you may be able to identify yourself with the history and faith that you are called upon to serve as a representative of your church community. Without that basic knowledge, a lay minister will fail in his/her ministry.”

The participants were captured by the theme

and fully engaged in conversation. Carol Norigian, the chair of the Women’s Guild and the Diocesan Delegate reflected, “As I continue to study about our Church, my faith and my service in the Armenian Church will strengthen, and I will appreciate the theology and the ancient tradition passed onto us through the generations.”

On Sunday, September 18, the Diocesan theme was introduced to the parishioners. Berberian delivered a sermon based on Jesus’ word, “Follow me.” He focused on three points: 1) The Call comes from Christ; 2) The Call is simple and 3) The Call is transformative.

Being an active parish in the Diocese, St. David Armenian Church will continue to follow the directives sent by the Diocese to strengthen the lay leadership of the Church through educational and outreach programs.

Recently, Berberian published his first handbook titled, *Walking Through the Armenian Faith and History: An Instructional Handbook*, which will be unveiled in February 2012.

## Nishan Parlakian, Educator and Dramatist

PARLAKIAN, from page 5

In the last decade, Parlakian published three anthologies which will remain handy reference works for many years to come. *Modern Armenian Drama* (2001) was co-edited with Dr. S. Peter Cowe. *Contemporary Armenian American Drama: An Anthology of Ancestral Voices* (2004) and *Notable Women in Modern Armenian Drama* (2009) were both prepared by Parlakian alone.

Parlakian’s articles on Armenian literature have been published in numerous anthologies and professional journals, and he frequently contributed reviews and other short pieces to Armenian newspapers and periodicals.

His multifaceted role within the Armenian-American community has included long-term relationships with the Armenian Students Association and with the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern). In partial recognition of this work, he received the Arthur H. Dadian Armenian Heritage Award from the Armenian Students Association in 1999, and in 2008, the St. Vartan Award from

special issues for almost 40 years.

For his publications and his work in Armenia, Parlakian has received grants from the AGBU, the Armenian Literary Society and PSC/CUNY. He was also a Fulbright lecturer in Armenia in 1991-92.

Alongside his work in the Armenian sphere, Parlakian was very interested in the work of Luigi Pirandello and became an active organizer of the Pirandello Society of America. He has served as editor of the society’s newsletter and was the president of the society from 1995 to 2003. He was literary historian of the Roundabout Theatre (New York City), editor and founder of the CUNY Stage (1995-2000) and sat on the editorial board of *Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States* and the board of the Classic Theatre.

Parlakian was very proud of the literary work of his father, Raphael, who as a youth had been praised by master poet Taniel Varujan but ended up as a jeweler in the United States in order to earn a livelihood. A devoted family man like his father, Nishan Parlakian leaves behind his wife of many years, Florence (née Mechtel); two children, Nishan Payel (and wife Margot) and Elizabeth Rose, as well as grandchildren, Liliana and Rose Parlakian.

Parlakian died on September 12. Services were held at the Riverside Memorial Chapel in New York on September 15 and he was buried the next day in Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, in Westchester County.



Prof. Nishan Parlakian

the Armenian Diocese.

Parlakian was artistic director of the Armenian Students Association Players from 1950 to 1954; in 1974, with the New York Armenian Students’ Association, he presented a program titled “Directing Armenians.” Parlakian spent 16 seasons (1972-1988) as artistic director of the Armenian Church of America’s Diocesan Players, during which time he staged plays by Shirvanzade, Sundukian, Baronian, Asadour and others.

From 1976 to 1980, he was editor of *The Armenian Church* quarterly magazine, and he was an influential voice on the editorial board of *Ararat* quarterly, where he contributed articles and edited

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# A Brotherhood Is Bolstered by Food and Friendship

WINNETKA, Calif. (*Los Angeles Times*) – In the kitchen of this Winnetka hall, honey-filled balls of *lokma* are piled on plates for dessert. Puff pastries called *borek* are filled with cheese, eggs and dill, then warmed in the oven. Spicy Armenian prosciutto chills in the fridge.

The night's main dish – marinated beef called *doner* on three large spits – is roasting. It takes at least five hours to make a proper *doner*, says cook Sako Cicek. He places thin ribbons of the meat in a chafing dish.

The occasion for this feast is *Doner Night*, an event sponsored by the Organization of Istanbul Armenians, a group of more than 1,000 Turkish Armenians in Southern California. Of the hundreds of thousands of Armenians in California, Turkish Armenians make up a small fraction. In addition to Armenian, they also speak Turkish, listen to Turkish music and have adopted many of the traditions of that country.

There are times, some said, when this closeness with Turkey – those who remained in that country were sometimes discouraged from following their own traditions and culture – has made it difficult to gain acceptance from other Armenians. But that is changing. Organizations like the one hosting this event have found ways to embrace both elements of the culture.

“Now they are going through a certain revival,” said Richard Hovannisian, who recently retired as the chair of the Armenian Educational Foundation at UCLA. “They’re given a little more space to discover their culture.”

After renting various spaces for years, the Organization of Istanbul Armenians occupies an ornate two-story building in Winnetka where children take Armenian-language lessons and events like *Doner Night* bring hundreds together for music and food. This year, the group will celebrate its 35th anniversary.

But when the group started, said Avedis Tekolian, one of the founders, “we didn’t have much money. People gave \$3, \$12. We worked very hard.”

In the US, said Talin Sarafoglu, the president of the Istanbul Armenians Ladies Auxiliary, which organized the weekend event, Turkish Armenians were able to learn more about the Armenian side of their culture.

“When we first came here, we also went through a revival of finding our Armenian identity,” she said. “Our goal is while we can keep

some of the customs and the food from our native land, we also want to bond with other Armenian groups.”

Like others, Frank V. Zerunyan, a city councilman in Rolling Hills Estates, left Istanbul

“At that time, it was not very well received when a non-Turkish individual or Christian minority reached levels of substance,” he said. “My father knew very well that I could not have much of a future in that country.”

When he arrived in the US in 1978, the Organization of Istanbul Armenians was two-years old and had only a few dozen members. He joined and ultimately became chairman of the scholarship committee.

For Berna Khachigian, another member of the auxiliary, the organization became like a second family.

She came to the US when she was 12 and has only a few close family members here, she said.

Past 10 p.m. on a recent Saturday night, Khachigian was in the kitchen, keeping tabs on things. The *doner* had been served. The dinner had been an elegant affair, with linen tablecloths and modern white china. Bottles of soft drinks, red wine and an anise-flavored drink called *raki* had been passed around the table.

The deejay was beginning to play Turkish and Armenian songs with a heavy bass that could be heard clearly in the kitchen.

“This is a gathering place for us,” Khachigian said. “We have friends here, they have become like cousins.”



Members of the Ladies' Auxiliary in the kitchen

because his family wanted more opportunities for him than they believed he would have in Turkey. When he was 11, his father, who had been a successful business owner, started getting threats.



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## More than 240 Youths Attend 48th Season of AGBU Camp Nubar

CAMP NUBAR, from page 5

and art projects were on display, and parents watched campers of all ages perform skits and Armenian dances and songs.

During the last two weeks of camp, campers and counselors awaited the surprise beginning of Color War. This three-day event divides the camp into two teams, Gold and Blue, and campers compete in athletic, artistic and creative activities as part of their respective team. Following the competition, counselors transformed the dining hall into a “Finding Nemo”-themed banquet for the campers to enjoy. With summer coming to a close, campers were teary eyed as they said goodbye to their friends.

“I always have a great time going to Camp Nubar, and knowing that I am going to share beautiful moments in this amazing community,” said 2011 camper Laura Bal of France. “At the end of the session, I was already thinking about the following summer. If you asked me to describe Camp Nubar in a few words, it would be friendship, family and a lot of fun,” she said.

Fellow camper Greg Merjian of Florida shared Bal's enthusiasm. “This year, camp was an amazing experience for me and I truly enjoyed my last year as a camper. I look forward to returning year after year because I never cease to enjoy every second that I am at camp. It's the only place I can go where the friendships hold deeper meaning and the memories last forever. I was a camper for nine years and I look forward to taking the next step and attending camp for years to come as a staff member,” he said.

For more information about AGBU and its worldwide programs, visit [www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org).

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New York METRO

# Educators Focus on Technology at Annual Symposium for Armenian Teachers

TENAFLY, N.J. – At the annual Symposium for Armenian Teachers, held this year at St. Thomas Church, presentations were given by expert educators on the ways students learn and on how technology can aid in the learning process.

More than 40 participants representing six Diocesan Armenian schools in New York and New Jersey attended the event, which was hosted by St. Thomas' Kirkian Armenian School on Saturday, September 10. The day's program was organized by Gilda Kupelian, coordinator of Armenian Studies in the Diocesan Department of Youth and Education.

Jim Jacobson, a professor of education at St. Peter College, gave an interactive presentation on the principles of learning. Participants also heard from Artoun Hamalian, director of education at the Armenian General Benevolent Union, who spoke about virtual classrooms and other technological tools for teaching children the Armenian language.

Kupelian introduced new resources and works in progress at the Diocese's Armenian Studies program. These include planning inter-scholastic cultural events for students and the development of a practical grammar book. Kupelian also noted the emphasis being placed on hosting an increased number of regional seminars to allow educators from different parts of the country to hear about the latest developments in Armenian studies and to share concerns and advice. The most recent regional seminar was held in Cambridge,



Symposium participants take part in a workshop during the day's gathering.



Educators at the annual Armenian Teachers Symposium this month with the Very Rev. Papken Anoushian, pastor of St. Thomas Church

Mass., last May for teachers in the New England area.

In addition to the presentations by guest speakers and Kupelian, symposium participants viewed and discussed a video on Classical Armenian orthography.

The day also featured an award ceremony. Sirvart Demirjian, Araxi Diratsouian and Nazik Sesian of Tenafly's Kirkian School were honored for 25 years of service. Tanya Vartanian of



The day's honorees with Gilda Kupelian (at left) and the Very Rev. Papken Anoushian

the Kirkian School and Berch Manukian of the Diocese's Khrimian Lyceum were honored for a decade of service.

The honorees were presented with gifts on behalf of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), in appreciation of their dedication to teaching children the Armenian language and culture.

The participating schools also received copies of a CD featuring the Armenian and American national anthems, as arranged by Khoren Mekanejian, the Diocese's coordinator of Music Ministry. Schools wishing to obtain the CD should contact Kupelian.

