



Grant Dink's widow, Rakel, with supporters outside the courthouse. (Today's Zaman photo)

Turkish Court Jails Man behind Dink Murder

Yasin Hayal, Accused Mastermind,
Sentenced to Life in Prison

ISTANBUL (Guardian) – A court in Istanbul has sentenced a man to life in prison for masterminding the killing of a leading Armenian journalist, but cleared all 19 suspects in the five-year-old case of acting under the orders of a terrorist organization.

Grant Dink, founder and editor-in-chief of the bilingual Armenian-Turkish newspaper *Agos* and despised by hardline Turkish nationalists, was shot on January 19, 2007 in front of his office in Istanbul, in a case that highlighted the threat faced by Armenians in Turkey.

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Yasin Hayal was convicted of masterminding Dink's assassination.

France to Host Rally in Support of Genocide Bill

PARIS (PanARMENIAN.Net, AFP) – The Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations of France (CCAF) urged all French people upholding principles of democracy and humanity to join a peaceful

rally on January 23 to support the bill penalizing Armenian Genocide denial.

On December 22, 2011, the French National Assembly passed a bill criminalizing public denial of the Armenian Genocide. If passed and signed into law by the Senate, the bill would impose a 45,000-euro fine and a year in prison for anyone in France who denies this crime against humanity committed by the Ottoman Empire.

The Genocide bill will be debated at French Senate on January 23.

Meanwhile, Turkey's main opposition party said Friday it had appealed to France's socialist leader over French plans

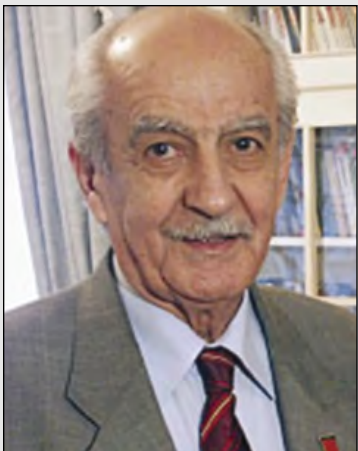
for a law that reinforces the view of Turkey's Ottoman-era massacre of Armenians as genocide.

In a letter to Francois Hollande, the social democratic Republican People's Party (CHP) denounced the French bill, which would outlaw denial that the 1915-17 massacre of Armenians by Ottoman Turk forces amounted to genocide.

Hollande is the Socialist Party's contender in the French presidential elections later this year.

"If the French parliament insists on voting through anti-Turk and unconstitutional

see FRANCE, page 5



Gevork Vardanian

Legendary Soviet WWII Spy Gevork Vardanian Dies at 87

MOSCOW (Agence France Presse) – One of the legendary Soviet agents of World War II, who infiltrated a British spy school and protected the "Big Three" in the Tehran conference, died at age 87 of cancer here on January 10, Russia's intelligence service said Wednesday.

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West Coast ADL District Committee and Tekeyan Cultural Association Drop Lawsuits

WATERTOWN, Mass. – Several contentious issues between the West Coast ADL District Committee and Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc. Central Board had resulted in the two sides taking their issues to court.

However, the parties met on December 16, 2011 to resolve their differences. The court cases were dropped on Wednesday, January 18, 2012, when a settlement agreement was signed to the satisfaction of both sides, marking the beginning of cooperative relations. Here below we publish the official joint communiqué regarding the issue:

Communiqué

The ADL US Western District Committee and Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc., US and Canada Central Board representatives held negotiations on Wednesday, January 11, 2012, at the TCA Beshgeturian Center in Altadena, Calif., and agreed to drop all legal actions and continue their cooperative relations.

ADL US Western District Committee
Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc. Central Board of US and Canada
January 11, 2012
Altadena, Calif.
George, Mandossian, Tekeyan, Cultural Association, Inc.
Hagop Nazarian, ADL Western District Committee

Imprisoned Zarakolu Calls upon Turkey to Recognize Genocide

ANKARA (news.am) – Ragip Zarakolu, the Turkish Human Rights defender and director of Belge Publishing House, who is imprisoned on charges of helping Kurdish separatists, forwarded, through his attorney, a petition to the Turkish parliament, asking the latter to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

In his letter, Zarakolu noted that the 100th anniversary of the Genocide is approaching, yet the policy of denial is continuing and that the concept of "if necessary, we will do it again" is being reflected. "Yes, Turkey must face its history. This is not only an obligation before the martyrs, but also a duty for the public. A fundamental apology is very important for 1915. Its place must be the parliament of Turkey. It will not debase Turkey, but rather strengthen and elevate it," according to Demokrathaber website of Turkey.

"At this time, when the 100th anniversary of the 1915 Genocide is approaching, the Republic of Turkey must apologize to the martyrs and its citizens alike," according to Zarakolu's letter.

Belge Publishing House has published numerous books on the Armenian Genocide and Zarakolu visited Armenia in February 2011 to pick up a state award.

Bulgaria's Parliament Defeats Resolution on Armenian Genocide

SOFIA (Sofia Echo) – The latest attempt by Bulgarian ultra-nationalist party Ataka to ask the country's parliament to recognize the Armenian Genocide was defeated on January 11.

The municipalities of a number of Bulgarian cities, among them Plovdiv, Varna, Bourgas and Stara Zagora, have approved resolutions recognizing the Armenian Genocide but over the years; similar resolutions in parliament have failed.

Volen Siderov, leader of Ataka, a party whose platform includes an overall anti-Turkish stance against the background of the centuries of Ottoman rule of Bulgaria, said that it was natural for a "patriotic party" such as his to recognize the Armenian Genocide. "To hide certain aspects of history because they are not good for you as a country is, to me, demagoguery," Siderov said.

He said that Ataka's resolution was not an attempt to politicize the issue but was a proposal based on reason, the necessity to recognize unpleasant moments in history.

The Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), a minority party led and supported in the main by Bulgarians of Turkish ethnicity, objected strongly to parliament being asked to deal with the issue.

It was not the function of parliament to decide historical truth, senior MRF Member of Parliament Lyutvi Mestan said.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Jazzman Aksel Bakunts Dies

YEREVAN (Tert.am) — On January 13, the Honored Artist of Armenia, jazzman and founder of Yerevan State College of Jazz and Variety Art Aksel Bakunts died in Yerevan, at the age of 65.

A state commission headed by Armenian Minister of Culture Hasmik Poghosyan has been set up to arrange an official funeral.

Ombudsman of Armenia Expresses Concern with Death of Soldier

YEREVAN (arminfo) — This week, ombudsman of Armenia, Karen Andreasyan, expressed his condolence to the relatives and friends of conscript soldier Hayk Khachatryan, who died on December 30, 2011. He also expressed his serious concern over the tragic incidents in the army, the press service of the Human Rights Defender's Office reported.

Andreasyan abstained from any comments on the incident not to disturb the preliminary investigation. However, given that Khachatryan's relatives expressed their discontent with the delayed medical assistance to the soldier, Andreasyan called on the military servicemen and their relatives to inform about the problems, incidents and complaints as soon as possible by dialing the hotline number 1-16. The ombudsman thinks that the well-timed call of the persons concerned and the interference of the Human Rights Defender may prevent tragic consequences in similar situations.

Hayk Khachatryan, 18, died at the infectious hospital of Nork on December 30. A criminal case has been instituted under Article 376 Part 2 of Armenian Criminal Code (habitual negligence in office that caused grave consequences). Earlier, Khachatryan's grandmother sent a letter to media outlets and said that her grandson died of chickenpox due to the negligence of the military unit's health care workers.

ICG Director Says Karabagh Resolution, Armenia-Turkey Resolutions Separate

YEREVAN (Armradio) — "The ratification of the Armenian-Turkish protocols will improve the relations between the two neighbor countries, which will, in turn, contribute to the reinforcement of stability in the region," Sabine Freizer, European program director at the International Crisis Group, said in an interview with bs-kavkaz.org.

"Unless the protocols are ratified, the process between Armenia and Turkey will become more complicated causing disappointment in both countries' societies," she said.

According to Freizer, both Armenia and Turkey will benefit from the normalization of relations. "Ankara is confident that it's quite a positive move first of all from the viewpoint of foreign policy, as Turkey will thus realize the "zero problems with neighbors" policy, which is important for joining the European Union. Besides, Turkey will get an opportunity to expand its economic influence in the South Caucasus," she added.

"As for Armenia, after the ratification it will establish diplomatic ties with Turkey and will have open borders and will win dividends on the foreign policy field," she said.

According to Freizer, the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations and the Karabagh issue are completely two different processes. "One cannot say they are not at all connected with each other, but we cannot hope that the Armenian-Turkish process will solve the Karabagh issue."

Provision of an interim status and security guarantees to Nagorno Karabagh will be the best option, according to Freizer. "Nagorno Karabagh has a functioning government and developing economy, and the interim status will provide an opportunity to communicate with the outer world and attract investments."

Environmentalists Protest at Armenian Mining Site

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — More than 200 environmental activists and their supporters have marched to a forest in northern Armenia to protest its transformation into an open-pit mine that they say would severely damage the environment.

The country's leading environment-protection groups have for years been campaigning against plans by the Armenian Copper Program (ACP) mining company to develop a massive copper and molybdenum deposit under the Teghut Forest.

It is estimated to contain 1.6 million tons of copper and about 100,000 tons of molybdenum.

If implemented, the project will lead to the destruction of some 128,000 trees. Critics say that would wreak havoc on Armenia's green areas that have already shrunk since the 1990s.

The ACP has pledged to offset the damage by planting new trees in the area and creating more than 1,000 new jobs.

Despite the uproar, the government gave the green light to the controversial project in 2008. Ecologists say about one-fifth of the 357-hectare forest given to the Liechtenstein-registered company has already been cut down in preparation for the start of mining operations.

Chanting "Shame!" the protesters from Yerevan walked on January 15 to reach the mountainous forest located in the northern Lori Province. Scores of police and ACP security guards were

deployed to block the demonstrators from advancing deeper into the proposed mining site.

The protesters were also confronted by a large group of local residents who work for APC. The latter angrily dismissed environmentalist warnings that open-pit mining would severely pollute the air, water, and land.

"You guys don't know the plight of the people here," one man told the protesters. "They were desperate for a living and now live like human beings. What do you want from those people [at the ACP]?"

Another ACP worker said, "While you enjoyed life in Yerevan, we were hungry here."

But some residents of two villages adjacent to Teghut joined the environmentalists in their protest.



Environmental activists on January 15 protested plans to transform Armenia's Teghut Forest into the site of a massive mining project.

Armenian Opposition Upset with PACE Official

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Leaders of the two opposition parties in Armenia's parliament have accused a top official of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) of pro-government bias after meeting him to discuss the political situation in the country.

Senior parliament deputies from the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun) and the Heritage party said on January 16 that John Prescott, a PACE co-rapporteur on Armenia, rudely brushed aside their concerns about the forthcoming parliamentary elections and human rights abuses.

Prescott came to Yerevan to discuss preparations for the May elections and to assess the Armenian authorities' compliance with a PACE resolution adopted last October.

The resolution urged the authorities to hold "genuinely democratic parliamentary elections," reform the law enforcement and judicial systems, and create a "pluralist media environment." It said this was essential for preventing a repeat of the deadly 2008 street violence in Yerevan after those elections.

Prescott, who served as Britain's deputy prime minister from 1997 to 2007, was due to travel to Armenia with Axel Fischer, the other PACE co-rapporteur. But Fischer canceled his trip at the last minute, citing health reasons.

The British Parliament deputy began the fact-finding visit with a meeting with members of Armenia's parliamentary delegation at PACE. One of them, Dashnaktsutyun's Armen Rustamian, presented the Armenian opposition's unanimous

view that large-scale vote rigging would be more difficult if the elections are held only on a party-list basis.

"For some reason, my arguments angered Mr. Prescott and I couldn't understand why," Rustamian said in an interview. "The debate between us heated up a little at that point. I couldn't understand why he reacted so emotionally and angrily. Naturally I countered that."

Prescott's ensuing meeting with Heritage's parliamentary faction was also tense.

Stepan Safarian, a faction member, said Prescott promised to communicate the opposition demands for electoral reform to the Strasbourg assembly. But Safarian said Prescott refused to discuss Heritage's concerns about human rights abuses allegedly committed by law enforcement bodies and the controversial criminal investigation into the 2008 unrest.

"He had no desire to listen to us," Zaruhi Postanjian, another Heritage deputy, said. "He said his mission was to document what is going on right now."

"When you present facts or express an opinion and your interlocutor bangs the table with his fist in response, that means he is biased," Postanjian added. "He did not want to hear evidence from us because he would have to evaluate that evidence in his report."

Rustamian, for his part, claimed that Prescott may have secretly promised to assist the Armenian authorities in blocking the voting reform favored by the opposition. "Prescott wants to be a tool in their

"They have appropriated people's wealth and are now doing what they want," one man said of the ACP owners. "They make people work for only 60,000 (\$160) drams a month. People work because they have no other choice."

Meanwhile the ACP's holding company, the Vallex Group, accused the protesters of illegally trespassing on its property and disrupting ACP operations. "The company has suffered substantial damage," Vallex claimed in a statement, threatening legal action against organizers of the protest.

Vallex also owns Armenia's largest copper smelter, located in the town of Alaverdi, which is also in Lori Province. The town is notorious for its polluted air and high incidence of fatal diseases.

hands," the Dashnaktsutyun leader charged.

Prescott refused to comment. The PACE representative was due to meet later in the day with leaders of the Armenian National Congress (HAK), a more radical opposition group that has been highly critical of the Council of Europe.

Prescott was to meet on January 17 with President Serge Sargisian, Parliament Speaker Samvel Nikoyan and Tigran Mukuchian, chairman of the Central Election Commission.

Prescott also agreed to schedule an unplanned meeting with relatives of opposition protesters killed in the March 2008 clashes with security forces. They will likely complain about the results of a fresh inquiry into the unrest that were announced by Armenia's Special Investigative Service (SIS) late last month.

The SIS reaffirmed its earlier claims that the violence was sparked by opposition "rioters" and that security forces were therefore right to open fire on them.

The HAK and Heritage strongly condemned that conclusion. They also criticized PACE for stating in its October resolution that "the chapter on the March 2008 events can finally be considered closed for the [Council of Europe] assembly."

"The [unrest] issue is no longer on the party's agenda," Galust Sahakian, the parliamentary leader of the ruling Republican Party, said in an interview on January 16.

Sahakian also spoke of the "positive work" done by the authorities ahead of the elections. "I don't think that our views are not shared by the PACE co-rapporteurs," he said.



ARMENIA

From Orphanage to Artsakh War, But No Passport

By Kristine Aghalaryan

YEREVAN (hetq) — Igor Ghahramanyan was fired from his job just before New Year's.

The reason: he has no passport. Even though he served on the frontline in the Artsakh War, Armenia's Passport and Visa Section (OVIR) does not believe this fact alone entitles Ghahramanyan to possess a passport.

The young man is caught in the midst of an Armenian "Catch 22."

"This country will not issue me a passport since I have no birth certificate. But ever since I opened my eyes, I have seen only Armenia. I have served in this country's military. All I want is a piece of paper so I can keep my job," Ghahramanyan says.

Ghahramanyan was raised in an orphanage and left in 1991. He was conscripted soon afterwards.

The 35-year-old remembers little about his childhood; only that his parents were Armenians living in Ukraine. He spent the first five or six years of his life there as well. He can't say how he wound up in the orphanage.

According to OVIR, an applicant must produce a birth certificate for citizenship papers. Through his grandfather,



Igor Ghahramanyan

Ghahramanyan was able to get the certificate years ago. He lost the certificate when he was living on the streets.

OVIR officials have told him that he can apply to the Ukraine

Embassy in Armenia for another birth certificate for a fee of \$100. He does not, however, have that kind of money.

The young man says he is willing to do any kind of work and that he is a "jack of all trades."

After leaving the army, Ghahramanyan was forced to live on the streets. Five years ago, his workplace found him a small room at the former dormitory building on Tbilisi Lane. Ghahramanyan fixed the place up and made it habitable.

The room measures 12 square meters. He cannot afford to use an electric heater during the cold of winter. The floor is always wet from the broken water pipes in the basement below.

He is married with three kids. He never invites them over to visit out of embarrassment. The children live with his wife at her parents' home.

Like many former orphanage residents in Armenia, Ghahramanyan never tells prospective employers about his childhood.

Ghahramanyan says that he has found much better work at decent wages when he has kept mum about being an orphan. Otherwise, he has been forced to work "off the books" for pennies.

He told me that things were so bad when he was living rough in the open that he often made a public nuisance of himself just to get arrested and spend a night or two in a warm jail cell.

Armenia, China Militaries Sign Cooperation Agreement

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenia and China have agreed to continue their mostly unpublicized defense cooperation during talks held in Yerevan between senior military officials from the two countries.

A delegation of the Chinese Defense Ministry, led by Major-General Xi Gwei, met with Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian and other senior Armenian officials during a three-day visit that ended on Sunday.

A statement by the Armenian Defense Ministry said that the two sides signed an "agreement on bilateral military and military-technical cooperation." It gave no details of that agreement.

The statement instead quoted Ohanian as praising the deal and saying that the development of Chinese-Armenian military ties has "promising prospects." His first deputy, Davit Ohanian, called for "the full use of the existing potential in defense cooperation."

The Chinese officials also held separate meetings with the heads of the Armenian Defense Ministry's departments on defense policy and personnel and military training. "Agreements were reached on developing cooperation in military education, rear supplies, the military-technical and other spheres," the ministry statement said without elaborating.

Defense links between the two countries



Senior Chinese military officials in Yerevan

date back to the late 1990s. Armenia reportedly received at the time several batteries of Chinese WM-80 multiple-launch rocket systems that have a firing range of up to 80 kilometers. Their delivery prompted protests from Azerbaijan.

China has also trained several dozen Armenian officers at its military academies. Meeting with a visiting Chinese army general in 2004, then-Defense Minister Serge Sargsian thanked Beijing for its "assistance" provided to

the Armenian armed forces.

Sargsian continued to emphasize China's importance for Armenia after becoming president in 2008. "Armenia is interested in deepening relations with China," he told Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi in Yerevan in February last year.

Yang similarly expressed his country's readiness to expand bilateral ties in all areas of mutual interest. China regards Armenia as a "trustworthy and reliable friend," he said.

Artsakh Photo Contest

YEREVAN — To implement the decision made by the participants of the Fifth Pan-Armenian Forum of Journalists and by summing up the proposals of the Forum's coordinating council, Armenia's Ministry of Diaspora will be organizing a photo contest called "Artsakh in Instants" through April 2012. Participants of the "Artsakh in Instants" photo contest must submit photos that are related to Artsakh's chronology, the war, daily routine, historical and cultural heritage and nation building and have already been released in the media or other publications and have been disseminated by periodicals, print and electronic media or photo agencies.

Participants must send their photos by mentioning "Artsakh in Instants" Photo Contest to the RA Ministry of Diaspora by March 1. Participants can send their photos to the RA Ministry of Diaspora at 26/1 Vazgen Sargsyan Street, Yerevan, or send an e-mail to www.mindiaspora.am, info@mindiaspora.am, contact@mindiaspora.am, mindiaspora@yahoo.com or call (+374 10) 58 56 01/109/.

Prosecutors Defend Treatment of Violent Governor

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenian prosecutors have upheld a law-enforcement body's controversial decision not to press criminal charges against a regional governor who reportedly assaulted a businesswoman late last year.

The Special Investigative Service (SIS), which is subordinate to the prosecutors, said last month that Syunik Gov. Surik Khachatryan did hit the woman, Silva Hambardzumian, at a Yerevan hotel lobby. But the SIS said the violence does not count as a "beating" because it did not involve multiple blows or cause the victim any physical injuries.

The incident took place just days after Hambardzumian alleged at a news conference that a mining company owned by Khachatryan misappropriated mining equipment worth more than 100 million drams (\$263,000) from another firm belonging to her. The governor denied that.