The Kirkian School, which hosted the symposium, recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. The school – the largest in the Diocese – was recognized by Armenia's Ministry of Diaspora on this occasion.

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**New York**  
**METRO**

# AAHPO's Annual Gala Banquet to Be Held October 15 in New Jersey

## Fundraising Efforts Dedicated To Continuing Medical Education in Armenia

By Taleen Babayan

TEANECK, N.J. — As a physician at the Ninotsminda Emergency Center, Dr. Lilit Ananiyan spends her days performing surgeries, checking in on her patients and treating the ill in this Armenian-populated district in the Javakhk region of southern Georgia. Serving in an under-staffed and under-resourced hospital, Ananiyan and her colleagues face a multitude of obstacles on a daily basis, including lack of heat during the harsh winter months, outdated ambulance cars and a scarcity of medical supplies. But perhaps the biggest challenge of all is the lack of updating one's medical training. Many of the doctors, not only in Javakhk, but also in Nagorno Karabagh and rural Armenia, have not received additional training or courses to update their knowledge of medicine since the collapse of the Soviet Union some 20 years ago.

Through the support of the Armenian American Health Professional Organization's (AAHPO) partnership with the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), Ananiyan and other doctors in Javakhk and Nagorno Karabagh are overturning this trend by having the opportunity to participate in AAHPO's Continuing Medical Education program.

"I could not believe such a humanitarian project could exist," said Ananiyan, manager of the medical ambulatory department at the Ninotsminda Emergency Center. "It was a great opportunity to deepen my professional knowledge."

The positive impact the Continuing Medical Education program has had on healthcare delivery in Armenia led to AAHPO dedicating its upcoming annual gala banquet to raise money to expand the program to Javakhk and Nagorno-Karabagh.

The theme of this year's banquet is "Help Save Lives! Support the Continuing Medical



Graduates of the Continuing Medical Education program together with AAHPO health care professionals and medical mission participants

Education of Doctors in Armenia." It will take place on Saturday, October 15, at the Marriott at Glenpointe. The evening will also serve as an opportunity to honor Dr. Richard Babayan, Annette Choolfaian, RN, MPA, and Dr. Haikaz Grigorian for their various achievements and contributions in the medical field.

The fall of the Soviet Union dealt a blow to the healthcare system in Armenia, and since the founding of the Armenian republic, no government regulations requiring doctors to keep their medical knowledge up-to-date have been implemented.

"In the Armenian-populated regions of Nagorno Karabagh and Javakhk, there are no mechanisms or funding for updating doctors' medical skills," said Dr. Aram Cazazian, a member of AAHPO's Board of Directors. "Ninety percent of the doctors have not received further medical education in the past 15 years."

The Continuing Medical Education program

currently supports 30 physicians a year, yet hundreds are waiting to participate.

"Medicine is progressive," said Dr. Raffy Hovanessian, a member of AAHPO's Board of Directors. "This continuing medical education program is vital because it is of utmost importance to update the quality of healthcare in Armenia, Javakhk and Nagorno Karabagh."

The money AAHPO raises for the CME month-long program in Yerevan covers tuition expenses, lodging and a stipend for doctors who are taking time off from their work. Over

Najarian, president of AAHPO, traveled to Armenia during the AAHPO medical mission this past summer where he had the opportunity to meet the graduates of the Continuing Medical Education program.

"It was a very moving, humbling experience," said Najarian. "Seeing and understanding the circumstances in which they work was sobering and inspires us to help. CME is a ray of hope that provides knowledge and saves lives."

AAHPO is in its 17th year serving the Armenian-American community.



Graduation ceremony of the CME program participants, including pediatricians, ophthalmologists and infectious diseases specialists, from Nagorno-Karabagh and Javakhk regions

the course of four weeks, the physicians participate in intensive programs in their specialty in leading medical centers as well as universities and advanced clinics in Yerevan. They learn modern medical skills, such as Cesarean-section techniques and the acute treatment of heart attacks, that will have immediate impact when they return to their home villages.

"Continuing medical education is a requirement that we take for granted here in the US," said Dr. Tsoline Kojaoghlanian, also a member of AAHPO's Board of Directors. "It is even more crucial to introduce and maintain it in areas of most need."

Aside from enhancing their medical skills, participating doctors also have the opportunity to network, take computer literacy courses and partake in teleconferences. At the conclusion of the program, participants will have completed an independent research project and received a certificate of completion signed by the Ministry of Health.

"This program provided me with a significant amount of information about medicine and new technologies," said Dr. Irina Khachatryan who works in the Stepanakert Children's Hospital. "It inspired me to continue to improve our health service quality."

Members of AAHPO themselves have firsthand experience of seeing the improvement this program has brought to physicians. Dr. Larry

"We are saving lives by training these doctors," said Cazazian, "The continuation of this program for many years to come is crucial."

AAHPO's 2011 Gala Banquet and Fundraiser will take place on Saturday, October 15 at the Marriott at Glenpointe, 100 Frank W. Burr Boulevard. Cocktails begin at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m. Vartan Abdo will serve as master of ceremonies. To RSVP by mail, include a list of names of the attendees along with a check made out to "AAHPO" and mail to AAHPO, PO Box 645, Far Hills, NJ 07931. RSVP's can also be submitted online at [www.aahpo.org](http://www.aahpo.org).



Dr. Eliz Agopian, an AAHPO medical mission participant, conversing with a CME graduate physician



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# Arts & Living

## Columbus Symphony Kicks off Pops Series with Opera to Broadway

COLUMBUS, Ohio (*Broadway World*) – Music Director Jean-Marie Zeitouni opens the Columbus Symphony Orchestra's (CSO) 2011-12 Pops Series with his own selection of works from "Opera to Broadway." Guest vocalists Aline Kutan, Frédéric Antoun and Keith Phares join the Columbus Symphony and Chorus for an evening of audience favorites from the worlds of opera and Broadway including pieces from "Romeo and Juliet," "Madama Butterfly," "Trovatore," "Oklahoma," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Sweeney Todd" and more.

A graduate of the Montreal Conservatory, Zeitouni has emerged as one of Canada's brightest young conductors with an eloquent yet fiery style in repertoire ranging from Baroque to contemporary music. He was installed as music director of the Columbus Symphony in October 2010, and also serves as principal conductor and artistic director designate of I Musici de Montréal, a prestigious Canadian chamber orchestra. Zeitouni also enjoys a long association with Les Violons du Roy, a celebrated chamber orchestra based in Quebec City, first as conductor-in-residence, then as associate conductor, and since 2008, as principal guest conductor. Over the years, he has led the ensemble in more than 200 performances in the province of Québec, across Canada, and in Mexico. In 2006, he recorded his first CD with Les Violons du Roy titled "Piazzolla," which received a 2007 JUNO Award for Classical Album of the Year in the category of Solo or Chamber Ensemble. They also recorded two subsequent CDs, "Bartok" (2008) and "Britten" (2010).

Guest soprano Kutan is a young Canadian soprano of Armenian origins who made her debut at the age of 18 in the role of Flora ("The Turn of the Screw" from Benjamin Britten) with the Vancouver Opera. She studied at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and the Laval University of Quebec. Before starting her operatic career, Kutan toured for two years with in a Canadian production of Andrew Lloyd Weber's "The Phantom of the Opera." In 1995, Kutan won the Metropolitan Opera Competition in New York.

Montreal-based tenor Antoun has sung leading roles with the Montreal Opera, Mexico's Bellas Artes, Opera Theater of Saint Louis, the Opera Company of Philadelphia and at the Spoleto Festival USA. His repertory includes Romeo in Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet," Alfredo in Verdi's "La Traviata," Rodolfo in Puccini's "La Bohème" and Nemorino in Donizetti's "The Elixir of Love," among many other roles. He has also specialized in concert works and oratorios, including Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion*, Mozart's *Requiem* and Haydn's *The Creation*. Antoun is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and has won awards from the Oratorio Society of New York, the George London Foundation, the Debut Young Concert Artist Series and the Licia-Albanese Puccini Competition.

Acclaimed both on the opera and concert stage, Phares is emerging as a versatile artist. A graduate of the Juilliard Opera Center, he was a national winner of the 1998 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a finalist in the 1999 Eleanor McCollum Competition of the Houston Grand Opera. He also has been recognized with a Richard Gaddes Grant from the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and the 2000 Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Juilliard School of Music.

The CSO presents "Opera to Broadway" at the Ohio Theatre (39 E. State St.) on Saturday, October 15, at 8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the Ohio Theatre Ticket Office (39 E. State St.), all Ticketmaster outlets and [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). The Ohio Theatre Ticket Office will also be open two hours prior to each performance.

For information, visit [www.columbussymphony.com](http://www.columbussymphony.com).



Prof. Sebouh Aslanian, left, with Prof. James Russell of Harvard

## A Fresh Look at Role of New Julfa

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Dr. Sebouh D. Aslanian, on Wednesday, September 14, brought the Armenians of New Julfa in Iran to life during a talk at Harvard University that was crammed with facts, but witty and fast-paced. He turned what could be a history lesson into a bird's-eye-view of the small-yet-plucky community which has left its mark around the world.

The lecture, his first since he took over for the recently-retired Prof. Richard Hovannisian at UCLA, was named after his book, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa*.

**By Alin K. Gregorian**  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

Immediately after starting the lecture, Aslanian pleasantly surprised those assembled by joking that he was

just saying enough to whet the audience's appetites so that they would purchase his book and then in turn, through brisk sales, help quicken the arrival of the paperback edition. From that point on, he had the audience's complete attention.

Aslanian's focus is the Armenians of New Julfa, Iran, a community of traders whose span reached from Venice to India to Mexico. That community was created artificially, as the original Julfans were forcibly brought over to Persia (Iran) from Julfa in Nakhijevan, by Persian ruler Shah Abbas I, in order to bring to Persia the skills (and profits) of these silk and gem traders. The approximate years that the community was practicing its global trade was from 1622 to 1750.

Aslanian spoke admiringly of how these newcomers to Iran thrived not long after their arrival. In fact, this ability to adapt became one reason why they were so successful in living anywhere in the world.

"Within a short period, they experienced tremendous growth," Aslanian said. "They created trade settlements from London to Amsterdam and as far east as Manila and Canton in China."

According to Aslanian, the New Julfans valued profits and trade so much that they were willing to make whatever changes needed to fit their host societies better. Among those changes was converting to Catholicism in Catholic host countries such as Italy and Mexico. This very conversion – with their detailed answers in questionnaires in the Inquisition offices – has left behind a trove of information about the community.