The businesswoman protested to the Office of the Prosecutor-General against the SIS's decision not to prosecute Khachatryan. According to her lawyer, Karen Tunian, a prosecutor dealing with the case has replied that the SIS investigation was objective.

Tunian criticized the decision on Thursday,

saying that her client will lodge another complaint with Prosecutor-General Aghvan Hovsepian and, if necessary, take the prosecutors to court. He insisted that Khachatryan's actions did constitute an assault. "Otherwise, you could slap anyone on the street and get away with that," he said.

Tunian also claimed that the SIS is refusing to give him transcripts of testimony given by eyewitnesses and video of the incident captured by hotel security cameras.

Khachatryan has been implicated in violent conduct in the past. He has always denied his involvement in such incidents and denounced opposition politicians and pro-opposition media for branding him a crime figure.

The SIS's decision not to charge him was denounced by Armenian human rights activists last month. Some of them linked it with unfolding preparations for the 2012 parliamentary elections.

Official results of Armenia's last presidential and parliamentary elections, marred by opposition allegations of vote rigging, showed President Serge Sargsian and his Republican Party doing better in Syunik than in any other part of the country.

Armenian Exports Soar in 2011

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenia's net exports rose at a double-digit rate last year amid faster economic growth resulting from strong performances of the domestic mining and food-processing industries as well as the agricultural sector.

According to the National Statistical Service (NSS), the volume of exports totaled \$1.21 billion in January-November 2011, a year-on-year increase of 31 percent. It was still dwarfed by imports that rose by 12.3 percent to \$3.75 billion.

The more modest rise in imports was enough to slightly widen the country's massive trade deficit in absolute terms. But with the Armenian economy on course to grow by more than 4 percent in 2011, the deficit is likely to have fallen as a share of Gross Domestic Product.

The NSS data shows that base metals, ores and ore concentrates generated almost 58 percent of the Armenian export revenue in the 11-month period. Their exports were up by over 23 percent.

The NSS also reported a 53-percent surge in exports of precious metals and stones and jewelry items that came in at almost \$180 million. That reflected upswings in the diamond-processing and gold mining industries.

Armenia also exported \$162.6-million worth of prepared foodstuffs, up by 40 percent year on year. Exports of fruit, vegetables, livestock and other agricultural products likewise soared by roughly 34 percent, reflecting robust growth in agriculture reported by the government.

This might explain why exports to Russia, the main market for Armenian agricultural goods sold abroad, jumped by 45 percent to about \$200 million.

Even so, the European Union remained Armenia's number one export market, accounting for nearly half of the January-November exports. EU countries have long been the main buyers of metals, mining output and gem diamonds exported by local manufacturers.

Analysts say a prolonged economic downturn in Europe could therefore have a direct impact on Armenia's macroeconomic performance already this year. Its possible spillover effects on Russia, the main source of vital remittances from Armenians working abroad, would also have negative implications for the country.

The Armenian authorities have forecast a GDP-growth rate of at least 4 percent for 2012. Government officials in Yerevan admit that a deepening financial crisis in the Euro zone would call that growth target into question.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Slovakia Discusses Armenian Genocide and Turkey's EU Affiliation

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia (Armenpress) – Slovakia insists that before becoming a member of the European Union, Turkey should respect all the standards of that body. Policy advisor to the president of the National Council of Slovak Republic Tomas Zalesak said that Slovakia's position on Turkey's affiliation with EU was discussed at that country's parliament in the context of recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

"Within the course of existence of the National Council of Slovakia, we have adopted a number of declarations concerning genocides and their denial," Zalesak said. He noted that Slovakia's parliament has also adopted declarations on the Jewish Holocaust, dislodging, etc.

The National Council of Slovakia has adopted the 1341 resolution on Armenian Genocide November 30, 2004. The resolution mentions that the National Council of the Slovak Republic acknowledges the 1915 events as Armenian Genocide, crime committed against mankind.

Belarus Leader Calls for Stepping up Cooperation With Armenia

MINSK, Belarus (Itar-Tass) – Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko called for stepping up trade and economic cooperation with Armenia, and developing relations with it within the scope of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

"We are in the same military and political alliance – the CSTO. We have no closed themes; we're ready to discuss any theme of our cooperation," Lukashenko said at a meeting with Secretary of Armenia's National Security Council Artur Bagdasaryan on Thursday.

The president noted that Belarus and Armenia have a coordinated position in international cooperation.

Lukashenko pointed out at the necessity to step up trade and economic relations between the two countries. He noted that by the results of 2011, two-way trade decreased by one-third.

"One can talk about objective and subjective reasons. But the potential of the two countries in trade and economy is considerable," the president said.

In this connection, Lukashenko said Armenia had brought forward a number of proposals to expand economic ties. For example, it proposed to supply Belarussian agricultural machinery, foodstuffs and consumer goods to Armenia.

"We are ready to find opportunities to arrange the supply of our products to Armenia, and set up joint ventures in Armenia to assemble certain kinds of cars and equipment. I see no obstacles here," the Belarussian leader said.

Turkish Schools Not to Include Armenians' 'Cruelties' in Exams

ANKARA (News.am) – The question on Armenians' "cruelties" is not included in the Turkish schools exam questionnaires due to numerous complaints.

The question offending Armenians, sent by National Education department of Bakirkoy district in Istanbul, was not included in the school exam questionnaires, Turkish Vatan reports.

Former head of the Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK) Sami Evren who was present at the exam opposed expressions containing racism and discrimination and left the school. He stated it is not right to hold exam containing such questions.

"It is not only wrong to speak about documents on 'cruelties perpetrated by the Armenians' but also address schoolchildren with such a question. It is equal to the expression 'you have perpetrated cruelties.' What would a Turkish student feel if he was called 'Turk barbarian' in a German school?" he asked.

AGBU Sofia Holds Series of Events 'For You, Armenia' to Mark 20th Anniversary

SOFIA, Bulgaria – Sofia's cultural calendar was full this past fall with a series of events celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Republic of Armenia, organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia, AGBU Sofia and Anima Art Gallery.

It began with a photo exhibit during the month of September by Bulgarian artist-photographer Bedros Azinyan, titled "Crossroads," at the Anima Art Gallery of the Sofia Hilton Hotel. The opening was conducted by the owner of the gallery, Anna Panayotova, together with the photographer and AGBU Sofia Chapter Chair Sonia Avakian-Bedrossian.

There is hardly anything more natural than to be facing different roads – to see opportunities and make choices, to seek new solutions or new beginnings. In his exhibition, "Crossroads," Azinyan hints at such alternatives through his photography. Renowned not just in Bulgaria, he has won many prestigious awards and has published his photographs in hundreds of publications.

The series continued with a concert of AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra with the AGBU Sofia Nur Dance Ensemble at the Pancho Vladigerov Concert Hall on September 18, 2011. The impressive program, conducted by Bedros Papazian, was comprised of works by Bulgarian and Armenian composers amidst a backdrop of photos of Armenia. On behalf of Armenia's Minister of Culture Hasmik Poghosyan, Arsen Sehoian, Armenia's ambassador to Bulgaria, awarded the artist Onnik Karanilyan with a special award certificate and Papazian with a gold medal for their creative achievements following the program.

A second month-long exhibit of architecture and painting by designer-architect Agop Karakashyan followed at the

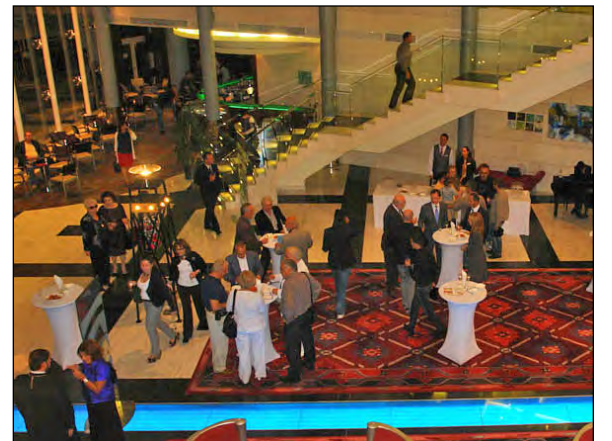
Union of Architects in Bulgaria from September 19 to October 23, 2011. The exhibition was opened by the Chairman of the Union of Architects in Bulgaria, Georgi Bakalov, who congratulated Karakashyan for the rich creativity of designs and pictures shown in the exhibition, which consisted of 28 panels featuring a selection of his paintings and projects.

On October 8, 2011, a charity ball took place at Hotel Sheraton, with the assistance of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church in Sofia. On this occasion, funds were raised to support the completion of the Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral in Sofia.

An art exhibit by Zara Manucharyan, titled "Armenian Shapes," was held at the Anima Art Gallery from October 3-23, 2011. The following thoughts of the artist express the basis of her work: "Armenian Shapes" is the movement of my spirit beyond time and space, an esoteric movement inspired by Narekatsi's holy texts and by the mysterious shapes of old, abandoned temples. These symbols and psalms deliver encoded messages, which give off curative and positive energy."

A second concert to mark the 20th anniversary of Armenian independence – the second of the autumn season – took place on November 20, 2011. It featured soloists Anahid Agopyan (piano), Nina Kouyoumdjyan (violin), Kalina

Hristova (violin), Rositsa Boyadzieva (flute) and Nikolai Temeznikov (tuba) performing the works of Handel-Aslamazian, Joseph Haydn, Artin Poturlyan, J. Rossini, Masne, Nestiko and



A view of the art exhibit by Zara Manucharyan, titled "Armenian Shapes," held at the Anima Art Gallery

Henry King.

A third and final concert in celebration of Armenia's independence took place on December 11. The AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra presented Christmas Jazz with soloists Militsa Gladnisha (vocal), Mihail Yosifov (trumpet), Vasil Spasov (piano) and Boris Taslev (contrabass).

Established in 1906, AGBU is the world's largest non-profit Armenian organization. Headquartered in New York City, AGBU preserves and promotes the Armenian identity and heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs, annually touching the lives of some 400,000 Armenians around the world.

For more information about AGBU and its worldwide programs, visit www.agbu.org.

AGBU Buenos Aires Chapter Launches New Theater Company Named after Krikor Satamian

BUENOS AIRES – The launching of the Krikor Satamian Theatre Company of the AGBU Buenos Aires Chapter occurred on November 18, 2011, with the presentation of "Hairus Ov Eh?" the Armenian version of Ray Cooney's comedic play, "It Runs in the Family," as translated by Krikor Satamian for the Ardavazt Theatre Company of Pasadena and adapted by director Silvia Kalfaian. Two other full-house performances followed, ensuring the company's successful debut.

The cast of the company, which stages plays in Armenian, consists of amateur actors (some of whom have emigrated

recently from Armenia, Lebanon and Turkey) who are interested in reviving the Armenian language and culture within the Buenos Aires Armenian community. The state of Buenos Aires is home to some 90,000 Armenians consisting of third- or even fourth-generation individuals. To encourage as many theater enthusiasts as possible to attend, Spanish subtitles were offered on a screen above the stage.

"The concept for a theater company all started while visiting our sister school in Canoga Park, California [AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School]. Mr. Satamian gave us some material to

work with and it felt only natural that we name our troupe after him. His visit to Argentina in the past had also left a vivid impression on our community," said Miriam Tabakian, coordinator of the Exchange Program between the local AGBU Marie Manoogian School and the Manoogian-Demirdjian School. Tabakian also added that the theater troupe plans to recruit younger actors for future productions, including students and alumni from the school. The entire play can be seen through the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYmJ6RPtd6I>.

The naming of this new theatre group after Satamian is a fitting exclamation point to the golden jubilee celebration of the prominent actor and director, which took place on October 30, 2011, at the AGBU Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Center in Pasadena, with more than 600 attendees applauding his numerous achievements. Over the past 50 years and on many stages in the world, Satamian has directed 75 plays, taken the lead role in 84 productions and translated 20 plays into Armenian from both English and French. One after the other, tributes were offered by AGBU Western District Chairman Haig Messerlian, former editor of *Nor Or* weekly Sarkis Minassian, prominent member of the London-Armenian community and former colleague of the honoree Assadour Guzelian, Chairman of Ardavazt Executive Committee Ara Babayan and others.



A scene from the comedy play "Hairus Ov Eh?" by the newly-formed Krikor Satamian Theatre Company of the AGBU Buenos Aires Chapter. From left: Roxana Banklian, Violeta Goshkarian, Juan Carlos Astarjian and Alisa Khachatryan



INTERNATIONAL

Selling Cigs by the Tramways: Survival in Nazi Occupied Greece

By Arthur Hagopian

SYDNEY — His home in Sydney's high-end Chatswood suburb is a far cry from the ramshackle camp in Greece where his family had found refuge from the 1915 Turkish massacres and where he grew up, and he no longer goes hungry or unshod.

But Chris Dikian still bears the psychological scars of the battle for survival he waged as a youth during the Nazi occupation of that country.

"Phix-Derghouty was a camp of mud brick shacks with tin roofs that housed mostly survivors of the massacres from various parts of Western Armenia," he recalls. A line of red brick buildings stood at the edge of the camp, opposite a Bata shoe factory, with an empty field in between.

Some enterprising souls had turned the field into a vast marketplace and shopping center, crammed with barbershops, smithies, a pickles factory, restaurants, cafes, bakeries, smallgoods and second hand dealerships.

Some had even rigged up power lines. The unlucky others, like the greengrocers or fruit vendors, had only kerosene lamps.

"This was the heart of the camp where the good and bad mixed," Dikian recalls.

"At dusk, the smoke from the souvlaki stalls combined with the aroma filled the air."

The shed housing his family was located near those shops. Like the other camp dwellings, it had one large all-purpose room with a store-room underneath where the family kept their precious hoard of food: olives, cheese, flour, corn, olive oil.

"I don't remember it having a kitchen. But all the mouthwatering smells came from next door where my grandmother used to live. She had arrived in Piraeus with her daughter and son and had ended up in the camp. My grandfather was said to have been a doctor who had migrated to the US having had enough of Sultan Abdul Hamid," he adds with a chuckle.

Dikian's father was born in a town near Istanbul to a rich couple but all efforts at recovering any of their fortune proved abortive.

Dikian tells how his father and uncle became separated from the main refugee caravan and ran to the nearby hills.

"They were saved by some Kurds and became part of their community as shepherds. With their newly-adopted Kurdish family they moved from one place to another looking for green pastures, as is the Kurdish custom," Dikian recounts.

But the two brothers lost track of each other again. The uncle managed to return to Armenia



A scene from the Phix-Derghouty camp

after months of wandering, but his father ended up in a red cross center and eventually found his way to mandated Palestine where he settled.

Another uncle, Leo, had set up as a vegetable vendor and went about the streets with his merchandise piled on a three-wheel cart.

"In the evenings, the eerie light from the kerosene lamp hanging from a pole on the cart evoked childish terrors in me," Dikian remembers.

A resourceful and helpful man, Leo enjoyed partying and one day, during the Italian occupation of Greece, he had the temerity to play an anti-Mussolini record on his portable gramophone, a misdemeanor that earned him a six-month tenure in a prison on Crete.

"He must have been drunk," Dikian surmises. "But he survived the harsh conditions in prison and came back loaded with dried figs and other fruits and sporting a beard."

"The Italian occupation did not last long. Soon the Germans moved in and unlike the British who liberated the country, they brought misery, hunger and atrocities with them," he recalls.

To combat the war-time famine, the Germans instituted a food rationing system but it did little to assuage the refugees' pangs of hunger.

"I and my grandmother sometimes climbed the nearby hills where on the slopes we would find and collect edible plants to cook. And sometimes my father would lug a sewing machine or some valuable household item to the outlying villages and barter for olive oil, flour, olives, wheat, cheese, anything he could get his hands on. But the less fortunate found themselves lucky if they could get hold of a dog and cook it and eat it."

People were dying around him all the time.

"All day long, we would see the garbage trucks making their rounds and collecting dead bodies from the streets and without ceremony carting them away."

Although the Greek resistance fighters did put up a fight, and no German soldier wandering around was safe, retributions were severe: for every soldier killed, the Germans shot 10 civilians they picked at random. In time, they upped the ante to 100.

"Schooling was irregular and we children had a lot of time on our hands. We wandered inside the known and unknown areas of the camp. We were advised not to eat the chocolates wrapped in shining silver and gold paper dropped by the German planes. The Germans were at liberty to poison us but once a man tried to sell adulterated olive oil and they hanged him. Nazi justice," Dikian adds.

One of the most memorable sights around the camp was that of Jews wearing their yellow patches. Dikian remembers there were quite a few of them, but gradually their number died down.

When the Germans succeeded in uncovering weapons caches, all hell broke loose.

"Peeking out of our window, I once saw a man — he must have been a resistance fighter — leading German soldiers to a ditch near our house where some weapons had been hidden. Rivers of blood ran down the man's face. After they dug had dug out the weapons, the soldiers

rewarded their informer with a bullet in the brain."

One day, he woke up to the shrieks of people and the suffocating smell of fire.

"The Germans are leaving!" people were shouting in jubilation.

"They were indeed, but before they left, they conducted a mopping up operation, shooting some people and herding others, my father among them, into train wagons."

And then they set the shops on fire with their flamethrowers. As the smoke rose into the sky, people ran around like headless chickens trying

they were different, more humane than the dour and atrocious Germans. The moment the smiling Tommies set up camp, we clambered around the barbed wire asking for handouts. Unlike the German soldiers who would respond with a kick when we asked for food, the British almost always managed to find something for us."

"George! George!" the children would call out the moment they saw one of the British troops coming out of their camp. It was their universal affectionate name for them.

The soldiers, most of whom were young, liked to sunbathe on the flat roof of their headquarters building. Sometimes, they would reward their faithful audience with biscuits they threw into the air.

"We collected every morsel," Dikian recalls.

Sundays were special. The soldiers got the children to line up and then led them to their mess hall for a feed: "what an unheard of luxury that was — hot tea mixed with milk, beet root, fried eggs, white delicious slices of bread."

Soon afterwards, Dikian's uncle Leo reappeared, this time with a horse wagon.

"After some discussion he put me next to him and we drove away. He wanted to show me the world beyond the barbed wires. I stayed for a short time with him helping him with odd jobs and then returned to Phix-Derghouty to find myself head of the family with my father away."

"I got hold of a couple of cartons of Papastrato cigarettes and set myself up in business selling them wherever I could, mostly in the tramways. I was doing all right too until the day I got robbed. Then I started to sell cakes but the business floundered when I started getting hungry and eating the cakes."

"Then came the joyous day when my father



The tramways at Neos Kosmos

to save what they could.

"I stood at the train station, holding my mother's hand."

"Where are they taking father?" I asked her.

"God only knows," she whimpered.

The arrival of the British troops heralded a new dawn of hope for the camp dwellers.

"We sensed, right from the beginning, that

walked in through the door — he had been freed by the Russians, and now began making plans to move us all to join his sister in Jerusalem."

Phix-Derghouty was left behind — but never forgotten. When Dikian returned for a visit several years later, there was no trace of the camp: in its ashes, the phoenix of a swank new suburb, Neos Kosmos, reared its golden head.

France to Host Rally in Support Of Genocide Bill

FRANCE, from page 1

'laws,' it could cause serious damage not just to France's image but also that of the European Union...," said the letter.

CHP chief Kemal Kilicdaroglu wrote directly to Hollande amid a growing diplomatic row between the countries over the bill.

Passing it into law "would provoke an unprecedented crisis" between the two countries, he wrote.

Copies of the letter also went to other leading socialists including the president of the Senate, Jean-Pierre Bel.

French senators will debate the bill on January 23 and if passed, it would go to President Nicolas Sarkozy for approval. France's lower house, the national assembly, approved the bill last month.

"The Turks cannot believe that the country of Voltaire and Diderot would want to trample over freedom of expression...," said the letter, a copy of which was obtained by AFP.

Ankara has already hit back by freezing political and military ties with Paris.

Iran to Increase Electricity Export to Armenia

TEHRAN (Press TV) — An Iranian official says the country's electricity exports to Armenia will increase upon the completion of a power transmission line between the two countries.