Aslanian spoke at length about the contracts which enabled the rich merchants of Julfa, which he called the nodal center, to send out junior partners without much capital to form nodes or settlements around the world. The senior partner with capital, he explained, got into a commenda trust with a capital-poor merchant willing to go away for decades at a time, making money for a particular merchant.

By the time the cash-poor trader went into a commenda trust with a rich, sedentary merchant, or *khoja*, he would be between 13 and 16, and by that time would have had the benefit of "essentially an MBA program." The master *khoja*, *der* or *agha* would send the young man or *enker*, across the Indian Ocean to make money. For their two to three decades of work, the younger partner would be entitled to receive anywhere from 25 to 33 percent of the profits. Throughout the long years of traveling, meticulous records were kept, which were presented to the sedentary partner for an in-depth analysis at the conclusion of the trip.

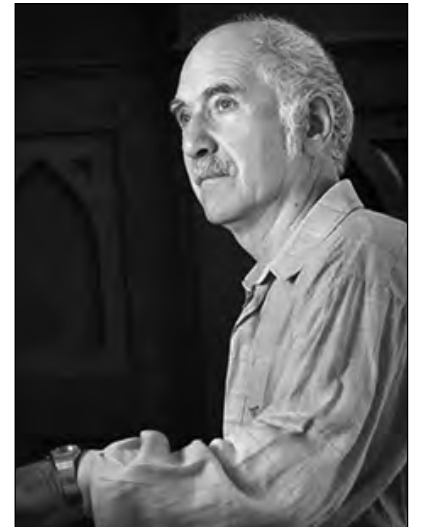
Of course, many wondered how this long-distance trust worked. As Aslanian explained, the *khojas* would often "house" the younger partner's family, so that if the partner absconded with the money, his family would pay the price. Also, if the younger partner suggested that some of the money had been lost or stolen, he

see ASLANIAN, page 16

## Concerts to Include Works by Lexington Grammy-Nominated Composer Hayg Boyadjian

LEXINGTON, Mass. – Works by Lexington-based and Grammy Award-nominee Hayg Boyadjian will be featured in three upcoming concerts.

The first concert will take place at the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 636 Commercial St., Provincetown, on Sunday, October 9, at 5 p.m. The concert, titled "My Spanish Nature," will present Aaron Larget-Caplan ([www.AaronLC.com](http://www.AaronLC.com)) on guitar and John Thomas on piano. The program will include Boyadjian's ([www.haygboyadjian.com](http://www.haygboyadjian.com)) *Mi Tango* for guitar solo, a work that was recorded by Larget-Caplan and is included in Boyadjian's recent solo CD "TROY1219" of six chamber works issued by Albany Records. About Boyadjian's *Mi Tango*, critic Barnaby Rayfield wrote in *Fanfare Magazine*: "Stunningly played.....this solo guitar piece is an energetic homage to Piazzolla's modern tango style, although there are many innovations of rhythm and sound effects from Boyadjian." Boyadjian's solo CD, titled "Vientos," has been sent by Albany Records for a 2012 Grammy nomination.



Hayg Boyadjian

The Provincetown concert will also include the following works: Boccherini-*Fandango*, Rodrigo-*Concierto de Aranjuez*, Debussy and De Falla and the world premiere of *Whispers*, a new lullaby by local Cape Cod composer Canary Burton.

For more information visit: [www.PTownMusic.com](http://www.PTownMusic.com).

The next concert will take place on October 21 at 8:30 p.m. at the Esquina Tango, Austin, Texas. The concert, titled "Dance, Love, Sleep," will include Spanish and flamenco dances, the Argentine Tango, Venezuelan waltzes and serenades and new music by Boyadjian.

For more information visit: [www.esquinatangoaustin.com](http://www.esquinatangoaustin.com).

The third concert will take place on October 22 at 7:30 p.m., presented by the Greater Houston Guitar Guild, Houston, Texas. For more information, e-mail [katygitarguild@yahoo.com](mailto:katygitarguild@yahoo.com).

The solo guitar performance by Larget-Caplan, titled "Dance, Love, Sleep, Bach" will include works by Mertz, Bach and new music by Boyadjian and Alan Fletcher.



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# The Revered and Reviled Bernard Lewis

By Daphna Berman

## A RETROSPECTIVE OF THE SCHOLAR WHO PROVIDED THE INTELLECTUAL AMMUNITION FOR THE IRAQ WAR

PHILADELPHIA (*Moment Magazine*) – Bernard Lewis has just moved to a small apartment in the manicured suburbs on Philadelphia's Main Line. At 95, it was time for the man the *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing* calls the "most influential postwar historian of Islam and the Middle East" to leave Princeton – his home for more than 35 years – for a senior living facility known for attracting retired academics.

"I'm getting old, I'm no longer sure about dates," he tells me in his polished British accent, though this moment of self-deprecation is hardly convincing: our conversation reflects his uncanny ability to recollect dates, time lines and facts – both from his lifetime and several centuries before. As we talk, Lewis recalls the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 as easily as the Turkish elections of 1950. He also regales me with stories, though it is impossible to predict which millennium they will date to. One minute, it's the Marx Brothers skits he shared with the Shah of Iran in the days before the revolution, the next, an eighth-century Arabian joke about a sinful woman praying to Allah for mercy before she dies. And he speaks with eloquence, his ideas organized into complete paragraphs.

In his new home, Lewis is surrounded by bookcases, some filled with collectors editions of his own works. He has published prolifically throughout his seven-decade career: His first scholarly article on the origins of Ismailism – a branch of Shia Islam – came out in 1937 when he was 21, and his most recent book, *The End of Modern History in the Middle East*, hit bookstores earlier this year. In between, he wrote more than 20 books, some of them *New York Times* bestsellers, plus numerous scholarly tomes, racking up countless honors, including the National Humanities Medal, which President George W. Bush presented to him at the White House in 2006.

The Old World gentleman dressed in slacks and a button-down Oxford shirt may be retired, but there is nothing retiring about him. As the scholar who coined the term "the clash of civilizations" to describe the headlong confrontation between Muslim and Christian worlds, Lewis has been extremely outspoken about his belief that the failure of large swaths of the Islamic world to reconcile itself to modernity can be blamed not on Britain or the US, but on internal decay. These opinions, coupled with his influence, have made him a lightning rod for the schisms that rock academia and the nation. Both friends and enemies are plentiful: They have strong feelings about him, whether they know him or not, and few, it seems, fall in the middle.

The late Columbia University Prof. Edward Said, author of the 1978 book *Orientalism*, accused Lewis of "demagoguery and downright ignorance" and more recent critics have accused him of fanning the flames of Islamophobia. But he is a prophet to his tight circle of admirers, which includes influential policymakers, many of whom served in the administration of President George W. Bush. They include former Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Defense Policy Board Chair Richard Perle, Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and National Security Council for Near East and North African Director Elliott Abrams.

"Bernard Lewis is the great Orientalist of our time and we shan't see the likes of him again," says Fouad Ajami, senior fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institute. Ajami, who was born and raised in Lebanon, describes himself as a "self-appointed disciple" of Lewis. The two have been close since Ajami's days at Princeton some 35 years ago and Ajami gushes freely about his mentor. "His ability to track Islam's journey over the 70 years of his career and really see the deeper currents of Islam – that is his genius. He is able to bridge the gap between scholarship and modern affairs and make a seamless connection between the past and the present."

Although Lewis hasn't particularly reveled in the media spotlight, he hasn't shied away from injecting his ideas into the political debate. As Ajami, a note of reverence in his voice, tells me: "Bernard Lewis is not a coward."

Many Jewish boys study Hebrew in preparation for their bar mitzvahs, but few fall passionately in love with the language. That is what happened to Lewis. Born in London in 1916 and raised by "twice-a-year Jews," as he puts it, he accompanied his parents – a businessman who dealt in real estate and a homemaker – to a "nominally Orthodox" synagogue on the High Holy Days and Passover.

"It was a new language and a new history, and it was my supreme good fortune that the Hebrew teacher my parents found for me was a scholar, a real maskil, who responded to my childish enthusiasm," he recalls. Lewis has recounted this 80-year-old story countless times, but his eyes still light up at the memory. His parents were willing to continue funding his Hebrew studies after his bar mitzvah, and so he continued his language instructions, adding Aramaic as well. This, of course, was in addition to the French, Latin and German he studied as part of his regular school curriculum. He was also deeply taken by history. "When we learned about British history and

the wars with France, I became interested in French history, and later, when we learned about the Crusades and the eastern question, my interest in Islamic history was first aroused. I was always interested in hearing the other side," he says of his attraction to the Islamic world.

In 1936, Lewis completed a bachelor's degree in history with a concentration in the Middle East, graduating first in his class from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. He started graduate studies and when, a year later, a professor asked if he would like to travel to the Middle East, Lewis jumped at the opportunity. With no funds to speak of – "I could no more go to the Middle East than I could go to the moon" – but with a stipend provided by the Royal Asiatic Society, he explored Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Turkey for six months. "I felt like a Muslim bridegroom meeting the bride with whom he is to spend the rest of his life and seeing her for the first time after the wedding," he wrote of the trip in his 2004 *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East*, one of many passages that critics cite to accuse him of eroticizing the "exotic" east.

On his return to London, Lewis was offered an appointment as an assistant lecturer in the School of Oriental Studies at the University of London. But World War II intervened and in 1939, Lewis was drafted into the army and placed in a tank regiment. "I didn't stay there long, either because of my aptitude for languages or my ineptitude for tanks," he says. Transferred to intelligence, he was stationed in London for the most part, but also toured the Middle East, with stops in



Bernard Lewis

Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. (That was his last visit to Iraq, he tells me.) "It gave me direct insight, which I previously lacked," he says of his wartime experience, "and I got a feeling for what people think and what they say – and the difference between the two." When the war was over, Lewis was appointed chair of the University of London's Near and Middle Eastern History Department. He was in his early 30s and it was clearly a feat, but Lewis credits the dearth of academics in the post-war years – rather than his own merit – for his promotion.

Though his original interest was the Arab world, out of necessity Lewis quickly branched out. As a Jew in the late 1940s and early 1950s, he would have been denied a visa to most Arab countries in the wake of Israel's independence. "Some people lied [and didn't disclose their Jewishness], which I was not prepared to do – and which was not very effective," he says. The result was that he shifted his research to include Turkey and Iran, focusing on the Ottoman period. As luck would have it, he was in Istanbul when the Turkish government opened its archives in 1950. As an up-and-coming scholar, he was the first westerner granted access to these storied treasures, which helped cement his prominence in the field.

He wrote extensively about the Ottoman Empire and Arab history as seen through the lens of the newly-opened archives. "He's the first true historian of the Middle East," says Martin Kramer, a former student, now a senior fellow at the Shalem Institute in Jerusalem. "Before him, there were linguists and philologists who dabbled in history, but he was the first to bring historical methodology to the study of the Middle East." Lewis, he says, pioneered fields from Jews in Islamic history to issues of slavery and race in the Ottoman Empire: "These were sensitive areas that required a deft hand, and Lewis had it."

While in Turkey, Lewis also witnessed that country's first free election, in which the Democratic Party officially ended the country's one-party era – something, he says, "that had

never happened before in the Middle East and hasn't happened very often since." Being present for the "dawn of Turkish democracy" left a deep impression. "It helped me understand the political process in the Middle East," he

says. His 1961 book, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, is still considered by many to be a landmark analysis of that country. Lewis also wrote *The Arabs in History*, now in its sixth edition, as well as other works, quickly gaining an international reputation in a field he readily admitted was becoming "an obsession."

In 1974, his 27-year marriage to Ruth Hélène Oppenheim, a Danish Jew, (they had two children, Michael, now 57, who works for AIPAC in Washington, DC, and Melanie, 60, an art educator, who lives in Pittsburgh) fell apart and he left England for a prestigious position at Princeton University. He was appointed the Cleveland E. Dodge Professor of Near Eastern Studies, a joint position between the Institute for Advanced Study and Princeton, where his chair was endowed by the family that founded the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). His new job required him to teach only one semester a year, leaving him with more time to research and write. Settled in America, Lewis published at an increasingly dizzying speed. Becoming an American citizen in 1982, he was poised to take on the role of a public intellectual.

### From Anti-Soviet to Neo-Con

Lewis' friendship with Henry "Scoop" Jackson, the Democratic senator from Washington, catapulted him into his new country's corridors of power, where he became a powerful intellectual influence on the burgeoning neoconservative movement. Jackson was a fierce anti-communist and opponent of détente, with close ties to the Jewish community. In 1974 he co-sponsored the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which restricted trade relations with the Soviet Union in response to taxes it levied on Jews seeking to emigrate. As the leading defender of Israel in the US Senate, Jackson was also critical of Soviet support for Arab regimes in the wake of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

Lewis' scholarship, which in its criticism of Islamic culture flew in the face of the so-called Arabists at the State Department, fit well with Jackson's worldview. "Each of them brought something to the table: Jackson had tremendous political skill, while Lewis provided the view of a preeminent historian, which helped inoculate Jackson to the claim that he was running against all expert opinion," says Robert Kaufman, author of *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics*. "Senator Jackson believed the main problem in the Middle East was not Israel, but a broader culture of tyranny. Lewis deepened those instincts."

Their relationship was mutually beneficial, Kaufman adds. In the 1970s, as a member of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Jackson invited Lewis, then in his late 50s, to Washington to testify before Congress, giving him his first taste of "policy prominence." Jackson brought Lewis into a circle of ambitious young men who, like him, were convinced that a tough stance with the USSR was vital to American interests. Among them were Jackson's aides, two of whom – Wolfowitz and Perle – had been students of University of Chicago professor and early neoconservative thinker Albert Wohlstetter. Lewis' relationships with this group of policymakers ensured that his influence on policy decisions would remain strong long after Jackson passed away in 1983. These up-and-coming "Jackson Democrats," as they were known, supported Ronald Reagan's bid for president after Carter defeated Jackson in the Democratic primaries. Their shift to the Republican Party was cemented following the 1980 election, when many of them went to work for Reagan in the White House. In some ways, it was the watershed moment for the neoconservative movement – an ideology that went on to concentrate its foreign policy efforts on promoting liberal democracies in other countries.

"Lewis is the elder statesman of the neoconservative movement," says Jacob Heilbrunn, author of *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neocons*. "He provided the intellectual scaffolding for the belief that something was very wrong with Arab societies. His worldview was antithetical to the dominant one and he essentially reversed the terms of the debate." Neoconservatives, with Lewis' backing, argued that Israel was not the obstacle to peace; the problem lay in the makeup of Arab societies. Lewis, long a strong defender of Israel, has close ties to the Jewish state: He gives annual lectures at Tel Aviv University and owns an apartment there as well. "He sees Israel as a liberal democracy," Kramer says, "the kind of democracy we hope for in other parts of the Middle East."

### From Armenian Holocaust to Turkish Deaths

Lewis' close ties to Israel may be one of the reasons he changed his opinions about Turkey, the first Muslim nation to recognize the Jewish state and its longtime ally. In the first edition of *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* in 1961, and in a second that followed seven years later, Lewis had termed the

continued on next page



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## The Revered and Reviled Bernard Lewis

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Armenian Genocide a “holocaust.” But by the third edition, published in 2002, he had a change of heart, replacing “holocaust” with the word “slaughter” and adding a reference to Turkish deaths as well. In 1985, he urged the US Congress to refrain from passing a resolution that would condemn the event as “genocide,” and after he published a 1993 article on the subject in *Le Monde*, he was fined a symbolic one franc by French courts under the country’s Holocaust-denial laws. “There is no doubt the Armenians suffered a terrible massacre, but to compare it to what happened to the Jews in Nazi Germany is an absurdity,” he tells me.

Lewis’ reversal took the Armenian community by surprise, says Rouben P. Adalian, director of the Armenian National Institute in Washington, DC. “For the Armenian community, it’s a huge preoccupation to have this history recognized and so, when Bernard Lewis enters the fray, it provides ammunition to the Turkish government in denying that a genocide



Rouben Adalian

took place. And so here we are, 95 years after the Genocide, with piles of evidence, still having this conversation.”

Looking back, Lewis says that he felt comfortable in the neo-conservative camp, and continues to feel that way. “Yes, I feel that ‘neoconservative’ is not an inaccurate description of me,” he says when I ask. Then he paraphrases the popular, though somewhat apocryphal Winston Churchill quote: “If you’re not a liberal when you’re 25, you have no heart. If you’re not a conservative by the time you’re 35, you have no brain.”

In choosing to blame Islam for its own decline, Lewis was bucking the new paradigm through which the region was being seen: post-colonialism, which attributed the Middle East’s current problems to the colonial era. Lewis argues that imperialism – while certainly one of the roots of the problems that now plague the modern Middle East – hardly explains the region’s malaise. Those very problems brought colonialism to the region in the first place, he’s insisted: “Why did colonialism come to the Middle East? Because [the region] was relapsing into total backwardness.”

During Lewis’ seven decades as a scholar, the study of the Middle East changed dramatically. When he was a student and a young professor, Oriental studies – as it was then known – drew on European experiences of the Crusades, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Modern Middle Eastern studies departments didn’t come into existence until after World War II, when the US began to place greater emphasis on studying the region due to its strategic significance. The government began to pour money into the field, and in 1958, as part of the National Defense Education Act, funded Title VI fellowships to support graduate students in what became known as “area studies.”

With the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, these programs became increasingly politicized. Lewis’ Israel sympathies set him apart early on, but were hardly the only thing that separated him from colleagues in the discipline. Many in these newly-formed area studies departments focused on methodology and theory, whereas Lewis remained committed to the “objective” study of history – a notion that had come into question in the field.

### Fighting with Edward Said

In 1978 when Edward Said published *Orientalism* – a work that became a handbook for post-colonial theory – Bernard Lewis’ status in the field came under intense scrutiny for the first time in his career. In the book, Said posited that the study

of the Middle East was yet another manifestation of imperialism and implicitly insists that the study of the east belongs to the people of the east. “Orientalists” (the term became a pejorative) like Lewis, he argues, barely conceal their disdain for their subject matter. At the core of Westerners’ study, Said claims, is a “subtle and persistent Eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic peoples and their culture.” He calls Lewis, his primary target, a “perfect exemplification” of an “Establishment Orientalist” whose work “purports to be objective liberal scholarship but is in reality very close to being propaganda against his subject material.”

Lewis responded in kind, publishing a screed against Orientalism in the *New York Review of Books*. He famously asserted, “If westerners cannot legitimately study the history of Africa or the Middle East, then only fish can study marine biology.” At the crux, Lewis tells me, is “the difference between scholarship and politics; they insist on seeing everything as politics and they see Orientalists as imperialists, which is absolute nonsense. The Orientalist scholarship in the western world began in the Middle Ages long before there was a question of French or British imperialism.”

Shortly before his death in 2003, Said attended a roundtable discussion organized by the Arabic weekly *Al-Ahram* in which he claimed that Lewis “hasn’t set foot in the Middle East, in the Arab world, for at least 40 years. He knows something about Turkey, I’m told, but he knows nothing about the Arab world.” Some 25 years had passed since the publication of *Orientalism*, but the rage – whether academic or otherwise – was still simmering, as raw then as decades before. Much of the debate took place on the pages of the *New York Review of Books*, but it also spilled over to conferences sponsored by the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), the reigning umbrella association of Middle East scholars founded in 1966, and which was eventually, in Lewis’ words, “taken over by Saidians.” Said and Lewis met only once, at a MESA conference and their meeting was brief and uneventful, Lewis tells me.

Lewis believes he became a target primarily because he was Jewish and British. “We all tend to judge others by ourselves; that’s human nature,” Lewis says. Said, a Palestinian born in Jerusalem and an English professor, was bitterly and viciously anti-British, he says. “He assumed that an Englishman who was a professor of Arabic would have the same attitude to his subject as he had to his.”

With the eighth anniversary of Said’s death approaching, this debate continues to rage across American college campuses, where a new generation of scholars has taken his lead. “Bernard Lewis is an influential scholar, but his writings, particularly over the past years, have become increasingly polemical and ideological,” says Nader Hashemi, a Middle East expert at the University of Denver and an outspoken critic of Lewis. “He assumes there is a fossilized Muslim core that determines the way Muslims will always behave and ignores changing social conditions in the Middle East.”

Indeed, Lewis has become *persona non grata* in Middle Eastern studies departments on college campuses across the US. Hashemi includes one of Lewis’ books in his syllabus, but mostly as an example of the kind of Orientalist scholarship students should learn to avoid. Lewis himself acknowledges the phenomenon: He was a guest lecturer several years ago at a university in the Midwest and says that while students representing various disciplines flocked to his lecture, not a single student from Middle Eastern studies was present. As a graduate student later told him, attending the lecture “would have harmed his career.” Says Hashemi: “Lewis’ reputation within the community of Middle East scholars has really sunk to an all-time low.”