Currently, the new transmission line is under construction in Iran's East Azerbaijan Province, Mirfatah Qarehbagh, managing director of Iran grid Management Company (IGMC), said on Saturday, January 14.

He added that the 400-kV power transfer line would connect Iran's electricity network to the Armenian city, Agarak.

According to Iranian Deputy Energy Minister Mohammad Behzad, the new power transmission line aims at exporting Iran's electricity to

Georgia, Russia and Europe.

The country is currently exchanging electricity with Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan and plans to add 5,000 megawatts of capacity annually to its power grid.

The Iranian Energy Ministry statistics show that the country will be exporting up to \$1 billion in electricity by March 2012. Iran's total power generation capacity stands at 63,403 megawatts, while total length of the power grid exceeds 780,000 kilometers.

Iran seeks to become a major regional exporter of electricity and has attracted more than \$1.1-billion in investments to build three new power plants.



Community News

Halejian Earns Ivy League Rookie of The Week Honors

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — With Ivy League action right around the corner for the Yale University women's basketball team, freshman guard Sarah Halejian showed last week that she is ready to play her part in the Bulldogs' quest for their first Ivy League championship since 1979.

After averaging 13.5 points, 3.0 assists, 2.0 rebounds and 1.5 steals in leading Yale to a pair of wins last week, Halejian has been named the Ivy League Rookie of the Week, the league announced last week.

This is the second Rookie of the Week award for Halejian, who was named the Co-Rookie of the Week on December 19 with Cornell freshman Marissa Rakestraw.

"Sarah is getting a lot of things figured out about playing Division I and playing Bulldog basketball," said Chris Gobrecht, the Joel E. Smilow, Class of 1954, head coach of Women's Basketball. "If she continues to improve, she will be one of the best young guards in the league by the end of the sea-



Sarah Halejian

son."

Harvard senior guard Brogan Berry was named the Ivy League's Player of the Week. Yale sophomore forward Janna Graf earned a spot on the Ivy League's Weekly Honor Roll.

Halejian matched her career-high with 14 points to go with three steals and two rebounds in an 80-47 win over Baruch on Sunday. Her performance helped the Bulldogs match their season-high of 80 points in a game, which they have done two other times in wins at Houston (80-62, November 25) and at Fairleigh Dickinson (80-51, November 14).

Earlier this month, Halejian started her week with a 13-point outing in Yale's 69-48 win at Bucknell. She also matched a personal-best with three rebounds and four assists. She has tallied three rebounds four times this season and her four assists were one away from her career-high of five, which she set in the win at Houston.

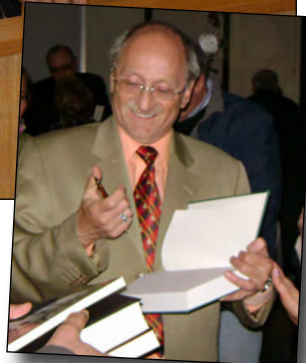
In the two games last week, Halejian was efficient with the basketball, shooting a combined 7-for-15 (.467) overall, 3-for-9 from 3-point range (.333) and a stellar 10-for-12 (.833) from the free-throw line.

Halejian has scored in double figures in four games overall this season and she has tallied at least nine points in five of the Bulldogs' last six games, averaging 10.3 points per game over that span.

Behind Halejian's play, the Bulldogs closed out non-league play with an 8-6 record, their best non-league finish since the 1993-94 season (8-4).



Above, Filmmaker Suzanne Khardalian with Dr. Ara Sanjian, director of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan, Dearborn; at right, Dr. George Bournoutian



Motor City Continues its Rev Into Hye Gear

DETROIT — The Detroit-Armenian community has always been a major force in the diaspora, and December's flurry of non-stop activities only proves that there

By Betty Apigian Kessel

is no such thing as hibernation for the committed residents of the city that put the world on wheels. The Armenians of Metro-Detroit have gone from survivor generation laborers and small business owners to respected industrialists and members of all the leading professions.

Their start in the gritty neighborhood of Delray has now ensconced them in comfortable, fashionable suburban residential areas like Farmington Hills, Birmingham, Canton, Novi, Bloomfield Hills and the Grosse Pointes.

We have gone from miniscule humble beginnings at The Zavarian Agoump in Delray, to the vastness of The Findlater Armenian Community Center and now to the present group of buildings in Dearborn comprised of St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church (Prelacy) coupled with the Azadamard Armenian Community Center and the jewel in the crown, the nearby Tower for Senior Citizen living.

In Southfield, we have the landmark gold-domed St. John's Armenian Apostolic Church (Diocese), which succeeded the Oakman Boulevard facility. The church property also contains a Veteran's Hall, gymnasium and one of the finest Armenian day schools in existence, the Alex and Marie Manoogian AGBU charter school. It goes from pre-school through high school.

Also in Southfield is the Armenian Congregational Church and Fellowship Hall. It hosts many lectures and other activities bringing the Armenian community together in brotherhood.

We are equally proud of the actively growing Armenian Catholic Church presently in Livonia. They host one of the most important events in Armenian history, the commemoration of the Battle of Vartanantz, well attended by members of the Armenian community. Services are always followed by a splendid buffet prepared by their ladies auxiliary.

On Friday evening, December 2, renowned historian and author Dr. George Bournoutian, paid another visit to the Detroit area, attracting a large crowd to hear his address on his latest book topic, "The 1823 Russian Survey of the Karabagh Province: A Primary Source on the Demography and Economy of Karabagh."

The lecture was held at the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School where earlier in the day he addressed the students of the school. He was warmly received with his enthusiastic style and friendly demeanor, the student body thereafter requesting the upper school's principal, Hosen Torossian, to invite Bournoutian for a return lecture. The students loved his humor, intelligence and declared him to be a fantastic teacher.

Torossian was gratified to know that; because of Bournoutian, two of his students declared history as their majors too.

Bournoutian is professor of East European and Middle Eastern Studies at Iona College in New Rochelle, NY. He is an avid world traveler and speaks five languages. He has written a vast arsenal of publications about which Boston area's

see DETROIT, page 9

AGBU New England District Set for Revitalization with New Leadership

WATERTOWN, Mass. — The AGBU New England District announces that it has a new Executive Committee.

"We're very excited to revitalize AGBU's role in New England, provide creative programming and reach out to our community," said Ara J. Balikian, the new chair of the New England District. "We have a rich history as the third district worldwide and the first in the United States. I hope that many of those who were past leaders, members, supporters and participants of the New England District in the past return to support us and our new initiatives."

As one of their first event, on Thanksgiving Day, the New England District, along with the AGBU Boston Young Professionals (YP), hosted a dinner for local college and university students who were not able to go home for Thanksgiving. This is a tradition they plan to continue and grow.

"In the Boston area, we are fortunate to have Armenian college and university students from around the world," according to Vice Chair Salpie Takadjian. "We're reaching out to them so we can be a resource for them and connect them to the local Armenian community. Their participation will help enrich us, as well."

The new Executive Committee is busy planning several other events. On March 31, they are hosting an inaugural event, Performing Artists in Concert, showcasing outstanding young Armenian musicians. All of the performers are past recipients of AGBU scholarships, who have received their education at some of the world's most prestigious conservatories and universities. Similar concerts have been held with great success, by the AGBU, in Carnegie Hall in New York City. Further details of the upcoming concert will be released soon.

Every second and fourth Thursday night of the month, starting at 6 p.m., at the AGBU Center on Mt. Auburn Street, the New England District is accommodating a Bistro Night featuring catered traditional appetizers, kebab and desserts. The Bistro night is open to all who want to congregate with friends and family.

They are also allowing members of the Armenian community to rent the center for functions, such as private gatherings, organizational meetings, get-togethers for families, luncheons, etc. Anyone interested in renting the center is encouraged to contact the New England District Center.

In addition, the New England District has instituted an Armenian cooking series, an educational series, as well as a series showcasing present day Armenian authors. In the near future, the Committee plans on opening the Center as a safe and fun gathering place for Armenian teenagers and as social gathering place during the day for Armenian seniors. "We also remain very committed to encouraging and supporting the activities of the Boston YP," said New England District Treasurer Robert Parsekian.

The committee also intends to launch an informative website. "It will be a great source of for all things AGBU related in New England and worldwide," said Executive Committee member Ipek. "I encourage everyone to check it out."

"I would like to thank past Chair Souren Maserejian and his entire committee for their unyielding dedication, hard work and sacrifice to the New England District," said Balikian. "We intend to build on their success."

The 2011 Executive Committee consists of Chair Balikian, Vice Chair Takadjian, Treasurer Parsekian, Secretary Christina Orchanian Mardiros, Alicia Demirjian, Talinn Demirjian, Antranig Mardiros, Ipek and Seza Metrebian Seraderian. Nina Festekjian serves as an advisor.



COMMUNITY NEWS

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

CHALLENGES TO HUMAN RIGHTS & RULE OF LAW IN ARMENIA

FRIDAY, **JANUARY 27**, 2012 **7:30 PM**
ST. LEON ARMENIAN CHURCH, ABAJIAN HALL
 12-61 SADDLE RIVER ROAD, **FAIR LAWN**, NEW JERSEY
 For further info call (201) 791-2862

After 20 years of Armenia's national independence, it's time to take a sobering inventory of its record in transitioning to a democratic state. Join us for a presentation of the key issues challenging success, possible solutions and the consequences of non-action.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- Human rights abuses and absence of Rule of Law—from Armenia's judicial system to the military and elections.
- The impact of entrenched corruption and oligarchical power on foreign investment, economic growth and national security.
- How elements of fear, intimidation and reprisal influence Armenia's civil society.
- The implications of Armenia's poor rankings in international democracy-progress reports.
- Challenges in Armenia-Diaspora relations and Armenia and the West.
- The role of individuals, civil society groups, foreign governments, and international institutions in promoting human rights and democracy in Armenia.

GUEST SPEAKER

SIMON PAYASLIAN

Charles K. and Elisabeth M. Kenosian Professor in Modern Armenian History and Literature at Boston University
 Author of the recently published *Political Economy of Human Rights in Armenia: Authoritarianism and Democracy in a Former Soviet Republic*

KAREN HAKOBIAN

Human Rights Activist and Organizational Trainer, Armenia

ARAM HAMPARIAN

Executive Director, Armenian National Committee of America, Washington, DC

GARO YEGNUKIAN, ESQ

Senior Fellow, Policy Forum Armenia, Yerevan

ARDA HARATUNIAN, MODERATOR

Q&A

LIGHT **REFRESHMENTS**

ADMISSION: **FREE**

St. John of Greater Detroit Hosts Benefit Dinner for Memorial

By Julia Papiyants

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. — Sparked by the independence movement of Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabagh accompanied by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Baku and Sumgait pogroms targeted the historic Armenian minority in Azerbaijan beginning in 1988. Mobs of extremist Azeris attacked and killed Armenians in streets and in their homes, and until today, the survivors have lived a similar fate as those from the 1915 Genocide. Thousands of Armenians were forced to flee their homes and leave their lives behind. Since then, many have fled to the United States and have slowly established their lives in different states, creating a newer community of Armenian refugee-immigrants.

Twenty-two years have passed since the faithful days of the pogroms. In recognition of these devastating crimes against humanity, and specifically against Armenians, St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit has planned to place a memorial on its grounds. To raise its goal of \$35,000, the Baku Memorial Monument Planning Committee recently planned a benefit dinner for December 4, 2011.

After several weeks of arranging, the event

was anticipated to be an enormous success — and it did not disappoint. Fr. Garabed Kochakian blessed the table in front of a full house, and the night began on a perfect note. From the splendid food to the beautifully lit and decorated venue, both generously provided by Garri and Kristina Mazmanov at their restaurant, Allegro, in West Bloomfield, to the help of volunteer staff, and finally, to the traditional Armenian sounds of Garri Hovakimian, Alex Mazmanian and Tamara Yesayan, the night's success proved that Armenians would never forget the injustices committed against their people.

The benefit dinner raised more than \$8,000, a large portion of the total amount needed to erect the monument. Still, the goal has not been met and additional fundraising is imperative. The Planning Committee has set an additional date for an event in February at the church hall, and St. John's looks forward to fundraising enough money needed to make this dream a reality sometime soon. To contribute to this endeavor, a tax-deductible donation can be made by check, payable to St. John Armenian Church with "Baku Memorial Fund" in the memo section. Credit cards and other forms of donation are welcomed and can be made by calling St. John Armenian Church.

For more information, visit stjohnsarmenianchurch.org.

St. David Armenian Church Honors Very Rev. Dr. Nareg Berberian

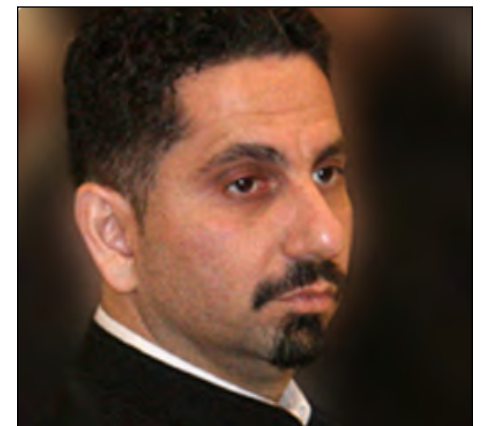
BOCA RATON, Fla. — A banquet celebrating the 20th anniversary of the ordination to the order of holy priesthood for the Very Rev. Dr. Nareg Berberian will take place in Mardigian Hall of St. David Armenian Church, 2300 Yamato Road, on Saturday, January 21, at 7 p.m. The occasion will be presided over by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America.

Berberian was born in Beirut, Lebanon. He received his first master of divinity degree in 1991 having studied at St. Valdimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York with focus on Biblical Studies. He was ordained into the priesthood at St. Vartan Cathedral in New York City on July 26, 1992 by Barsamian and assigned to St. James Armenian Church in Richmond, Va., while there, he received his doctorate degree in ministry, focusing on the role and the mission of the Armenian priesthood in the United States. Berberian speaks Armenian, English and Turkish and Arabic. He also reads and comprehends French, Classical Greek and Russian.

In 2001 Karekin II appointed Berberian to the 1,700th anniversary committee celebrating the establishment of Armenia in the year 301

AD. This meeting took place at the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin in Armenia.

In 2001, Barsamian, primate, chose Berberian to serve as pastor of St. George Church in Hartford, Conn. He served in that capacity until 2002 when he accepted the invitation to become pastor of St. David Armenian Church of Boca Raton.



Very Rev. Dr. Nareg Berberian

WE REMEMBER:

JANUARY 19, 2007-JANUARY 19, 2012



Coffee Hour in Memory of Hrant Dink



SUNDAY
JANUARY 22, 2012

following church services

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Tarvezian Hall

465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472

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Reflections by Khatchig Mouradian:

"It has been 5 years and counting, no justice in sight yet!"

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MARCH 26, 2012

St. David Armenian Church
20th Charity Golf Tournament
 Via Mizner Country Club
 Boca Raton, Florida



for more information contact
 Sonia Janian
sonajanian@yahoo.com



COMMUNITY NEWS

OBITUARY

Legendary Soviet WWII Spy Gevork Vardanian Dies at 87

VARDANIAN, from page 1

Gevork Vardanian, working under the codename Amir, in 1942 managed to attend an entire British training course for Russian-speaking spies in Tehran whom London then wanted to send all over the Soviet Union.

According to the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) – the successor to the Soviet KGB – his work helped expose the British network, which existed despite London's wartime alliance with Moscow.

But Vardanian's greatest exploit was his role in ensuring security at the 1943 conference in Tehran between the Allied "Big Three" of Soviet tyrant Joseph Stalin, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and US President F.D. Roosevelt that started to draw up the map of postwar Europe.

Vardanian – only 19 at the time – led a group of young Soviet agents who exposed in its early stages a Nazi plot codenamed "Operation Long Jump" to assassinate the three Allied leaders at the conference.

"Everyone in foreign intelligence will remember Gevork Andreyevich for his overwhelming love for the motherland and his fidelity to his duty," the spokesman of the SVR, Sergei Ivanov, said in a statement.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev described Vardanian as a "legendary spy, a true patriot of his country and an extraordinary personality. He participated in stunning special operations which have gone down in the history of our for-

wife, Gohar, who was also an agent.

According to the SVR, they worked undercover together for 30 years in different foreign countries as "illegals" after World War II.

The SVR still gives no specifics about this work, saying only that it was in "extreme conditions" and in "complicated circumstances."

They only returned to the Soviet Union in 1986 with Vardanian continuing to work in the service until 1992.

"Everything we did was important for the motherland. But the most important things cannot be discussed at the moment," he said before his death in comments broadcast by Channel One television.

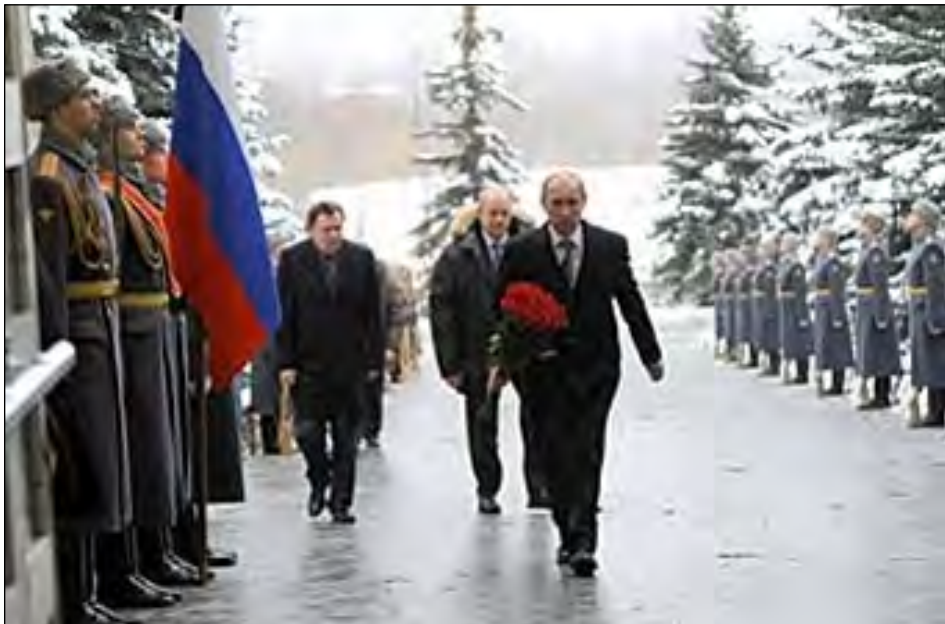
He was born in the Russian city of Rostov-on-Don, the son of an Iranian factory owner of Armenian origin, and received top honors from the Soviet Union as well as Russia and Armenia for his work.

His father had also carried out espionage work for the Soviet Union and it was for this that he took the family back to Iran in the 1930s.

By the age of 16 the young Vardanian was already working to expose "Fascist spies" in Iran.

The funeral took place January 13 in Moscow. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin attended the ceremony.

Director of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service Mikhail Fradkov, former directors of the service Yevgeni Primakov and Sergey Lebedev, Armenia's ambassador to Russia, representatives of the Armenian community were also present at



Prime Minister Vladimir Putin at the funeral of Gevork Vardanian

foreign intelligence," he said in a letter of condolence to Vardanian's family.

The SVR said in a statement on its website that Vardanian died on Tuesday. A source in the service told the state RIA Novosti news agency that he died at a Moscow hospital Tuesday afternoon.

During a life remarkable even by the standards of a spy and parts of which are still shrouded in secrecy, Vardanian worked in tandem with his

the ceremony. Vardanian was buried in Moscow's Troyekurovskoye cemetery.

Vladimir Putin laid flowers at Vardanian's grave and talked with his relatives.

Earlier Putin had sent a condolence message to the relatives of Vardanian that said in part: "Gevorg A Vardanian had a bright life full of heroic events. He was a high level professional who created legendary pages in the history of intelligence."