“In most American universities,” says Ajami, “the battle of ideas between Lewis and Said was, alas, won by Said and his disciples. To me, that is a tragic outcome.”

When the Twin Towers came crashing down on September 11, 2001, Lewis’ book *What Went Wrong: Western Impact and Eastern Response* was at the printer. When it was released in December, its thesis was on everyone’s mind. As Lewis says, “Osama Bin Laden made me famous.” Kramer phrases it this way: “Bernard Lewis became a household name after 9/11, at a time when followers of Said thought they got rid of him.” No longer just relegated to the Ivy League and the pages of high-brow journals, the academic dispute over the Islamic world now became central to explaining Osama bin Laden and his global *jihad*.

“Clash of civilizations” thundered across the airwaves, three words often associated with the Harvard political science Prof. Samuel Huntington, who borrowed it for the title of his landmark 1993 *Foreign Affairs* article, which was later expanded into a book with the same title. Huntington, a titan in his field, died in 2008, and Lewis hesitates to take credit for the phrase, telling me he never called his theory “the clash of civilizations” per se. “It was an idea I came to in stages after studying the long history of jihad and crusade and counter-crusade and so on throughout the centuries,” he explains. Nevertheless, he believes in its fundamental truths: Christians and Muslims both believe they are the recipients of God’s final word, which they are obligated to share with the rest of humanity – a message that is both universal and exclusive. “This inevitably led to conflict, to the real clash of rival civilizations aspiring to the same role, leading to the same hegemony,” Lewis said during a 2006 Washington, DC event hosted by the Pew Forum. It is not their differences that lead to the clash but their similar-

ties, he adds.

To his admirers, his views of the two civilizations made Lewis nothing less than a modern-day seer. Says Ajami: “Islamic fundamentalism, which became the story of the world – he foresaw it before anyone. He has an ability to see things, buck the trend, differ from his contemporaries and step out of the consensus. The 1990s were an era of globalization, when people talked about the differences in the world being erased by a common marketplace. There were two men – Bernard Lewis and Sam Huntington – who said, ‘it ain’t so.’”

For Lewis, the clash of civilizations had finally made it to America’s doorstep. The situation had reached a dangerous boiling point and could no longer be ignored. The attacks of 9/11, he warns, must be seen as a battle in a larger war of *jihad*. According to the first stage of *jihad*, infidel rule in Islamic lands must end. “That has been, in the main, completed. All the states that were formally ruled by Russians and Frenchmen and Englishmen are now ruled by people of their own land.” The second stage, he says, is to recover lost lands of Islam – i.e., countries like Israel and Spain that were once ruled by Muslims but no longer are. The third and final phase is extending Islamic rule to the whole world, where inhabitants can either embrace Islam or become second-class citizens. “There is no doubt” that 9/11 is part of this struggle, he insists. “Osama bin Laden expressed himself quite clearly – this is part of global *jihad* and initiation of the final phase, bringing the true faith into the lands of unbelievers.”

Israel and the unsettled Palestinian question is not – as so many claim – the root of Arab hatred of the US. “Israel serves as a useful stand-in for complaints about the economic privation and political repression under which most Muslim people live, and as a way of deflecting the resulting anger,” Lewis says in a November 2001 issue of *The New Yorker*.

Since American foreign policy under George W. Bush was conducted by a group of men with whom Lewis was well-acquainted, he had rare access to the White House after September 11, 2001. He had a “quite friendly relationship with Cheney” at the time, he recalls, and he was a guest speaker at the vice president’s residence only weeks after the attacks. On the eve of the Iraq invasion, Cheney, appearing on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” invoked the name and philosophy of the then-octogenarian professor. “I firmly believe, along with men like Bernard Lewis, who is one of the great students of that part of the world, that strong, firm US response to terror and to threats to the United States would go a long way, frankly, toward calming things in that part of the world.” Bush reportedly read a well-worn copy of *What Went Wrong*, which was given to him by Condoleezza Rice, who also met privately with Lewis, according to reports. And Karl Rove is said to have invited him to address White House staffers, military aides and staff members of the National Security Council in a closed meeting, where Lewis reportedly discussed the failures of contemporary Arab and Muslim societies and shared his opinions about the origins of the Muslim world’s anti-Americanism.

Once again Lewis was instrumental in providing an intellectual foundation for government policy, but this time the men he influenced were in control. Peter Waldman called this framework the “Lewis Doctrine” while describing Lewis’ outsized influence in shaping Middle East policy in the *Wall Street Journal* in February 2004. “Though never debated in Congress or sanctified by presidential decree, Mr. Lewis’ diagnosis of the Muslim world’s malaise, and his call for a US military invasion to seed democracy in the Mideast, have helped define the boldest shift in US foreign policy in 50 years,” Waldman writes. “As mentor and informal adviser to some top US officials, Mr. Lewis has helped coax the White House to shed decades of thinking about Arab regimes and the use of military power. Gone is the notion that US policy in the oil-rich region should promote stability above all, even if it means taking tyrants as friends. Also gone is the corollary notion that fostering democratic values in these lands risks destabilizing them. Instead, the Lewis Doctrine says fostering Mideast democracy is not only wise, but imperative.”

### Iraq Policy

Lewis was not unwilling to combine his academic expertise with policy advice. He published op-eds frequently and in one 2002 *Wall Street Journal* piece appropriately called “Time for Toppling,” he predicted “scenes of rejoicing” in Iraq should “we succeed in overthrowing the regimes of what President Bush has rightly called the ‘Axis of Evil.’” He did the talk show circuit as well. When Charlie Rose asked him in a 2004 interview why invading Afghanistan would not have been enough to prove that the US was more than a “paper tiger,” as Bin Laden called it, Lewis said plainly, “Afghanistan was not sufficient; one had to get to the heart of the matter in the Middle East.” During that same interview, he also backed his friend Ahmed Chalabi, the controversial Iraqi politician who claimed that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. When pressed by Rose on whether the Iraq invasion was “worth it,” Lewis replied pointedly: “Yes, I think it was necessary to do something. One has to consider what the alternatives were.”

Lewis’ influence on the formulation of the Bush administration’s controversial Middle East policy drew critics en masse. Michael Hirsh, chief correspondent at the *National Journal* and author of the highly critical 2004 article, “Bernard Lewis Revisited,” says that Lewis’ credentials gave the Bush administration’s policies “intellectual credence.” “It

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## The Revered and Reviled Bernard Lewis

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was a mistake to say [that 9/11] was an expression of anger that represented the mainstream of the Arab and Muslim world," Hirsh tells me. "Really, the US had to just wipe out al Qaeda, but instead, they took on the entire Arab world. That's where people like Lewis led us astray and I don't think anyone would cite him today without some sense of irony." Hirsh goes on: "By his own volition, he left the academic world to become a political figure and that was the beginning of the end of his reputation."

Hashemi also questions Lewis' understanding of the situation: "Lewis is a medievalist and he tries to interpret contemporary Islamic politics by going back to an earlier time period where an 'essential' Islam allegedly existed. He uses this framework to explain events that happen half a millennium later. He plays into a neo-conservative right-wing agenda that wants to control, manipulate and dominate the Middle East. His apocalyptic narrative fits well with a Fox News audience, but it's not serious political analysis or scholarship."

When I ask Lewis about his role in the formulation of the Bush administration's Middle East policy, he minimizes it and calls any reference to a "Lewis Doctrine" misleading and "worse – it's false." He tells me that the White House asked him to email his opinions from time to time, which he did, "but I don't know that they took any notice of it."

He takes pains to distance himself from the military invasion, and despite some of his earlier writings, says that he advocated for the US to recognize an independent government in the north of Iraq, which would have potentially fomented democratic movements in the rest of the country. As he tells me repeatedly: "It was a profoundly mistaken decision to invade Iraq. What should have been done was to help the people in the north. But to invade the country was a mistake; I said so at the time and I've said so ever since."

"Do you think people misrepresented your opinions?" I ask. "Definitely," he says. Ajami, for his part, says he doesn't remember his mentor's opinions about the Iraq invasion. But he says the malice coming from both the Ivory Tower and elsewhere about Lewis' role in the Bush administration is misguided. "For enemies of Lewis, he became the godfather of the Iraq war, which was ridiculous," Ajami says. "Academics don't lead governments to war."

As Lewis knows well, what his legacy will look like depends largely on who writes the history. He is reluctant to predict what contours it will take; most likely, the work will be left to his disciples, much as Said's worldview continues to live and thrive both in academe and elsewhere thanks to his followers. But in 2007, Lewis and his coterie took a step toward reshaping the academic battleground. They founded the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa (ASMEA), an academic group meant to counter the influence of MESA. "In the democratic world, universities are free and you don't have an imposed orthodoxy," Lewis tells me. "That's not the case [in Middle Eastern Studies departments] where you have an imposed orthodoxy to a greater degree than any other time since the Middle Ages. It makes free discussion, if not impossible, very difficult."

With Lewis as its chairman and other big names like Ajami on board, ASMEA hopes to challenge MESA's hegemony. At 1,100 members, it's significantly smaller than its competition (MESA has more than 3,000, according to its website), but David Silverstein, the group's executive director, says its ranks are growing. For the most part, it is funded by member dues, as well as organizations like the Bradley Foundation, a Milwaukee-based group that aims to strengthen capitalism and limited government and also supports conservative think-tanks like the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation. "ASMEA is restoring competition in the marketplace of ideas in Middle Eastern studies," Silverstein says. "This is an issue of ongoing concern to [Lewis] because of his love for the discipline and his horror at the way it slid from its former

# CALENDAR

## CALIFORNIA

**OCTOBER 6-10** — Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA), Sixth International Conference, San Francisco. For info, call Anita Tashjian (323) 394-3586. Visit [www.aiwala.org](http://www.aiwala.org).

**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.

## FLORIDA

The Armenian Cultural Association of America, Inc. presents: **Armenian Heritage Cruise XV**. Leaving January 21, 2012. 15th Anniversary Celebration. For more info, visit [www.ArmenianHeritageCruise.com](http://www.ArmenianHeritageCruise.com).

## MASSACHUSETTS

**OCTOBER 20** — The K. George and Carolann S. Najarian, MD Lecture on Human Rights. Endowed Public Program of Armenian Heritage Park. Faneuil Hall, Boston. 7 p.m. Keynote speaker, Paul Rusesabagina, human rights activist; US Presidential Medal of Freedom (2005); president and founder, The Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation; author, *An Ordinary Man*, Penguin 2006. The Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation was founded in 2006 by Rusesabagina, the real life hero of the acclaimed film "Hotel Rwanda." Portrayed by Don Cheadle in the film, Rusesabagina saved the lives of more than 1,200 people during the Rwandan genocide and has been honored internationally for his heroism. Charlie Clements, executive director, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard Kennedy School of Government will introduce Rusesabagina.

**OCTOBER 22** — Fall Harvest Bazaar, noon-8 p.m., First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. Great food, fun and the marketplace. Lamb, beef, chicken and losh kebab dinners grilled fresh all day with pilaf and salad, enjoy in our Fellowship Hall or packed for home. Yalanchi, cheese boreg and falafel. Home made manti, kufte, choreg, string cheese packaged for the freezer. Handmade pastries, dried fruits, nuts. Marketplace includes books, children's items, "attic treasures" and more. Handicamp ramp and MBTA train and bus line. For info, visit [www.FACBelmont.org](http://www.FACBelmont.org) or (617) 484-4779. All welcome.

**NOVEMBER 17** — Party at the Other Park! Benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment. Fenway Park, Boston. Advance reservations only. For details and reply form, visit [www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net](http://www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net).

**FEBRUARY 11, 2012** — The Armenian Sisters' Academy 30th Anniversary Gala, Saturday, at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston. Additional details to follow.

## NEW JERSEY

**SEPTEMBER 24-25** — The annual St. Mary Armenian Church Food Festival, 200 West Mt. Pleasant Ave., Livingston, NJ. Free admission starting Saturday, 12-7:30 p.m., Sunday 12:30-4:30 p.m. Armenian music by John Vartan Ensemble, delicious food, games, raffle. For direction call (973) 533-9794, visit [www.MyArmenianChurch.org](http://www.MyArmenianChurch.org).

**SEPTEMBER 25** — Hope around every curve. Second annual ride 4 Avi, Family Fun Day, Sunday, 12-3:30 p.m. Knights of Columbus Hall, Shunpike Road and Harvard Street, Summit. Minimum tax-deductible donation. Adults, \$10 and children, \$5. Includes BBQ lunch and live entertainment. For more information, visit [www.ride4avi.com](http://www.ride4avi.com).

**OCTOBER 1** — Festival of Dance and Music Ensembles, at 7 p.m. sharp. Bergen Academics, 200 Hackensack Ave., Hackensack. In celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Hovnanian School. Tickets, \$50, \$35 and \$25. Call Sonya (201) 315-5916 or Mari (914) 907-6762. Program organized by Hamazkayin.

glory to something so politicized."

Back in his apartment, Lewis tells me he is slowing down, but, again, this is relative. "He is so unlike the stereotypes of aging," says his partner of 15 years, Buntzie Churchill, who has co-authored two books with Lewis and is former president of the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia. Lewis attends ASMEA events ("people call just to make sure that he will be there," says Silverstein. "They just want to be in the presence of a great man"), and he is currently putting the finishing touches on a memoir, *What and When, How and Why: Reflections of a Middle East Historian*, due out next year. Rather than focus on current politi-

events in the Middle East, which he has been following on television, he has been sorting through old notes and turning his attention to poetry. Right now, he's at work on a collection of poetry he's translating from Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew — four of the dozen or so languages he has mastered.

Lewis remains an ardent student of Islam,

which despite his criticism of its present-day manifestations, he admires as one of the world's great religions. It could be this love, says Ian Buruma, writing in *The New Yorker*, that has led Lewis to overreach in his belief that the west may be able to save his beloved Muslim civilization. Wrote Buruma, "Perhaps he loves it too much."



**On October 22, the First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont, Mass., will host its annual Fall Harvest Bazaar, from noon-8 p.m., featuring Armenian dinners, home made Armenian pastries, marketplace, children's items and more. For info, visit [www.FACSBelmont.org](http://www.FACSBelmont.org) or call (617) 484-4779. Pictured above are church members, preparing for last year's bazaar.**

**OCTOBER 15** — The Armenian American Health Professional Organization (AAHPO) Gala Benefit event. Cocktails, 6:30 p.m. Dinner program and dancing, 7:30 p.m. Teaneck Marriot at Glen Pointe, 100 Frank W. Burr Blvd., Teaneck. For info, call (201) 546-6166, [info@aaapho.org](mailto:info@aaapho.org).

## NEW YORK

**SEPTEMBER 24** — St. Nersess Armenian Seminary presents **Evening under the Stars**, at 7 p.m. Benefit reception, 150 Stratton Road, New Rochelle, NY. Come and enjoy cocktails, music and mingling under an elegant candlelit tent on the scene of the seminary campus. \$100 per person; to RSVP, call (914) 636-2003 or visit [www.stnersess.edu](http://www.stnersess.edu).

**SEPTEMBER 25** — 92Y Streetfest '11, 12-5:30 p.m., Lexington Avenue, 79th to 94th streets, New York City. Visit Armenia's booth, featuring AWI watches, mountain honey, walnut and apricot preserves at International Way. See AGBU's Dance Ensemble at Main stage. For info, visit [www.92.org](http://www.92.org).

**OCTOBER 1** — HMADS 45th anniversary celebration. Friends of HMADS present Krikor Satamian at Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs Church Auditorium, Bayside, NY 11364. Tickets, \$65, including mezza/dinner. For information, contact school office: (718) 225-4826; e-mail [hmads@hmads.org](mailto:hmads@hmads.org).

**OCTOBER 28-30** — The annual symposium weekend of the Women's Guild Central Council. At the St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral Complex and Diocesan Center, New York City. For information, contact Rita Oscherician at (201) 398-0153 or [margherita@optonline.net](mailto:margherita@optonline.net).

**OCTOBER 30** — Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble of St. Vartan Cathedral, New York City, presents Independence celebrating the 20th anniversary of Armenia's "Independence." Twentieth anniversary of Karabagh and 20th anniversary of the Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble. 150 Performers. 5 p.m., Felician College, 262 Main St., Lodi. Donation: \$100, \$50, \$40, \$30 and \$25. For tickets, call Marie (201) 745-8850, Sossy (201) 779-9007, Diocese (212) 686-0710. Purchase tickets online at [www.shushidance.org](http://www.shushidance.org).

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

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## COMMENTARY

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror- Spectator

Established 1932

An ADL Publication

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The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July, by:

#### Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509  
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560 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632  
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#### SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

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| Canada              | Air Mail                  | \$125 a year        |
|                     |                           |                     |
| All Other Countries | Air Mail                  | \$190 a year        |
|                     | Display advertising rate: | \$7 per column inch |

© 2010 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator  
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA  
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, P.O. Box 302, Watertown, MA 02471-0302

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## COMMENTARY

## Celebrating 20th Anniversary of Armenia's Independence

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The republic of Armenia is 20 years old. It seems that there is nothing unusual about this anniversary, but seen through the perspective of our turbulent past, the anniversary becomes very significant with historic ramifications.

At the turn of the 20th century, a historic opportunity was created for an independent republic, squeezed on a tiny portion of historic Armenia. The republic was short-lived, but it was a rare opportunity for self-rule after 600 years of foreign domination.

Political and historic events limited the life of the republic to only two years, after which Armenia was absorbed into the totalitarian structure of the emerging Soviet Empire.

Although ham-strung with constricted sovereignty and subject to authoritative harsh rule, Armenia survived – indeed thrived – in its second incarnation, with tremendous achievements in science, technology, education and the arts.

The third republic emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union, at a most trying time, as a border war was raging with Azerbaijan and an earthquake had devastated one-third of the country.

On September 21, 1991, independence came to a gloomy Armenia. It was rather forced by the political circumstances, similar to the previous two republics.

Armenians at home and abroad welcomed independence with trepidation, as the specter of a Turkish threat was looming across the border.

Fortunately, Armenia won the war at the cost of 7,000 casualties. The ensuing and continuing no-war-and-no-peace status has hampered the country's economic growth, coupled with the blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

The days of power outages, freezing cold and lack of running water are already history, but the economic strangulation by Turkey is still taking its toll.

The government is trying to put a brave face over the country with pomp and circumstance. Fireworks and a military parade are intended to boost the morale of the populace, who do not

have much to cheer.

There are mixed feelings in the country, with the realization of the dream for an independent Armenia, counterbalanced by the severe economic crisis, which is contributing to the depopulation of Armenia.

The diaspora is gearing up to celebrate the 20th anniversary of independence with a sense of history rather than the goals achieved in this time span. The economic hardships are at best academic for the Diaspora Armenians, while people in Armenia are at the receiving end of that crisis.

Armenians are also encouraged by the fact that while the first republic survived for only two years the third republic has already been around 10 times longer.

By the end of two years, Armenians around the world were at a psychological threshold waiting to see if the new republic could or would survive beyond that threshold. Now that moment is history too.

During the last 20 years, Diaspora Armenians got more and more involved with the life of the homeland, sharing the good and the bad days. Perhaps that is the reason President Serge Sargisian is flying to the US to celebrate the 20th anniversary of independence with the largest Armenian community abroad, although there are some rumblings in California, trying to politicize the occasion.

Armenia is the best chance for the survival of the Armenians in the world. The leadership may give some cause for concern, but the historic significance of the occasion must bind all the Armenians together.

Criticizing authorities for every ill has become the favorite sport for almost all the political parties and the press. But the blame-game can last only until we realize that every Armenian and every group has to carry his or her weight.

The diaspora has to do a lot of political legwork internationally to ease the blockade and allow the homeland to breathe easier.

Armenia is doing its share and should war break out, the country has the military hardware and technology "to impose peace," as the president reassures us. Therefore, let us join with the people in Armenia to celebrate this historic moment and look forward to happier times.

## Ambassadors to Armenia, Turkey Approved by Senate Foreign Relations Committee

AMBASSADORS, from page 1

In the end, his nomination went through after a split vote, with Senators Menendez, Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Jim Risch (R-ID) voting against Ricciardone's nomination, and Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Chris Coons (D-DE) also raising concerns about Ricciardone's troubling response on minority rights and religious freedom in Turkey.

John Heffern was unanimously approved to serve as ambassador to Armenia. The next step in the process is for approval by the full Senate.

"The Armenian Assembly calls upon the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to undertake a full assessment of the current situation of Armenian churches and other such religious

sites and monuments in Turkey, and formulate legislation therein to enhance religious freedom in Turkey and protect and preserve what remains of its Christian heritage," stated Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny.