Armenian-French Actress Rosy Varte

PARIS (PanARMENIAN.Net) – French actress of Armenian decent Rosy Varte died in the American Hospital in Paris on January 14. She was 88.

She died following a bout of bronchitis, which resulted in pneumonia, according to her husband, director Pierre Badel, foreign media reported.

Varte was born Nevarte Manouélian in Istanbul, Turkey on November 22, 1923. She starred in more than 100 plays in several theatres in Paris.

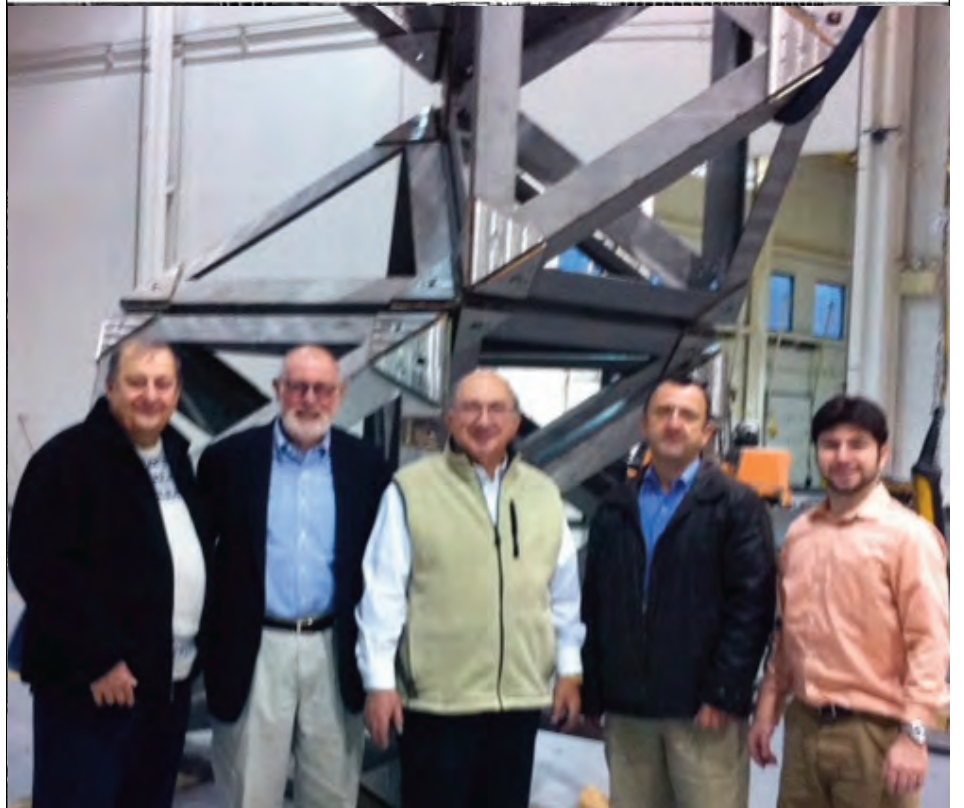
She appeared in 95 film and television shows since 1949. She starred in the 1972 film "The Bar at the Crossing," featured at 22nd Berlin International Film Festival.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Motor City Continues its Rev Into Hye Gear

DETROIT, from page 6

Joe Dagdigian says. “I think Professor Bournoutian is phenomenal. I have most of his books and have read many of them, but he writes faster than I can read.”

The professor was introduced by David Terzibashian who told the audience to be ready for a very exciting presentation. They were not disappointed.

Dr. Ara Sanjian, director of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan Dearborn, said he was not surprised Bournoutian electrified the audience. He further stated there now exists an academic and paper war concerning the subject topic.

The Turks and Azeris have mobilized their communities to negate the work of Bounoutian and others who clearly have researched and established an accurate account of the situation. “Armenian’s want Mountainous Karabagh not all of Karabagh. Maps were given to everyone making the discussion easier to follow.”

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

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

This effort took him six months working 10 hours daily seven days a week. He has established for all time that Armenian presence was present in all of Karabagh prior to 1828, actually over 96 percent in Mountainous Karabagh and over 83 percent in Zangezur.

Unfortunately some historians changed, doctored or deleted references to Armenian presence in certain reproductions of the survey and copies of these doctored books were sent to universities in the US, Canada and Europe.

Bournoutian here and Robert Galichian in London are the only two challenging Azeri claims that Armenians existed east of the Arpachay River nor that even Yerevan is Armenian, that the whole area was Azerbaijan. Because of the 1915 genocide of the Armenians, eastern Turkey no longer contains Armenians, adding to their convenient claim of our non-existence.

Bournoutian’s research thereby repudiates the thought that we need more fighters, soldiers and fewer intellectuals. It is the dedicated scholarly research of people like Bournoutian that prove that we need both – fedayees and scholars. Armenians have both and the paper and academic war rages on.

Your support is needed by purchasing the researched books to make you aware of how attempts are being made to alter history and to encourage scholars to continue with their important work.

This lecture was sponsored by AGBU Detroit Chapter, Knights of Vartan, Detroit Chapter, University of Michigan - Dearborn Armenian Research Center and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

• • •

The Armenian Research Center, University of Michigan-Dearborn in cooperation with the AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School, the

Armenian National Committee of Michigan, the Cultural Society of Armenians from Istanbul and the Knights of Vartan Nareg Shavarshan Lodge presented Suzanne Khardalian’s stirring documentary “Grandma’s Tattoos.”

Khardalian’s grandmother, Khanoum, was a victim of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. At least 1.5 million Armenians were mercilessly slaughtered during this period and for some years thereafter. Thousands of Armenian women, young girls and boys were captured and taken away to lead a life Armenians would consider a fate worse than death. They were led to a life of prostitution and slavery.

The Turks, Kurds and Arabs who captured, traded or “owned” these enslaved Armenians and made it obvious by the terrible markings they put on their face, chest and fingers – tattoos. They could not hide what they had become, chattel, branded like cattle. The strife of these ownership markings led to terrible emotional stress and shame, ahmot, for the unfortunate Armenians who for years lived this inhuman fate. Imprisoned in their own minds, their bodies used for hedonistic pleasure, they often found themselves to later be marked as dirty and unwanted even by their own people, if they were fortunate enough to survive the experience.

In 1919 at the end of WWI, the Allied Forces reclaimed 90,819 Armenian young girls and children who during the war years were trafficked into prostitution in order to survive or had given birth to children after forced or arranged marriages or rape. These women were tattooed as a sign of who possessed them.

Just think how many hundreds of thousand more Armenians we would have today if this injustice were not perpetrated upon these innocents.

European and American missionaries picked up and saved thousands of refugees who later were scattered over the world to places like Beirut, Marseilles and Fresno, living with their secrets without revealing what tortures and shame they endured while in captivity.

Khardalian’s grandmother was described as unloving, not one to hug or show love, as a wicked woman who despised human contact. It is no wonder.

The documentary is directed by Khardalian and produced by her Swedish husband PeA Holmquist. They have made many films together.

The film opens with a gentle scene, a man rowing a boat on the calm Euphrates River, never leaving you to think this was the beginning of a horrible life for Khanoum the young victim. It is this oarsman, a Kurd, who picks up the young 12-year-old girl and her mother with the guile that he will save their lives. He rapes the young girl, makes her his concubine and for five years her fate is sealed with the shame the tattoos represent, rape and prostitution.

In one scene Khardalian is seen in the desert of Der Zor where she finds bones of her ancestors bleached from the hot sun easily on the sand’s surface. She bends down to find a tooth and other bone fragments. Her guide points out thousands of Armenian graves, sadly as far as the eye can see.

The film is jarring. Not a sound was to be heard throughout the whole screening. A mesmerized audience contained their own thoughts remembering the terrible details of the Genocide. Not all Armenians were killed, some escaped through pure luck, some converted to Islam to save their lives, unfortunately thousands became victims of their blue-tinted tattoos. Many women chose to sacrifice their lives by jumping into the rocky rivers thereby drowning themselves.

The art exhibit of Robert Barsamian last April at the Jewish Holocaust Center in West Bloomfield was the first time the focus was on the Armenian Genocide. The new director of the center, Stephen Goldman, welcomed the artist’s work, which focused on the Genocide. One painting in particular shall never be forgotten. It was a portrait that demonstrated the height of evil, depravity and savagery of the Turks. It was called “Slave Girl.”

It was a somber faced beautiful Armenian woman cloaked in black with long dark hair and a horizontal line of tattoos on her chin,

neck and many more tattoos vertically passing down to her breast bone. They depicted the number of times she was sold into slavery.

These women and children ended up in the tents of Arabs, Turks and Kurds, bearing their children, living a daily life of hell on earth. No family, no country, just humiliation and shame.

Barsamian’s art and films like the one produced by Khardalian must be exposed to the world to reveal and counteract the denial of the Turks and Kurds of their guilt.

Pray for these forgotten women that they now have peace. No woman, child or boy should be exposed to such a horrible life, but horrible people are capable of much depravity.

The film ended. The lights were turned on. Saddened, somber faces, shaken by what they had viewed, were everywhere. Tears were wiped. These people are not unfamiliar with the details of the Genocide and yet they were momentarily stunned, wanting to not believe what they had just seen was true.

Our thanks to Khardalian and Holmquist for bringing to the reality of the screen the no more secret of “Grandma’s Tattoos.” As local filmmaker Hrayr Toukhanian said, “Suzanne successfully brought to life a circumstance about which few had any knowledge.”

• • •

It was in The Belian Center in Troy that a refreshing evening of art was presented featuring four students close to concluding their studies at the Center For Creative Studies in Detroit.

The exhibit was appropriately named “A Common Thread” because all four artists are of partial or full Armenian heritage proudly reflecting that in their creations.

The glossy post card arrived as promised by May Kafafian, mother of Levon Kafafian, 23, one of the featured artists, who has decided art will be his life’s work. His specialty is fabric design. Kafafian said, “Talking about our next generation. Not all but some of our youth feel their roots very deeply. It may not be connected to anything we have done as parents. I like to think it is in their genes.”

The exhibit started with a wine and Armenian mezza buffet which more than 200 guests nibbled while walking through the all-white, brightly lit interiors of the Belian showroom owned by Zabel Belian and her dentist son Raffi. It will run through December 16, featuring art by Ryan Adkins, Kafafian, Esther Rubyan and Michael Stambouljan

Kafafian explains the idea behind “A Common Thread.” “It comes from the folklore belief that we are all connected by the strings of fate. The common thread runs through all of us, especially as the four of us share a common heritage – that of Armenian descent. This exhibition is about how our origins metamorphose within us and emerge as individual expressions of the merger of our heritage and personal experience. Each student-artist has created their own interpretation of what they see as their own trans-ethnic identities.”

As an employee of Hagopian World of Rugs in Birmingham, Mich., Kafafian is surrounded by beauty, color and the essence of design in the thousands of rugs on display in the glamorous showroom. Kafafian is a junior majoring in Fiber Design. He will be presenting a dining room showcase, primarily in textile.

He says his work is strongly influenced by his Armenian roots as is the post card of his design. It is dark maroon in color and simultaneously he and I declared it is the color of blood so much of which has been shed by our ancestors.

Rubyan, 21, created “Water,” which is one of a series of edited photos of models in blacklight bodypaint about the elements and spirituality. She is a junior pursuing a double major in fine arts and photography. She works as a nightlife photographer for the Metro Times newspaper. She will be showing a series of photography prints.

Adkins, 21, designed yarn wallpaper, creating an aesthetically-appealing space out of little material and minimum effect on the wall on which it is installed. He is a senior majoring in interior design. This is his second exhibit; the first was a part of this past year’s Detroit Design Festival titled “Urban Hollow.” He has worked

as design assistant at Wallace Consulting, a Detroit area interior design firm.

Michael Stambouljan, 23, is a senior in metals, pursuing a minor in animation. He works at the university as a work-study student. He will show a collection of hollow ware and sculpture in metal and glass.

The artists beamed as they greeted guests to their exhibition, obviously pleased at the turnout and positive comments of encouragement. Perhaps proudest of all was Khatchig Kafafian, Levon’s father, who had supported his son through several major changes. He says, “Who knew?” as he continually snapped photos and offered refreshments to art-goers. Seems Levon has inherited some of Dad’s talent.

It was a night to remember and all eyes will be on these developing young Armenian artists as we wish them success and happiness in their chosen field of creativity.

• • •

The Detroit Azadamard Gomideh invited the community to celebrate the 121st anniversary of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) at the Armenian Community Center (ACC) on Ford Road in Dearborn on December 10. A complimentary dinner was provided to all guests.

The program guest speaker was Unger Mher Karakashian from Montreal, Canada.

Honored that evening was Archpriest Dr. Gorun Shrikian and the ACC Mortgage Burning Committee.

The popular annual event, is called an accounting of the ARF to the community. Gomide Chairman Raffi Ourlian welcomed guests to the celebration.

Msr. Andon Atamian of St. Vartan Armenian Catholic Church, Rev. Daron Stephanian of St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church and Pastor Makarios Darawi of the Armenian Congregational Church said the opening and closing prayers.

Anahid Movsesian sang the American and Armenian national anthems joined by the audience.

Nanor Andonian gave a recitation in Armenian.

Ourlian introduced featured guest speaker Karakashian, a teacher at Montreal’s St. Hagop School and producer/director of the Horizon TV program.

Karakashian speaking in both Armenian and English, discussed the issue of the Protocols and the 31st World Congress stating also the present regime in Armenia needs to be changed, not just the faces but the attitudes. Socially just policies must be implemented for the advancement of the Armenian people, something they have been waiting for over 20 years.

He stated, “No matter what the outcome of the election, we must give the individual a constructive life, social justice and democratic reforms. Their long awaited aspirations must be fulfilled. Our people have always trusted us.”

Karakashian said it is time to put our house in order. It is time to change the way the government in Armenia operates, no longer doing business the same way. The Genocide is a proven fact and no longer needs to be defended. Other matters press for attention. The Turks have organized a hateful initiative. Together with the Azeris the Turks have formed a powerful alliance against which we must plan to work against.

“The work of the ARF continues and how do we accomplish our goals? Those familiar with our work know we continue to work for the strength and good of our people.”

Shrikian addressed the gathered group, most of whom were his parishioners before his retirement. He told of the people who rallied to end the ACC’s debt. “We wanted to make this building mortgage free and we did.” This evening all of them were awarded plaques for their accomplishment. One by one their names were called and Allie Krikorian and Armen Derderian delivered their earned reward, a beautifully designed plaque by Khatchig Kafafian.

The annual accounting of the Detroit Azadamard Gomide concluded with a rededication to the strengthening of Armenia and Karabagh.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Lecture in Lowell On Seldom-Seen Sights in Armenia

LOWELL, Mass. — Joe Dagdigian is not your common Armenian tourist. When he returns to Yerevan each summer, he brings with him a sense of adventure and exploration.

He searches out the unusual sites and shares them with others back home in Merrimack Valley.

Dagdigian will present an illustrated talk on “Unseen Sights of Armenia,” on February 11 at the ARS Community Center, 142 Liberty St.

The program is free and open to the public in commemoration of the February 18th Revolt, sponsored by the Lowell Aharonian ARF Chapter.

“Most photographs represent scenes over the past four or five years of people, church and cultural exploits from pre-Christian times to the present,” said Dagdigian. “Photos will include archeological sites, nature scenes as well as projects that various individuals and organizations are initiating, including places in Tiflis, Georgia and Javakhk.”

Dagdigian is a veteran member of the Lowell ARF and also belongs to the Boston Chapter of the Knights of Vartan. His pet project deals with the Cosmic Ray Division in Armenia, a scientific research station on Mount Aragats, having raised thousands of dollars for that cause.

He will soon be launching a course at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) in Belmont titled, “A Visual Journey Through Armenian History.” The class will take place Monday nights from February 13 to March 12 from 7-9 p.m. and will cover 3,000 years of Armenian history and culture.

A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Shengavit Historical and Archaeological Cultural Preserve in Armenia.

A light reception will precede the talk. Coffee and dessert will follow.



Mashtots Hairabed Church near the Garni Temple, practically unknown by tourists Unseen sights of Armenia

Jendian Receives 2012 President's Award of Excellence

FRESNO — Dr. Matthew Ari Jendian, a self-described “public sociologist” who excels in academic scholarship and research, commitment to students and community engagement, is the recipient of the 2012 President's Award of Excellence at Fresno State.

Jendian, born and raised in Fresno, received his bachelor's in sociology and minor degrees in psychology and Armenian Studies from Fresno State (1991) and his PhD from the University of Southern California (2001) and joined the faculty at Fresno State in 1995. He is an associate professor, chairs the

ship and a commitment to the university and the community as exemplified by Welty.

University Advisory Board members, community leaders who consult with the president, select the recipient and donate money for a \$10,000 award that accompanies the honor.

Jendian is the recipient of several honors, including the Social Action Award from Temple Beth Israel, Amigo Award presented by Vida en el Valle, Provost's Award for Faculty Service, and was honored in Menk, an encyclopedia of biographies of prominent Armenian scholars.

Under Jendian's leadership, Fresno State's Humanics Program has become recognized as among the strongest in the country in terms of academic vigor and impact of service on the community. The Humanics Program prepares and certifies students to strengthen and lead nonprofit, community benefit organizations. Over 100 students are seeking the Humanics certificate at Fresno State

program. Since 2001, nearly 150 Fresno State students have graduated with a Humanics certificate, and approximately 70 percent of them are employed in nonprofit and public sector positions.

Jendian is the current board president of Buchanan Babe Ruth Baseball Association in Clovis and has served as a board member of the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance, a national organization with nearly 50 academic partners. He also serves the Armenian Church as an ordained deacon and has been a board member for several other organizations including Fresno Nonprofit Advancement Council, Fresno Housing Alliance and Relational

Culture Institute.

He is the author of a book, *Becoming American, Remaining Ethnic: The Case of Armenian-Americans in Central California* (LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2008), which can be purchased online at Barnes and Noble (<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/Becoming-American-Remaining-Ethnic/Matthew-A-Jendian/e/9781593322618>). In addition, Jendian is the author of several journal and opinion articles and has made numerous pre-

sentations at state, regional and national professional conferences while serving as a reviewer for scholarly publications and journals in his field.

Jendian has also served as an external evaluator with local and multinational community benefit organizations, including Porterville College and Armenian General Benevolent Union. He and his wife, Pamela, reside in Clovis with their two sons, Joshua and Nicholas.



President John D. Welty, Dr. Matthew Ari Jendian and J. Michael McGowan

Department of Sociology and coordinates the university's highly-regarded Humanics Program which prepares the next generation of leaders for nonprofit, community benefit organizations.

He was honored Wednesday, January 11, at the Spring Assembly for faculty and staff. The award was presented by J. Michael McGowan, president and CEO of Premier Valley Bank and a member of the University Advisory Board.

The President's Award of Excellence was established in 2001 by the University Advisory Board to honor Fresno State President John D. Welty. The award recognizes a faculty or staff member who demonstrates integrity, leader-

ATP and AESA to Host Complimentary Events in Southern California

MISSION HILLS, Calif. — On Tuesday, February 7, Armenia Tree Project (ATP) will host a program about its programs to protect Armenia's natural heritage. The complimentary event will take place at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, 15105 Mission Hills Road, at 7 p.m. The presentation will be led by Executive Director Jeff Masarjian and Director of Forestry Zachary Parisa.

On Wednesday, February 8, ATP joins with Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AESA) in association with AGBU Young Professionals and Armenian Environmental Network (AEN) for a panel discussion on “Armenia's Environmental Challenges in the 21st Century.”

Panelists include Varouj Abkian, assistant director with the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, Robert Kurkjian, principal scientist, Tetratex, Anne Shirinian Orlando, MSEE, PhD, Environmental Studies, and Zack Parisa, RF, MFS ATP director of forestry, co-founder and president of SilviaTerra. The panel discussion will be at Parsons, 100 W. Walnut St., Pasadena, 7 to 9:30 p.m.