"We would like to thank Senator Menendez for his principled leadership in calling attention to Amb. Ricciardone's offensive and unacceptable responses to questions dealing with the plight of Christians in Turkey," said Armenian National Committee of America Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "Senator Menendez along with Senators Boxer and Risch sent a powerful message to Ricciardone and State Department officials that the American people deserve a US envoy who will

fight hard for US values and interests and not succumb to Turkey's propaganda machine."

The nominations are now set to go to the full Senate for confirmation.

## LETTERS

### An Apology Is Not A Tall Order

To the Editor:

This letter is in direct response to Edmond Azadian's Commentary last week, "Political Dividends from Turkish-Israeli Row."

There is a direct world-wide dividend/benefit in an initiative by the Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian to formally address Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman with a diplomatic demand that Israel apologize for its actions in the killing of 10 Turkish citizens in the Gaza strip calamity matter. This demand should be conditional that no "quid pro quo" item matter by anyone and anywhere be of relevance – except those of suffering relatives.

Who can argue against or who can lose by such an apology and by this Armenian intrusion into a most relevant affectation of world matters?

– Armen J. Esserian  
Cambridge, Mass.

### Notice to Contributors

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* welcomes articles, commentaries and community news from our readers. In order to assure the accurate and timely publication of articles submitted, please note the following policies:

- All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10 point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.
- Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are encouraged.
- All submissions should include the name of a contact person and a daytime telephone

number.

- Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is 12 noon on Monday of the week of publication.
- Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director. Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.
- The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.
- Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.



## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Visit to Nakhichevan Shows Why Armenians Can Never Again Live Under Azeri Rule

Scottish researcher Steven Sim reported about his troubling experiences in Nakhichevan, a historic Armenian territory now occupied by Azerbaijan. Since Sim's 2006 revealing report has not been adequately publicized in the international media, I would like to present here some of its highlights.

Sim stated that he entered Nakhichevan by land from Turkey and traveled to the village of Abrakunis at Yernjak valley. When he asked a 12-year-old about an ancient church there, the boy pointed to an empty piece of land.

Sim next visited Bananiyar, known to Armenians as Aparank, where he reported that "at least until the 1970s there were some ruins of a large medieval church located on high ground in the middle of the village. Now a mosque is built on the former church grounds." At Norashen, two Armenian churches and a graveyard had existed at the north-western edge of this village. He found no trace of

either churches or the graveyard.

On his third day in Nakhichivan, while traveling by train to Julfa, Sim observed the remains of the Jugha graveyard. He reported seeing "a hillside covered by stone slabs, spread out over three ridges. All of the gravestones had been toppled, without any exceptions."

In Ordubad, Sim was taken to the police station where his bag was searched, as he was interrogated about the purpose of his visit. He was then placed on the next bus back to Nakhichevan city. From there he went to Shurut which used to be "a small Armenian town during the late medieval period, with churches, schools, monasteries, scriptoria and several tens of thousands of inhabitants."

At the neighboring Krna village, there were no traces of the local Armenian Church. The same was true about the village of Gah. When he asked a passerby about the church in Shurut, he was told that it had been destroyed.

In Shurut, Sim was confronted by a group of villagers. When he said that he had come to see the old church, they told him that there was never a church in their village. As he left Shurut, the taxi driver told Sim that the villagers had phoned the police in Julfa and that law enforcement officials would probably be waiting for him somewhere along the road.

A car was indeed waiting for Sim. "A policeman got into the back of the taxi and asked me if I had a topographic map and an ethnographic book." When Sim answered that he did not, the policeman made a cursory search of his bag. In Julfa, Sim stopped at the police headquarters, where his bag was searched again. After waiting in a corridor for a while, Sim was taken to the town's Araz Hotel. He was escorted to a garden in the back of the building. Sim was

finally allowed to leave after three hours. Everything in Sim's "bag was taken out and carefully looked at, and the bag itself was examined for any secret compartments. This lasted for about 15 minutes, without a word being spoken."

Sim was asked about his job. How much did he earn, who paid him to come to Nakhichevan and why would he spend his own money to come here? The officers examined carefully Sim's notebook and checked through all of his photographs stored in his digital camera. They showed most interest in a photograph he had taken in Nakhichevan city. "It was of a stone slab that I had seen in the gardens opposite the Momina Hatun mausoleum, surrounded by a large collection of ram-shaped gravestones. On this stone was carved a cross rising from a rectangular base."

The Azeri officials told him that it was not a cross. Sim told them that he had read about the church in an Armenian book. They angrily responded: "It is wrong. It is lying to you. You see, Armenians are always lying — they are lying to everyone." They also stated that "there never were any Armenian churches anywhere in Nakhichevan. There were no Armenians ever living here — so how could there have been churches here?" The Azeris told Sim: "We think that you are not here with good intentions towards the Azerbaijan republic."

Sim stated that his unpleasant experiences in Nakhichevan shed "some light onto the attitudes that Azerbaijan holds about Armenians and anything Armenian." The report shows why it is impossible for Armenians of Artsakh (Karabagh) to live ever again under oppressive Azeri rule. If a Scottish visitor is treated so poorly, imagine how much worse Azeris treated their Armenian subjects in Artsakh until its liberation.

# Australian Senator Discusses Assyrian Genocide in Parliament

By Sen. Concetta Fierravanti

Recently I attended a commemoration seminar at the New South Wales parliament organized by the Australian chapter of the Assyrian Universal Alliance. The seminar focused on events of 95 years ago in one of the bloodiest chapters in modern history, with the massacre and deportation of hundreds of thousands of Assyrians, Armenians and Greeks. This persecution left thousands homeless, dispossessed or fleeing to refugee camps. The systematic dismantling of human rights and the persecution of the Assyrians has been acknowledged by many members of the parliament across the political spectrum at both federal and state level.

We not only have taken a keen interest in this issue but have wanted to support the community in Australia in its efforts to raise awareness of the problems of persecution. We have sought to raise the issue in parliament and actively have continued our efforts to assist the current plight of those persecuted as they continue to face hardship and persecution. But as we commemorate and remember past atrocities we need to look to the future and continue the pressure on governments of all persuasions to do all in their power to highlight the plight of the Assyrians and to represent their concerns. But whilst they continue to integrate and make a contribution to Australian life, it is important that they continue with the support of others to work towards redressing past injustices. The community here in Australia are the children and grandchildren of an oppressed generation. We must not lose sight of past struggles which shaped the present status of the Assyrians as a stateless nation.

Tonight I would like to focus on the Australian connection with these tragic events, which took place 95 years ago, under the shadow of World War I. During a seminar that I attended at Parliament House in New South Wales recently, Dr.

Panayiotis Diamadis, director of the Australian Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, made a very informative presentation. He has kindly provided me with a copy, and I would like to share with the Senate some fascinating insights into Australians who rescued Assyrians, Armenians and Hellenes. In his presentation, he stated:

The survivors of the Assyrian, Armenian and Hellenic genocides rescued were not an amorphous mass of people; they were tens of thousands of individual stories. The Australian men and women who rescued those in need were also individuals with their own unique experiences.

Dr. Diamadis also made reference to those many Australians who rescued people, who not only did what they could in very difficult circumstances but then subsequently continued their efforts in Australia, and I will come to those in a moment. He began his presentation with the Dunsterforce. He stated:

Formed to secure the Caspian Sea oilfields for the British Empire, this elite unit included many Australians, outnumbered and outgunned by the Turkish-Kurdish forces arrayed against them. The force retreated into north-west Iran and began marching south-west towards British Mesopotamia. This was mid-1918.

Dr. Diamadis recounted some of those stories, for example, of Captain — later general — Sir Stanley Savage. He described:

One of the unfortunate women folk was so overcome at the sight of the first party of British that they wept aloud. Striking their breasts they would call down upon us the blessings of God and rush across and kiss our hands and boots in every joy at the sight of their first deliverance.

He also quoted another member of the Dunsterforce, Captain J M Sorrell MM, and quoted from an article that was published in the Perth Sunday Times, on April 27, 1919:

It was almost a hopeless task, as the road for 100 miles was black with refugees. The suffering was very great and, in spite of all that our people could do, thousands suc-

cumbed to starvation, disease and exhaustion.

He relates that, by the time the survivors reached the town of Baqubah, northwest of Baghdad in British Mesopotamia, only 40,000 were left. He stated:

The men of the Dunsterforce have left us with a stunning collection of eyewitness testimonies and photographs of the Assyrian exodus, now housed in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

And further:

These young Australian soldiers were assigned to secure certain territory for the Empire. Failing that, their duty was to return to base as safely as possible.

They were not under orders to risk their lives to save these local people. Savage, Sorrell and their comrades rescued some 40,000 Assyrian and Armenian men, women and children. They saved these lives because it was their duty as human beings to help the helpless.

He then went on to describe the efforts of, in particular, Mrs. Edith Glanville, a remarkable woman who founded Quota and who did so many other things when she returned to Australia, including returning to the Middle East on various occasions and doing wonderful work at the Australian orphanage in Syria in connection with Armenian refugees. During the 1920s and 1930s Edith Glanville was a vocal proponent of Assyrian settlement in Australia.

I also want to make reference to an article which appeared in The Australian on April 25, 2008. It is one of those articles that appeared at the time of Gallipoli. It talks about the efforts of Australians who also helped in Armenia and elsewhere in that area. The article refers to the handful of Australians who were at the forefront of the relief effort, yet their stories have been largely hidden. The article goes on to state:

Not one Australian historian has devoted any attention to these remarkable Australians, who have been forgotten along with the "forgotten genocide".

The article also refers to Mrs. Edith Glanville. But it also talks about other people like Charles Lloyd Jones, the first chair-

man of the ABC, and Oscar Lines, the general manager of the Bank of New South Wales. They were concerned with the plight of the Armenians and worked together with others, such as former Menzies cabinet minister and British High Commissioner Thomas White, who was also a prisoner of war during World War I in Turkey and, as the article states:

As a witness to the Armenian genocide, he later returned home and joined the Armenian relief effort.

The article also refers to another prominent Australian, the Rev. J.E. Cresswell from Adelaide's Congregational Church, now the Uniting Church. He was the national secretary of the Armenian Relief Fund of Australasia in the 1920s. The article also refers to Sydney Declaration of Philadelphia, which set up the Armenian Relief Fund, which included prominent philanthropists, businesspeople such as the Griffith brothers, who at the time were large suppliers of tea and coffee in Australia, and the Elliot brothers, who were one of the nation's biggest pharmaceutical groups. The article describes how this fund, with the help of many Sydneysiders, raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help the Armenians when Australians were already sacrificing so much during World War I. The article concludes:

So as we reflect on the sacrifices of brave Australians who landed on those distant shores, let us also remember those Australians who lost loved ones and through the kindness of their hearts were able to save others.