ATP conducts important environmental projects in Armenia's impoverished and deforested zones. Since 1994, ATP has made strides in combating desertification in the biologically-

diverse but threatened Caucasus region. Millions of trees have been planted and restored, and hundreds of jobs have been created for Armenians in seasonal tree-related programs. ATP works to further Armenia's economic and social development by mobilizing resources to fund reforestation. These new trees provide food, wood, environmental benefits and opportunities for economic growth.

Established in 1983, in Glendale, the AESA is a non-partisan and non-sectarian philanthropic organization focused primarily on addressing the professional, technical and scientific needs of fellow Armenian engineers, scientists, industrialists and architects worldwide. AESA also establishes technical and social interaction and promotes technological exchange between experts in science, engineering, industry and architecture from Armenia and the diaspora. AESA has organized conferences and workshops for addressing different issues related to Armenia and has completed projects in the fields of computer, environment, technical book publications, buildings and others.

Both events are complimentary and open to the public but reservations are required to attend. For reservations, contact Hermine Mahmoudzian at hermine@armeniatree.org.


New York
METRO

Armenian Bible Church Celebrates Christmas

By Dr. Ani Janbazian

HACKENSACK, N.J. — As most people were taking down their Christmas trees and decorations and finishing up their holiday leftovers, Armenians around the world were still celebrating the birth of Jesus. On Saturday, January 7, the Armenian Bible Church came together for a Christmas celebration that included singing, a play portraying a powerful message and a memorable Christmas sermon.

The program began with an opening prayer and welcoming words from Rev. Dikran Youmshakian followed by a skit and nativity scene by the Sunday school children. The youth and the adult choirs offered a good selection of worship and praise songs including Christmas carols. An Armenian poem, "The Christmas Star," written by Rev. Samuel Bakalian, was recited by Tamar Kalachian afterwards.

Youmshakian then came up to give the Christmas message, which was about post-Christmas activities. He presented a picture through his words of what perhaps happened to Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus after all the shepherds and the Magi came and left. They put away the gifts from the Magi, took care of the newborn baby and went on with their daily activities until Joseph had a dream that changed the course of events. Youmshakian described what Joseph did using Scripture from Matthew 2:13-15, where an angel told him in a dream to take the child and his mother, escape to Egypt and to stay there until advised because Herod was to search for the child and kill him. Joseph could have easily not listened to the warning in his dream; he could have said that Jesus was not even really his child and that he could have continued with his daily activities dismissing the angel's instructions. Yet he submitted immediately, and in the middle of the night, when it was the most dangerous time to travel alone with Mary and a newborn baby, he left for Egypt and faithfully obeyed the Lord. Youmshakian ended the Christmas message by emphasizing the significance of doing the same as Joseph — "accepting Jesus, tak-



The Sunday School children performed a skit for Armenian Christmas.

ing Him, leaving our worldly lives and going where God directs us to go and waiting until His return with full glory, for the world will try to distract us and like Herod will try to 'kill the child.'"

Following the Christmas message, the drama team gave a powerful play about the life of a young man named Raffi who came to accept Jesus through an encounter with an angel he had while he was in a coma from a car accident. Following the play, Asadour Ghoughasian and Antionette Kassas sang a beautiful duet in Armenian and the program ended with a

closing song and prayer followed by refreshments downstairs in the church.

The Armenian Bible Church is an independent fellowship of Armenian Christians who come together for worship and praise. The church has an active Sunday school and a dynamic youth group. Worship services are held on Sundays at 12:30 p.m. at 67 S. Prospect Ave. Sunday worship services are also broadcast on cable TV on Thursdays at 9:30 p.m. For more details, visit the church website: armenian-biblechurch.com.

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Tekeyan Cultural Association of N.Y. and N.J. / Tibrevank Alumni, Inc.

Admission is free and open to the public.

A reception will follow the program.

For information call Manug at (718) 224-3422, or Zakar at (646) 387-6512



Arts & Living

Dr. Levon Avdoyan Reveals Armenian Treasures at Library of Congress Armenian Exhibition

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – It was an evening of revelation on Thursday, December 1, 2011 as Dr. Levon Avdoyan unveiled the large trove of Armenian treasures in the Library of Congress where he serves as specialist of the Armenian and Georgian areas. Titled “To Know Wisdom and Instruction,” his fascinating talk covered 500 years of Armenian printing and a history of the Armenian collection at the Library of Congress. Starting on April 19, 2012, an exhibition of the collection of Armenian manuscripts and printed books will be open to the public for five months.

He is also preparing an exhibition catalog, which will be published in time for the opening of the exhibition. The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world and the Armenian collections have now become a major source for Armenian studies and research.

It was also an evening of appreciation as Michael Haratunian, longtime chairman of the Columbia University Armenian Center Board of Directors, was honored. Following a welcome to the enthusiastic audience of more than 100 by the current Chairman of the Armenian Center Mark Momjian, a special tribute was accorded by Board member Dr. Nicole Vartanian to Haratunian who was presented the first edition (1934) of Franz Werfel’s *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*.

In his remarks, Haratunian recounted the rich tradition of the Armenian Studies program at Columbia University, starting with the announcement of the Armenian Chair in 1979 by then-Columbia President McGill. Dr. Nikit and Eleanor Ordjanian raised it to a permanent endowment at Columbia College with Kevork Avedisian donating \$1 million to establish the Chair of Armenian Studies. This was followed by Sarkis Agopian funding the Armenian collection, Suren Fesjian funding the publications and Krikor and Clara Zohrab Liebman providing full tuition for Armenian graduate students, which currently totals in the millions of dollars.

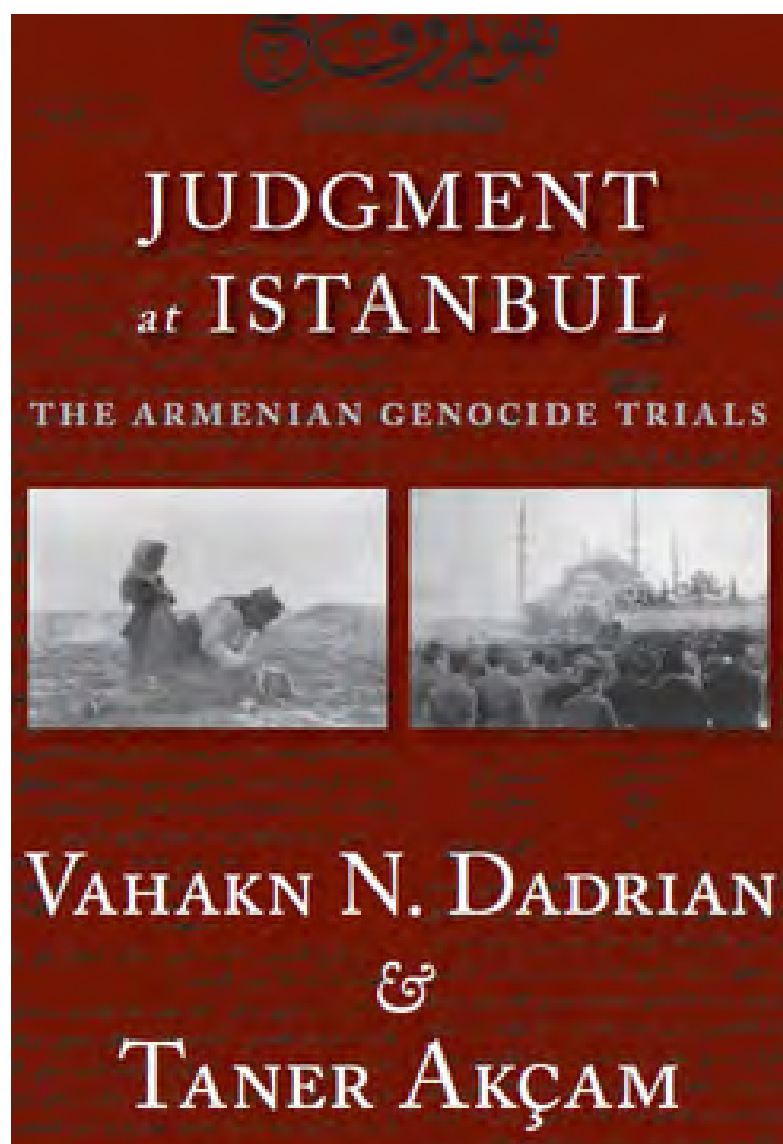
Avdoyan was introduced by Armenian Center Board member Lola Koundakjian, who related his impressive background which includes a doctorate in Ancient History and Armenian Studies from Columbia University under Professors Nina Garsoian and Morton Smith; joining the Library of Congress in 1977, and becoming its specialist for Ancient Classical History, and Byzantine and Medieval Studies in 1982 and finally its area specialist for Armenia and Georgia in 1992. He is also the author of the entire illustrated guide of the Library of Congress’ Near East collection, as well as of many scholarly monographs and articles.

Armenia at the World’s Largest Library

Avdoyan announced that the exhibition that will open at the Library of Congress on April 19, titled “To Know Wisdom and Instruction: The Armenian Literary Tradition at the Library of Congress,” will use the Library of Congress’ Armenian collection to illustrate the Armenian literary tradition. He is also preparing an exhibition catalog, which will be published in time for the opening of the exhibition. “The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world, and the Armenian collections have now become a major source for Armenian studies and research,” he added with understandable pride.

He revealed that many of the works about Armenians were not written by Armenians but nonetheless are valuable. “Yerevan itself will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the printing of Armenian books in 2012,” he stated.

The scholar pointed out that the Library of Congress was founded in 1800 to serve the see EXHIBIT, page 15



Study of Armenian Genocide Trials Relies on Irrefutable Documentation

By Daphne Abeel

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

This is an important book. Vahakn Dadrian and Taner Akçam, one Armenian, one Turkish, both noted scholars of the Armenian Genocide, have written a study of the Genocide trials conducted in the waning days of the Ottoman Empire, that documents irrefutably the facts. Using a multiplicity of sources, they have chronicled in meticulous detail the criminal prosecution of the perpetrators by means of the Ottoman Special Military Tribunal.

In particular, the courts martial, which took place over a period of three years (1919-1922) point to the powerful role played in the Genocide by the top leaders of a militarized political party, namely the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).

The trials, which were an unusual occurrence, being an instance of prosecution by the Ottomans of their own citizens, took place for two basic reasons: the widespread outrage aroused by the knowledge of the terrible crimes in the international community and pressure from the Allies, notably the British.

Of the greatest importance during the Special Military Tribunal was the presentation and use of documents in evidence that pointed to undeniable facts of an organized mass murder enacted against the Ottoman Empire’s Armenian population. During the trials, the witnesses on the stand were asked to confirm and authenticate many secret, coded messages and telegrams bearing their own signatures. These documents were procured in pretrial proceedings by the ministries of Interior and Justice, and once attested to by the witnesses, they were pronounced – “it conforms to the original.”

As Dadrian and Akçam state in their introduction, “These crucial documents are bound to be of considerable help in the task of lifting the fog that continues to obscure the catastrophe of 1915 and the circumstances surrounding it.”

While many archives and documents remain inaccessible, particularly to Turkish readers and researchers, European and American archives are open to scholars and Akçam and Dadrian have made extensive use of German, Austrian, American, Russian, French and British materials.

After 1922, when Istanbul as capital of the Ottoman Empire passed under the jurisdiction of the new nationalist government set up in Ankara, many of the court martial archives disappeared, and, according to the authors are likely housed with the chief of staff in Ankara. The trials themselves abated under the new government headed by Kemal Atatürk.

Most important as Akçam and Dadrian assert repeatedly is that many defendants were offered the chance to examine documents that bore their signature and to authenticate them.

see TRIALS, page 14

Yerevan Meets Hollywood

Fugitive Studios Signs Agreement To Boost Entertainment Industry In Armenia

LOS ANGELES – US-based Fugitive Studios Entertainment and Deem Communications in Armenia signed a long-term partnership to cultivate the entertainment industry in Armenia. Since 2006, Deem Communications has earned a reputation as a producer of quality entertainment such as concerts, performances and festivals. Fugitive Studios Entertainment seeks to invest in the entertainment sector that will attract international celebrities and artists to perform in Armenia.

In recent years more companies have endeavored introducing international artists such as Joe Cocker, Plácido Domingo and Lara Fabian to the public in Armenia. The market is clearly demonstrating a need for such events. According to Raffi Niziblian, the founding director of Deem Communications, the market is ripe for this fruition both in Armenia and in the neighboring countries. “Armenia is at its infancy in the field of entertainment. I am excited about this opportunity. We hope that this partnership will help establish Armenia as a regional entertainment mecca. I look forward to collaborating with such an innovative company as Fugitive Studios,” said Niziblian.

In 2010 and 2011 Deem Communications collaborated with Fugitive Studios Entertainment to produce two highly-anticipated concerts with Serj Tankian of System of a Down in Armenia. The concerts were supported by the prime min-



Roger Kupelian (left) and Raffi Niziblian

Books

ister of the Republic of Armenia and were financially backed by local sponsors seeking to associate their brands with these high-level profile events. Award-winning visual effects artists and artistic director of Fugitive Studios Entertainment, Roger Kupelian, said: “We are proud to be investing in a company with a proven record in the entertainment and media industry, a sector that we have wanted to develop in Armenia for some time now.” In addition to film credits that include the “Lord of the Rings” trilogy and the new “Men in Black 3,” Kupelian is currently working to bring the Vartan Mamikonyan epic and “East of Byzantium” to the silver screen and has recently published a graphic novel, titled War Gods.

Established in 2006, Fugitive Studios Entertainment was created by Kupelian and his partners as a way to bring “East of Byzantium” and similar independent projects to quality widespread release, in a variety of media. Having honed its expertise by also producing quality visual effects and developing work for mainstream entertainment, as well as a series of music videos for Tankian, Fugitive Studios Entertainment is now focusing on bringing the series of Kupelian’s graphic novels to a wider audience.

For more information, visit www.fugitivestudios.com.



ARTS & LIVING

Rachel Kaprielian Addresses AIWA Armenian Christmas Celebration

ARLINGTON, Mass. — On Sunday, January 8, the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) New England affiliate held their third annual Armenian Christmas Celebration at the Armenian Cultural Foundation. A large turnout of members, relatives and friends enjoyed festive holiday cheer.

Carolyn Atinizian, president of the AIWA New England affiliate, opened with a Power Point introduction summarizing AIWA's purposes and recent activities.

Featured guest Rachel Kaprielian, Massachusetts Registrar of Motor Vehicles, offered inspiring words for the group. She spoke about the rewards of public service and encouraged women to enter this field. Women are often reticent and tend to feel they have to know everything before taking on something,

she said.

"Just get in there," she advised. "You can ask people to teach you what you need to know once you are there." She talked about her public service at the age of 22, when she first ran for Watertown Town Council. Trying to decide whether to enter the contest, she asked her father, "What if I lose?" He replied, "So what?" With that encouragement she jumped into the campaign and won. She went on to become the state representative for Watertown in the state for several years. In office, she constantly reminded herself to "be confident; you were elected for a reason." She noted, "You get knocked around, but you get up, dust yourself off and keep going." She thanked the Armenian community for their support over the years.

Kaprielian summarized the accomplishments



Rachel Kaprielian with members of AIWA



Mary Galstyan and Ani Belorian of Zangakner Ensemble, with director Hasmik Konjoyan on the right

of her three years at the Registry of Motor Vehicles and her efforts to streamline operations and make more functions available by Internet. "The 35-year-olds get hostile when they can't do something on line, but people over 60 are also our customers," so she has worked at making the Registry offices more user friendly. She has moved 10 of the 30 branches of the Registry to government owned buildings where they do not have to pay rent. Assisted by technology, staffing of the Registry has been reduced from 1,000 employees to 800 employees.

Also participating were the members of the Zangakner ensemble. AIWA member Armine Medzorjian, director of the Erebus Saturday Armenian School in Belmont since 2008, described how she was able to raise the school's enrolment from 24 to 80 children. She has a master's degree in philology and education. She noted with satisfaction that the school has numerous children from mixed ethnic backgrounds, including Chinese, Arab, Russian and Jewish, who learn the Armenian language. The success of the school lies in dedicated teachers who care for their young ones. Medzorjian intro-

duced Hasmik Konjoyan, director of Zangakner Ensemble of children from 4 to 12, who put on a stunning, spirited performance, lifting spirits with their beautiful renditions of old and new Armenian favorite songs. Mary Galstyan and Ani Belorian stole the show, not only with their lovely voices, but their vivacious personalities and graceful dancing.

The celebration provided a warm and stimulating beginning to a new year of AIWA activities.

Also present was playwright and AIWA member Joyce Van Dyke, who gave compelling background information about "Deported / A Dream Play," her new play, which will have its world premier at the newly refurbished Modern Theatre, 525 Washington St., Boston, in the spring.

Based on the experiences of her grandmother, a Genocide survivor who built a new life in America, the play weaves together memories, dreams and the bonds of friendship into a powerful and poignant narrative. AIWA is sponsoring a special benefit performance on Sunday, March 11, at 2 p.m. Tickets are now available from the AIWA office or from AIWA members.

FRIENDS OF HRANT DINK

Presents

AN EVENING WITH AHMET ALTAN

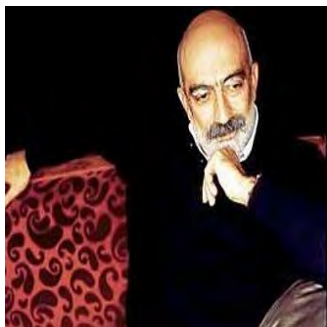
Editor and Founder of Taraf, Turkey's leading liberal newspaper

Recipient of the 2011 International Hrant Dink Award



Turkey After Hrant Dink

Across the Turkish-Armenian Divide
and the Future of Genocide
Recognition in Turkey



SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2012, AT 6:30 P.M.

Armenian Library and Museum of America
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Website: www.friendsofhrantdink.org ~ Email: info@friendsofhrantdink.org

Mathews to Speak on 'The Mystery of Gospel of King Gagik of Kars'

FRESNO — Dr. Thomas Mathews will present an illustrated talk titled "The Mystery of the Gospel of the King Gagik of Kars," at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191, on the Fresno State campus.

The presentation is the first in the spring 2012 Armenian Studies Program Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the Armenian General Benevolent Union, Greater Fresno Chapter.

The library of St. James in Jerusalem contains what was probably the most ambitious illuminated Gospel book of the entire Middle Ages. Commissioned by the last Armenian King before the Seljuks conquered Armenia in 1065,

the text is accompanied by pictures of colorful birds and flowers, but its greatest glory was an unparalleled set of 227 illuminations of the Life of Christ. A new project of study undertaken at Oxford University enables one to appreciate the profound spiritual meaning of the scenes and their importance to life in Armenia. Most striking is a unique portrait of Gagik's daughter, Maren, in rich silks, enthroned as the king's intended heir. She outlived her father and inherited his castle of Tsamandos in Cappadocia.

Mathews will present the latest research about this image of the King and about the manuscript.

Mathews is the John Langeloth Loeb Professor of the History of Art Emeritus, Institute of Fine Arts, at New York University (NYU), holding advanced degrees in theology and the history of art (NYU, PhD).

Mathews has devoted himself to the interpretation of religious art of the Early Christian and Medieval world. His areas of study have included architecture and liturgy, manuscript illumination and exegesis and the cultic use of icons. His most well-known book, *The Clash of Gods* (Princeton University Press), excited considerable controversy by challenging traditional interpretations of Early Christian art.

Recipient of many fellowships and honors, he taught the history of art at NYU's Institute of Fine Arts for 30 years, and in 2010 he was a visiting professor at Oxford University's Oriental Institute, where he lectured on Armenian art.

In the history of Armenian art he has published numerous studies including *Armenian Gospel Iconography*, *The Tradition of the Glajor Gospel* (Washington, 1991) and *Treasures in Heaven, Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts* (The Pierpont Morgan Library, NY, 1994).

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ARTS & LIVING

On A Road Trip with Clarinetist Kinan Azmeh in Armenia

By Rabab Ourabi

YEREVAN (*Forward Magazine*) – Yerevan, Armenia's capital, is a place with an incredible history accompanied by a landscape with innumerable archaeological sites, ranging from the Stone Age to Medieval times. Using a music bridge together with live illustrations to cross among cultures, saturated with stylish rhythms, we stood breathless to the expressive Kinan Azmeh's clarinet accompanied by the live illustrations of Kevork Mourad.

From the first moment you meet Azmeh, catching bright eyes, unforgettable smile, you sink into the warmth of inner beauty that reflects his charming personality. A Syrian born artist and the first Arab to win the first prize at the Nicolay Rubinstein international competition in Moscow, Russia, 1997. Azmeh has been recognized worldwide both as a soloist and a composer.

At 35, he has managed to create a diverse portfolio, being one of the most promising Syrian musicians. According to *Enigma* magazine: "his power lies in his hands; the hands of a musician. They flirt wittily with the saxophone; play Mozart daintily on a clarinet, improvising brilliantly to form dialogues that bridge East and West.

On stage, he plays with the comfort of a seasoned performer, smiling, embracing the crowd on the emotional journey of the notes."

Azmeh appeared as soloist with the Bavarian radio orchestra, the West-eastern Divan orchestra, the Kiev Camerata, the Corasara orchestra and the Syrian Symphonic orchestra. Azmeh also shared the stage with giants like Marcel Khalife, Daniel Barenboim, Francois Rabbath, Solhi-al-Wadi, Manfred Leuchter and members of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Azmeh looks to Arab musicians like Khalife and Rahbani as role

models he can relate to. "It's a combination of the emotional, the intellectual and life experiences," said Azmeh of his respect for the two renowned musicians.

In the notes included in the new album "Complex Stories, Simple Sounds," Lebanese musician Marcel Khalife writes the following: "Kinan, the music drops that were enriched with rain and longing on the way to Aleppo made me pick the moon before it could fall into the sea and become extinguished in a heavy blue that delights the heart."

The recipients of Khalife's praise are Azmeh and Sri Lankan-Canadian pianist Dinuk Wijeratne, whose performances and compositions are recorded on the album.

"His power lies in his hands; the hands of a musician. they flirt wittily with the saxophone; playing Mozart daintily on a clarinet.

His compositions include several works for solo, orchestra, and chamber music; film, live illustration and electronics. His discography includes three albums with his ensemble Hewar, several soundtracks for film and dance, and a duo album with pianist Wijeratne. He serves as artistic director of the Damascus Festival Chamber Music Ensemble, with whom he released an album of new contemporary Syrian chamber music written especially for the ensemble by various composers and is on the advisory board of the Nova Scotia youth orchestra.

Azmeh founded with Isam Rafea, conductor of the Syrian National Arabic Music orchestra the band Hewar (Dialogue), which has toured throughout Europe, the US and the Middle East. "The formula is simple," explains Azmeh. "We compose the first few lines and then we improvise intuitively on them. On stage we are all part of the dialogue. Each one of us is equally involved in adding his touch and making it survive to the end." Behind Azmeh's music lies a political and social consciousness endemic to Arabic music. Countering negative perceptions of the

Middle East can be a daunting task, but Azmeh is enthusiastic about the challenge, Hewar blends the Eastern sounds of the oud and tabla (or drums) with the deep Western sounds of the double bass, clarinet and cello, to create Arabic music fused with jazz, opera, folk and classical music.

The Epic of Gilgamesh tells the tale of King Gilgamesh, a man whose reign encompassed what would have been modern-day Iraq some 5,000 years ago. The story brings a message of peace. "What inspired us to do Gilgamesh is that we think it is important to preserve the history and culture of Iraq and share it with an Armenian audience," Azmeh says. "Number one, we want to raise questions in terms of what the country is about and, number two, we are bridging a gap that is very important to bridge."

Without knowing what to expect, we went into the auditorium. Live drawing and visual animations by Mourad began projecting onto the screen behind Azmeh, acting as a counterpoint to his music. As he played, rocket grenades disappeared into clouds behind him and a thick gray mist morphed into a surreal industrial landscape. Azmeh mesmerized the audience with a multilayered virtual ensemble while Mourad's animations alternately danced and did battle across the screen, while improvising freely in different Arabic modes on top of his own ensemble.

He also wove in an exhilarating Syrian drumming soundtrack. Mourad made more than 10 drawings while Azmeh played, projecting them live on video. The most stunning moment came when the music was reaching its climax, and Mourad's painting turned into a brilliant, prerecorded animation. The audience held its breath as the characters in the painting danced, violently battled and then made peace and walked away hand-in-hand, while coordinating carefully with Azmeh's music.

Azmeh and Mourad created a powerful sto-

rytelling that was magical.

Before the last note faded, the audience stood and the night that began in silence exploded into a chorus of applause for the synthesis of artistic traditions. The unstoppable applause brought both artists back to the stage hand in hand to acknowledge the appreciative audience. We left speechless, we all wanted that evening never to end.

Kinan and Syria the following night, we were invited to a jazz club, where Kinan joined the band playing that night; he caused a sensation, Azmeh made frequent use of the lower range of his instrument, producing a sound at once resonant and vulnerable. the feeling that you have is that he performs so perfectly and has no difficulties in evincing any form of interaction with his audience.

On several numbers he slid up the register for strident, passionate solos that were even more striking in contrast. You have to watch him play; he brings his heart and soul to the stage. In describing his music Azmeh said, "My musical pieces are somewhat sequential. They illustrate to me the kind of person I'm to become, through understanding who I was and who I now am."

On an early morning day trip to Ararat Mountain, Kinan told me that as much as he loves New York, he still feels his future is in Syria. He recently bought an old Damascene house in the city of Damascus where he plans to settle down in the future. "My real icons are the people who are trying to make it in Syria – the people who think about emigrating as the last option, not the first," he says. "Music is what I want to do and I want to do it here. If you leave, nothing will improve. If you want your kids or grandchildren to live here – it begins with you. This is where I feel I need to be most and this is where I feel I am rewarded the most."

"My real icons are those trying to make it in Syria, who think about emigrating as the last option, not the first."

Study of Armenian Genocide Trials Relies On Irrefutable Documentation

TRIALS, from page 12

One of the most shocking and specific sources, which the authors quote, is a coded telegram, signed by the head of the Erzerum Special Organization, Bahaeddin Sakir Bey, to the Governor General of Marmuetulaziz. It reads, in part, "Are the Armenians driven from there being liquidated? Are the troublemakers whom you reported as being driven forth and banished, being destroyed or are they merely being driven out and sent away? Please give an honest report, my brother."

Although many defendants had the charges against them dismissed, the death penalty was often pronounced on CUP officials, such as Talaat who escaped to Berlin, only to be later assassinated by an Armenian youth, many were convicted and sentenced to death or to long terms in prison.

The trials were significant for several reasons – not only were they a precursor to the later Nuremburg trials, but because many of the verdicts were supported almost entirely by Muslim testimony.

Dadrian and Akcam have performed an enormous service to all other scholars seeking authentication of the Armenian Genocide. In addition to their researches in archival, judicial and parliamentary documents from several countries, they have also compiled an extensive bibliography from Turkish, English, German, French and Armenian sources.

They have also surveyed and recounted the coverage of the trials in the Istanbul press of the time. Much although not all testimony was gathered from Muslim witnesses. At Trabzon's municipal hospital, Ali Saib, director of Trabzon's Health Services, was accused of murdering Armenians through the use of gas and poison. A colleague, Dr. Ziya Bey, provided a written report that implicated Saib in the crime, stating that Saib Bey, using poison, had injected children by

syringe and later removed the bodies by stuffing them in baskets. Remarkably, the court later acquitted the defendant.

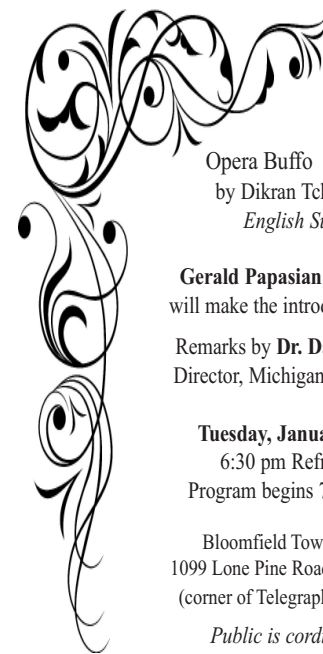
Finally, the authors have provided the full texts in English of the indictments and verdicts. In the Key Indictment trial against the leading CUP members, the verdict reads in part, "That these massacres were carried out under the [express] orders and with the knowledge of Talaat, Enver and Cemal Beys is [attested to] by the following coded message: In Talaat Bey's coded telegram dated 21 Temmutz 1331 (3 August 1915 to the Governors General of Diyarbakir and Mamuretulaziz and to the District Governors of Urfa and Zor ordering that the bodies of the dead remaining on the roads not be thrown into ravines, rivers or lakes, and instead be interred and their remaining possessions burnt."

This book stands as a monument of original scholarship on the facts of the Genocide. The wealth of specific citations, the multiplicity of sources surveyed make this volume an invaluable and fundamental source for any future study.

Dadrian, a noted Genocide scholar, is the author of *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*. He has taught at the State University of New York and is a director of Genocide Research at the Zoryan Institute.

Akcam, born in Turkey, is the first Turkish scholar to have acknowledged the historicity of the Armenian Genocide. The author of many books, he is associate professor of history and the Kaloosdian/Mugar Chair in Armenian Genocide Studies at the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University.

Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials. By Vahakn N., Dadrian and Taner Akcam. Berghahn Books. New York. Oxford. 2011. 363 pp. ISBN 978-0-35745-251-1



Tekeyan Cultural Association
sponsors the
film projection and presentation of

Opera Buffo **Gariné**
by Dikran Tchouhadjian
English Subtitled

Gerald Papasian, Actor/Director
will make the introduction in person
Remarks by Dr. David DiChiera
Director, Michigan Opera Theater

Tuesday, January 24, 2012
6:30 pm Refreshments
Program begins 7:00 pm sharp

Bloomfield Township Library
1099 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield, MI
(corner of Telegraph and Lone Pine)

Public is cordially invited

Tekeyan Cultural Association will screen Gerald Papasian's modified version of Dikran Tchouhadjian's "Gariné" Opera at the Bloomfield Public Library. The Opera will be presented by Gerald Papasian, the artistic director of the Dikran Tchouhadjian Research Center of Paris, and will be followed by the projection of the performance.

Tchouhadjian's "Gariné" operetta, originally called "Leblebiji Horhor Agha," was written in 1875 in Turkish, and quickly became a hit. Tchouhadjian used the urban and folk melodies of his time in the framework of a comic operetta. The setting was in the harem of Prince Khurshid Bey, in the 18th century. The prince fell in love with young Fatime, whose father, Horhor Agha, was a poor chickpea seller. He wanted to save his daughter from what he thought was a kidnapping, but his daughter was actually in love with Khurshid.

The operetta was translated into Armenian while Tchouhadjian was still alive, and in the 20th century it was translated into Greek, French, Russian and German. In the 1940s, it was performed in Soviet Armenia under the new title "Gariné.". In 1967 the Armenian version was made into a film. It was still set in Istanbul, but the harem story was changed.

While Tchouhadjian's original score has been lost, Papasian discovered scores in Paris in French translation that were intended for a French production that never occurred. After this discovery, and through lots of detective work, Papasian was able to use the various versions to make his own revisions for a new Western Armenian script. He changed the figure of the father from a poor vendor into a rich man, changing also the development of the love story to allow for a livelier plot. Gariné gradually falls in love with Armen, a young intellectual who returns from his studies in Venice and establishes the theatre company in which Gariné performs.

After creating a new Western Armenian version, with a revised script, Papasian translated the operetta into French and English. The French version was staged in Paris and Marseille last year by a company of 40 singers/actors, dancers and musicians (including Gerald Papasian as the father, Horhor Agha), to critical acclaim.

For more information call 248-302-7576





ARTS & LIVING

Christmas Concert Held in Providence

By Shirley Ventrone

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — On December 28, 2011, the Cultural Committee of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, under the direction of Konstantin Petrossian, presented a concert titled “Silent Night, Holy Night” in the sanctuary of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church. This Christmas concert included the Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island and the Junior Choir of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church. The evening also featured performances by talented soloists.

Father Shnork Souin, pastor of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church welcomed everyone, especially Rev. Mattias Shaltan, pastor of Saint Ephraim Syriac Orthodox Church in Central Falls, as well as choirmaster, Gabriel Aydin. Also in attendance was Rev. Gomidas Baghsarian, pastor of Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church.

One of the more unique aspects of this joint musical venture pointed to the different approaches made musically by the Armenian and Syriac Choirs to the same great celebration in honor of the birth of Jesus Christ.

The music of the Syriac Church uses a modal system, based on eight modes, arrangement of

tones in a scale. Each hymn has the ability to be sung in different modes, as well as texts, based on the calendar. The texts and hymns move in an eight-week cycle.

Oh Come All Ye Faithful was sung with the featured soloist, 9-year-old David Alexander. This youngster is extremely talented, and he truly enjoys sharing it. *Ov Zarmanalee* (How Wondrous), the beautiful Armenian Christmas Carol was sung by the Chorale with a moving solo by tenor Sarkis Yepremian. Soprano Gohar Manjelian sang *Aysor Don Eh*. It was an impassioned performance. David Griego added to the festivities by joining in *Joy to the World* performing adroitly on the flute. Mari Panosian provided the organ accompaniment.

The Saint Ephraim Children and Adult Choir, under the direction of Gabriel Aydin, presented their beautifully spiritual hymns accompanied by Talia Ghazal, keyboard, Jean Ibrahim, oud, and Christian Ghazal, tablo.

The Syriac music was similar, yet different in comparison to the Armenian. Obviously, the sentiments of celebration, praise and joy remain the same. The sense of the minor key was present in both. However, there were, unique to each, different musical ideas.

At the end of the evening, the Armenian and Syriac choirs came together to sing *Silent*



The members of the choir with Konstantin Petrossian, left, and Sarkis Yepremian

Night and Joy to the World.

A lovely post-concert gathering took place in the Egavian Cultural Hall. Many delicious homemade pastries were provided. This gather-

ing allowed the opportunity for people to share and ask questions of one another.

This great celebration and sharing seem to embrace the message of the season.

Dr. Levon Avdoyan Reveals Armenian Treasures at Library of Congress Armenian Exhibition

EXHIBIT, from page 12

US Congress, but evolved into the national library. It is the oldest cultural institution in the federal government, and comprises three huge buildings, and a huge campus for motion pictures and recorded sound with 155 million items with an estimated 560 miles of shelves. “And over 60 percent of the material is not written in English,” he added.

Due to the political and economic conditions,

the publication of Armenian books could not begin in the homeland, but started in the diaspora as a result of the fall of Cilician Armenia in 1375 AD, he related. “Armenian was the second Middle Eastern language to be published, Hebrew in 1472 being the first.” In 1512, Jacob the Sinner opened the press in Venice and printed five books. And in America, although the first printed books by Armenians started in the 19th century by the

various Biblical societies for missionary work abroad, the first work in Armenian for American Armenians was published in 1888.

The first massive collection of Armenian works at the Library of Congress took place in the late 19th century. It continued with “dribs and drabs” until 1948, when the “Committee for the Armenian Collection” created by Arthur H. Dadian and including the legendary scholar Dr. Sirarpie der Nercessian, it grew from some 250 to 6,000 items in the Armenian language collection. By 1992, when Avdoyan was appointed Armenian specialist, the collection had grown to 7,000 items. “Today,” he said, “there are estimated to be from 40,000 to 45,000 Armenian works.”

Using a PowerPoint presentation, he showed pages of the oldest *Gospel* book printed in 1321 AD, the 1487 *Verin Noravank Gospel* with its gorgeous pigmentation, the (1733), the ecclesiastical fabric dedicated to St. Karapet in 1741, and documents and posters from the Near East Relief. There were also 1859 photos of Armenian cotton cultivation from Paris; a photo of Lady Azgapatyan who in 1919 was the first woman to represent Armenia at the World Suffragettes’ Conference in Paris; and even an item of firefighting in Armenia.

He noted that that there are no photos from the time of the Armenian Genocide, but there are several from before and after the catastrophe. Also in the collection are many Armeno-Turkish books, including the 13-volume diary of Tavit Adamian who went through the Genocide and emigrated to Boston. There is also a letter in the Alexander Graham Bell Archives describing the Genocide in Adana in 1909, as well as Talaat Pasha’s note of thanks to U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau for hosting a dinner on the eve of the Genocide, April 24, 1915, and the many Morgenthau telegrams to

the State Department.

“The Library of Congress has the largest map repository in the world,” including the first published map of Yerevan published in 1920 before the fall of the First Republic, he continued.

Rare books abound at the Library of Congress, Avdoyan revealed, including the *Book of Prayers* from Krikor Naregatsi (1763); a collection of stereographic images; a manuscript of astrology; postal stamps; *Verk Hayastani*, the first novel of Khachadour Abovyan (1959) and a huge collection of memorial books by immigrants who wrote about their homeland.

Start of Digital Area

From the time of the *Book of Fridays* to the period of publication in the current Republic of Armenia, the presses have always remained active, he pointed out. “We’re at the start of the digital area,” he said, adding that only 10 percent of the Library of Congress is digitized. In response to a question asking what sorts of collection should be digitized, he made several suggestions, including the need for primary documentation on the First Republic of Armenia.

The evening ended with Momjian quoting Thomas Jefferson: “I cannot live without books.” He then presented Avdoyan with Christopher Oscanyan’s *The Sultan and His People*. Published in New York in 1857, it is probably the first book printed in the United States by an Armenian author.

He is also preparing an exhibition catalog, which will be published in time for the opening of the exhibition. “The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world, and the Armenian collections have now become a major source for Armenian studies and research,” he added with pride.

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A concert to benefit the Armenian Heritage Foundation

*Commemorating the immigrant experience and celebrating all
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Saturday, February 4, 2012 at 7:30 pm
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Labyrinth image taken from the Armenian Heritage Park on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway in Boston

Program includes music by and about immigrants, including Dvořák's *Largo* from *New World Symphony*,
Morrill's setting of poems by Peter Balakian, Barber's *The Coolin'* (Reincarnations),
an excerpt from Menotti's *The Saint of Bleecker Street*, Somewhere from Bernstein's *West Side Story*,
Parsegh Ganachian's *Oror*, Alan Hovhaness' *Prayer to St. Gregory*, and more

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SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE AT INTERMISSION





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Computer Forensic Specialist

20 Concord Lane Cambridge, MA 02138
tel 617 491 1001 aa@techfusion.com cell 617 797 5222

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ARTS & LIVING

Véronique Nichanian on Life at the Helm of Hermès Menswear

By Josh Sims

PARIS (*The National*) – Style is defined by the way you make your clothes work with your body, not by fashion, says the 35-year veteran of the menswear industry.

Véronique Nichanian is having none of it. “If there’s one question I get asked that really annoys me,” she says, “it’s the one that suggests it’s a strange idea for a woman to be designing exclusively for men. It suggests there is something surprising in that, although nobody seems surprised by the number of male designers only designing womenswear. But it’s also a sign of how society and the fashion industry have moved on that I’m asked that less and less now.”

That is probably the best policy. After all, Nichanian is, as it has said on her business card since her promotion last year, “Artistic Director of the Hermès Men’s Universe.” That sounds like an awfully big job, even for a company not notorious for slapping its name on just anything it might be able to make a euro from. It is also the only pompous thing about the relaxed, chatty and chic Nichanian, who started her career in menswear design 35 years ago, as a stylist for Cerruti. Far from a steady progression up the fashion industry ladder, the next stop was her appointment to oversee the fledgling men’s ready-to-wear at Hermès. Hermès itself celebrates its 175th

anniversary next year. And she is still there, making her one of the industry’s longest-serving creatives at a single fashion house, seeing the company recently open its first menswear-only store and herself appointed to France’s Legion of Honour. Yet, despite this, she is one of the industry’s least well-known names, a fact attributable to her willingness to let the clothes do the talking, and her reluctance to have her picture taken at every Parisian soirée.

“I didn’t have a planned career when I joined Hermès,” she says. “In fact, I only met Jean-Louis Dumas [the late chairman of Hermès] to tell him I was happy at Cerruti. But he sold the job – and its potential – with such passion I was convinced.

“Did I think I’d be there two decades later? Not at all. Where will I be in five years? I don’t know. But as long as I’m happy here, I’ll still be with Hermès.”

The company’s approach to its defiantly logo-free menswear (and this is definitely clothing for men, not for skinny fashion boys) seems particularly timely, focusing on pricey but considered clothing that is slow to date, making the outlay worthwhile and the recessionary purchase all the more sensible. The new spring/summer collection reads like a rundown of menswear staples: two-button suits, double-front buttoning cardigans, sailor neckline sweaters and other miscellaneous bits of knitwear, narrow straight trousers, the only distinctive design touch being a dabbling with the

drawstring, be that on trouser waists or the backs of raincoats. The colors are equally safe – navy, white, black and shades of what the fashion lingo that describes them calls “clay” and “tile.”

It is mostly in the fabrics that there is invention amid the classicism: piqué cashmere, raffia-effect cloth, crepe cotton, double-faced and silkscreened lambskin, technical cotton canvas ... And it is talk of fabrics that gets Nichanian most energized, with memories of hanging out around Paris’s Marché Saint Pierre cloth market as a teenager and tales of how she pushed Hermès’s craftspeople to create, for example, a matt finish on nubuck crocodile, despite their protestations that it couldn’t be done. Even so, there is nothing to scare les chevaux here. And what a relief to be free of the willfully radical. Unusually for a brand at this level, everything you see on the catwalk will be available in the shops. There are no wacky pieces designed simply to attract press attention.

“I’m interested in clothes more than fashion,” explains the French-Armenian designer, who trained at the noted Ecole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne. “I think of clothes as objects – functional and comfortable, both of which are especially important in menswear. It’s a more modern approach to produce timeless clothes than a new ‘look’ every season. In fact, I don’t know if that demand for seasonal change really has a future – surely it’s better to be able just to buy a piece of clothing because you love it, to be able to wear it for years and add it to a wardrobe of clothes you’ve already been wearing for years? Of course, fashion is a business. But I do like the idea of only showing a new collection when the designer has something to say, not every six months.”

With the differences between one of her collections and another measured in maybe millimeters – the slope of a shoulder, the length of a jacket – she works in what she has termed “radical continuity.”

That, of course, is in itself a radical idea, albeit one that seems to be gathering momentum. Nichanian fights shy of clothes that overpower the personality of her imaginary man –



Véronique Nichanian

or her sometime muse-like husband – as much as for herself; for the office she dresses in that characteristically French, sexily mannish way in which the high gloss somehow pulls off a low-maintenance look.

“Although,” she counters, “[stylish dressing] is a question of attitude rather than nationality. Despite the stereotype, French men are no better dressed than men anywhere else. When you’ve got it, you’ve got it! You can look around on the street wherever you are and see very stylish people – it’s defined by the way they make their clothes work with their body, and the way they mix them together. It’s not about fashion.”

How a Hermès wardrobe is put together is down to the wearer – and with more individuality the better, Nichanian reckons, even if that means an occasional lapse in Parisian *haute* taste. Certainly, all she wants, she says, is for her menswear “to make the men wearing it feel handsome and good about themselves, as clothes should. Most men like the subtleties, which suits me. I don’t like chichi things. I prefer the simple but precise. For me the real expression isn’t in big statements, but in fabrics and detail.”

It is a definition of the luxury product perhaps – carefully considered, artfully crafted with the best materials and an aesthetic free of any “use by” date. Indeed, perhaps now more than ever, just such a definition needs stressing for those companies for whom it is a genuine stock-in-trade – not for nothing is Nichanian given free rein to create what she wants, regardless of the end ticket price. She also laments the idea that, while Hermès is often referred to as a “luxury” brand, “luxury doesn’t really come into it, especially because ‘luxury’ doesn’t seem to have any real meaning now – it’s like being a ‘star.’ It’s a loose word – one of those silly superlatives that now gets applied to anything.”

“What I do with Hermès menswear is luxury by the old definition,” she adds. “And that luxury is actually about time – which is what is needed to give scope to the attention to detail in an object – and the appreciation of particular values. It’s the companies that are seen to support clear values that people are paying more and more attention to now. And after 20 years or more, that’s very refreshing.”

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CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

JANUARY 21 – The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) presents jazz sensation Grace Kelly in Concert. Proceeds to benefit the Avedisian School in Armenia. National Heritage Museum, Lexington. Tickets \$35, \$20 with student ID. Cocktails at 6:30 p.m., concert at 8 p.m. For tickets or more information, call AMAA at (201) 265-2607; Jean Marie Papelian at (781) 904-2700 or visit www.gracekellymusic.com or www.amaa.org.
JANUARY 28 – Friends of Hrant Dink presents An Evening with Ahmet Altan, editor and founder of *Taraf*, Turkey’s leading liberal newspaper, recipient of the 2011 International Hrant Dink Award. Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Armenian Library and Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown.

NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 22 – A Commemorative Evening for Hrant Dink, on the fifth anniversary of his assassination. Sunday, 4 p.m. Keynote speaker, Zakarya Mildanoglu, Agos weekly columnist. Master of ceremonies, Dr. Herand Markarian. Badarak, requiem service. St. Thomas Armenian Church, Tenafly. Free admission and reception to follow. For info, call Manug (718) 224-3422, Zakar (646) 387-6512.

NEW YORK

JANUARY 24 – Commemorating 500 Years of Armenian Printing, under the auspices of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern). Keynote speaker, Zakarya Mildanoglu, Agos weekly columnist. Master of ceremonies, Hagop Vartivarian. Tuesday, 7:30



On Saturday, January 28, at 6:30 p.m., the Friends of Hrant Dink will present a talk featuring Ahmet Altan (pictured here), editor and founder of Taraf, Turkey’s leading liberal newspaper, at the Armenian Library and Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown, Mass.

p.m. Guild Hall of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, 630 Second Ave., New York City. Admission is free. Reception will follow. For info, call Manug (718) 224-3422, Zakar (646) 387-6512.

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

COMMENTARY

Hrant Dink: A Martyr to His Cause

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Hrant Dink proved to be a figure larger than life. His frame, while slender, cast a giant shadow. He inspired confidence and radiated power and determination. He used to suck the air out of the room as he entered a place. But his legacy came to match and surpass his attributes while he was living.

He was gunned down five years ago on January 19, 2007. He was silenced at that moment but his message resonates even louder today throughout Turkey and beyond. His assassination was a spectacular event, but what followed was even more spectacular, although unexpected; thousands of people demonstrated in Istanbul in protest, chanting “We are Hrant Dink,” “We are Armenian.”

He was an iconoclast of sorts. When he began publishing his weekly, *Agos*, in 1996, he had to break certain traditions. He had to overcome certain established modus operandi in the community and then even more so throughout the rest of Turkey.

The Armenian press was at a critical point in Turkey when he founded *Agos*. The major dailies, *Marmara* and *Jamanak*, were losing readership, not necessarily because of a decline in quality but mainly through the retreat of the Armenian language. To switch from Armenian to Turkish, or to any other language, was considered a betrayal, but in the meantime, because of the language barrier, the Armenian youth was deprived of the message. Someone had to take bold action to reach out to the youth. The media in the US had encountered that dilemma in the 1930s when English-language publications appeared to keep the community informed and cohesive, through a lingua franca.

It was Hrant Dink who took that bold initiative and began publishing *Agos* in Turkish, reserving some pages for the Armenian section.

His message was so powerful that it went beyond the Armenian community; Kurds, Alevis, other minorities and Turkish intellectuals subscribed to the paper, but they also began to contribute to it. It was a historic and critical period when taboos were crumbling down and Turkey, in its bid to join the European Union, appeared ready to make major yet painful compromises.

Hrant Dink promoted a philosophy that saved not only the Armenian cause (which the traditional media served timidly) but also the emancipation of Turkish society. In a way his message went against the traditional thinking; he opted to educate Turkish society instead of blaming it. His position was that Germany came to terms with its past because it is a civilized nation, thus Turkey had to be educated first in order to be able to accept the past more objectively. His ear was to the ground and he could hear the footsteps of the future.

Five years in the making, his message has gained tremendous ground; the Turkish media, scholars and political activists today are discussing freely the issue of the Armenian Genocide as well as a host of historic injustices perpetrated against the minorities. The Genocide issue has become an agenda item for national discourse in Turkey, penal code article 301 notwithstanding. At the present time, there is a tug-of-war between the liberal society and a reluctant government, which is resisting the inevitable

avalanche of change. Everyday quantitative change is being converted to qualitative change. The thrust of Dink’s message has come to transform the entire Turkish society.

As if Armenians had not given enough martyrs, Hrant Dink came to add one more to the number of the 1.5 million sacrificial lambs, but this has been one sacrifice which is poised to bring justice to all the previous martyrs.

The “deep state” in Turkey was implicated in Dink’s assassination. Right after the journalist’s murder, the police had glorified the 17-year-old gunman, Ogun Samast, snapping photos with him in front of the Turkish flag. That already indicated how deep the “deep state” went. The subsequent trial also demonstrated that they had received tips on the plot to kill Dink long before the deed and had not acted on time. “Five years after the assassination of Hrant Dink, evidence related to the real perpetrators of the crime is still being covered up,” the Dink family lawyer, Fethiye Cetin has said.

The assassin was not a lone gunman; there was certainly an organization behind him, whose tentacles extended into the different agencies of the Turkish government. The fact that the police could not find any phone records between the plotters of the murder, and that it has fallen on the shoulders of the Dink family to discover 14 phone calls with the suspects Mustafa Ozturk and Salih Hacisalihoglu, is an indication that seeking justice is an uphill battle in the Turkish judiciary. Attorney Cetin has also made the accusation that the police “intentionally obscure the evidence.”

More revealing is the confession of another suspect, Yasin Hayal, who has said, “I have been used by the Turkish Republic and now they want to eliminate me. My life is in danger and the state will be responsible if anything happens to me.”

He has made other incriminating confession: “I never knew Tancel [another suspect] was a state agent. I respected him because he was the head of Alperen Ocaklari [an extreme right-wing group]. I met him in 2002 and he introduced me to a lot of figures, including police officers.”

The trial seems to go nowhere. The developments in the upcoming days might be a new beginning instead of the end. According to the Dink family’s lawyers, bureaucracy and institutions resist solving the murder in its entirety because there is a lack of political will to move the investigation along.

Another indication of government’s reluctance to bring all the facts into light is the jailing of Nadim Sener, who had published a book investigating the government’s handling of Dink trial.

The evidence that the courts, attorneys and journalists are pushing forward in this case is moving ahead inexorably despite all the machinations the state institutions bring against the truth and the people unraveling it. No one could imagine such development in Turkey five years ago.

It is destined that great causes require great martyrs. Socrates, Christ, Joan of Arc and Galileo paid with their lives to uphold their messages. Their blood proved to be the necessary nutrient to help germinate their philosophy. Dink prematurely believed that Turkey hand changed enough to accept his mission. However, it was not the time yet, but his martyrdom will certainly bring that change, when we commemorate his death on the centennial of Genocide in 2015, along with 1.5 million Armenian martyrs.

LETTERS

Praise for ALMA, Arkun

To the Editor:

The Armenian Education Center (AEC) of Virginia appreciates Mr. Aram Arkun’s wonderful coverage of the Richmond, Va. opening of the Armenian Library and Museum of America’s (ALMA) traveling Armenian Genocide Exhibit at the Virginia Holocaust Museum.

The AEC committee members would like to acknowledge the academic excellence and absolute generosity of spirit that ALMA’s chairman, Haig Der Manuelian, and ALMA’s staff

extended and continue to extend to the AEC. The AEC would not have been able to produce such an effective and well-developed exhibit in the few months we had between being approached by the Virginia Holocaust Museum and the December 2011 opening of the exhibit. This thoroughly-researched and beautifully-produced exhibit provided us exactly what we needed to bring our Virginia Armenian community’s attention to the need for donations of their families’ survivors’ journals, letters, photographs, oral histories and other Genocide relevant artifacts for what will

become a permanent Armenian Genocide exhibit at the Virginia Holocaust Museum.

ALMA has been creating and generously sharing unparalleled exhibits on the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian people and its history and culture for many years. Of course, Mr. Arkun acknowledged ALMA in the article, but our committee felt it important to write this letter expressing the AEC’s heartfelt appreciation and deep respect for the work ALMA does and shares.

—Anne Tootelian Norris
AEC committee member
Richmond, Va.

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— 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 noon on the Monday of the week of publication.

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tor. 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.

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EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR

Marc Mgrditchian

PRODUCTION

Dilani Yogaratnam

SENIOR EDITORIAL COLUMNIST:

Edmond Azadian

CONTRIBUTORS:

Florence Avakian, Elizabeth Aprahamian, Daphne Abeel, Dr. Haroutiune Arzoumanian, Taleen Babayan, Prof. Vahakn N. Dadrian, Diana Der Hovanesian, Philip Ketchian, Kevork Keushkerian, Sonia Kailian-Placido, Harut Sassounian, Mary Terzian, Hagop Vartivarian, Naomi Zeytoonian

CORRESPONDENTS:

Armenia - Hagop Avedikian

Boston - Nancy Kalajian

Philadelphia - Lisa Manookian

Contributing Photographers:

Jacob Demirdjian, Harry Koundakjian, Jirair Hovsepian

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E-Mail: **editor@mirrorspectator.com**

For advertising: **mirrorads@aol.com**

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COMMENTARY

Kissing. . .

By Rev. Arnak Kasparian

Let's talk about kissing. Anybody who has not done any kissing may be excused. I am talking about real, meaningful kissing, not the kiss of an aunt leaving traces of lipstick on your cheek.

You have to help me in this sermon. Close your eyes and remember the first time you really kissed or were kissed in your life. I want you to remember three things:

(1) Remember how you felt before you kissed. Remember? You were a little frightened, a little excited and nervous. May be you thought of your breath, or did you do it right?

(2) Remember how the kiss felt. You can't describe the kiss because some kisses touch your body only, some kisses touch your heart. It is different for everybody. I couldn't use words to describe it, but you know how it is. If you wanted to describe it with one word, you would say "wow."

(3) Remember how you felt afterwards. Here are two things I want you to pay attention to: (a) You found the kiss meant something. Like — does it mean you are in love? Does he or she love me? (b) The kiss changed the way you behaved. Should I smile? Would I go out with him again?

What does this kissing have to do with our worship today? Believe it or not, your first kiss is a lot like our experience of God as Christian people. Before you meet with God, really meet Him face to face, the idea of God who meets His people might be frightening. Even if you believe in God, you are not sure you want to meet Him. But one day it happens: this kiss with God, and there are no words to describe it except maybe a "wow."

You come to church, you take Holy Communion and, on one occasion, you are overwhelmed with this experience; or you are in your room lonely, and suddenly He is there with comfort and with strength; or, for nine months you wait to have a child, and when the baby finally is born, you look at this tiny thing and know that in each birth God still makes His creation new: you have been kissed by God.

Yes, you have been kissed by God taking Holy Communion. You have been kissed by God in the loneliness of your room. You have been kissed by God having a child. And, like your first kiss, you find that after it is over, you have to struggle what the kiss means, because you know it will change your life.

We call our church Apostolic. We are proud and happy that the first enlighteners of the Armenians were two of the 12 apostles: Thaddeus and Bartholomew. Before we think that these men were holier or better than we are, or God loved them more than He loves us, remember this: an Apostle is simply someone who is kissed by God through the life of our Lord and chose to live his life in a different way. More than anything else, the *New Testament* tells us about the Apostles' mistakes, their humanness: Peter's cowardice, Paul's cruelty before his conversion, Andrew's timidity. Each of them, like each of us, made mistakes by the dozen. They were frail and weak and frightened men. But, unlike others who met Jesus, they decided to stay in love to kiss again.

And right now in this day, at this hour, that same Christ stands before each one of us, His arms outstretched, His eyes filled with love, He invites us to embrace Him, to become the new Apostles for new age, an age touched by desperate fear and awful loneliness. This is more than an invitation for us, Armenians. We have chosen to be known as an Apostolic Church. As Armenians this is our destiny: to be the people that embrace our Christ and carry His love to the nations of the world.

Remember how it was. How frightened you were at the first time, but look now at the Pure Love and run to Him, and enjoy His embrace throughout eternity. Amen.

Armenia's Population Drain

By Thomas De Waal

It happened 23 years ago, but Armenia's second city, Gumri, has never fully recovered from the devastating earthquake of 1988. A full 8 percent of the population perished in the quake. Local newspaper editor Levon Barsegian, serving as my tour guide in Gumri last month, proudly pointed out the elegant black-stoned houses for which this former imperial Russian town is famous.

But he also pointed out the old market building, which is still a ruin — in fact Soviet buildings collapsed while older structures stayed up. And he told me that 6,000 families are still living in the makeshift "temporary" accommodation the Soviet government provided for them back then.

But there is a more insidious problem in Gumri, more visible in a town [read: city] like this than in Armenia's capital Yerevan, or for that matter any of the metropolitan cities of the former Soviet Union. Many of these apartment blocks are half-empty. Thousands of people have simply gone.

Even as the world marked the birth of its 7 billionth person last month, a few countries are confronting the problem of insufficient population. A majority of them are post-communist countries. In some, like Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, the problem is low birth rates that aren't replenishing demographic stocks. In others, the problem is emigration, a drain on population.

This problem has hit Central Asia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, where young men in particular and rural youth in general head off, mainly to Russia, to find work. But two countries are particularly hard-hit: Moldova and Armenia.

In Moldova two causes stand out. One is poverty — Moldova's GDP per capita is down at African levels. The other is proximity to the European Union, with Moldova's ethnic

cousin and new EU member, Romania, just over the border.

Migration from Armenia in absolute numbers is probably no worse than from its two South Caucasian neighbors, Azerbaijan and Georgia. But the country's smaller size makes it a much more critical issue. The last Soviet census put the population at 3.3 million, two-thirds urban and one-third rural. Half of that rural population may now have emigrated in search of work, plus considerable numbers of urban dwellers too.

The last official census in 2001 put Armenia's population at just over 3 million. Most people believe it is a lot worse than that. The drop in numbers came despite the fact that as many as 400,000 people entered Armenia in 1989-92, either refugees from the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict with Azerbaijan or émigrés from the Middle East. But it seems few of those people stayed. Around a million people may have left the country since the end of the Soviet period.

A 2009 Gallup poll conducted among 12 post-Soviet countries presents gloomy data for both Moldova and Armenia. Moldova came first and Armenia second in the number of people saying they would like to move abroad for temporary work (53 and 44 percent respectively). Armenia won dubious first place ahead of Moldova in the number saying they would like to move abroad permanently (39 and 36 percent respectively).

Armenia is a small, landlocked country, still suffering the economic impact of its unresolved conflict with Azerbaijan [a war that Azerbaijan itself started following decades of ethnic cleansing of Armenians in Artsakh]. But the problem is compounded by the fact that twice as many Armenians live in the worldwide diaspora as inside, and they draw their relatives abroad. And Armenians are traditionally mobile: it is likely that the émigrés' grandparents fled massacres in Anatolia [read: genocide in Turkish-

occupied Western Armenia and Cilicia] in 1915 or emigrated from the Middle East to Soviet Armenia.

Now the issue is causing problems with Armenia's main ally, Russia. Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian publicly expressed worry over the Russian government's scheme, entitled Compatriots, to give thousands of Armenians the promise of citizenship and work if they move to depopulated parts of Siberia. In effect, one ally is resolving its demographic problems at the expense of another.

Opposition supporters I spoke to in Armenia argue that the government has no interest in stemming emigration. It acts as a pressure valve against the kind of disgruntled masses who can undermine governmental authority, they say, and allows authorities to produce inflated electoral rolls so they can falsify election outcomes more easily. Moreover, remittances help keep the country afloat. World Bank estimates from 2010 said that 9 percent of Armenia's GDP came from remittances.

But it is difficult to see the country developing while it is sapped by emigration. The rural economy is a subsistent one. It is a constant strain to maintain an 80,000-strong army to confront Azerbaijan when the stock of 18-year-old men, born in the early 1990s, is so low.

Perhaps the only silver lining is that if Armenia does begin to solve its manifold economic and political problems, there is a huge diaspora out there that has used these fallow years to get better education and training than they could have received in Armenia. If and when Armenia does turn a corner in its national development, these people — re-emigrants, let us call them — will be in the vanguard of that new story.

(Thomas de Waal is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. This commentary was first published in the *National Interest*.)

France's Shamefully Forgotten Allies: Soldiers of the Empire

By Robert Fisk

It took Indigènes to remind the French that they owed their liberation not only to De Gaulle's largely white Free French troops but also to 134,000 Algerian soldiers, 73,000 Moroccans, 26,000 Tunisians and 92,000 "others" from Sub-Saharan Africa. Indigènes means "natives" but the English version of the movie was called *Days of Glory*, which rather took the sting away. Yet the French have still largely ignored their massive empire armies of both world wars. And so have we. Where are the great films, the great novels about the Indians who fought for King and Empire at the Somme, and in North Africa and Italy?

Wandering the Great War cemetery at Chemin des Dames — the atrocious 1917 offensive, which won for General Charles Mangin the title "Butcher of the Blacks", and led to French mutiny — and the British Second World War graves at Sidon in southern Lebanon, I notice how the Muslim dead, mostly Senegalese and Algerians and Tunisians in the first graveyard, Indians in the second, are separated from their non-Muslim comrades-in-death. A few metres of grass keep infidel and believer apart (the definitions are interchangeable, of course) as if sharing the same cemetery is quite enough, without accepting that all were brothers in humanity.

It is the same today. A recent exhibition in Beirut showed archive footage of Australian troops in the 1941 invasion of Lebanon, fighting and dying and laying railroad tracks and manning gun positions on the Beirut

Corniche. The Lebanese flocked to see the films, especially Lebanese Armenians who remembered how Australian troops of the Great War gave their food to the dying victims of the Armenian Genocide 23 years earlier. But there were no pictures of the Indian soldiers who fought and died in Lebanon.

So it's worth a glance at how "we" Westerners regarded "our" soldiers over the past 100 years. All praise to *Le Monde Diplomatique* for drawing our attention to a sand dune beside a small forest road not far from the old Courneau camp in the Gironde, which is bleakly decorated with two memorials. One shows African faces, sculpted in stone. The other says: "To the greatness of Allah." Yet in a war that for the first time commemorated the individual names of the fallen, all that is written here is a dedication "to the 940 Senegalese and 12 Russians who died for France 1914-1918". Anonymity was enough for blacks.

The French camp of Courneau was a training ground for newly arrived Senegalese troops en route to the Somme, but it was also a hospital base for the sick and wounded of the Somme and Fort Douaumont at Verdun. And when — after weeks under the snow and the rain of shells — they did not die of their wounds at Courneau, they died of disease. A government health inspector predicted in 1916 that the Senegalese, under the autumn rains and cold, would contract respiratory diseases.

In a camp of 20,000 largely black troops, thousands fell ill each week. The first soldier died on 28 April 1916, 13 others in May, including a soldier called Dakpé of the 42nd Battalion, "son of a father and mother whose names are unknown." In the archives,

the soldiers' names are recorded. Mory Bakilé, born at Lambatura, Moriba Keita from Manikoura. The first black French member of parliament, Blaise Diagne, raised his voice in protest. But the "cemetery of Negroes" continued to be filled with corpses.

At least 421 Senegalese riflemen died in 1916, mostly from pneumonia, then 12 Russians — recruited to fight in France by the pre-Bolshevik Tsarist government — and then 88 American soldiers died of the same infections at Courneau after May 1918. Sixty-six of their bodies were later reburied with military honors in the US, the rest transferred to the American military cemetery at Suresnes. Their names are on their gravestones. Not so the Senegalese. A local French architect's appeal for a memorial with their names was overruled.

In nearby Bordeaux, says Mar Fall, a sociologist of Senegalese origin, "they like to avoid topics which are unsettling. If we open the Pandora's box of First World War African soldiers, or those of the Second World War, we will arrive very quickly at the colonial history of the city." The city fathers promise a real memorial "after further study." The dead African soldiers, whose graves are clearly identified in the front-line cemeteries, all joined up on the promise of French citizenship. A further little indignity. Originally, the dead African soldiers did have their names inscribed on a wooden board above their individual graves. Then they were reburied in a mass grave and their names disappeared.

But wait. If we are not yet ready to confront the black Africans' sacrifice for us, do see ALLIES, page 19



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

As France Tightens the Noose, Turkey Reacts with Outrageous Words and Deeds

Turkish leaders routinely proclaim that they are not afraid of facing their country's past. Yet, the minute someone reminds them of the darkest chapters of their history, they panic and overreact.

The most recent example of Turkish officials' irrational behavior is their reaction to French initiatives to adopt a law criminalizing denial of the Armenian Genocide. Despite Turkish threats and retaliatory measures, the bill was adopted by the French Parliament on December 22, 2011 and the Senate is expected to approve it on January 23.

Here are a few examples of outrageous Turkish overreaction to France and all things French:

- Prime Minister Erdogan accused French President Nicolas Sarkozy's father of participating in the Algerian atrocities while serving in the French Army. Sarkozy's father shot back by admonishing Erdogan to read his biography, telling him that he had never set foot in Algeria.

- To justify his own country's genocide of Armenians, Erdogan accused France of committing "genocide" in

Algeria. Yet, Erdogan was shocked when Algeria's Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia rebuked him for playing politics with Algerians' blood. Ouyahia also blamed Turkey for the deaths of countless Algerians by providing ammunition to France during the colonial period for which former Turkish President Ozal apologized to Algeria.

- The mayor of Ankara announced last week that the City Council had decided to change the name of "Paris Street" to "Algeria Street," rename "Charles De Gaulle Street" in honor of a yet to be named Algerian hero and erect a monument dedicated to the Algerian "massacres" in front of the French Embassy in the Turkish capital.

- Turkish factories have been busily manufacturing toilet paper, trash bags and baby diapers carrying Sarkozy's name and condoms with the picture of French Deputy Valerie Boyer. Meanwhile, a gang of Turkish hackers attacked the websites of French lawmakers and threatened to rape Mrs. Boyer and murder her children.

- Prof. Oya Akgonenc wrote a hilarious article titled, "Armenian Events in the Triangle of Armenia, France and America." She identified three "dangerous attackers" of Turkey whose last names start with S: "Sarkozy of France, Sargisian of Armenia and Sassounian, head of the Armenian lobby in the United States!"

- Although Turkey called for a boycott of French products and services, Turkish flights to Paris were fully booked, as the number of Turks visiting France during the holidays increased by 10 percent compared to last year. Similarly, trade between the two countries increased by 30 percent after the 2001 French recognition of the Armenian Genocide, despite the Turkish boycott of France.

- French-Algerian businessman Rachid Nekkaz, who proudly declared during a recent visit to Turkey, "I feel like

I am a Turk," announced setting up a million euro (\$1.3 million) fund to pay the fine for any Turk arrested in France for denying the Armenian Genocide. Mr. Nekkaz failed to inform potential Turkish denialists that the pending French law also carries a sentence of one year in jail which his fund would be unable to prevent.

- The head of a Turkish news agency called for the closing down of French schools in Turkey and banning the teaching of French in Turkish schools.

Such nutty statements are likely to multiply after the French Senate approves the bill criminalizing denial of the Armenian Genocide and President Sarkozy signs it into law, in view of the fact that the two largest French parties have expressed their support for the Armenian bill. Imagine the whining of Turkish leaders, when Turks are arrested in France for breaking the upcoming law on genocide denial.

Turkish protests will reach a crescendo when the French government proposes to the 25 other states of the European Union a similar anti-denial law which would lead to the arrest and punishment of Turkish denialists throughout Europe.

Turkish leaders have no one else to blame but themselves for their embarrassing and demeaning predicament. Yet, Turkey is in no position to give lectures about freedom of expression to anyone, given its draconian laws that violate the basic human rights of its own citizens. In France, it is illegal to lie about genocide, while in Turkey it is illegal to tell the truth!

Instead of blaming the French Senate or the three men "whose last names start with S," Turkish leaders could get out of their century-long quagmire by acknowledging the Armenian Genocide and making amends to the descendants of dispossessed victims.

France's Shamefully Forgotten Allies

ALLIES, from page 18

we dare – like the Franco-Ivorian journalist Serge Bilé in his new book *Sombres Bourreaux* ("Dark Executioners") – investigate the lives of those black soldiers who chose to fight for Hitler? For yes, incredibly, the Nazis let a few serve in the Légion des Volontaires Français. One was Norbert Désirée, a Guadeloupe docker who wanted to fight Bolshevism in opposition to his communist fellow countrymen who were demanding independence for their island. Then there was Louis-Joachim Eugène, also from Guadeloupe, who found German racism less painful than that of his fellow Frenchmen.

And the Cameroonian Werner Egiomue who loved Hitler but whose black skin created a scandal in the German High Command. Ahmed Fall from Senegal was used as a propagandist by the German army. How could these men – old enough to be our grandfathers – have collaborated with Vichy or the Nazis, asks Malika Grog-Bada, a journalist for *Jeune Afrique*, originally from the Ivory Coast. "Patriotism? A desire to be recognized?" Unforgivable, of course. But history is cruel and there is plenty of rusting barbed wire beneath the snow.

Why, I still have copies of *Signal*, the German propaganda magazine that remained on open sale in Paris until the 1980s, which show German troops throwing raw meat at Algerian prisoners-of-war in 1940, photographs which depict the indigènes as animals fighting for food.

We forget that these poor men were also our Allies.

(Robert Fisk is a columnist for the *Independent*. This commentary originally appeared in the December 31, 2011 issue of the paper.)

Armenian Genocide: Israel Must Maintain its Moral Compass

By M. Hakan Yavuz and Tal Buenos

Keeping silent on a moral issue for the sake of maintaining political ties with Turkey would be a declaration of moral bankruptcy.

Was the recent surfacing of the Armenian tragedy in the Israeli Knesset rooted in political or moral ground? Fully aware that the timing of the public debate on the Armenian tragedy recently held by the Knesset's Education Committee is political to an embarrassing degree, Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin set out to negate this immediate perception by stating, more than once, that the reopening of the debate on the issue was not a matter of political or diplomatic considerations, but a moral duty.

Such rhetoric aims to establish a narrative according to which the Israel-Turkey political relationship held Israel's moral position hostage. Now that Israel is free from its political commitments to Turkey, the argument goes, Israel may officially declare that what happened to the Armenians during WWI was genocide.

However, to argue that Israel did in fact keep silent on this issue for the sake of maintaining political ties with Turkey is tantamount to declaring Israel's moral bankruptcy.

A state that prides itself on earnestly trying to do the right thing despite endless and tremendous challenges and unprecedented moral trials cannot afford to abandon its moral compass in this manner.

Is Israel prepared to sacrifice the integrity of its current president, whose position symbolizes Israeli consensus, and say that when Shimon Peres announced unequivocally in April 2001 that what happened to the Armenians was tragic but not genocide, he sold morality for political gain? Tragically, by blurring the differences between the Holocaust and the massacre of Armenians, Israel is harming itself by lending a hand to the continued practice of irresponsible use of the term genocide in other arenas of conflict, such as the conflict Israel itself has with the Palestinians. In a growing number of forums, campaigns against Israel's position in its conflict with the

Palestinians are armed with the term genocide as a weapon of mass political pressure.

This has already had a detrimental effect on Israel's international relations, but will surely haunt it to a greater extent in days to come, especially should the United States reduce the level of its commitment to warding off accusations against Israel in the international system. Such a scenario may eventually lead to united international opposition against Israel, and perhaps even to outside interference with Israeli actions through international courts of law. Is it hard to imagine a possible law somewhere in Europe that would make it illegal to deny the "genocide" of the Palestinians? Instead of letting politicians add more fuel to the fire of misuse of the term genocide, careful scholarly work must be done to investigate the transition from Holocaust to the modern-day use of the term genocide and put its politicization in proper academic perspective.

Scholars are invited to examine the historical context of post-World War II interests in Germany, and see how the American-led efforts to "de-Nazify" and reeducate Germany introduced the term genocide via Raphael Lemkin, an employee of the US government, to cement the moral advantage they had over the Germans through international law, out of political interest, and not simply out of the goodness of their hearts.

Accordingly, the universal condemnation of the Nazi crimes in the Holocaust provided the necessary impact for the introduction of the Genocide Convention in the United Nations. Then, once the term was taking on a life of its own, its promoters sought to convince states to ratify genocide, the practice of universalizing the singularity of the Holocaust had begun, and the systematic extermination of Jews was now to be equated with many dissimilar events.

For instance, it is reported that while looking to persuade the Irish to ratify genocide and bring the term closer to their hearts, Lemkin told John Costello, the prime minister of Ireland, that the potato famine from which they suffered

was a type of genocide.

In a world where a potato famine resulting from a careless shipping management is described by the same word as the deliberate attempt to exterminate all of Europe's Jews, the Holocaust will surely be confused with cases of civil war. The Deutchtum (German character) of German Jews will be mixed up with acts of rebellion, and Nazi Germany's irrational hatred and greed will be indistinguishable from a nation's reasonable desire to survive a conflict.

The loose and superficial definition of genocide proved to be sufficient for promoting US interests in Germany post WWII, but not tight enough to save the term from becoming rich ground for interest groups that are seeking political momentum. While the well-being of the weak must be advocated, it cannot be done at the expense of a nation's natural right to defend itself when threatened by other groups, be they strong or weak.

Every nation has the right to employ whatever means it has to fight for its survival, and should not have to do so at the expense of its moral standing in the eyes of other nations. This is a belief both Israel and Turkey share.

Turkey is uniquely positioned at the gateway between East and West, and as such, it holds the key for the long-awaited accommodation of the State of Israel in the region.

A common denominator for both might be found in the attempt to rescue the term "genocide" from further politicization. With this short essay, we intend to encourage increased scholarly dialogue on the concept of genocide: morally, philosophically, historically and legally. It is our hope that such activity would advance the field of genocide studies in both countries, and weather the storm between the two governments until the relations between the two nations know better days.

(Prof. M. Hakan Yavuz is originally from Turkey and teaches political science at the Middle East Center at the University of Utah. Tal Buenos is originally from Israel and is a doctoral student political science at the University of Utah, focusing on genocide studies. This commentary originally appeared in the January 14 issue of the *Jerusalem Post*.)



Turkish Court Jails Man behind Dink Murder

DINK, from page 1

Yasin Hayal was sentenced to an aggravated life sentence for soliciting the murder, but the court decided there was no evidence of a criminal organization, and suspect Erhan Tuncel, who had been charged as a main instigator of the killing, was found not guilty. Tuncel was, however, sentenced to 10 years and six months' imprisonment for a separate crime. All other suspects were acquitted.

Ögün Samast, a radical nationalist who was 17 at the time of the murder, had been found guilty of shooting Dink and was sentenced to nearly 23 years in jail by a juvenile court in July 2011.

"We don't expect much anyway," Arzu Sun Becerik, one of the lawyers representing the Dink family, said moments before the verdict was handed down by the court. "This verdict will be incomplete, because the investigation was not thoroughly done, because not all the facts have been taken into consideration."

In 2010, the European court of human rights found that Turkey had failed to properly investigate the role of state officials in the murder.

Numerous irregularities in the Dink murder investigation have been pointed out by lawyers and human rights groups since the trial began in July 2007, including deleted evidence, misinformation of the court by security and police officials, as well as "lost" security camera footage from cameras around the scene of the murder.

Lawyers and human rights groups were shocked by the court's decision to exclude all possibility of an organized crime.

Amnesty International's Turkey researcher, Andrew Gardner, said: "There has been evidence since the time of the murder five years ago indicating that those on trial were working as part of a network, that state officials were complicit in the murder. This has been acknowledged by the Dink family lawyers, defendants in the case, the prosecutor and a state administrative investigation. Yet those individuals were not investigated effectively, they were not prosecuted."

"The court concluded that there was no organization behind the murder, moving still further from the weight of evidence."



Protesters hold a banner that reads "for Hrant, for justice" outside the court in Istanbul.

Lawyers representing the Dink family had repeatedly asked the court to summon several witnesses, among them senior police officers in Istanbul and Trabzon, but these requests were rejected. They also presented evidence to the court that the Istanbul police had been informed about a murder plot against Dink, but ignored the warnings.

"It is a damning indictment of justice in Turkey, sending the message that those in positions of power will be protected and human rights violations by state officials will go unpunished," said Gardner.

"The investigation, the prosecution and the verdict were largely irrelevant to achieving justice for Hrant Dink."

Fethiye Çetin, one of the family's lawyers, said after the verdict: "This is not over. What is over is this comedy. For us, the trial is just beginning."

Reporters Without Borders issued a statement on the end of the trial. "Whatever it decides, we do not expect a lot from this court. Five years after Dink's murder, this court has proved to be powerless to shed light on all the complicity within the state apparatus and to identify the masterminds. No one can regard this case as solved. Elements within the police and judicial apparatus have been obstructing the investigation up until the final moment.

The end of this trial will almost certainly confirm the failure of a judicial system that did not give itself the resources it needed to get at the truth," the statement reads.

"There is only a faint hope that justice will finally be rendered to Dink. Everything now depends on the desire and ability of the prosecutor's office to assemble enough evidence to open a new trial," the statement continued.

European Court of Human Rights orders Ankara to pay record compensation

STRASBOURG, France (*Today's Zaman*) — The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has ordered Turkey to pay more than 20 million euros in compensation after an allegation by 13 Cypriot nationals that the stationing of Turkish troops in the northern part of Cyprus following a 1974 intervention deprived them of their homes and properties.

Greek Cypriot Constantinos Lordos, together with 12 co-plaintiffs, filed a case with the ECtHR in 1990 after the Turkish military inter-

vention blocked access to their properties in the district of Maras.

In its principal judgment, delivered on November 2, 2010, the ECtHR ruled that the military activity had violated the right to "protection of property" of eight applicants and the right to "respect for private and family life" of a further seven.

In a judgment rendered on January 10, the court awarded the applicants between 100,000 and 8,000,000 euros each for pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages, as well as a further 15,000 euros, to be shared between all applicants, for costs and expenses incurred during the process.

Following the outcome of the 2010 Demopoulos v. Turkey case, the ECtHR recognized the Immovable Property Commission, founded by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (KKTC) as "an appropriate domestic body" for dealing with disputes and subsequently directed more than 1,400 cases to the commission. The court had previously ruled that decisions concerning compensation claims by Greek Cypriots that were made before the Demopoulos decision would be handled by the ECtHR. As a result, Lordos and Others v. Turkey will be the last case to be heard by the court.

As of January 10, 2,801 applications have been lodged with the commission. Of these, 194 have been concluded through out-of-court settlements and seven through formal hearings. To date, the KKTC government has paid more than 77 million euros to applicants in compensation.

HALO Trust Rep Visits NKR MFA

STEPANAKERT (a1plus.am) — Acting NKR Foreign Minister Vasily Atajanyan received the head of the Stepanakert Office of the British HALO Trust non-governmental organization, Nick Smart.

Smart said his visit to the NKR Foreign Ministry was of an introductory nature. He discussed the plans of the organization for 2012, noting that he would spare no effort to continue and develop the established traditions of cooperation between the HALO Trust and the authorities of the NKR.

During the meeting, Atajanyan stressed the importance of the activities of the organization on humanitarian demining of NKR, assuring that the NKR Foreign Ministry would continue to facilitate the activities of the HALO Trust.

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