I raise this issue tonight not just in commemoration of the thousands of Assyrians, Armenians and Hellenes who died but as a tribute to the contribution of so many individuals — people like Captain Savage and Captain Sorrell, Mrs. Edith Glanville and so many more good, anonymous and generous Australians who saw a need and acted.

(The above speech was made on August 23 by Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells [New South Wales] in the Australian Senate of the Federal Parliament.)



# Karsh Photographs Exhibit Artistry, Technical Mastery

KARSH, from page 1

It was Bob Khederian, a board member of ALMA, who first made the suggestion that she donate prints to ALMA.

A gala benefit took place on Friday night at the Copley Plaza Hotel and the exhibit, titled "Karsh: Celebrating Humanity," opened to ALMA members and supporters on Saturday.

Certainly, Karsh's images have drawn attention because he gained access to some of the world's most famous people. But he would not have achieved international renown without a superb technical mastery of his craft and a deeply-thought-out vision of how he wished to present his subjects. He wrote extensively about his approach to the making of photographic portraits — for example, in his book, *Karsh Portfolio*, 1967, he stated, "Within every man and woman, a secret is hidden, and as a photographer, it is my task to reveal it."

What may be less familiar to viewers than the iconic portraits themselves are some of the particulars of Karsh's photographic and printing techniques. For Karsh, taking a portrait was not a matter of sitting someone down in front of a camera and simply clicking the shutter. Extensive preparation and meticulous attention to every detail were key to producing the final product.

Karsh began his study of photography at an early age. Born in Mardin, Turkey in 1908, he was sent by his family, at the age of 16, to Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada where he apprenticed with his photographer uncle, George Nakash. Nakash felt his nephew had great potential as a photographer and arranged for him to study in Boston with a fellow Armenian portrait photographer, Joseph Garo.

When he returned to Canada, he set up his own studio in Ottawa in 1932, not far from the seat of Canada's government and through a connection with the prime minister, he began to take portraits of prominent figures.

Karsh had a keen apprehension of the function of light in the context of black and white photography and went to great lengths to achieve the prints that express his signature look. His work at a local theater in Ottawa introduced him to the use of incandescent — as opposed to natural — light and he was to use this medium to dramatic effect in his work. For some of his assignments, he and his assistants would transport as much as 200-300 pounds of lighting equipment to a shoot. He also developed a strategy of lighting his subjects' hands separately from their faces, a technique that deepened the interest of the shot.

Karsh made use of a number of large-format cameras, but his favorite instrument was the Calumet 8" x 10", whose large negative made possible a finer image quality in the printing process. In many instances, he would spend considerable time with his subjects before actually taking any photographs, talking to them, and persuading them to relax. However, in the case of the famous Churchill photo, taken in 1941 after Churchill's speech at the Canadian parliament, he recounts that he had only a few minutes to catch the essence of the great man.

The darkroom processing of the image was as important to Karsh as the composition and actual taking of the shot. He developed his own negatives and the prints were made through a photogravure process on especially manufactured heavy paper to produce silver gelatin prints. This process made possible a great range

in tonality of the final prints, from the deepest blacks to the most brilliant whites and everything in between. He also made extensive use of retouching to heighten or diminish the density of an image. When he signed the original prints, he used a special heavy, soft, black ink.

In all aspects of his work, Karsh must be admired and respected as the consummate professional who mastered both his art and his craft. There is virtually no photographer today working as Karsh did, and with the advent of digital photography, it is highly unlikely that his darkroom skills will ever be replicated.

The show at ALMA, consists of 23 of the 25 images that Estrellita Karsh has given to the museum (two not hung because of lack of space are of Marian Anderson and Jim Hansen, but they will be hung elsewhere in the building). Amongst them are the Churchill photo, portraits of Albert Schweitzer, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa, Ernest Hemingway, Robert Frost, Pablo Casals and others. The exhibit includes several portraits of Armenian subjects including Aram Khachaturian, Vartan Gregorian and Stephen Mugar, Gregorian being the only subject in the show who is still living.

Jerry Fielder, curator and director of the Estate of Yousuf Karsh, who once was Karsh's assistant, said "These prints were all made from Karsh's original negatives, which are housed in the archives in Canada. No one can reproduce a Karsh print without permission."

The opening, which drew a crowd of about 200 people, coincides with the renovation of ALMA's Bedoukian Gallery by Keith Crippen, head designer of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), who also designed the MFA's new Art of the Americas Wing. The first floor space has

been brightened with new lighting and fresh paint and the gallery is set off from additional space devoted to the display of ALMA's collection of manuscripts and other historical artifacts.

Said Michele Kolligian, ALMA trustee and gala chairperson, "The renovation of the gallery and the Karsh gift will put ALMA in a position to attract more visitors and supporters, non-Armenian as well as Armenian. We are so fortunate to have had a wonderful team of professionals work on this renovation, which includes a new media room, climate controlled display cases and new bookstore space."

ALMA curator Gary Lind-Sinanian, who worked with Crippen, MFA graphic designer Jennifer Munson and others virtually up to the moment of the gallery opening, said, "This is great, but most people have no idea of the hundreds to details that go into making a show like this happen."

Prior to the ribbon-cutting which allowed guests into the gallery, Estrellita Karsh spoke briefly, and said, "This is a real museum now, using the past of the Armenians to bring forth the present and the future, which my husband, Yousuf, represented. This is a gathering of the old, the new, the contemporary and shows that the Armenian culture is moving out into the community."

The exhibit is permanent, and open to the public starting Thursday, September 22. ALMA's hours are Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday, 12-6 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 12-8 p.m.

The renovation for the "Karsh: Celebrating Humanity" exhibition was made possible by a gift from the Dadourian Foundation.

## A Fresh Look At Role of New Julfa

ASLANIAN, from page

would be imprisoned and flogged until he could reveal the whereabouts of the money or agree to pay it back. A steady network of gossip sent word around the Julfan centers if indeed a merchant had been robbed, thus his story, upon his return, could be verified if indeed bandits had struck.

"This relationship yielded very high dividends in terms of trust. There were only a handful of cases of cheating," Aslanian said. He stressed it wasn't simply that they were all Armenians and could trust each other, but that they had devised methods in their dealings with each other which made honesty a much more profitable policy.

This very intermingling, he explained, while building a lot of trust, limited the profits of the New Julfians. They had their methods for dealing within their own network, but they could not establish the same iron-clad deals with those outside. Communities that went outside their own group, such as the Sephardic Jews and the Multans in Punjab, were able to establish more networks, he said.

### Julfans around the World

According to Aslanian, the people of New Julfa should not just be of interest to Armenians, but to anyone interested in history in general. New Julfians, he said, were the only mercantile community that operated in all major empires in the 17th through 18th centuries, including the Ottoman, Safavid (Persian) and Mughal (Northern Indian) empires, collectively known as the Gunpowder Empires, as well as the maritime empires of Portugal, Holland, England and France.

Elements of the community were mobile, but they had "exceptional gifts to offer their host societies." They facilitated the transfer — or cross-pollination of technologies from West to the East.

For example, Aslanian said, Julfians introduced Calico Printing to Marseille from India. In turn, they brought the art of printing in 1637 to Julfa.

Part of the reason for their importance, Aslanian said, was that they were meticulous in documenting their transactions, so that much can become known about the host country in which they were conducting business.

Also, the Julfians did a lot of business in countries which had access to the Indian Ocean, thus anyone interested in that part of the world can have first-hand documents about life there, rather than those from those countries' colonial rulers.

In total, Aslanian said, the Julfians have left behind close to 25,000 documents.

### Trading Terms

In terms of conducting business, Aslanian said, the Julfians were sophisticated, using double-entry bookkeeping and power of attorney.

Their growth, Aslanian said, was through "fishbone dispersion," in other words, short jaunts from a center, and enxt establishing new centers, all the while interlocking with each other.

India was a major center for the New Julfa traders, as of course, silk, other fabrics and various gems were to be found there. In India, they were scattered all over, but were more concentrated in Madras and Calcutta. From there, they went to Tibet and China. "Even today to go from Tibet to China it is very hard, but they did it with yaks," he said, in awe of their diligence. Some continued on to Manila, and, "some more adventurous people traveled to Acapulco and Mexico City" from there.

At the height of their strength, the New Julfians had settlements in Cadiz, Spain, Marseille and Paris, France, Venice and Livorno, Italy, as well as Aleppo, Izmir and Split. While the settlements left an indelible impression and had, according to Aslanian, "a disproportionate influence," many of those settlements never got above 100 persons.

The Julfan network collapsed in 1747 when another Persian king, Nader Shah, extorted money from the merchant class, focusing on Isfahan and New Julfa. The majority of the merchants left the area, with many headed either to Venice or to India.

Another reason Julfa Armenians could not survive ultimately was the competition they



Soorp Amenaperkitch (All Savior) Church in New Julfa, influenced by Islamic architecture

had from the British and Dutch, in the form of the East India Company of the UK and the Dutch East India Company. Both the Dutch and the British, he said, unlike the Julfa traders, routinely used violence against the natives wherever they settled. And both, again, unlike the Julfians, isolated themselves and created an unequal relationship with the natives.

The role of Julfa Armenians, Aslanian said, is huge, with the three most important centers of higher learning for Armenians around the world — the Lazareff Institute in Moscow, the Armenian College of Calcutta and the Moorat Raphael College of Venice — all founded and funded by Jugha Armenians.

In fact, the richest family in Venice — and at one point of all of Europe — was the Shahmirian family, Julfians that had moved to Venice from Madras.

Julfans were also behind the first Armenian newspaper and the first proto-constitution, both in Madras.

Aslanian was particularly grateful to the cler-

gy and staff at the Soorp Amenaperkitch Church in Julfa, where he conducted a lot of research. He had gone to many centers around the world to photograph Julfan documents.

He spoke about the very specific Julfa dialect. The language, he said, is not just a variation of Armenian, but one that absorbed almost 60 percent of foreign words into it, from Persian to Turkish, Arabic, Hindustani, Tibetan and many European languages.

The talk was sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard, the Department of Near Eastern Languages Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard University, the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard, the Harvard Armenian Society and the Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation.