

## French Senate Passes Measure Making Genocide Denial a Crime

PARIS (AFP) — French senators have passed a bill outlawing the denial of the Armenian Genocide in 1915, with a seething Turkey slamming the move and warning of consequences while Armenia hailed a day “written in gold.”

The French Senate on Monday, January 23, approved, by 127 votes to 86, the measure which threatens with jail anyone in France who denies that the 1915 massacre of Armenians by Ottoman Turk forces amounted to genocide.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, whose right-wing UMP party put forward the bill, must now sign the bill for it to become law.

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Demonstrators at the French Embassy in Yerevan thank President Sarkozy.

## Thousands Mark Dink's Death, Trial Verdict

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Tens of thousands of protesters marked the fifth anniversary of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink's murder on Thursday, January 19 as outrage continues to grow over a trial that failed to shed light on alleged official negligence or even collusion.

Human rights activists placed red carnations on the spot in Istanbul where Hrant Dink was gunned down in broad daylight outside of his *Agos* newspaper office by a nationalist teenage gunman.

The case highlights Turkey's uneasy relationship with its ethnic and religious minorities, including at least 60,000 Armenian Christians. Many people carried black banners that read: “We are all Hrant, we are all Armenian,” and some chanted “Turkey will be a grave for fascism.”

Tens of thousands marched for justice, a call shared by Turkish leaders and leading



Tens of thousands marched in honor of Hrant Dink's death.

businessmen who expressed unease over this week's sentencing of one man, Yasin Hayal, to life in prison for masterminding the killing, while another 17 were acquitted of charges of acting under a terrorist organization's orders. The court neglected to issue a verdict about a 19th suspect.

“The verdict is tragic and is weighing heavily on the conscience of everyone in Turkey,” Rober Koptas, Dink's son-in-law

and editor-in-chief of *Agos*, told AP television in an interview.

The gunman, Ogun Samast, was sentenced to nearly 23 years in prison in July by a separate juvenile court.

Umit Boyner, the head of Turkey's influential industrialists' association TUSIAD, said the court's decision had “shocked” the public.

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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*



Samuel Maserejian

## Samuel Maserejian Dies

BOSTON — Samuel Maserejian, a longtime supporter of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and the paper's contact person with the central post office, died on January 19, at Massachusetts General Hospital, after experiencing health complications.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Commemoration of Baku Armenian Victims In Tsitsernakaberd

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A march commemorating the Armenians killed in Baku and Sumgait massacres and marking Dink's murder day was organized last Thursday in Tsitsernakaberd.

The event was organized by Yerevan State University's Association of Young University Colleagues non-governmental organization. The head of the organization, Gevorg Melkonyan, briefed journalists that the massacre of the Armenians in Baku was the continuation of the Sumgait pogrom committed by the Azerbaijani government in 1988.

“If international community had given political assessments to Sumgait, Baku and Maragha pogroms in time, I am sure, Hrant Dink's murder would not happen in Turkey,” said Melkonyan. He reminded that all those people have been killed for the mere reason that they were Armenians. “International community should give relevant political assessments to all these events,” he said.

### Azeri Soldier Crosses Border into Karabagh

STEPANAKERT (Arminfo) — On January 23, 3:30 p.m. local time, the servicemen of the NKR Defense Army detained a citizen of Azerbaijan, who was crossing the border of Karabagh in the northeastern section of the contact line.

According to the NKR State Commission on Prisoners of War, Hostages and Missing Persons, the detainee was wearing the military uniform of the Azerbaijani armed forces without any insignias.

He had a military card in the name of Jr. Sgt. Ahundzade Mamedbagri Taliboglu (born in 1990), the native of Lenkoran region of Azerbaijan. The relevant bodies of Karabagh are trying to find out the circumstances of the incident.

The NKR authorities informed the Offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the OSCE in Stepanakert about the incident.

### Petrosian Becomes Armenian Chess Champ

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — In the 11th round of the highest league tournament of 72nd Armenian Men's Chess Championship Tigran Petrosian beat Robert Hovhannisyan and became the champion of Armenia, with 7 points, armchess.am reported.

Robert Hovhannisyan became vice champion, with 6.5 points. Samvel Ter-Sahakyan finished third, with 6 points.

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### Puppets of Armenia

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Brandy Factory to Start Exporting to China

YEREVAN (arminfo) – The Yerevan Brandy Factory will start exporting brandy to China this year, the director general of Armenian Development Agency, Robert Harutunian said this week.

He said that the arrangement on brandy delivery to the Chinese Urumchi company was made last year.

The Yerevan Brandy factory was privatized in May 1998 by the French Pernod Ricard. It is the biggest producer and exporter of Armenian brandy.

## Armenia, Malawi Establish Relations

YEREVAN (armradio.am) – Malawi and Armenia have formally established diplomatic ties.

The two countries forged formal diplomatic relations last Friday at a signing ceremony that took place at the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations in New York.

Malawi's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Brian Bowler, signed the diplomatic papers on behalf of the Malawi Government whereas his counterpart, Garen Nazarian signed on behalf of the Armenian Government.

According to a communiqué released after the ceremony, the two countries have agreed to promote their bilateral cooperation through their diplomatic missions at the United Nations and other convenient diplomatic channels.

The two countries are convinced that the establishment of diplomatic relations corresponds to the national interests of both countries and will further strengthen international peace and security.

## Youth Cut Trees at Sevan National Park

YEREVAN (news.am) – Armenia's Police Force received a call on Friday that trees were illegally cut at the Akhtamar forest section of Sevan National Park.

On the same day, police detained four Tsovaghyugh village residents for illegally cutting down 10 pine trees at the park a few days prior.

The material damage is being assessed, and an investigation is underway.

## Stepanakert to Have 24-Hour Water Supply

STEPANAKERT (NEWS.am) – Nagorno-Karabagh Republic (NKR) President Bako Sahakyan held a consultation last week devoted to improving the water supply of the capital.

The president stressed that improving Stepanakert's water supply is of particular importance and noted that great efforts were exerted to make sure the capital had a 24-hour water supply, his office said.

Sahakyan also noted that several flaws and omissions were discovered while improving Stepanakert's water network and stated that such work is not acceptable.

Karabagh's president instructed the government and the corresponding agencies to eliminate all problems in this regard immediately.

## Ghahramanyan to Get Armenian Passport on Heels of Hetq Coverage

YEREVAN (hetq) – Republic of Armenia Police Chief Vladimir Gasparyan has instructed his Passport and Visa Department (Ovir) to issue Igor Ghahramanyan an Armenian passport.

The new head of Ovir, Hovhannes Kocharyan, this week met with Ghahramanyan and told him to bring his military discharge papers and a photo.

This decision comes after Hetq reported on Ghahramanyan's plight, a former orphan and veteran of the Artsakh War, who had been fired from his job for not possessing an Armenian passport.

# Aliyev, Sargisian Pledge to Step up Search for Karabagh Peace

SOCHI (RFE/RL) – The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan pledged to intensify their efforts to agree on the basic principles of resolving the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict after fresh talks hosted by their Russian counterpart Dmitry

Medvedev on Monday. Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders agreed that they need to “move away from maximalist positions” in order to ensure further progress in the peace process.

Aliyev and Sargisian were reportedly close to achieving a breakthrough at

earlier on Monday, Medvedev insisted that these talks have been “useful” despite the lack of concrete agreements reached to date. “I hope that this kind of contact will continue in the future,” he said in televised remarks.

The trilateral statement similarly spoke of “progress” in the Russian-mediated negotiations. It also said that Aliyev and Sargisian called for continued mutual visits by Armenian and Azerbaijani intellectuals and other prominent public figures.

According to Lavrov, they asked Moscow to continue to arrange such “humanitarian ties.” “Dmitry Medvedev certainly agreed,” he said.



From left, Presidents Ilham Aliyev, Dmitry Medvedev and Serge Sargisian

Medvedev on Monday.

In a joint statement with Medvedev issued in the Russian city of Sochi, Serge Sargisian and Ilham Aliyev said, “they expressed readiness to accelerate the achievement of an agreement on the basic principles of the Nagorno-Karabagh settlement.” In that regard, they stressed the importance of switching to discussions on a comprehensive peace accord based on those principles.

The statement did not say, however, that Aliyev and Sargisian narrowed their differences on the framework peace deal drafted by Russia, the United States and France under the aegis of the OSCE Minsk Group.

According to the Interfax news agency, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said after the trilateral meeting that there is still “a whole series of issues that remain to be agreed” before the conflicting parties can sign a document on the basic principles. Lavrov said the

their previous face-to-face talks with Medvedev that took place in another Russian city, Kazan, last June. Prospects for a near-term solution to the Karabagh conflict have dimmed since then.

The two presidents also discussed but apparently failed to reach a final agreement on joint investigations of deadly ceasefire violations in the conflict zone, which have been proposed by the US, Russian and French co-chairs of the Minsk Group. Their joint statement said that the mediators were instructed to “continue this work” on concrete procedures for such investigations.

The Sochi summit highlighted Russia's central role in the Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiating process that has been publicly praised by the United States and the European Union. Medvedev has organized a dozen Aliyev-Sargisian meetings during his four-year presidency.

In a separate meeting with Aliyev held

## New UK Ambassadors Begin Armenia Mission

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Five months after their highly-unusual appointment, a British married couple formally took over as their country's new ambassadors to Armenia when they handed their credentials to President Serge Sargisian on Thursday.

Jonathan Aves and his wife Katherine Leach will take turns to run the UK Embassy in Yerevan for four-month sessions. The British Foreign Office has said the arrangement is meant to enable the career diplomats to look after their three small children.

Meeting with Aves and Leach, Sargisian expressed confidence that they will “contribute to the development of British-Armenian relations and the deepening of bilateral cooperation in various fields.”

Although the Armenian authorities did not object to the dual appointment, it clearly took officials and pundits in Yerevan by surprise. Some of them wondered if it is a sign of Armenia's insignificance to the United Kingdom.

“The British do not take us



Jonathan Aves and Katherine Leach, the first two-person team of ambassadors in Armenia

Armenians seriously,” former Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Navasardian told Britain's The Daily Mail newspaper last August. “I doubt whether they would send a couple to the United States or many other countries.”

The paper also quoted an unnamed Armenian official as similarly asking whether London would “foist such a self-indulgent plan on a country they think of as important.”

Zambia is the only other country where the post of British ambassador is shared by two diplomats married to each other. A Foreign Office spokesman argued in August that such arrangements “keep families together and reduce travel and shipping costs.”

“Doing the job jointly will enhance our effectiveness at work, as well as giving us both the chance to spend time with our children while they are young,” Leach has said.

## Hayastan Fund Completes Renovation of Nephrology, Dialysis Departments at Yerevan Hospital

YEREVAN (armradio.am) – The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund recently completed an extensive renovation of the Nephrology and Dialysis departments of Yerevan's St. Gregory the Illuminator (Surb Grigor Lusavorich) Hospital. The refurbishment was made possible by the fund's Toronto affiliate (with sponsorship of a Toronto-based benefactor), within the framework of 2011 projects implemented through sponsor-specified grants.

The renovated premises, encompassing a total area of 1,120 square meters, include eight patient rooms, a cafeteria, two offices and all restrooms. In addition, the power and water systems have been replaced and a central-heating system was installed. Both upgraded departments have been fully operational since mid-December.

Dr. Razmik Pandunts, who heads the Nephrology and Dialysis departments, had high praise for the quality of the upgrades as he conveyed his gratitude to the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. “Without a doubt, our staff has been delighted to work in such beautifully renovated facilities,” Pandunts said. “This new environment is also having a visibly positive effect on our patients.”

The Nephrology and Dialysis departments employ a staff of 36, including six doctors and 30 nurses. Today some 55 patients receive treatment at the two wings, which together have the capacity to serve up to 80 patients at a time.

The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund is currently carrying out two other projects sponsored by its Toronto affiliate: the complete renovation of the third and fourth floors of the Nork Retirement Home, in Yerevan and the refurbishment of the Education and Cultural Centre of Shushi, Artsakh.

Commenting on the completion of the St. Gregory Hospital project and other initiatives sponsored by the Toronto affiliate, Mkrtich Mkrtichian, its chairman, said, “We are extremely gratified by the fact that the Armenian community of Toronto is doing its utmost to be of assistance to our sisters and brothers in the homeland.”

## Correction

Because of a typo in a front-page ADL communiqué last week, we are reprinting the item again on the front page. We regret the error.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Thousands Mark Dink's Death, Trial Verdict

RALLY, from page 1

"What we solidly see in this trial process is that the belief in justice has been shaken and weaknesses in our justice system have been revealed," he said.

Turkey's leaders have vowed a thorough investigation into Dink's killing — signaling dissatisfaction with Tuesday's court ruling by a panel of judges.

Dink's lawyers have said they will appeal the verdict, saying the investigation was flawed because the judiciary had not followed up on evidence alleging officials may have been aware of the plot.

Protesters marching past the site of the January 19, 2007 killing carried banners that read: "This case cannot finish like this." A black marble plaque marking the spot bore the solemn words in Turkish and Armenian: "Hrant Dink was killed here."

President Abdullah Gul said the case amounted to a tough test for Turkey.

"The conclusion of this case in a transparent and just manner in line with our laws is an important test for us," Gul said on Thursday.

Koptas responded that politicians were feeling guilty because they had done nothing in five years to ensure justice.

"If Hrant Dink was a test, Turkey failed, the ruling party failed," he said. "If candid steps are taken in the future (to



Tens of thousands marched in memory of Dink, carrying signs that said "We're all Hrant, we're all Armenian."

rectify the verdict), Turkey's image can be repaired but I'm not very hopeful."

Rustem Eryilmaz — who led the panel of judges — sparked even more fury when he told the daily *Vatan* in an interview published Thursday that he was not satisfied with the decision, acknowledging that the court had failed to reveal allegations of negligence or collusion between the state and the suspects.

"We could not shed light on what was going on behind the scenes, which is what everyone is curious about," Eryilmaz said. "There must be instigators ... but there is a need for evidence to accept the existence of such from a legal perspective."

Eryilmaz said the judges felt pressure to issue a verdict after the 4-1/2 year trial, and did not have time to examine thousands of telephone conversations at the scene on the day of the assassination.

Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc said Eryilmaz's remarks were unaccept-

able and questioned why and how the court had neglected to issue its verdict on the 19th suspect.

"The assumption that only one person was responsible for this incident has damaged the public conscience," Arinc said Thursday.

Dink had sought to encourage reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia, but several years before his death he was prosecuted under Turkish law for describing the early 20th-century mass killings of Armenians as genocide.

Historians estimate up to 1.5 million Armenians were killed by Ottoman Turks around the time of World War I, an event widely viewed by genocide scholars as the first genocide of the 20th century.

Turkey, however, denies the deaths constituted genocide, saying that the toll has been inflated and that those killed were victims of civil war and unrest.

## Petition to Free Nedim Sener Hits 3,000 Names

IPI Urges Increased Support As Turkish Journalist's Trial Continues

By Scott Griffen

VIENNA (International Press Institute) — A petition, led by the International Press Institute (IPI) calling for the release of imprisoned Turkish investigative journalist and IPI World Press Freedom Hero Nedim Sener, has already received over 3,000 signatures. On January 5, an Istanbul court declined once again to release Sener, who has spent nearly 300 days in prison.

Sener and nine other journalists were arrested last March and charged with serving as the media wing of Ergenekon, an alleged clandestine ultra-nationalist organization with ties to military and security forces accused of plotting to overthrow the government. If convicted, Sener faces up to 15 years in prison.

According to The Freedom for Journalists Platform, an umbrella group representing 94 local and national media organizations in Turkey, nearly 100 journalists are behind bars in the country. The figure includes 40 journalists arrested during mass raids in late December and accused of spreading 'terrorist propaganda' and makes the country one of the world's leading jailers of journalists.

IPI named Sener a World Press Freedom Hero in 2010, three years after he published a book investigating the government's handling of the 2007 murder of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink.

In court last week, Sener was quoted by the *New York Times* as calling himself "a victim in a revenge operation — nothing else." The government's case hinges



Journalist Nedim Sener (left) reacts as he leaves his house escorted by plainclothes policemen in Istanbul on March 3, 2011.

on highly questionable evidence, including a file containing Sener's name found on a computer inside the offices of Oda TV, also implicated in the Ergenekon case. Independent forensic investigators have suggested that the file was placed there by outside hackers, according to a report circulated by defence lawyers.

IPI Press Freedom Adviser for Europe Steven M. Ellis attended the court's reading of the indictment against the journalists in Istanbul on 26 December in a show of support for Sener and the other imprisoned journalists. The next hearing in the case is expected to take place on 23 January.

Following last week's decision denying Sener's request for release pending trial, Ferai Tinc, a member of the International Press Institute (IPI)'s Executive Board and the chair of IPI's Turkey National Committee, commented:

"What we are witnessing in this case can be described as a total denial of jus-

tice and a direct blow to independent journalism. If it was not, all of the detained journalists would have been freed. This case has become an instrument of intimidation against the entire media environment in the country. The journalists have spent more than 10 months in detention. The detention itself has turned into punishment. We all know that in democracies punishment must come after the verdict."

IPI Executive Director Alison Bethel McKenzie said: "Every signature on this petition sends a message to the Turkish government that attacks on press freedom are unacceptable. IPI and its subsidiary, the South and East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), urge supporters of free media and freedom of expression around the world to add their names and help our imprisoned World Press Freedom Hero — and by extension the dozens of other journalists imprisoned in Turkey."

## International News

### Saint Stepanos Church Opens in Bulgaria

SOFIA, Bulgaria (Armenpress) — The Saint Stepanos Armenian Church opened in the Bulgarian town of Pazardzhikon Monday, December 19. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs press office reported that Fr. Abgar Hovakimian, Locum Tenens of the Armenian Apostolic Church's Diocese of Bulgaria, celebrated a Holy Mass at the Church.

Armenia's ambassador to Bulgaria, Arsen Shoyan, chair members of Armenian Apostolic Church Committee in Bulgaria, mayor of Pazardzhik and Armenian philanthropists also attended the Divine Liturgy.

The church's groundbreaking ceremony was held in 2005.

### Turkish Hostel to Be Opened in Tumanyan House-Museum

TBILISI (News.am) — The house-museum of Armenian writer Hovhannes Tumanyan here will be sold, according to the Armenian community in Tbilisi.

Part of the house-museum was sold to a businessman in the 1990s, who is now going to sell it to a Georgian-Turkish company Geo Turan. The latter will build a hostel for Turkish citizens. The company has offered Tumanyan's great-grandchild, Alain Tumanyan, to sell the other part, however, he refused.

### Eduard Sharmazanov Attends Havel Funeral

PRAGUE (Armenpress) — On December 23 the Deputy Speaker of the RA National Assembly Eduard Sharmazanov represented the Republic of Armenia at the funeral of former President of the Czech Republic Václav Havel in Prague.

The source notes that the representatives of Turkey and Azerbaijan did not attend the funeral.

### Canada Marks 20 Years Of Recognition of Armenia's Independence

OTTAWA — Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird this week issued the following statement on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Canada's recognition of Armenia's independence:

"Twenty years ago today, Canada was among the first Western nations to recognize Armenia as an independent state and, a few days later, to formally establish diplomatic relations. Today, we enjoy a strong and growing partnership, notably through our ongoing cooperation in multilateral organizations."

"Over the years, we have forged bonds of friendship and cooperation based on our shared commitment to promoting democratic values and global peace and security. These links have been further strengthened by the presence of more than 50,000 Canadians of Armenian descent who continue to make significant contributions to Canada's cultural, political and economic life."

To mark the anniversary, Baird recently met with Armenian ambassador to Canada, Armen Yeghanyan, and presented him with a framed reproduction of the official declaration establishing diplomatic relations between Canada and Armenia.

### Azerbaijan Amassing Arms for Possible Karabagh War

BAKU (Bloomberg) — Azerbaijan is buying up modern weaponry to be able to regain control of the Nagorno-Karabagh region quickly and with few losses should peace talks with neighboring Armenia fail, President Ilham Aliyev said.

Defense spending will rise 1.8 percent this year to \$3.47 billion, which Aliyev said tops Armenia's entire state budget.

"It's not a frozen conflict, and it's not going to be one," Aliyev said this week in remarks broadcast on state television channel AzTV.





## INTERNATIONAL

# A Time to Act: What Will Become of Varak Monastery After the Recent Earthquake in Van?

By Ara Sarafian

LONDON — Varak Monastery, near Van, was one of the great monastic centers of the Armenian church. Its main structure was built at the end of the 10th century. Much of the monastery was destroyed in 1915, a significant part was destroyed in the 1960s, while good sections have just barely survived until our days. In recent years, busloads of tourists have visited Varak as a place of historic interest. Many have been Armenian, but also Germans, Japanese, Italians and Americans.

The 2011 earthquake in Van hit Varak Monastery badly. Parts of the main church collapsed, while other parts were significantly weakened. Old cracks got bigger, new ones appeared. It is too early to state if the monastery can be made safe for visitors again. In the opinion of this writer, who hopes to be wrong, what remains of the monastery of Varak may well be doomed. However, according to one report, a team of Turkish engineers recently inspected the monastery and claimed they can save it. They hope to start restoration work as early as this spring. Such promises have been made in the past and one needs to be a little skeptical. The current state of the church makes such work much harder than at any time in the past. If the monastery

is saved, then all credit will be due to the Turkish authorities.

The local Kurdish village at Varak is also in a terrible state. Its 600 inhabitants (65 families) are mostly farmers, though many of them are simply unemployed. The earthquake hit the



serious damage outside porch evident (2010)

villagers hard and they now live in tents and containers supplied by the Turkish government. Most of their houses are unsafe for habitation. There is talk of relocating the village, but

in this writer's opinion, such a move will be unfortunate. These villagers have guarded much of Varak over the years. During the last five years, Mehmet Coban was even appointed as an official guard at the main church, with a small government stipend, but little else. Fortunately, he excelled in his work, putting a makeshift wall around the monastery, covering the openings in the roof with plastic, and making sure that all visitors were supervised. In short, he took care of the place. He has proven to be a kind and considerate man, but his future is also now uncertain.

What will become of Varak? The local population supports the preservation, and hopefully the restoration, of the monastery. The local government in Van, both at city and provincial levels, also wants to preserve Van's culture and heritage. There is even talk of inviting Armenians to participate in the future development of this region with educational events, civil society projects and economic ventures. Varak's future, as well as the future of other similar sites, may be linked to such positive contacts — and a lot more can be done if Diaspora Armenians were more actively involved in the development of this region.

(Ara Sarafian is a historian and director of the Gomidas Institute. He is a frequent visitor to Eastern Turkey, especially the Van region, where he organizes specialized academic tours. For more information, contact [info@gomidas.org.uk](mailto:info@gomidas.org.uk).)

## At 95, French Resistance Veteran Loyal to Radical Roots

VITRY-SUR-SEINE, France (Agence France Presse) — At 95, age has not diminished the radical convictions that led Arsene Tchakarian to join France's legendary Resistance against the Nazis.

Tchakarian, a Turkish-born Armenian, is the last survivor of the Manouchian Group, mainly foreign-born Resistance fighters who were initially shunned for their communist orientation but later decorated as war heroes and feted in poetry, song and film.

He has worked to keep their legacy alive, belonging to a proud tradition of radicals — such as fellow Resistance nonagenarian Stephane Hessel, whose 2010 pamphlet *Indignez Vous!* (Time for Outrage!) turned into a surprise best-seller, urging a popular movement against finance capitalism.

The title inspired Spain's Indignados (The Indignant), among masses worldwide who have taken to the streets to protest government austerity programs seen as punishing ordinary people for the excesses of big business.

Tchakarian said: "With the crisis, we are destroying countries... It is here, now, the real dictatorship."

Tchakarian, a struggling apprentice tailor when he came to Paris in 1930, has been showered with decorations for his wartime activities including the Legion d'Honneur, France's highest award.

Though he concedes he lives an easier life these days, Tchakarian says he remains a radical "revolted by the capitalist system."

"I'll always belong to the working class," he said.

Tchakarian was part of a network run by fel-



Arsene Tchakarian

low Turkish-born Armenian Missak Manouchian. While many comrades, including Manouchian, were hunted down and executed, Tchakarian and a handful of others survived to tell their story.

With the death in November of fellow veteran 90-year-old Henry Karayan, he sees his mission as all the more important. "In a way, I'm the last of the Mohicans," he joked.

Like Manouchian, it was Tchakarian's communist convictions that led him to take up the fight against the Nazis.

Long before Nazi troops swept across Europe, Tchakarian was putting his beliefs to the test on the streets of Paris.

### Code Name: 'Charles'

In February 1934, he was among a group of communists who fought French fascists outside parliament during riots that some left-wing commentators have described as a coup attempt by the far right.

He later became active in the left-wing Popular Front alliance, struggling for better working conditions.

And when the war broke out in 1939 he was among those sent east on a doomed mission to confront the invading Nazi forces.

Returning to Paris was a shock, he said. "There were Germans everywhere, the Nazi flag on the Eiffel Tower."

He already knew Manouchian, a journalist and poet. It was Manouchian who supplied him with his first anti-Nazi pamphlets in 1942.

But there was tension between the Resistance network run by Gen. Charles De Gaulle from London and Manouchian's alliance of communists and radicals: their critics feared the influence of Moscow.

"They hesitated when it came to supplying weapons," he said.

"They were scared of the USSR and for them, we were Bolsheviks," he recalled.

Once the different strands of the Resistance began working together, the Manouchian Group emerged, bringing together activists from Italy, Armenia, Polish Jews and other immigrants.

Tchakarian fought under the codename "Charles" as the group carried out attacks including the September 1943 ambush of SS Gen. Julius Ritter, whom they gunned down in a Paris street.

But just months later, in February 1944, the group was decimated when French police, collaborating with the German security service, arrested 23 of its members, including Manouchian.

After a one-day show trial they were all sentenced to death.

Tchakarian slipped through the net thanks to a Paris police officer who hid him. He made his way south to Bordeaux and continued his Resistance activities until the end of the war.

Today, his home outside Paris is packed with archives on the Manouchian Group's exploits, and he still visits schools to recount their wartime role.

"Not everyone likes what I have to say, but I don't care," he said.

## Assen Armenian Cemetery Opened, Named for Dink

ASSEN, Holland — The Armenian residents of Assen, after an eight-year effort led by resident Nicolai Romashuk Hairabedian, have become the owners of a cemetery, which they have named in honor of the late Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink.

Said Hairabedian, "Because we are commemorating the fifth anniversary of the murder of Hrant Dink for five years, we have dedicated the cemetery to Hrant Dink."

## Canada Deports Rwandan Genocide Suspect

TORONTO (PanARMENIAN.Net) — A Rwandan man charged with crimes against humanity has been deported from Canada and is due to arrive in the central African country overnight, Rwanda's justice minister said on Tuesday, January 24.

According to Reuters, Leon Mugesera, who lost a 16-year battle to stay in Canada, will face charges of inciting murder, extermination and genocide.

Justice Minister Tharcisse Karugarama said he was told Mugesera was on a plane bound for Rwanda, after Canadian authorities said on Monday he would be deported as soon as possible.

"There would be some security that is accompanying him and they would hand him over to Rwandan authorities," Karugarama said,

adding Mugesera would most likely be held in one of two prisons in Rwanda.

Mugesera, who says he fears torture or death if returned to Rwanda, spent years fighting his deportation in various courts. He and his family lived in the predominantly French-speaking province of Quebec.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in 2005 that a speech Mugesera made in Rwanda in 1992 was a crime against humanity by inciting Hutus to kill Tutsis, whom he referred to as cockroaches that should be exterminated.

Rwanda says Mugesera, who was a member of the ruling Hutu party when he made the speech, is a war criminal who was complicit in the 1994 genocide, in which 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died.





# Community News

## Lecture by Taner Akçam At NAASR on Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials

BELMONT — Dr. Taner Akçam, the Robert Aram and Marianne Kaloosdian and Stephen and Marian Mugar Professor of Modern Armenian History and Armenian Genocide Studies at Clark University, will give a lecture titled, “Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials,” on Thursday, February 16, at 8 p.m., at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Center, 395 Concord Ave. The lecture is co-sponsored by the Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation, the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard University and NAASR.

The newly-published volume *Judgment at Istanbul* (Berghahn Books), by Vahakn Dadrian and Akçam, is a new, authoritative translation of the Key Indictments and Verdicts and detailed analysis of the Turkish Military Tribunals concerning the crimes committed against the Armenians during World War I.

The authors have compiled the documentation of the trial proceedings for the first time in English and situated them within their historical and legal context. These documents show that Wartime Cabinet ministers, Young Turk party leaders and a number of others inculpated in these crimes were court-martialed by the Turkish Military Tribunals in the years immediately following World War I. Most were found guilty and received sentences ranging from prison with hard labor to death.

*Judgment at Istanbul* will be available for purchase and signing the night of the lecture.

In this lecture, Akçam will discuss the authors’ new findings and the importance of these trials in light of recent scholarship, as well as address the critiques of and attacks against the validity of the trials and documents discovered through the proceedings.

Until recently, knowledge of the trials was limited to those trials whose indictments and verdicts were published by the Takvim-i Vekâyi. Over the course of years of meticulous research, Dadrian and Akçam discovered that there were as many as 62 trials. In *Judgment at Istanbul* they not only list these until-now-unknown cases but also analyze the political conditions of the time and the history of these trials.

Akçam is the author of *From Empire To Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide* and *A Shameful Act: the Armenian Genocide and Turkish Responsibility*, as well as numerous articles in Turkish, German and English. His forthcoming book, *The Young Turks’ Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*, will be issued by Princeton University Press in April.

Admission to the event is free (donations appreciated).

More information about the lecture is available by e-mailing [hq@naasr.org](mailto:hq@naasr.org).



Taner Akçam



Workshop participants make sandwiches for a South Florida homeless shelter.

## ACYOA Chapter Workshop Focuses on Strengthening Local Chapters

BOCA RATON, Fla. — Thirty-five ACYOA members from parishes across the Eastern Diocese gathered earlier this month for the ACYOA’s fourth annual Chapter Workshop, hosted by St. David Church. The workshop was designed and facilitated by the seven-member ACYOA Central Council with the diocesan vicar, the Very Rev.

**By Armen Terjimanian**

Simeon Odabashian, serving as the workshop chaplain.

Under the theme “We’re All In This Together,” the January 13-15 workshop aimed to provide an interactive atmosphere for participants to share successes, struggles and advice on how to nurture and build their respective ACYOA parish chapters while also providing opportunities for service, worship and Christian fellowship.

The first night of the workshop started with an icebreaker where participants worked in small groups. Their task was to complete a puzzle which spelled out words describing leadership skills they would later present to the full group, such as “dedication,” “communication” and “trust.” After another team-building session

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ACYOA members speak about ways to strengthen their local chapters.

## Five More Received The ‘Gift of Hearing’

LOS ANGELES — Just before the year ended, four young children and one young adult received the “gift of hearing” due to the efforts of the Armenian International Medical Fund (AIM Fund). Even though the “switch on” of the cochlear implants took place on December 24, 2011, the surgeries were performed a month before.

AIM Fund’s ninth medical mission took place in November 2011 by a team of volunteers from UCLA: Akira Ishiyama, MD, Salpy Akaragian, RN-BC, MN, Don Kawachi and Shant Shekherdian, MD. The cochlear implant surgeries were performed at the Erebouni Medical Center in Yerevan, under the leadership of Arthur Shukuryan, MD. Most of the patients were children under the age of 5, two of whom had their impairment identified through neonatal hearing screenings, which are performed on all newborns in Armenia.

In addition to the surgeries, during this mission state-of-the-art virtual training took place at the Armenian International Ear Center located at Erebouni Medical Center. The chosen fellow, Gayane Sargsyan, and other ENT specialists practiced drilling temporal bones (part of the skull near the ear) under the guidance of cochlear implant surgeon, Prof. Dr. Akira Ishiyama.

Although these surgeries are free for the patients, the implants are costly — the implants are funded by AIM Fund and the Armenian government, specifically Minister of Health Harutun Kushkryan, MD. Today, 49 children and young adults are able to enjoy sounds most people take for granted due to the successful results of their cochlear-implant surgeries.

AIM fund plans to continue giving the “gift of hearing” to more children this year. To accomplish this goal, a fundraising event is scheduled for March 11, at Pandora on Green Restaurant at 5:30 p.m. For more information, contact AIM Fund at [www.armenianimf.org](http://www.armenianimf.org).

## Peter Musurlian Wins Two Golden Mikes, Interviews NBC’s Tom Brokaw about Burbank

BURBANK, Calif. — Veteran Broadcast Journalist Peter Musurlian won two Golden Mikes Saturday, January 21, at the 62nd Annual Golden Mike Awards, organized by the Radio & Television News Association of Southern California.

The event was held at the Universal City Hilton and was attended by hundreds of working radio and television journalists from media markets all around Southern California.

Musurlian, who is the station manager and senior producer for the Burbank Channel, won for shooting and editing a feature story on the making of Burbank’s Centennial Rose Float. He also wrote and narrated the piece.

Since 2002, Musurlian has won 10 Golden Mikes, in seven different categories, including: documentary, serious reporting, business reporting, entertainment reporting, videography, editing and producing the show “Burbank Magazine,” which he created in 1999. He is also nominated for four Los Angeles Area Emmys.

The big honorees at the event were NBC’s Tom Brokaw, who was given the Broadcast Legend Award and KCRW’s Warren Olney, who was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# East Coast Transplant Who Rose to California Governorship Looks Back at Life of Service

By Kenneth Ofgang

LOS ANGELES (*Metropolitan News-Enterprise*) — It was the 1950s, a time when the Golden State was just that, for so many.

California's population, 10.6 million in 1950, grew by nearly half during the decade, with personal income growing nearly 150 percent in that time.

Not every California dream worked out, of course. But for a young lawyer from upstate New York, who took his older sister's advice and came to Los Angeles, the decision worked out beyond anything he says he could have imagined.

He has been a lawyer, a legislator, attorney general and governor. Now "trying to be retired," living "without demands," George Deukmejian is a 2011 MetNews Person of the Year.

Now 83, he speaks fondly of the village in which he grew up, Menands, NY near Albany.

His parents were Armenians who emigrated from eastern Turkey, each in the first decade of the 20th Century, then met in the Albany area. He attended local public schools as his father, also George Deukmejian, worked at a series of occupations.

The elder Deukmejian had worked in New Haven, Conn., as a photographer, before coming to the New York capitol region, where he operated photo shops with a brother. That enterprise was not ultimately successful, and he moved on to a local department store, operating an Oriental rug concession.

That didn't work out, either. "It was hard to sell Oriental rugs in the Depression," his son remembers, so he closed down the business and became a jobber, buying paper products which he then sold to retailers.

His mother, he notes, also worked outside the home, at least from the time he was 6.

The all-consuming event of his youth, as one might imagine, was World War II, which America joined when he was 13.

"The war dominated our life in those days," he recalls. "[T]here was not much in the way of any divisions....There was a lot of pride in the way the war was going, especially after D-Day."

That day — June 6, 1944 — happened to fall on his 16th birthday.

It was also a time of great sadness, of course, as over 400,000 Americans lost their lives.

A senior in high school when the war ended, Deukmejian wanted to go to college, an opportunity that had not been available to his immigrant parents or his older sister, who had left high school in order to work. (She later graduated from UCLA.)

Money being scarce, he went to Siena College, a Franciscan institution in Albany. "I was very appreciative that there was an affordable school," close enough that he could live at home, while working part-time and during vacations, he recounts.

He had several jobs, including serving as the vacation replacement for the only paid member of a local volunteer fire department and filling kerosene tanks for an oil delivery company.

He was also an assistant manager for Tom Thumb, a company that sold ice cream from trucks. His major was sociology, he chuckles. "If it was up to me now I think I would have been a business major," he says.

He obtained his degree, and was admitted to the law school at St. John's University in New York City.

"It was reasonable, \$300 a semester," he remembers.

Life in the big city was a lot different from that upstate.

"Oh boy, that was a big change," he remembers. "I'd never been out of my area."

The law school, which moved to its current Queens location in 1972, was then located in a 14-story building in downtown Brooklyn. Deukmejian and three roommates moved into a Brooklyn apartment building owned by a

lawyer who dabbled in real estate.

A former New York governor, Hugh Carey, graduated from the school a few years before Deukmejian, while Carey's successor, Mario Cuomo, got his degree a year after the future Californian.

Deukmejian had an early interest in politics, although he can't recall exactly what attracted him to it. "Nobody in my family was active politically," he notes.

His first campaign, he explains, was that of Thomas E. Dewey, his home-state governor who made his second bid for the presidency in 1948.

There was a Korean War-era draft, and his

The county counsel was Harold Kennedy, who held the job from 1945 to 1967. Deukmejian, who was assigned to work on air pollution issues, says he met "a lot of wonderful people," including Baldo Kristovich, who later became the county public administrator/guardian, and John Larson, who later became county counsel.

But while he enjoyed the work and the people, Deukmejian says, he only stayed a year and a half. "I didn't want to be in the public sector forever," he explains, and he was taking on new responsibilities.

Living on the Westside at the time, he had

third term. They met at the Lafayette Hotel in Los Angeles. Deukmejian says he and Reagan hit it off immediately, and "remained friends until his passing."

After the election, the new governor asked the new senator to head up a group of lawmakers dedicated to implementing Reagan's legislative program.

But while taking on more responsibility in the Legislature, Deukmejian had personal business to attend to. As if his solo law practice hadn't suffered enough with the extended sessions, the 1966 election saw the enactment of a ballot measure backed by the Assembly's top Democrat, Jesse Unruh, to eliminate the budget session and allow annual sessions of unlimited length.

It was, in effect, the beginning of the full-time Legislature, although lawmakers were still allowed to have outside business interests.

The Lucas brothers were well-established in Long Beach, having practiced together since 1954. Malcolm Lucas had met Deukmejian at a bar meeting, he recalls.

"The quality I recognized right away was that this guy radiated honesty and integrity," Lucas says.

"From the beginning and all throughout his career, George took his role as an advocate and representative of the people very seriously," the former chief justice, now a private judge, comments. "George was always well-liked by both sides. He worked well with...opposing counsel and [in public office with] those of differing political views."

Campbell Lucas — who later was appointed by Deukmejian as presiding justice of Div. Five of this district's Court of Appeal and is now deceased — received his own Superior Court appointment from Reagan in 1970. That led Deukmejian and another lawyer who had joined the firm, Donald Dyer, to merge their practice with a well-established Long Beach firm, Riedman, Dalessi & Woods, which became Riedman, Dalessi, Deukmejian, Woods & Dyer.

Then-partner Fred Woods is now a justice of Div. Seven of this district's Court of Appeal, to which Deukmejian appointed him in 1988.

Gaining public attention with his advocacy of anti-crime legislation, Deukmejian rose to the Republican Senate leadership within three years, and decided to run for attorney general in 1970. While some law enforcement groups backed him, he came in last of four candidates, as the better known and better funded Evelle Younger, district attorney of Los Angeles County, won the primary and later, the general election.

Fortunately for Deukmejian, some quirky legislative politics enabled him to run statewide without giving up his Senate seat.

The new Long Beach district was originally supposed to be the 34th, meaning that Deukmejian would have had a four-year term. But John Schmitz, the ultra-conservative Republican who had been the sole senator from Orange County, and was thought to be controversial enough to be at risk of losing a primary, balked at being reapportioned into a two-year term, so the numbers were switched.

Deukmejian thus started with a two-year term, then won a four-year term with 91 percent of the vote in 1968, when only the American Independent Party put up an opponent.

In 1974, with Younger expected to run for governor, Deukmejian was preparing for a second try at the attorney general's post. Fundraisers were held around the state, but Younger — who wound up running four years later and losing to incumbent Jerry Brown — decided the timing wasn't right and ran for re-election instead.

So Deukmejian curtailed his campaign and refunded donations to contributors.

While he wound up not running in 1974, he retained the allegiance of supporters, who were there for him again when he won the office in 1978. One of those was Marvin Baxter, a

*continued on next page*



George Deukmejian with then-Gov. Ronald Reagan

induction had been deferred as long as he was a student. So in June 1952, he graduated from St. John's, passed the New York bar exam and took a state job he knew would be temporary while he waited for the call from Uncle Sam, which came in February 1953.

"I was sent to Ft. Dix [in New Jersey] for 16 weeks of infantry basic training," he explains, "and got into the best shape I've ever been in."

As a law school graduate, and despite the fact he was no more than "a buck private out of basic training," he was able to wangle a coveted assignment to Paris as a member of a team that evaluated financial claims by French civilians. It was more like being a lawyer than a soldier, he notes, as a handful of military personnel worked in an office with 22 French civilians, mostly translators.

So PFC Deukmejian was given a subsistence allowance to live in the city and buy civilian clothing. He later was sent to Fontainebleau, about 30 miles south-southeast of the city center, where the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, or SHAPE, was established, to "brush up on tactics," although the Army "never asked me to go out on a firing range or anything like that."

He returned stateside in 1955, going home to Albany, at first. But his sister had moved to Los Angeles with the man she married in 1950 and she encouraged her younger brother to visit, so he made a cross-country drive.

He liked what he saw, and so he flew home, wound up his affairs, and moved to California for good.

He couldn't practice here, of course, so he got a job with Texaco in its Land and Lease Department while studying for the bar exam. Failing on the first try was "discouraging," he says, but in retrospect is understandable.

"I was rusty, and I didn't know California law," he explains. He passed on the second try and was hired as a deputy county counsel, one of only about three dozen lawyers in the office at the time.

met Gloria Saatjian, a Long Beach resident, at a wedding in Pasadena, and they were married in 1957. He moved to his wife's hometown and began looking for opportunities in private practice.

He noticed that the Belmont Shore area of the city was virtually unrepresented. He joined the local business association, where he gained a number of small businesses and individuals as clients, and was soon asked to serve as the group's president. That led to a stint on the board of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, and a chance to meet the city's "movers and shakers," he recalls.

He also volunteered to help Republican candidates, including the local assemblyman, William Grant, whose 1960 re-election effort he volunteered for.

The Deukmejians had no children at the time and the Legislature was an attractive place for an upwardly mobile young lawyer because the work was part-time.

And then came 1966, one of the busiest years of his career. In addition to the lengthy legislative calendar, he had a new electorate to face.

The US Supreme Court had handed down a series of decisions between 1962 and 1964 known as the "one-man, one-vote" cases. The court said that legislative and congressional districts could no longer be drawn so as to make the votes of rural residents worth more than those of voters in urban areas.

While the California Assembly at the time was apportioned on the basis of population, the state Constitution provided that no county could have more than one senator. So Los Angeles County, with nearly 40 percent of the state's population at the time, was represented by just one of 40 members of the upper house.

Under judicial mandate, the California Senate was reapportioned, giving Los Angeles County its proportional share of the upper chamber, some 13 seats.

That was the same year Ronald Reagan won the governorship, upending Brown's bid for a





## COMMUNITY NEWS

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Fresno lawyer at the time and now a state Supreme Court justice.

The 1970 race was an uphill battle, though. “He was a very young legislator,” Baxter recalls. “And he didn’t have the funds or exposure to compete effectively against Younger.”

With Younger running for governor in 1978, the stage was set for another Deukmejian run for attorney general. Better known and better funded than before, he had a single primary opponent, James L. Browning Jr., a former US attorney for the Northern District of California.

Easily dispatching Browning — whom he later appointed to the trial bench in San Mateo County — in the primary, Deukmejian was an early underdog in the general election, in which his opponent was Yvonne B. Burke, then a member of Congress who had won a close Democratic contest with Burt Pines, then the Los Angeles city attorney.

Looking back, Burke — who later became a Los Angeles County supervisor — says the state may not have been ready for an African-American woman in the post, 32 years before the election of current Attorney General Kamala Harris. But she adds that Deukmejian did well as attorney general, and said she “never had any problems working with him” when he was governor.

Burke, Deukmejian says now, was simply ill-suited as a candidate for that particular office.

Although Brown was re-elected governor in 1978, there was a conservative mood in the state, as voters that year approved another death penalty initiative — the one Deukmejian had sponsored six years earlier was thrown out by the state Supreme Court.

As attorney general, he argued personally in two cases — one on the death penalty and the famous Tanner case in which the state high court upheld the “Use a Gun, Go to Prison” law.

Many of Brown’s appointments to the bench, in particular Chief Justice Rose Bird, had come under heavy criticism. “Jerry’s judges,” as they were dubbed, were often liberal, more concerned with making policy than following the law, and often inexperienced, critics charged.

If elected, Deukmejian vowed, he would



George Deukmejian with President Gerald Ford

appoint a different kind of jurist, a pledge he made good on later.

But the road to the GOP gubernatorial nomination was not the cakewalk that the attorney general primary had been. Lt. Gov. Mike Curb got a jump on the attorney general and had raised \$1 million, “which in those days was a lot of money,” Deukmejian says.

“We started late and had a lot of catching up to do,” he recalls, but was able to raise more than \$8.5 million with the help of a finance committee headed by Los Angeles attorney Karl Samuelian, a partner in the firm of Parker, Milliken, Clark, O’Hara & Samuelian.

Samuelian, now retired from the firm that still bears his name, said he knew Deukmejian during his time as a state senator and attorney general, and was attracted to a fellow Armenian American.

“I believed in him,” the attorney explains. “He was a solid candidate,” someone to whom donors were attracted, “very strong on fiscal issues and on law enforcement issues.”

“He knew what he was talking about,” Samuelian says, “and he was 100 percent credible.”

The attorney general ultimately beat the lieutenant governor by about 7 percentage points, and went into the general election an underdog to Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, whose path to the Democratic nomination had been considerably smoother.

“I finally determined that maybe we had a chance,” Deukmejian recounts. “When all the votes were counted, we won by 93,000.”

The transition from a liberal Democratic administration to a conservative Republican one, was “very difficult, very demanding,” he says. “You have to start making key appointments — the governor’s immediate staff, major agency heads — deliver an inaugural address, deal with the budget [and] make an address to the joint session of the Legislature. And all of this over the holidays.”

As expected, the new administration appointed many judges from the ranks of prosecutors, as well as business lawyers. But both Deukmejian and Baxter say they are especially proud of their efforts to diversify the bench, particularly when it came to women lawyers.

Working with Judith Chirlin, serving as liaison between the administration and California Women Lawyers and later a Deukmejian appointee to the Los Angeles Superior Court, Baxter came up with an impressive list of judicial appointments, male and female, the ex-governor says.

Chirlin, now executive director of the Pasadena-based Western Justice Center Foundation, says the governor “did a terrific job,” with women gaining 20 percent or more of jobs.

Early on, the Senate rejected his appointment of Michael Franchetti, his former chief deputy attorney general, who had worked under Merksamer on the transition team, as finance director.

He realized, he says, that the lawmakers had their own ideology and constituencies to answer to, and that his small victory margin didn’t help. “I hadn’t been elected by a landslide, but I was a former legislator. I thought they’d give me a little deference.”

After disastrous experiences like his meeting with the Democratic senators and additional meetings with Democratic committee chairs, some of whom “were nothing but confrontational,” he developed a new approach.

“I finally told the staff we’re not accomplishing anything,” and that from then on, Deukmejian says, when he needed to meet with legislators, there would be five people in the room — himself, the president pro tem of the Senate, the speaker of the Assembly, and the minority leaders of the two chambers. “That’s how the ‘Big 5’ got started,” he explains, referring to what became a standard mode of operation.

The approach worked, he notes, because the speaker at the time, Willy Brown, D-San Francisco, “was a very pragmatic leader.” Brown, he says, “knew his caucus very well” and “could tell me whether he had the votes for something or didn’t.”

Brown, he jokes, “would [publicly] call me the part of the horse that went over the fence last, but we worked well together.” Relations with Senate President Pro Tem David Roberti, D-Los Angeles, were a little more complicated, he posits, because power in the Senate is less centralized.

“He had a balancing act with the Rules Committee,” Deukmejian explains, “but it all worked out pretty well.” The administration “accomplished what we set out to do,” including creating an improved business climate, he comments.

Deukmejian entered the 1986 campaign as an odds-on favorite for re-election. The state’s economy was doing well, voters were giving credit to the governor for bringing the state budget into surplus after discovering a \$1.5 billion deficit when he took office, and his criticism of the liberal majority on the state high court was resonating.

He made the still-controversial decision to announce that he would vote against three incumbents on that year’s retention ballot — Bird and Justices Cruz Reynoso and Joseph Grodin. All three were swept from office, the only three members of the appellate bench to suffer that fate in the 78 years since contested elections for those positions were abolished.

Deukmejian rejects criticism from those who say that his opposition to the three was an attack on judicial independence.

The result, he says, was not surprising. “They were very, very unpopular.”

His own role in their rejection, he adds, should not be overstated.

The actual work of taking on Bird, Reynoso, and Grodin at the ballot box was done by others, including Robert Philibosian, who had served as Chief Deputy to then-Attorney General Deukmejian and later as Los Angeles district attorney.

The success of the campaign, Philibosian says now, enabled Deukmejian to appoint conservative justices to the court and “literally changed the course of California history.”

While Deukmejian did many great things as governor, Philibosian says, his judicial appointments were “a real legacy.” He “appointed people who would adhere to the ethics and principles” that he himself espoused, and many of them still serve today, the former district attorney, now a lawyer in private practice in Los Angeles, comments.

As the easily re-elected governor of the nation’s largest state, Deukmejian became the subject of the inevitable talk about being on the national ticket in 1988. California was considered a battleground state then, and some thought that as the vice-presidential nominee, he might make the difference in the outcome.

But had he been elected vice president, then-Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy, a Democrat, would have succeeded him. So he wrote then-Vice President and presidential nominee George H.W. Bush in August, while on a trade mission to South Korea, saying he could not be considered.

He had no animus against McCarthy, he explains, but if he had left office at the time, the Democrats would have had full control of the executive and legislative branches of government. He says he “couldn’t bring myself to do that, to benefit me personally.”

As the 1990 election approached, Deukmejian neither encouraged nor discouraged speculation that he would run for a third term. “It had been 28 years” in public office, he points out. “That was enough. I accomplished what we set out to do. I never dreamed I’d be governor of California....I was very thankful, but it was time to turn it over to some younger people.”

He decided to return home to Long Beach, and to practice law in the Los Angeles area. He says he spoke to eight law firms before settling on Chicago-based Sidley & Austin, “a very large and old firm going back to the days of Abraham Lincoln.”

It was 1991, his first year at Sidley, “I was just sort of getting used to my surroundings and for the first time in my life I was starting to make some money,” he explains. He was in Washington on business, and was renewing acquaintances with President George H.W. Bush, who had narrowly carried California with the governor’s help, as well as with two former governors, Attorney General Richard Thornburgh and Bush’s chief of staff, John Sununu.

Thornburgh was planning to leave office to run in a special election for the Senate in Pennsylvania. At one point during the meeting, the attorney general and Sununu stepped out, so Deukmejian and the president were alone, and the president told him, as he recounts it:

“I know you and John have talked about [succeeding Thornburgh] and I really want you to consider it.”

He declined, he explains, but “I told him ‘If you can’t get anybody else, I’ll reconsider.’” The president subsequently appointed Thornburgh’s deputy, William Barr, to the position.

Deukmejian remained at Sidley until 2000, then moved on to a quiet retirement in Long Beach, where he is still one of the city’s most recognizable citizens.

State Sen. Alan Lowenthal, D-Long Beach, strongly supported the renaming. The ex-governor and his wife, he says, “have achieved almost beloved status” in the city.

Deukmejian, the senator says, “has served his city and state so well...I can’t think of anyone who deserves it [to have the courthouse named for him] more.”

## Great opportunity to study in Armenia and receive college credit

Northeastern University’s Dialogue of Civilizations program has been sending students to Armenia for the past three years to learn about Armenia’s history, politics, and culture. Classes are held in English at the American University of Armenia and are supplemented by numerous field trips. Students earn eight college credits. The program will be held in Yerevan from late May to late June 2012. Visit the website: [http://www.northeastern.edu/internationalaffairs/learning\\_coop/dialogue/](http://www.northeastern.edu/internationalaffairs/learning_coop/dialogue/)

Qualified non-Northeastern college students may apply. Contact Gregory Aftandilian, adjunct faculty member, at [gaftandilian@verizon.net](mailto:gaftandilian@verizon.net) or phone 703-402-9134.

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## OBITUARY

### Gregory Abrahamian

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. — Gregory Abrahamian, 81, died Thursday, January 5, after a lengthy illness. He was the husband of Mary (Yessian) Abrahamian for 56 years.

He was born on October 24, 1930, in New Britain, to the late John Hovhanness Abrahamian and Mary (Halajian) Abrahamian. He was educated in New Britain schools, graduating from New Britain High School in 1948. He attended Indiana Tech College and graduated in 1953 with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

He was employed for a short time by the state of Connecticut Highway Department. In 1959, he began employment with the City of New Britain serving in many capacities. He was the assistant engineer and acting chief engineer in the Water Department until 1964, when he was appointed to the Engineering Department, rising to director of engineering from 1970 to 1980. In 1981, he began employment with the Mattabassett District in Cromwell as executive director until his retirement in 1993.

His hobbies included tending to his vegetable garden, playing golf, flying after getting his private pilot's license at age 60, cooking Armenian style, playing cards, reading, especially the daily passages of the Holy Bible, which sustained him through his illness, and uniting annually with his old buddies from the Championship Royals basketball team from the YMCA in the 1940s.

An active member of the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection in New Britain, he was instrumental in the building of the present church on Stanley Street in 1982. He served selflessly on the Building Committee where he volunteered as project engineer and general contractor. In his honor, the church auditorium was named after his parents, the John and Mary Abrahamian Auditorium. He served on the Parish Council for many years and was the Diocese Delegate for many terms. On October 17, 2010, Abrahamian was presented the St. Vartan award by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America for his exemplary leadership and devoted service to the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection.

He belonged to the Shuttle Meadow Country Club, the New Britain Elks Club, the Professional Engineering Society, the Armenian Democratic Liberals and the Armenian Seniors at the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection and the Garmery Kharpert Benevolent Society.

In addition to his wife, he leaves his children, Lee Abrahamian of New York City, Diane Roy and her husband, Dr. Gerard Roy, of Farmington, Conn., Gregory Abrahamian of Baltimore, Md. and David Abrahamian of Farmington; three grandchildren, Jack, Sam and Lily Roy; his sisters-in-law, Margaret

Abrahamian, Lucy Simonian and Roxie Maljanian and his brothers-in-law, Arthur Simonian and John Maljanian. Especially close to him were his parish priest, the Rev. Kapriel Mouradjian, whose prayers and visitations were most comforting and his devoted friend, Bill Higgins whose daily visits were most welcomed. He also leaves cousins, Jennie Garabedian and Philip Pilibosian and nephews and nieces, Mark Simonian, Guy Simonian, Craig Simonian, Arthur Simonian, Debra Maljanian-Kerr, Susan Sagherian, John Maljanian Jr., John Abrahamian, Dr. Lori Pirundini and Rachel Boloyan and their spouses. He also leaves 20 grandnieces and grandnephews.

He was predeceased by brother Paul Abrahamian.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection, 1910 Stanley St., New Britain, CT 06053.



Gregory Abrahamian

### Dr. Antranig Zoulikian Longtime Supporter of Tekeyan

LONDON — Dr. Antranig Zoulikian, a longtime supporter of the Tekeyan Trust and the Tekeyan Centre Fund, died at St. Helier Hospital on January 14.

Zoulikian was one of the national, social figures of the London-Armenian Community.

A surgeon, he was a member of Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons /FRCS/ as well as a member of the London Armenian Doctors' Union. Simultaneously to his professional activities, Zoulikian was deeply involved in community life and patriotic activities. He dedicated his services to the Mihran Damadian Club (1980-1998), the Church Council of the London Armenian Community, the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the Tekeyan Cultural Association (1970-1987). He was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Tekeyan Trust London as well as Tekeyan Centre Fund, Armenia, from 1996 to 2008.

From 1980 to 1987, Zoulikian was the editor-in-chief of the Ereboundi, a biweekly published by the Tekeyan Trust for many years. He wrote

a number of articles and publications referring to the problems of Armenians all over the world and pursued the Great Genocide in favour of our nation.

Despite his bad health during the last years, he continued writing articles, corresponding and working with various institutions and mass media of the diaspora.

A great patriot, thinker and a man of principles, Zoulikian remained faithful to his ideas, the Motherland and the Armenian Church until the end of his life.

Vartan Ouzounian, chair of the Tekeyan Centre Fund (Armenia) and honorary secretary of the Tekeyan Trust London, said in a statement, "At this sorrowful moment, on behalf of the Tekeyan Trust London and Tekeyan Centre Fund (Armenia,) I extend my deepest sympathies on the passing of Dr. Antranig Zoulikian to his family, relatives and friends who share the great loss. Dr. Zoulikian will always remain very much alive in the memory of all those who loved, respected and treasured him."

### Samuel Maserejian

MASEREJIAN, from page 1

Maserejian was in and out of Mt. Auburn Hospital in Cambridge for some time and was transferred to Massachusetts General Hospital on Friday, January 13, shortly before his death.

He was born in Aleppo, Syria, on February 7, 1940. When he was 4, during a picnic in the mountains nearby, he was lost and presumed dead. After 48 hours, Maserejian was found by local shepherds and brought back home. That is why he was named the "Lost and Found" of the family. At 16, Maserejian traveled to Kuwait City to make a life for himself. During his stay there for 17 years, he helped the local priest during the Sunday mass and during funerals, weddings and baptisms because he had a great voice and recited the prayers very well. In Kuwait, he married Eugeny Osanna Tekeyan and had two daughters, Silva and Ani. In 1972, Maserejian and his family immigrated to US and joined his brothers and parents.

He was an active member of Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and local organizations and participated with Krikor Satamian in presenting theatrical presentations in Massachusetts and New York.

His wife passed away in 1996. He is survived by children, Silva Emerian and her husband, Jayson, of Fresno, Calif. and Ani Nigoghosian and her husband, Vahe, of Waltham, Mass.; grandchildren, Silas and James Emerian and

Sarine Nigoghosian; brother, Krikor Maserejian, of Waltham, Kevork Maserejian of Arlington and Zareh Maserejian and Souren Maserejian, both of Belmont.

The funeral service and a celebration of his life was held at the Armenian Memorial Church on Saturday, January 21. In spite of the snowstorm, the church was packed with relatives and friends. Rev. Avedis Boynerian officiated.

Zareh Maserejian, in his eulogy said that "Sam was the singing bird of the family, when we were all together for happy or sad occasions; he was the one who prolonged our happiness with his songs or ease our sadness with Armenian recitations and proverbs. He loved humanity, he loved every body."

Sam Maserejian's daughter, Ani, in her eulogy said "My father did not have a high education, but he used to help me and my sister, Silva, in our homework when we were in high school. He was a happy man, filling our lives with jokes, sometimes repeated jokes, which were better presented each time. I did everything for him to have peace and comfort during his last days on this earth, and I am sure he is in heaven now, united with our mother and telling her the same jokes."

Internment was at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, in Cambridge. Family, relatives and friends attended a memorial dinner at the church hall afterwards.

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In memory of our mother Siranoush Hovsepian, aunts, Esgouhi Simonian and Sirvart Simonian, and Godmother Maritza Ohannessian, we donate \$100 to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

Charles Hovsepian, New Britain, CT  
Ruth & Wil Swisher of Newington, CT

### Secretary Needed

**The Armenian Evangelical Church of New York is seeking an experienced bilingual secretary (Western Armenian and English). Computer proficiency a must (Microsoft). Part time or full time. Please call 1 (609) 466-0226.**





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# ACYOA Chapter Workshop Focuses on Strengthening Local Chapters

ACYOA, from page 5

— a quiz using “Armenian Church Hye Q” game cards, which tested the young parishioners’ knowledge of the Armenian Church and culture — evening vespers concluded the first night’s events.

Saturday began with morning matins, after which Central Council Chair Danny Mantis led a session on “Mission, Team, and Organization,” challenging the workshop participants to understand the ACYOA’s mission and the resources the organization has to make it succeed. Participants were told that a clear mission, balanced team and healthy organization were important aspects of a successful chapter. Participants were asked to analyze the “health” of their respective chapters, and they discussed with Central Council members what they thought would make for a successful ACYOA chapter.

“It’s great how chapters in the same region are able to work together for the same common goal: To create a solid ACYOA organization,” said Alyne Corrigan from St. Stepanos Church of Elberon, NJ. “I’m looking forward to this upcoming year.”

Participants were then broken up into groups based on geographic regions to brainstorm ideas for events and put together a 12-month calendar using guidelines for goalsetting and the “Circle of Crosses” chart.

After a service lunch, where participants made over 100 sandwiches for a South Florida homeless shelter, a Bible study was led by Odabashian on the 2012 Diocesan theme of lay ministry. Participants were divided into three small groups to allow for better conversation. The study groups were guided by Odabashian; the Very Rev. Nareg Berberian, pastor of St. David Church and Garen Karamyan, the youth director of Holy Martyrs Church of Bayside, NY.

A panel discussion followed on the challenges faced by the ACYOA. The panel discussion tackled questions such as what is the Central Council’s role in the ACYOA and how can chapters overcome a lack of participation at events.



Chapter Workshop participants pose for a group photo with the Very Rev. Nareg Berberian.

Participants were happy with what they got out of the weekend.

“This weekend was an incredible experience that I shared with individuals who, like me, have a common goal of bringing together our Armenian youth through social events, church and other activities,” said Andrew Khachatryan from the St. Sarkis Church of Carrollton, Texas. “We as ACYOA board members want our youth to be closer to God, and our bond through workshops like this makes me feel blessed.”

Since the program began in 2009, more than 100 ACYOA chapter leaders from 27 parishes have participated in similar chapter workshops.



The Very Rev. Simeon Odabashian leads a Bible study discussion.

## The Armenian Sisters’ Academy, Lexington, MA

### 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Event



**Saturday, February 11, 2012, 6:30 pm**

**Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston**

**Keynote Speaker, His Excellency,  
Rouben Shugarian,  
former Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia**

**Musical Entertainment by:  
Elie Berberian**

**For tickets and table reservations,  
please contact the school office at (781) 861-8303**

## AIWA Scholarship Applications Now Available, Including Special Awards in the Sciences

BOSTON — The Armenian International Women’s Association (AIWA) is now accepting applications for scholarship awards for the 2012-2013 academic year.

In addition to awards in the humanities and social sciences, grants are available to students in the sciences through the Lucy Kasparian Aharonian scholarships, granted by AIWA in conjunction with the Society for Women Engineers — Boston Chapter.

Students in the fields of science, mathematics, engineering, technology, computer sciences and architecture are eligible for Aharonian Awards of \$2,000 to \$6,000 (juniors and seniors) or up to \$10,000 (MS and PhD students).

In addition, AIWA offers a number of scholarships for female students in all academic fields, ranging in value from \$500 to \$2,000. The program was initiated with the Agnes K. Missirian Scholarship, which was established in memory of the professor of management at Bentley College (Waltham, Mass.), a strong advocate for women’s rights.

Also available for students in all academic fields are Dr. Carolann S. Najarian, Ethel Jafferian Duffett, Rose A. Hovannesian and Zarouhi Y. Getsoyan scholarships.

AIWA scholarships are awarded annually to

full-time female students of Armenian descent attending accredited colleges or universities. Students entering their junior or senior year in college, as well as graduate students, are eligible to apply for the awards, which are based on financial need and merit.

The Aharonian science awards were initiated in 2007 in memory of the late Lucy Kasparian Aharonian, an active member of the Society of Women Engineers, who enjoyed a long career in software engineering even while raising a family. With degrees in mathematics and business administration, she worked for several major firms in the Boston area and also taught on various levels. Later, she embarked on a second career as a basket artist.

Applications for all AIWA scholarships for the 2012-2013 academic year are available on-line or can be requested by mail. The deadline for applications is April 10. Winners will be announced at the association’s annual meeting in May.

Further information about scholarships and other AIWA programs to advance the status of Armenian women is available from AIWA’s new website ([www.aiwainternational.org](http://www.aiwainternational.org)), or by mail from 65 Main St., #3A, Watertown, MA, 02472 or e-mail: [AIwaInc@aol.com](mailto:AIwaInc@aol.com).





## New York METRO



The spirit of the season shone brightly at HMADS.

# HMADS Students Present Fun, Festive Christmas Program

By Lana Kazangian

OAKLAND GARDENS, N.Y. — On Friday, December 23, 2011, the 80 Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School (HMADS) students — from 3-year-olds in nursery through the graduating seniors in the sixth grade — put on an unforgettable show, wowing parents, grandparents, friends, alumni, guests and VIPs alike, with song, dance, recitation and comedy in two languages.

Starting the year, HMADS Principal Zarminé Boghosian knew it would be like no other, as this year, the school is celebrating its 45th anniversary and its 30th graduating class. “I am so proud of our students,” said Boghosian. “They exemplify what HMADS has accomplished through its 45-year history — providing the children of the community with a competitive New York State education and an unsurpassable attention to Armenian literacy.”

The program began with the opening prayer delivered by Fr. Bedros Kadehjian, the interim pastor of Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs. Notable at the event was the presence of Rev. Vertanes Kalayjian, from Washington DC, (brother of principal Boghosian), who spoke briefly at the program’s conclusion, giving Christmas Blessings to the school and all present. Also in attendance were St. Vartan Cathedral Choir Director Khoren Meikanedjian, HMADS board members, volunteers and members of the media.

The Christmas program was full of non-stop top-of-the-line entertainment. The Class of 2012 were the emcees of the evening. The Nursery class’ Nativity scene was as ethereal and spiritual as it was adorable. Ballet buffs loved Kindergarten’s rendition of Tchaikovsky’s *Pas De Trois* (instructor Medeia Mark). All grades recited and sang in both English and Armenian, with old favorites like *Gaghant Baban Aha Yegav* and *Gaghant Baban Oosh e Munaster*, as well as new presentations like the avant-garde (not to mention quite comedic) *Couch Potato Santa* by the fifth and sixth graders.

The one-and-a-half-hour show was nostalgic, as well as light and funny, full of Christmas cheer and the true joy of the season. The HMADS children shined on stage — in costume and their fancy attire — for their parents and all of the show’s guests alike.

The success of this very entertaining and celebratory evening was due to the combined efforts of HMADS faculty including choirmaster Anahid Boghossian, pianist Nevart Z. Dadourian, Armenian Language Department teachers: Houri Ghougassian, Anie Manuelian and Socy Nigdelian, all the teachers of the individual grades and the strong leadership of the principal.

Of course, no Christmas is complete without a visit from Gaghant Baba (Santa Claus) himself. A group of generous young representatives of the community came together to help Santa

deliver personalized gifts for each child at the school. Mr. and Mrs. Dikran Charchian, along with Jaque Minoyan, Roupen Aslanian, Tony Tahmisyan and HMADS Alumnus Allen Nisanyan joined forces to make Christmas happen like no other year before. On their own initiative, these individuals pooled funds, hand-selected gifts, with the help of HMADS fourth-grade teacher Talar Aydin and wrapped and delivered them on the night of the Hantes to the children. These young benefactors gave all a reminder that the true spirit of Christmas is about giving — and in this instance, giving back to their alma mater and for the education of the young.

HMADS is also the recipient of another generous Christmas gift from the proceeds of a traditional Annual Thanksgiving Eve Party that is sponsored by five young organizations in the community.

At the end of the program, the HMADS Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) presented a check for \$5,000 as a result of a year-long fundraising efforts, parent volunteerism and contributions. “We are very proud to be a support to HMADS,” said PTO Co-Chair Liza Andreopoulos, “because it gives so much to our children, and has given so much for the past 45 years.”

The school looks forward to its 45th-anniversary celebration this year, commemorated with a Gala Concert in the Church of the Holy Martyrs on Saturday, January 28, 7:30 p.m., featuring HMADS Choir and a number of renowned artists from the Greater Metropolitan



The PTO presents a check for \$5,000.

area.

HMADS is a New York-based private elementary school, fully accredited by the New York State Department of Education, operates in

Oakland Gardens, Queens. Students graduate with dual fluency in English and Armenian, along with pride and knowledge of their heritage.



The students perform at the Hantes.





## New York METRO

# HMADS Celebrates 45th Anniversary with Gala Benefit Concert

By Lana Kazangian

OAKLAND GARDENS, N.Y. — Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School (HMADS) is marking its 45th anniversary this year. Starting in 1967 as the Hye Bardez Nursery School, the school grew from only a nursery program to a comprehensive nursery through sixth grade elementary school, fully accredited by the New York State Board of Education. To date, 265 students have graduated from the school, with a competitive American education coupled with intense study in Armenian language, history and culture.

To commemorate the great resource that HMADS has been to the New York community, parents past and present, friends, supporters and school staff are organizing a gala benefit concert for the school in the Church of the Holy Martyrs in Oakland Gardens on Saturday, January 28. The concert, set to begin at 7:30 p.m., will showcase the talents of many local vocalists such as lyric soprano Anoush Barclay, baritone Vagharshag Ohanyan, mezzo soprano Hasmik Meikhanedjian and contemporary artist Hooshere. Instrumental musicians featured are violinist Diana Vasilyan, international prize-winning pianist Tania Gabrielian and accompanist Janet Marcarian. Also participating in the concert will be the HMADS Choir, composed of the upper-grade students of HMADS, under the direction of conductor/lyric soprano Anahid Boghossian and accompanist Nevart Z. Dadourian.

"We are anticipating a remarkable evening," said Arek Nisanyan, HMADS board co-chair, "to commemorate an important achievement in HMADS history. We invite all to join with us in celebrating the contribution of this great institution to our children's lives."

The program promises to be one to remember with a beautiful array of Armenian favorites and European classics performed in the most perfect

setting: the church itself with its heavenly acoustics. With the participation of the aforementioned artists, as well as a symbolic procession of 45 students and alumni of the school, the entire evening will surely delight from start to finish. Special attention is being given to all artistic elements of the concert, from costumes to ambiance, and all in-between details, to maximize the beauty of the musical experience, and pay homage to the prestigious occasion.

In comparison to most schools of its caliber, HMADS is tiny, but let there be no mistake — HMADS has plenty of power in its punch. Year after year, HMADS produces a graduating class of sixth graders with a strong academic footing and ever-grounded in their pride and knowledge of their Armenian language and culture. They go on after graduation to successful junior high and high school terms, and later on, to recognition in their college and professional careers.

"I am so touched that this concert has such overwhelming support," said Zarminé



Boghossian, the principal of HMADS. "It is heartwarming to see the fruit of our labor is not only the education, but also the love and camaraderie nurtured within these walls."

Throughout its years, HMADS has done more than just educate kids — it has lent a hand in establishing and developing a true community, a family of friends, supporters, parents current and past, alumni, who have benefited in their own ways from HMADS, and continue to participate in its events, donate to its fundraising

drives, and volunteer when called upon in service to the school. HMADS is now in its "grand-parenting" stage, with some of its former students, now grown, married and sending their children to the school. "As a proud alumna of the school," said Jackie Baklajian-Baron, HMADS parent and PTO executive member, "I'm further proud that I can pass on the legacy of HMADS to my son, who is now a second grader in the school I graduated from."

Housed in the community center wing of the Church of the Holy Martyrs, HMADS is non-affiliated and is supported by various organizations, as well as individual benefactors. This year marks 45 years of its inception and the 30th graduating class.

Tickets are almost sold out and may be purchased by contacting the HMADS School Office. All proceeds will benefit the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School [www.hmads.org](http://www.hmads.org).

A gala champagne reception will follow the concert in HMADS' Kalustyan Hall. All attendees and participants of the concert are invited.

## 40th Anniversary Celebration of Armenian and Sunday Schools Establishment in White Plains

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. — December 4, 2011 will remain in the annals of St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church as a date of an unforgettable celebration of joy. The Tutak Hall of the church was filled to capacity with children, teachers, parents and friends of Armenian and Sunday Schools, gathered there to observe the 40th anniversary of the establishment of both Sunday and Armenian Schools.

The day started with the celebration of Divine Liturgy by Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian

who also ordained three young men in minor orders. Andrew Kayaian was ordained "theer" (acolyte) and Paul Derderian and Arsen Yelegen were made sub-deacons. All three young men have been studying and preparing for this day with seriousness and faithfulness. The congregation present followed the impressive ceremony with approval and joy. Following the celebrant archbishop's message, a special requiem service took place for the teachers of the Armenian School as well as for members of Gulbenkian family, whose name has been immortalized in this parish as Gulbenkian Sunday School.

As people began to enter Tutak Hall, they were given a celebratory booklet and a souvenir pen, donated by Robert Stepanian of Promotional Concepts of Greenwich, Conn., in memory of his father, Bob, who is known in the parish as the founder and the first chairman of the MR/MRS/MISS Club.

The program started with the children of both schools on the stage singing The Lord's Prayer and the American and Armenian national anthems. They then offered some *sharagans*, songs, a pledge and prayer before Gizirian's table blessing. Children were standing on the stage between the US and Armenian flags and large size logos of both schools.

Following the luncheon, catered by Anahid Krichian of Paterson, NJ, Dr. Anna Kazanchian, chairperson of the Planning Committee, formally welcomed the audience, stating in part current and past teachers of both schools deserve highest praise for their hard work, as "they are the ones carrying the torch that will keep the light of Christianity and the pride of being Armenian alive and well in our children."

Fr. Karekin Kasparian, the pastor of the parish since its founding, reminded the audience that the church members rejoiced in welcoming the unprecedented large audience since the church's consecration banquet, presided over by Karekin I, Catholicos of All Armenians. He stressed the special relationship of this parish with St. Nersess Seminary, which he headed 40 years ago; whose students have had a prominent role in the establishment of both schools. He stated that more than 250 teachers have taught at both schools within the past 40 years, with 20 of them men and women connected with St. Nersess Seminary. He expressed his conviction that it is vital for children to receive knowledge and commitment about both their Christian faith and Armenian culture to establish firmly their identity.

Zaven Tachdjian, chairman of the Parish Council, said among other things, "...The schools are the pillars of our community. They are the incubators that nurture and form the core group of the new generations, thus ensuring the continuity, survival and prosperity of

this parish. ... Although we can firmly state that for the past 40 years, our schools have not only survived, but actually thrived and prospered, there are more challenges lying ahead. ... But most of all, we have to maximize our efforts on your children to make their presence here enjoyable and enlightening. This Parish Council, and many more to come, has and will exert all its efforts and use all available tools to ensure a positive and nurturing environment for our youngsters."

Yn. Dawn Kasparian was invited to read parts of the messages received by some of the teachers and assistants from the past years.

Teachers received special recognition and a memento as appreciation; Lisa Kouzoujian for the longest non-stop Sunday School teaching for more than 20 years, Margrit Hamparsoumian for the same distinction in the Armenian School, Mark Derderian for his longest term as Sunday school superintendent and Anahid Chookhachian as Armenian school principal for the longest duration.

A 15-minute video presentation on the life and activities of both schools within 40 years by Maria Bedonian and Sylvia Kruienza was enjoyed by all.

Two graduates of both schools were invited to express their sentiments as to how their experience in both schools had impacted their Christian-Armenian formation aside from the deep influences of their families. Both Michael Aram Wolohojian and Lydia Kurkjian have witnessed in their eloquent testimonies about the influence of both schools in their lives.

Two graduates of the Armenian School, Gayane Hamparsoumian and Kayla Kalayjian Love, who have become star dancers in Shushi Dance Troupe, performed two beautiful dances to the delight and warm applause of the audience.

A huge birthday cake specially made for the occasion with logos of both schools by "Sweet Lisa" of Stamford, Conn., was enjoyed by all with appreciation by all present for the art work of Lisa and Steve Maronian.

Rev. Mardiros Chevan, one of the early students of St. Nersess who has served as superintendent of the original Sunday School of our parish, shared some sweet and humorous reminiscences from his experience. Rev. Untzag Nalbandian also extended his warm greetings and wishes to the pastor and both schools.

The closing words of appreciation and encouragement were reserved for Gizirian, who in his inimitable way, uplifted the labor of the pastor and all who have contributed to the lofty work done in both schools as humble but vital agents of promoting our Christian legacy and cultural heritage.

With the singing of *Der Getso*, the program came to conclusion in a festive mood.



### 2012 SUPER BOWL PARTY

**February 5, 2012**  
**Party Kick Off: 6:00 pm**  
**Game Kick Off: 6:30pm**

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**Watertown**

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# 2011 TCA Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh Program Supporters

Since its inception in 2001, the Tekeyan Cultural Association's Sponsor a Teacher Program has raised more than \$518,000 and reached out to 4,064 teachers and workers in Armenia and Karabagh. The Program is in its 12th year and it continues successfully.

The followings are the 2011 donors by state, as they were received.

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# Arts & Living

## Dissident Director's Life to Turn into International Movie

MOSCOW (*Russia Today*) – The rollercoaster life of Armenian film director Sergey Paradjanov is worthy of a gripping movie plot. Adored by Federico Fellini and Francois Truffaut for his edgy and flamboyant films, he spent years locked in a Gulag for allegedly being gay.

In fact he had been imprisoned for speaking out against the stiffness of the Soviet regime in his movies.

He was a man of mystery, of scandal and tragedy. But no matter how surrealistic his films – his real life was even more so. A new multi-national co-production of his life is in the works directed by a man who knew him.

The film will take viewers to the places most loved by Paradjanov – where he worked and spent most of his life: Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and France. It is to be directed by fellow Armenian Serge Avedikian, who won the best short film prize at Cannes in 2010. He couldn't say no when offered the project having met and interviewed Paradjanov in 1984. Avedikian says it is as if Paradjanov "prompted" him to agree to tell the tale of a free man who created his own world in defiance of the real one.

"Charming but unbearable," according to his second wife, Paradjanov defied the authorities for the sake of truth and good humor. When invited to play Karl Marx in a Soviet movie, he pretended to nit-pick the thick beard. That was the end of his acting career.

Paradjanov was born in 1924 in Georgia, but most of his works were created in Ukraine. He moved there after the tragic death of his first wife. She had been thrown under a train by her own brothers – for marrying the penniless Paradjanov who couldn't pay the traditional ransom for her.

Paradjanov was a true eccentric; his dinner



Serge Avedikian

plate had to be arranged in a specific way, and there were rules for putting a cup on a table. His fantasy knew no borders – and neither did his movies. He came to prominence in 1964 with the "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" – a story of a Ukrainian Romeo and Juliet in which fantasy and traditions take over from realism. Described as "the greatest movie ever created," it caused Paradjanov to fall from grace with the authorities. They forced him to re-edit his next surrealistic creation – "The Colour of Pomegranates" – a story of a medieval poet, told through a magic mix of color, plasticity, music, it talks about love and criticized authorities in a disguised way.

His jokes didn't go down well with the Soviet authorities, and he was accused of homosexual rape and spent five years in a Gulag. It was only the intervention of filmmakers such as Fellini, Truffaut and Michelangelo Antonioni which got him released.

After a 15-year break he got back to work in 1983 creating his masterpiece, "Legend of Suram Fortress."

Paradjanov died of cancer in 1990 in Armenia, leaving his final movie, "The Confession," unfinished. "My whole life I was motivated by jealousy," Paradjanov once said, "I used to be jealous of beautiful people – and became charming. I was jealous of smart people and became unpredictable." Some say, he might have been jealous of talented people – and became a genius.



A scene from "The Birthday Gift"

## Yerevan's Hovhannes Tumanyan State Puppet Theater Visits East Coast

RICHMOND, Va. – For the first time ever, the Hovhannes Tumanyan State Puppet Theater of Yerevan visited the United States this January. Its East Coast performance tour began on January 20 at St. James Armenian Church here and continued to various Armenian churches and communities in Washington, DC, Philadelphia, Fair Lawn, NJ, New York City and White Plains, NY, as well as Boston and Providence. A five-member ensemble of the group, including its artistic director, performed Robert Arakelian's short story, "The Birthday Gift," in Armenian, and Hovhannes Tumanyan's "The Foolish Man" in English with floor puppets. The initial presentation was directed in particular at younger children. The four actors of the ensemble also sang a medley of lively Armenian traditional and folk songs.

The Richmond premiere was well attended, with some 65 Armenians in the audience, including a strong contingent of children. St. James pastor, Fr. Mesrob Hovsepyan, introduced the performance, explaining the importance of introducing various aspects of Armenian culture to Armenian children (and adults) in the United States. Artistic director and theater manager Ruben Babayan coordinated the sound system for the performance, providing the background music and some prerecorded dialogue for the puppets.

The two stories had important moral messages for children. The animals of "The Birthday Gift" showed the importance of giving and not just receiving, while the famous Tumanyan short story, "The Foolish Man," based on a folk story, depicted



The Richmond audience

a man who was unable to recognize and take advantage of good fortune.

The puppeteers skillfully manipulated their charges, and spoke or lip-synched their dialogue distinctly. Though the English dialogue was understandable, one suggestion for improvement would be to correct some aspects of English pronunciation and style in the prerecorded portions.

The four principal puppet actors were Aghasi Melkonyan, Inga Zahalyan, Naira Hakobyan and Robert Sargsyan. The youthful Aghasi Melkonyan said in an interview that he fell in love with puppetry as a youth, and soon graduated

see PUPPETS, page 15

## Diana Der Hovanessian: 'I Write Almost Every Day'

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Diana Der Hovanessian does not need to be introduced. This dynamic Armenian lady has been active in American literature, with writing and translating poetry. This year was very productive for her: three volumes by her have been published, both her writings and translations. This trinity of books was the reason for running an interview at Der Hovanessian's place in Cambridge, full of literature, arts and Armenian-ness.

**Artsvi Bakhchinyan:** This year you added three new books to your publications. How many does that make?

**Diana Der Hovanessian:** Fifteen of my own books and 10 volumes of translations.

**AB:** The new translations are called *Armenian Poetry of Our Time*. And the book starts with 20th-century greats such as Daniel Varoujan, Siamanto, Tekeyan and goes on to young contemporary poets such as Vahe Arsen. You've been working on this book a long time?

**DDH:** Yes, very long.

**AB:** Do you think of translating as part of your own work? Or do you consider it an obligation? Or is it a way of being a part of great poetry you admire?

**DDH:** I'll answer yes to all those questions. Translating isn't as much fun as creating something new and it has a lot of responsibilities attached. But I started because there was no contemporary anthology of Armenian poetry in English. Some individual poems had been translated by past poets, even Henry Longfellow. But in 1896, working from literal prose translations from Armenian scholars and friends Alice Stone Blackwell produced the first edition in English of *Armenian Poems*. Then in 1917, for Near East Relief, and to call attention to the murder of Armenian poets in 1915 and the Genocide, she added more poems and published another edition.

**AB:** Alice Stone Blackwell was a great friend of the Armenians and a humanist. But she was not a poet. Do you think her translations hold up?

**DDH:** Of course, they are dated. She uses 18th- and 19th-century phrases. For instance, she begins Bedros Tourian's "Little Lake:" "Why dost thou lie in hushed surprise, Thou little lonely mere?" It's too bad that Julia Ward Howe who was also active (she was president of The Friends of Armenia) did not do some of the poems. She was a known poet.

**AB:** Alice Stone Blackwell's book was long out of print, I believe, was that why you started?

**DDH:** Before I had any book publications, but was publishing poetry in journals and newspapers, a Bulgarian poet asked me to work with him on an anthology of Bulgarian poetry. And I said, No, I can't do that...when there isn't a modern Armenian Anthology.

**AB:** And you began...

**DDH:** I started it with my father. We had already done a few translations together. The first were for a concert the

see POETRY, page 14





## Diana Der Hovanesian: 'I Write Almost Every Day'

POETRY, from page 13

Boston Pops was doing of Armenian sharagans for his friend the conductor Rouben Gregorian. And the second for a lecture on Daniel Varoujan my *Hayrig* was giving and wanted six poems in English for that program. I was publishing poems already in those days...and when I saw how the Varoujan turned out I sent them to one of my editors who surprised me by taking the whole batch.

**AB:** And that's how you started?

**DDH:** No. Actually another editor of mine invited me to lunch and said she was thinking of starting a page, at the Christian Science Monitor, of International Poems and wanted me to do some Armenian.

**AB:** And you did?

**DDH:** I told her I didn't know Armenian that well. This was a long time ago. And she looked at me, and said, "Well, you're young. Learn it!" So I did, I took every course offered at Harvard. And every course at Boston University. But, also, I had lots of help. After my father's death many friends sent me poems or read to me. And of course, my students in Armenia would run around gathering books. And poets of course would come to read to me. The only book I did all alone was the volume of Derian. I did it with a dictionary and then had it checked. The Kouchag too. Strangely enough, I didn't find Kouchag's dialect difficult. It sounded similar to the dialect my grandmother had spoken to me. But Sayat Nova was hard. And most intimidating was Narek, even though I worked from modern Armenian translations of the old *Krapar*. For the first anthology I did the Narek with the help of Hayr Oshagan, a priest at Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge. And for the book of Narek, translations done with Tom Samuelian...he would send a driver every morning with word for word translations done by a priest, when I was in Yerevan on a Fulbright. And then when I returned to Boston, the rest were sent by email.

**AB:** How do you choose which poems to include in an anthology?

**DDH:** I think a translator often does a poem he wishes he could have written himself. Or else it is a very important poem, pivotal in some historic aspect, and must be done. For instance I had to translate Bedros Tourian for the first anthology because he was important historically...he was the first to use vernacular Armenian and write about personal themes.

**AB:** But you didn't like Tourian?

**DDH:** No, although he was my mother's favorite. He did have one great poem, "Drdounch." My rules for translating include three debts the translator owes. 1. The translator owes the reader the poem the original poet wrote. 2. The translator owes the original poet the best possible version in the second language. The original poet's reputation is in his hands. And 3. The translator owes the poem a vibrant second life in the second language.

**AB:** You did a large volume of Charents with M. Margossian. And some of those translations were used in a recent film made in Yerevan. Is Charents one of your favorite poets?

**DDH:** Not when I started. During the five years I was translating Charents I would dream about him. We would have arguments in these

dreams. On my first trip to Armenia I was working on that book ... and met his daughters and spent a lot of time with Anahid.

**AB:** And remember during another trip I took you to meet late Regina Ghazaryan, a friend of Charents who had buried some of his papers.

**DDH:** Oh yes, yes, yes. That was a unforgettable meeting. It is important to meet people who personally know the authors you translate. I hope they remember Regina in Armenia.

**AB:** One of your new books is *Dancing At the Monastery*. It has a lot of prosy poems. Have you abandoned formal verse and rhyme?

**DDH:** No, my very newest manuscript has a larger share of sonnets and villanelles, etc.

**AB:** But the brand new book, just out this month, from Cervana Barva Press, *Now I See It*, is in the works.

**DDH:** Actually those poems are just published but were written a while ago. My editor at Sheep Meadow Press would also take out any light or humorous verse, any strange shapes. But in the last few books he allowed sections of light verse. By the way, I'm a great admirer of Charents's light and satiric verses. I enjoyed translating those.

**AB:** And you didn't have dreams then about arguing with him about those?

**DDH:** (laughing) No! But to get back to the shaped poems. In the 16th-century English, poet George Herbert did some religious poems in the shapes of altars and wings and more recently in the 1950s in Brazil and Germany some artists were combining strewn words on posters and art and calling the movement Concrete Poetry.

**AB:** Tell me a little bit about your writing habits. Do you write every day? Do you rewrite? Do you keep old versions? You did a recent program with an American poet, X. J. Kennedy called "Where Does a Poem Come From?" Did you two decide where poems come from?

**DDH:** We decided of course they come from poets: and they come to poets from the most unexpected places: a news item, a remembered conversation, someone else's poem you wish to answer, a dream. A lot of poems used to come to me when I was half asleep and I would get up to write them down. Now...I just ignore them. But I do write almost every day...mostly rewriting. And I throw most of it away or my house would be filled with paper. Even more than now! I do write on paper first. Then type it into the computer and keep changing it. What takes up most of my time is the New England Poetry Club: planning programs, finding judges for contests, introducing speakers, answering mail. I am hoping to retire from it soon. We have a good vice-president.

**AB:** I hope the Varoujan prize and programs on translations that you started will continue.

**DDH:** I hope so too.

**AB:** I have one last question I think you have often been asked. Have you thought of writing a memoir? After all you have known and worked with some of the biggest names, not only in Armenian poetry but world poetry: Andrey Voznesensky, Bella Akhmadulina, Tomas Tranströmer, Yevgeni Yevtushenko, Czeslaw Milosz, Seamus Heaney?

**DDH:** (laughs) Mmm.

## World Premiere of Piano Work by Gilbert Biberian

GLOUCESTER, U.K. (*This is Gloucestershire*) — It seems the Charlton Kings-based guitarist Gilbert Biberian has turned his mind to composing. All was revealed when the Rautio Trio gave the world premiere of his piano trio, for Gloucester Music Society.

Titled *Ithaka*, the eight-movement work is



Gilbert Biberian

inspired by a poem by the Greek poet Constantine Cavafy and felt like a musical journey, albeit an inward one. Biberian's Greek-Armenian roots, were embedded within the music rather than evident on the surface.

This is a work of great variety with a declamatory start and several dramatic outbursts along the way. But the excitement was balanced by a silvery notturno, a dance, which reflected the sinuous rhythms and melodies of Asia Minor and a heart-felt Alleluia. The composer is now working on a string quartet and a guitar concerto.

The Rautio Trio demonstrated their versatility and musicianship elsewhere in the program.

The *Piano Trio in G* composed by the 25-year-old Beethoven abounded in youthful exuberance.

The stimulating second half placed special demands on the players who gave a warm, affectionate account of Frank Bridge's *Phantasie Trio*.

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*Labyrinth image taken from the Armenian Heritage Park on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway in Boston*

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# AGBU Ardavazt Performs Yervant Odian's 'Ser Yev Dzidzagh'

## New Performances Added

LOS ANGELES — Now in its 31st year, the AGBU Ardavazt Theatre Company continued its mission of presenting Armenian-language productions to the community with 10 performances of Yervant Odian's two-act comedy, "Ser yev Dzidzagh" (Love and Laughter), which ran November 5 through December 10, 2011, all to full houses.

"Ser yev Dzidzagh" is a synthesis of three of Odian's comedies: "Charshle Artin Aga," "Michnort Der Baban" (The Priest-Broker) and "Taghaganin Gnige" (The Vestryman's Wife).

The setting is Constantinople during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this time successfully portrayed through the use of slides. The plot revolves around the separate campaigns waged by the parents of an eligible daughter to marry her to one or the other's chosen suitor, with the aid of brokers; meanwhile, the daughter successfully pursues her own choice, based on love, as opposed to material considerations reflective of the bourgeois mentality of the Armenian middle and upper classes during that period.

Actor and director Krikor Satamian once again put on stage a cast of 16 seasoned and young performers, as well as introducing several new ones and playing the role of one of the suitors.

This production was enhanced by the periodic rendition of short excerpts from Tigran Chouhajian's "Leblebiji Hor-Hor Aga" operetta, taken from the production staged jointly a few years ago by Ardavazt Theatre Company and Lark Musical Society, as well as a recording of folk music by John Bilezikjian and the introduction of solos.

Favorable reviews of Ardavazt's latest production appeared in *Asbarez*, as well as *Nor Or* and *Massis*. In fact, the show garnered such acclaim that additional performances have been announced in Pasadena (January 29), Orange County (February 5) and Fresno (February 26). Visit [www.agbuca.org](http://www.agbuca.org) for additional information.



A scene from the AGBU Ardavazt Theatre Company's performance of Yervant Odian's "Ser Yev Dzidzagh"

# Yerevan's Hovhannes Tumanyan State Puppet Theater Visits East Coast

PUPPETS, from page 13

the Puppet Institute in Yerevan. He has been working as part of the Tumanyan Puppet Theater for 16 years. While this may be his first visit to the United States, he has traveled a lot with the puppet ensemble to many other countries. In particular, he enjoys participating in international festivals, as he can learn a lot from other puppeteers there, both technically and stylistically.

The Tumanyan Puppet Theater was founded in 1935 and has a building as its headquarters in Yerevan along with a distinguished history. With a large staff, its presentations can include as many as 17 performers.

Babayan said in an interview that he began working in the puppet theater from 1980 as head of its literary division and then as a stage director. In 1998 he became its chief artistic director and manager. The theater maintains a large permanent repertoire of 34 different pieces. They include both Armenian works and various famous international ones and represent all the types of puppetry art ranging from finger and hand puppets to marionettes. The theater has given presentations all over the world, in countries as distant as India or Kazakhstan. In these places, English only is used. Last year in 2011 it participated in seven international festivals.

Babayan teaches at Yerevan's Theater and Film Institute where he holds a chair in Acting Skills and Production. He has prepared three generations of puppeteers who all are now working at his puppet theater. In general, there are a large number of young people working there.

Babayan said, "The theater changes with time and must always remain contemporary. At the same time, some of its presentations have continued in the repertoire for 35 years. The stories of Tumanyan, Alexander Pushkin, Hans Christian Anderson, Shakespeare and others are classics, so the main changes in their productions are new actors." However, Babayan pointed out, there is one chief aspect in his work that has changed: "The rhythm of the times has become more rapid and so the production must also become more condensed. For

example, a trip to the United States used to take one month a century ago and now it is just a matter of hours. Staging cannot avoid taking this into consideration."

how the performance would be before revealing that he is Armenian."

Babayan felt that videos, films and modern technology have not lessened the value of pup-

Party Perfect donated the stage equipment for the performance.

For a video trailer of the show, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkE9XQ2>



A scene from "The Foolish Man"

This East Coast tour is a first in a number of aspects. Not only is it the first visit of the theater to the US, but this is the first time that it travels as the result of an invitation from Armenian communities. Babayan pointed out that while outside Armenia, its role is often to introduce Armenian culture to non-Armenians, though sometimes Armenians turn up at performances too. He related one amusing anecdote: "We primarily participate in international festivals. Last year we went to Hungary for a festival and performed. The festival director afterwards introduced himself and said that I am Armenian. He said that he was waiting to see

pet theater. Each time a new technology is introduced, people fear that older forms of art will die out. It was the same with theater when film was introduced, or film when television began to be available, yet these fears turned out to be largely unfounded. The live connection with an audience is unique.

The Republic of Armenia's Ministry of Culture provided subventions for the East Coast tour of the theater. A number of local Armenians, Chuck Ashjian, Bedros Bandazian, Sam and Maral Haboush, Karen and Nouneh Karapetian and Harry Deloian, subsidized the Virginia performance, while local company

BQiQ. More information on the theater itself is available at [www.arpuppet.am](http://www.arpuppet.am).

The group has the following performances: Fair Lawn, NJ, Saturday, January 28, 6 p.m., at St. Leon Armenian Church ([karinekocharyan73@gmail.com](mailto:karinekocharyan73@gmail.com)); New York, NY, Friday, January 29, 3 p.m., St. Illuminator's Cathedral, ([gradaranik@gmail.com](mailto:gradaranik@gmail.com)); Providence, Saturday, February 4, 6 p.m., sponsored by Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Egavian Cultural Center and Watertown, Sunday, February 5, 3 p.m., Watertown Middle School, sponsored by the Erebouni Saturday School and Amaras Art Alliance([www.AmarasOnline.com](http://www.AmarasOnline.com)).





ARTS & LIVING

# The Balian Family and Ottoman Architecture: New Book, New Challenges



The cover of Pascal Carmont’s *The Amiras: Lords of Ottoman Armenia*

LONDON — The Balian family dominated Ottoman architecture for much of the 18th and 19th centuries. A recent work by Pascal Carmont maintains that “For two centuries, this family created the Ottoman splendor of Constantinople, covering it with magnificent buildings in a cultural encounter between East and West. From 1840 they were all trained in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. The family continuity of the Balias was one of the determining factors of their influence, whose starting point was the Era of the Tulips. Without compromising the architectural canons of the Orient or Islam, the Balias dominated a gradual westernization of official Ottoman architecture.” Some members of the Balian family were given the title of *Ser Mimar-i Devlet* (Chief State Architect) and decorated with Grand Cross of the Medjidia.

However, a Turkish historian, Selman Can, has recently maintained that the Balias were simply contractors and not great architects of

Ottoman landmarks such as the Dolmabahce theatre, the old Ciragan Palace, Beylerbey Palace, the Mosques of Ortakoy, Nusretiye and Hirkai-Sherif. So far, no serious art historian has credited Can’s assertion. Not surprisingly, Yusuf Halacoglu, the former head of the Turkish Historical Society, has praised Can’s work.

According to Carmont, the Balias were part of a broader Ottoman Armenian aristocracy (the Amiras) who dominated much of Ottoman economy, finances, military production and architecture for several generations. These Armenians were at the heart of the Ottoman Empire and enjoyed the favors of a succession of Ottoman Sultans. In his semi-biographical account of the Amiras, based around 10 major families, Carmont argues that the Ottoman Empire was not simply a Turkish Empire as it is maintained today. The Ottoman Empire was a mosaic of different peoples, religions and classes, who served Ottoman Sultans in their different capacities. The

Armenian Amira class, including the Balian family, had a special place in this structure. They even produced important dignitaries in the Ottoman civil administration. When the Russian armies were at the gates of Constantinople at the end of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, Sultan Abdul-Hamid II sent Arakel Dadian to greet Grand Duke Nicolas, the brother of the Tsar.

The Amiras, however, were also at the heart of the Armenian community (*millet*) of the Ottoman Empire. They represented the power of “Ottoman Armenia” by working for the well-being of such national institutions as the Constantinople and Jerusalem Patriarchates, the formation of an Armenian Catholic Millet and educational and artistic projects.

(*The Amiras: Lords of Ottoman Armenia*, translated by Marika Blandin, introduction by Ambassador Bernard Dorin, was published in London by Taderon Press, 2012, and costs \$22/UK£17.)

# Armenian Pianist Drew Petersen Specializes in Chopin

NEW YORK — He may not sound Armenian with the name Drew Petersen, but indeed, he is half Armenian pianist he is indeed half Armenian, and the other half, a mix of Norwegian, Irish, German and Finnish. Of all the nationalities represented in Petersen, “Armenian is the one I identify with most, thanks to my family and my upbringing,” he said.

Petersen, an 18-year-old pianist from New Jersey who is now studying at the Juilliard School in New York City, just performed two recitals in Florida as a top scholarship winner for the Chopin Foundation of the United States. He played two different all-Chopin programs for the foundation’s concerts on Saturday, January 14 and Sunday, January

15, to full houses. On Saturday, he played at the Broward Library where audience members arriving too late watched from the lobby on a large screen TV, and on Sunday at the 800-seat Grenada Presbyterian Church in Coral Gables. These were concerts that left a lasting impression on the listeners. After all, how can one forget Chopin’s *Sonata No. 2 in B-flat Minor, Op. 35*, rarely performed in its entirety, which includes the famous third movement *Marche Funebre*?

The audience listened intently without a sound, to the entire masterpiece until the end when the crowd rose to their feet with excitement and applause.

At the age of 14, he left traditional high school to begin a bachelor of liberal Arts

degree at the Harvard University Extension School. With nothing to hold him back, he will complete his academic degree this year while concurrently studying with Jerome Lowenthal at the Juilliard School.

Petersen, who turned 18 in December, has had a very busy life; not only is he performing around the country, but he has traveled to Europe many times to perform in festivals in Italy, Germany and Switzerland. At age 5, he was presented in Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall. By age 10, he had performed in New York City’s Steinway Hall for Steinway & Son’s 150th Anniversary, and by 11, he was asked by conductor Lukas Foss to perform a Mozart piano concerto under his direction for the Music Festival of the Hamptons open-



Drew Petersen

## CALENDAR

### MASSACHUSETTS

**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.

**MARCH 31 — AGBU New England District Presents: Performing Artists in Concert**, 8 p.m. Under the artistic direction of mezzo-soprano Solange Merdinian and conductor Aram Demirjian, the inaugural program will feature young Armenian artists who are recipients of scholarships from AGBU in the performing arts. They will perform the works of both Armenian and non-Armenian classical composers. Details to follow.

### NEW JERSEY

**JANUARY 28 — Voice of Armenians TV presents Yerevan’s Hovhaness Tumanis Puppet Theater**. Two plays in a single night in English and Armenian at 6 p.m. Saint Leon Armenian Church, 12-61 Saddle River Road, Fair Lawn. Adults, \$25, children under 8, \$15.

**MARCH 8 — Hovnanian School Open houses** The doors of your child’s future are open, come see for yourself from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Hovnanian School, 817 River Road, New Milford. For information: (201) 967-5940.

**MARCH 31 — CARS presents Armenian singer Sibil from Istanbul** at 7 p.m. Special guest performance by Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble. Bergen County Academics, 200 Hackensack Ave., Hackensack. For information, call Hilda (516) 496-0248, Margit (914) 686-0840, Adi (973) 761-1544. Tickets, depending on seats: \$50, \$30 and \$25.

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



**On March 31, the AGBU New England District will present a concert featuring young Armenian artists who are recipients of scholarships from the AGBU in performing arts. Under the direction of mezzo-soprano Solange Merdinian and conductor Aram Demirjian (pictured here), they will perform the works of both Armenian and non-Armenian classical composers. Details will follow.**

### NEW YORK

**JANUARY 28 — Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School celebrate its 45th anniversary** with a Benefit Gala Concert at the Armenian Church of Holy Martyrs. Admission, \$45. Reception to follow. 209-15 Horace Expressway, Oakland Gardens. RSVP (718) 225-4826.

ing night gala. Leading up to that performance Petersen was the focus of a documentary titled “Just Normal,” produced and aired on Plum TV.

Petersen has been the winner of many piano competitions, one of which allowed him to perform a recital in New York’s Symphony Space this March. He has performed on PBS’s “From the Top” and has been heard several times on Robert Sherman’s “Young Artist Showcase” on WQXR.

In addition to playing the piano, Petersen has been studying conducting since the age of 10, in addition to composition.

Although multi-lingual in English, French and German, Petersen regrets not yet mastering the Armenian language and traveling to Armenia.

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

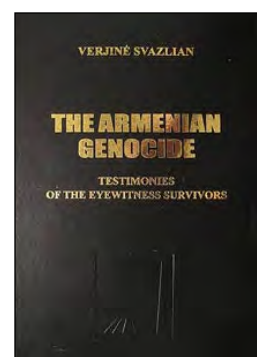
# Still Documenting the 1915 Genocide: Politics, Prose and Poetry

By Alan Whitehorn

After almost a century since the 1915 state-sponsored mass slaughter of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, one would think there would be few new pioneering books on the subject of the Armenian Genocide. That, however, is not the case. At least four important new reference volumes on the Armenian Genocide have appeared in English within the past year: Verjine Svazlian, *The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors*, Vahakn Dadrian & Taner Akçam, *Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials*, Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, and Shahen Khachaturian, *The Color of Pain: The Reflection of the Armenian Genocide in Armenian Painting*. Each book is an important work that has been years in the preparation. Collectively, these works will have an enduring impact, as we approach the 100th memorial year.

## The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors

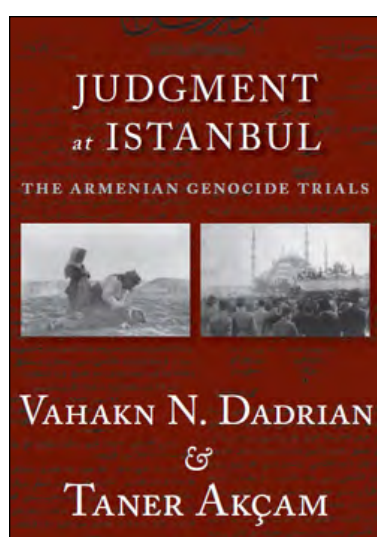
Verjine Svazlian, author of a number of previous books of survivor memoirs on the Genocide, is a remarkable scholar who has produced her lifetime's legacy book: *The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors* (Yerevan, Gitoutyoun, 2011; ISBN 978-5-8080-0857-1). At 848 pages, it is epic in scope, in almost every sense. Svazlian began her research interviews in the Soviet Union of the 1950s when it was politically dangerous to conduct such research. Half a century after and, at considerable expense in personal time and money, she has produced the most comprehensive published documentary account ever of Armenian Genocide survivor testimonies. Seven hundred entries, most mini-autobiographies, are included. Svazlian, senior research professor at the Armenian Genocide Museum, has published key portions of her genocide survivor research previously, but this is the integrating encyclopedic volume. Notably, it is co-sponsored by the prestigious National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, the Museum-Institute of the Armenian Genocide and the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography in Yerevan.



With the help of her daughter Dr. Karnik Svazlian, the epic volume is exceptionally well-indexed by survivor's name, city, region and subject. It has become an essential primary source documentary work. That this vast volume was achieved by one individual, rather than a team of scholars, is extraordinary. Without a doubt, it will become a crucial reference source for future researchers and educators writing about the Genocide. A copy should be acquired by every genocide and human rights museum. An Armenian-language version is also available. A Turkish language version was planned, with a brave publisher in Istanbul. Regrettably, he was arrested by state authorities in the fall of 2011. Government coercion, with the intent of silencing and intimidating publishing on the 1915 Genocide, continues in Turkey even to this day, almost a century later. It is an aggressive authoritarian form of genocide denial and, according to Genocide Watch's Gregory Stanton, the last stage of genocide. Dr. Svazlian's encyclopedic volume, in English and Armenian, is an articulate and powerful response to such arbitrary state censorship.

## Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials

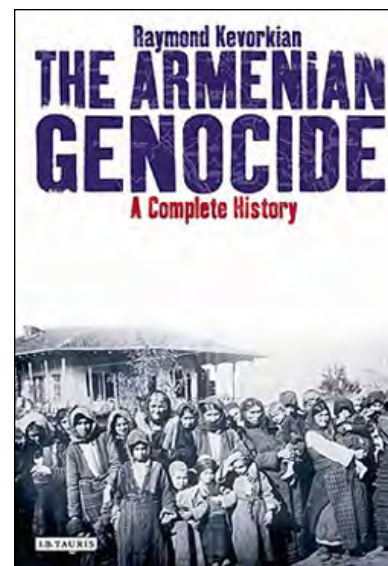
Vahakn Dadrian and Taner Akçam are two remarkable and respected scholars (one Armenian and one Turkish) who have individually published many important books on the Armenian Genocide. Their new co-authored 363-page volume *Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials* (New York, Berghahn Books, 2011; ISBN 978-0-85745-286-3) focuses upon the years after World War I when a new Turkish regime sought to punish the former Young Turk government and party officials who had engaged in atrocities and



extensive human rights abuses. A Turkish-language version of the book was originally published in 2008. Drawing upon many primary sources in a variety of languages, this volume pulls together the most complete record to date of the pioneering post-WW I trials. It details the charges laid in a Turkish military court against Young Turk leadership, the course of the trials and the verdicts (including death sentences in absentia for Mehmet Talaat, Ismail Enver, Ahmed Cemal and Mehmet Nazim). This pivotal volume shows the too-often neglected story of a key stepping stone for the emergence of human rights law, as it relates ultimately to crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes. These landmark Turkish court cases preceded by three decades the crucial and far better known Nuremberg and Tokyo Tribunals of the 1940s. It would take even longer, until the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st for the creation of the International Tribunals for Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Cambodia and the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague to prosecute others for such crimes against humanity. *Judgment at Istanbul* is part of several ongoing projects sponsored by the Zoryan Institute to document ever more fully the Armenian Genocide.

## The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History

Raymond Kevorkian's *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London, I.B. Tauris, 2011; 978 1 84885 561 8) is a 1,029-page opus that provides a broad canvass on the plight of the Armenians in the latter decades of the Ottoman Empire during both times of peace and war. The book commences with chapters on the massacres in the 1890s, then explores in-depth the pre-WWI era, documents extensively the key phases of the 1915 Genocide, including individual chapters on specific events in the different regions of Anatolia. Quite significantly, it also includes extensive coverage of the post-war trials and the emergence of the crucial concept of "crimes against humanity." This is a volume that is epic in time frame and regions covered. As an academic book, it is well-footnoted, with 200 pages of references. The tables of data on Armenian population statistics, number of churches/monasteries and schools are exceptionally useful. They remind us that the Genocide was not simply the death of a million and a half individuals, but an entire ethnic community targeted and slaughtered, with neighborhood schools, churches and monasteries destroyed. Genocide is a crime against a collective group of people such as an ethnic group or religious minority. Amongst its key targets are community schools and places of collective worship. Raymond Kevorkian, based in Paris, originally published this important work in French in 2006. Now that this encyclopedic volume is available in English, his epic work will have an even wider audience. It is destined to become a key reference work. We should all be grateful for his life-time dedication to the writing of this massive volume.



## The Color of Pain: The Reflection of the Armenian Genocide in Armenian Painting

In addition to detailed analysis by scholars, members of the Arts community have also endeavored to "describe the indescribable." Shahen Khachaturian's edited collection *The Color of Pain: The Reflection of the Armenian Genocide in Armenian Painting* (Yerevan, Printinfo Publishing House, 2010; ISBN 978-9939-53-643-9) is a compendium of Armenian artists' account of mass killings of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. This 208 page bilingual (English and Armenian) large-format art book focuses upon color paintings on the Hamidian Massacres of the 1890s, the 1915 Genocide and the continued period of suffering long after the horrific deeds. This volume is a powerfully moving portrayal of the collective suffering from state-sponsored ethnic and religious persecution of the Armenian people. The insights are through the eyes of famous and notable Armenian artists. Many of the paintings included in this volume can be found in the collections of the National Gallery of Armenia and the Armenian Genocide Museum in Yerevan. The painfully-evocative paintings include those by Hovhannes Ayvazovsky, Vartges Sureniants, Sarkis Khachaturian, Arshak Fetvadjan, V. Podpomogov (Ter-Astvatsatryan), Khoren Der-Harutian, Arshile Gorky

(Vostanik Adoyan), Kero Antoyan, Carzou (Carnik Zulumian), Jansem (Hovhannes Semerdjian), Papaz (Hagop Papazian), Hagop Hagopian, Grigor Khandjian and others. The edited collection could have included other contemporary artists such as Canada's Hagop Khoubessarian, but it is, without a doubt, an impressive volume. The quality of the color prints is excellent. It is often said that a picture can convey more than words. Together these works of art offer a highly-effective way to teach about the Young Turk's genocide of Armenians. *The Color of Pain* is an important new volume that lends powerful visual testimony through the artists' perspective. A DVD or website version would be useful to widen the audience reach of this volume. I could imagine such organizations as Facing History and the Genocide Education Project using such materials in their high school genocide education seminars. For a younger more visually-oriented



generation, this might be quite informative.

As best we can, we continue to try to document the 1915 Genocide, but it is a very, very difficult account to write. We draw enormously upon dedicated individuals who have devoted a lifetime to tell as full a story as possible after such enormous death and trauma. But it not enough that scholars and artists pen this profoundly moving story. It also requires others to resist the 'sin of indifference' and read these important accounts. They need to better learn and understand. They can further help by donating copies of these volumes to

community and public libraries, so that the voices of the dead are more widely heard and not forgotten. These four books can help make a difference. They are worthy testaments to the Armenian victims and their kin.

(Alan Whitehorn is author of a number of books on the Armenian Genocide, including *Just Poems: Reflections on the Armenian Genocide*.)





COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN  
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COMMENTARY

# Georgia's Chokehold on Armenia Reaches Critical Level

By Edmond Y. Azadian

While Armenian news media outlets have been concentrating on the French Senate action criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide, closer to home relations with neighboring Georgia are causing heartaches for citizens and government officials alike. Relations are tense, to say the least.

Georgian authorities are cognizant that they have the upper hand in their bilateral relations with Armenia; they are using that advantage to help tighten the noose which Azerbaijan and Turkey have put in place through their blockade. That policy is nothing less than the continuation of the Genocide by squeezing Armenia out of existence.

By virtue of its NATO ambitions, the Tbilisi government is doing anything and everything to ingratiate itself to Ankara and Baku. Unfortunately, Armenia is at the receiving end of that policy.

Georgian actions have bearings on three different areas: a) regional politics, b) domestic abuses of human rights in Georgia and c) a planned depopulation program in Javakhk.

Because of the blockade, Armenia is restricted in its access to the outside world, which impacts negatively on its economic development.

One outlet for Armenian is Iran, which remains precarious, because of sanctions and threats against that country by the United States and the European Union. In the event of a conflagration, Armenia will be devastated.

The other outlet is, of course, Georgia. The Tbilisi government is using that leverage against Armenia cynically. Every excuse is being used to restrict the movements of people and goods to the outside world through Georgian territory: road conditions, weather, tense relations with Russia, etc. Recently many citizens of Armenia were stranded on the Georgian borders with Turkey and Russia because of weather conditions. Their ungraceful Georgian hosts took the opportunity to impose exorbitant taxes on those citizens. These seem minor issues, but many Armenians travel to Turkey through Georgia to bring goods for sale to Armenia in order to provide for their families.

But besides such low-level harassments, high political games are at play. At one point, Mikheil Saakashvili's government toyed with the idea of a federation with Azerbaijan to further strangle Armenia. During his last visit to Baku, the Georgian president assured President Ilham Aliyev that Georgia would side with Azerbaijan should a war break out. The only problem that Azerbaijan has at this moment is with Armenia (if we discount the late president of Azerbaijan Abulfaz Elchibey's dream to wrest Northern Azerbaijan from Iran).

To add insult to injury, recently Georgia's deputy speaker of the parliament, Friton Dotvan, announced in Baku that "Azerbaijan and Georgia will return their occupied territories, because those are their own." The reference is, of course, to Nagorno Karabagh, which is being equated to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, all casualties of reckless actions of war-mongering leaders in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The next level of political harassment in Georgia is against citizens of Armenian origin. For centuries, Tbilisi had been a hub of Armenian culture. Georgian jealousy has reduced that community to a shell of its former self and that discriminatory policy is still on-going. Armenians are not only being denied equal economic opportunities under different, at times cryptic statutes, but their schools are forced to close down and their churches are being usurped and re-consecrated as Georgian churches.

In 2009, the 14th-century St. Kevork of Mughni Church collapsed; despite repeated requests to the government to shore up the building before the collapse, the government took no steps to help. The Georgian authorities have yet to make good on their promises to rebuild the church. At this time, the destiny of St. Nishan Church in Tbilisi is at stake. Recently an "accidental" fire broke out, causing the collapse of one wall. In the late 19th century, there were 29 active Armenian churches in Tbilisi; today there are only two. St. Nishan is among the six Armenian churches claimed by the Georgian Orthodox Church.

During the visit of Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II to Georgia both President Saakashvili and Patriarch Illya

II had promised to resolve the contentious issue, which to this date remains unattended.

The Georgian government, in its desire to join NATO and the European Union, had promised to discontinue trampling minority rights. One of the issues the Georgian government had pledged to HH Karekin II and the international community was to recognize minority churches as legal entities. Now that issue has turned out to be a catch-22. The legalization of the Armenian Church in Georgia has been tied to the legalization of the Georgian Church in Armenia, where there is no restriction whatsoever, not only for different religious groups, but even fanatical sects. But it turns out that the Georgian Church does not intend to take the initiative to seek legal status in Armenia, thus leaving the legal status of the Armenian Church in Georgia in limbo, because of a lack of reciprocation.

Every day a new scandal breaks out, forcing the Armenians to forget the existing ones. The most recent scandal is the potential sale of the poet Hovhanness Toumanyan's Tbilisi house which in 1899 was baptized as Vernadoon, where writers, poets, artists, editors gathered rendering it a hearth of Armenian culture. Writers Ghazaros Aghayan, Avedik Issahakian, Levon Shant, Derenik Temirjian and others have been permanent guests. In the 1930s, Toumanian's descendants had turned over the house to the government of Soviet Georgia, including a valuable research library. After taking over that cultural sanctuary the Soviet government of Georgia had put it to "good use" by converting it to a macaroni storage. And today, the democratic government of Georgia has put the facility for sale and the buyer is a Turkish-Georgian company, which intends to convert it into a hostel for Turkish guest laborers. Armenians in Armenia and Georgia are appalled and they are trying to salvage that cultural icon.

The third level of pressure is on Javakhk Armenians. Javakhk is a historic Armenian territory that fell into Georgian hands during political upheavals in the region, before the region's absorption into the Soviet Union.

The Russian government maintained a military base in Javakhk. Armenians depended heavily on the base for economic sustenance and for security guarantees. Moscow decided to evacuate the base prematurely, driven by its own political motivation, leaving the Armenian community to the tender mercy of the Georgians.

Javakhk is a depressed economic area. There are no proper roads, living conditions are substandard and the authorities manipulate the situation in such a way that the condition of the Armenians is further aggravated. Political activists like Vahakn Chakhalian are jailed, organizations are banned in this country, which is a darling of the West for its openness and transparency. There is yet another threat hanging over the heads of the Armenians; the Tbilisi government is planning to resettle in Javakhk Turkish Metzkets exiled to Central Asia by Stalin. That will further exacerbate the ethnic tensions in the region, which is the intention of successive Georgian administrations.

Anti-Armenian policies in Javakhk are so strong now that they don't even allow textbooks from Armenia to be used by Armenian students there.

What is the Armenian government doing to confront these provocations?

Unfortunately, Yerevan's hands are tied; first, Armenia does not wish to jeopardize its access to the outside world through Georgia. And then, the leaders in Armenia remember that history repeats itself. We are at a political juncture where we were during the first independent republic (1918-20). Armenia cannot confront its hostile neighbors on three sides.

Recently, Minister of Culture asmik Poghosian gave an interview citing all these problems and highlighting the importance of Georgian-Armenian relations. She has dispatched a commission to study the situation in Georgia and seek solutions.

That very much outlines the position of the government, which soft-pedals all relations with Georgia. Following the visits of Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian and even President Serge Sargsian, similar pronouncements were made. A deceptive formula is being promoted to hide the intentions and grievances of both sides that there are no problems between the two countries that cannot be solved.

We need to be aware, however, that not only are the issues not being solved, but that Georgia is able to easily apply more pressure to keep up its chokehold, its political fig leaf not withstanding.





## COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## 20 Steps Turkey Could Take to Worsen Relations with France After Genocide Vote

Turkey's leaders have been threatening France for months with various reprisals should the French government pass a law making it illegal to deny the Armenian Genocide.

Ignoring Turkish threats and blackmail, the French Parliament adopted a bill on December 22, 2011, criminalizing denial of the Armenian Genocide. The Senate followed suit on January 23, 2012, with a vote of 127-86, after a seven-hour debate. The new law, to be signed soon by President Nicolas Sarkozy, carries a one-year jail term and a fine of \$60,000 for anyone denying the Armenian Genocide. Every single member of the French legislature, even those voting against the bill, stated that they had no doubt whatsoever about the facts of the Armenian Genocide.

The hour of truth has now arrived. One wonders if Turkey's leaders have the courage to carry out their bombastic declarations. We would like to ask them two questions: 1) Are you all talk and no action or, as the saying goes, is your bark worse than your bite? 2) Will you be taking short-term face-saving measures or more serious and permanent steps?

Unlike a month ago, the Turkish public will not be satis-

fied if the Ambassador is withdrawn, only to be sent back in two weeks. Also, Turks may not be too impressed by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's announcement that he would no longer visit Paris.

While Turkish officials are recovering from the shock of the French vote, we wish to offer some tips on how Turks can make a bad situation even worse. In its fury, the Turkish government may take retaliatory measures not only against France, but also all countries that have recognized the Armenian Genocide. Such extreme, irrational and self-defeating actions would contribute to Turkey's isolation and hurt its own interests. Below are suggested ideas on how Turkey could settle scores with France and other perceived adversaries:

- 1) Withdraw the Turkish ambassador from France and do not send him back until the French government renounces its acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide and the newly adopted French bill.
- 2) Expel the French ambassador from Turkey and shut down the French embassy.
- 3) Break all economic, military, cultural and political ties with France.
- 4) Collect all French products such as chocolates and wines from store shelves throughout Turkey and dump them in the sewer; and ban French fries and French kissing!
- 5) Cancel all Turkish Airlines flights to French cities and do not allow Air France flights to Turkey. Place similar restrictions on French ships.
- 6) Prohibit teaching of French in Turkish schools and shut down private French schools in Turkey.
- 7) Forbid access to all French websites.
- 8) Discontinue Turkey's efforts to join the European Union, in view of the expected submission of similar measures on Genocide denial to all 26 EU member countries.
- 9) Cancel Turkey's membership in the Council of Europe because in 1987 the European Parliament recognized the

Armenian Genocide.

10) Withdraw from the United Nations because in 1985 the UN Human Rights Commission adopted a report recognizing the Armenian Genocide.

11) Ban all Turkish official visits to France.

12) Expel all French citizens from Turkey and demand that all Turkish citizens immediately leave the territory of France.

13) Do not allow French tourists and businessmen to enter Turkey.

14) Shut down French automobile factories in Turkey, causing the unemployment of thousands of Turkish workers.

15) Rename all French streets in Turkey to Algerian and North Korean names.

16) Adopt a resolution by the Turkish Parliament accusing France for the so-called Algerian "genocide."

17) Deport all citizens of Armenia working illegally in Turkey. Deprive them of all food and water during their long march from Istanbul to Armenia or, even worse, to the Syrian desert!

18) Withdraw all private and public Turkish funds from French banks.

19) Blacklist all French books, movies, newspapers and TV programs in Turkey.

20) Arrest French citizens in Turkey in retaliation for Turks imprisoned in France for denying the Armenian Genocide.

The French Senate's decision is part of the high price the Turkish government has been paying for the past 100 years for its persistent denial of the Armenian Genocide and the heinous crimes committed by its Ottoman predecessors. Until Turkey acknowledges its guilt and restores the Armenian lands and properties to the descendants of Genocide victims, it will continue to face serious challenges from other countries and will be denied a place in the family of civilized nations.

## Hrant Dink Case Exposes Shortcomings of Turkey's Justice System

Today, as Armenians and non-Armenians alike mark the fifth anniversary of the tragic assassination of Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink, and pause to reflect on his life's work, deep disappointment continues to be expressed regarding the January 17 Turkish court decision in the Dink case, which fell far short in rendering justice.

Despite its public commitment to do so, Turkey failed to conduct an exhaustive investigation and the January 17 court decision reflects this fact as all suspects were acquitted of charges of acting as part of an organized conspiracy. The European Parliament's rapporteur on Turkey, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, called the verdict "disappointing." "The Hrant Dink case could have been an example of how properly functioning judicial institutions deal with disrupting forces in a society. This verdict makes clear the need for further judicial reform in Turkey," Oomen-Ruijten continued.

In the weeks following Dink's assassination in January 2007, then Chairman Joseph Biden, Jr. (D-DE) of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, at the urging of the Armenian Assembly, introduced legislation (S. Res. 65) condemning Dink's murder and urged Turkey to repeal Article 301 of its penal code, which criminalizes discussion of the Armenian Genocide.

The legislation, which also supported "an exhaustive investigation into the assassination of Mr. Dink" by the Turkish government, unanimously passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the first time in 18 years that a Senate Committee approved legislation with reference to the Armenian Genocide.

Biden commented at that time: "Hrant Dink was a man of strong conviction who wanted, above all, to foster greater understanding and respect between Turks and Armenians. His assassination is one more tragic reminder of why Turkey needs to reform its laws and allow for an open discussion of events surrounding the Armenian Genocide. It should never be a crime to speak the truth."

Memorial services honoring Dink are being held throughout the Armenian Diaspora, while in Turkey tens of thousands have taken to the streets again to demonstrate solidarity with the Dink family and to protest the court's failure to hold all those involved with Hrant Dink's murder accountable.

"Hrant's spirit touched us all as he sought to make Turkey a better place for everyone. His exemplary courage will always be remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with Raket Dink and her family, especially during this difficult time in light of the recent court decision," stated Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, legate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America in Washington, DC.

(This commentary was sent by the Washington-based Armenian Assembly of America.)

## A Moral Israel Must Recognize Armenian Genocide

By Israel W. Charny

I never cease to be amazed at the "upside-down double talk" that genocide deniers speak – not only in denial of the Armenian Genocide, but in denial of the Holocaust and, believe it or not, denial of the Rwandan genocide. In fact, many of us scholars characterize denial of genocide as the "last stage of genocide."

In a recent article in the *Jerusalem Post* called "Armenian Genocide: Israel must maintain its moral compass," the arguments set forth by Hakan Yavuz and Tal Buenos are a thin veneer for nothing less than a pro-Turkish government position of maintaining denial of the Armenian genocide.

What is their argument? For Israel to now break its silence and recognize the Armenian Genocide would be tantamount to confessing, retroactively, that its been playing politics all along by remaining silent and, with crocodile tears, admitting that those of us who care about Israel cannot allow that to happen.

Wrong enough, but their basic argument is extended by a manipulative and factually irresponsible debate of the very concept of "genocide." Suddenly the historic Polish attorney Raphael Lemkin, a Jew with a high post in the Polish government legal system who we recognize as having virtually given his life to bring into international law the concept of "genocide" that he created, is characterized as "an employee of the US government" who he was serving to gain a moral advantage over the Germans after WWII.

There is not a word of recognition that Lemkin first submitted a resolution about the mass killing of religious and national entities to the League of Nations long before WWII. Lemkin was an employee of the US occupational army in Germany very briefly after surviving the Holocaust in which he lost virtually all of his family. After giving up law positions at Duke University as well as Yale, he devoted himself full time to the passage of the Genocide Convention in the newly-founded United Nations. The authors should be reprimanded severely for their distorted presentation of Lemkin's identity.

The key issue that emerges is the question of whether, after years of a realpolitik denial of the Armenian Genocide, in disheartening obsequiousness to Turkey in an attempt to gain their favor at the expense of the basic

I never cease to be amazed at the "upside-down double talk" that genocide deniers speak – not only in denial of the Armenian Genocide, but in denial of the Holocaust and, believe it or not, denial of the Rwandan genocide.

moral principles that are intrinsic to recognition to another people's genocide or holocaust, Israel's recognition of the Armenian Genocide would constitute another politicized move rather than a moral correction.

Finally, the authors seek to stall with a disingenuous promise, 70 years after the Holocaust, that further study of the concept of "genocide" will bring us to an understanding we do not have, as if we do not know that genocide is the mass murder of a significant part of a targeted people, executed by a government or any other entity, such as a religious or ideological group or a terrorist organization.

The facts are well known: The Turkish government executed the Armenian Genocide – in which one to one-and-a-half million Armenians were murdered.

And for us Jews and Israelis, there are added meanings: One Israeli professor at Bar Ilan University once characterized the Armenian Genocide as a "dress rehearsal for the Holocaust." We also know that Hitler explicitly built on the precedent of the Armenian Genocide when he went after us Jews.

(Dr. Israel W. Charny is executive director of the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem, editor of the web magazine GPN Genocide Prevention. Now, a co-founder and former president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars and editor of the Encyclopedia of Genocide. He was awarded the Armenian Presidential Prize – similar to the Israel Prize – in Yerevan in June 2011 for his contributions to the study of denials of genocides – including the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust. This article originally appeared in the January 22 issue of the *Jerusalem Post*.)





# French Senate Passes Measure Making Genocide Denial a Crime

FRANCE, from page 1

Turkey furiously denounced the move, with Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin telling CNN-Turk television that it was “a great injustice and shows a total lack of respect for Turkey.”

“We strongly condemn this decision which is... an example of irresponsibility,” the Turkish foreign ministry said in a written statement, adding that the government would not hesitate to swiftly implement retaliatory measures.”

When France’s lower house passed the bill last month, Ankara froze political and military ties with Paris.

Armenia meanwhile praised the vote, with Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian saying: “This day will be written in gold not only in the history of friendship between the Armenian and French peoples, but also in the annals of the history of the protection of human rights worldwide.”

The vote “will further consolidate the existing mechanisms of prevention of crimes against humanity,” the statement said.

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II has addressed a letter of gratitude to French President Nicolas Sarkozy. “From the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin we welcome and bless you, the state officials of France, our friends, the French people, and express the deep gratitude of our church and world-spread Armenians for passing the Armenian Bill at the Senate,” he wrote.

“The voice of justice was again heard from the French Senate: our people have been waiting for its victory for a century. The passed law proves your devotion, the devotion of the French state and people to democratic principles, universal values, the fixing of which will rule out the violations in the world and the tragic crimes against humanity,” he concluded.

France has already recognized the killings as a genocide, but the new bill would go further, by punishing anyone who denies this with a year in jail and a fine of 45,000 euros (\$57,000).

Earlier Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who cancelled talks with European Union foreign ministers in Brussels on Iran’s nuclear drive, to deal with the crisis, said Ankara had already prepared its response.

“We have previously determined the steps to be taken if the bill is finally adopted. No one should doubt it,” the state-run Anatolia news agency quoted Davutoglu as saying.

Davutoglu said Saturday the law would trigger “permanent sanctions,” arguing that it goes against European values and would not help Turkish-Armenian relations.

Trade between France and Turkey was worth 12 billion euros (\$15.5 billion) in 2010, with several hundred French businesses operating there.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused France of hypocrisy and Sarkozy of pandering to France’s estimated 400,000 voters of Armenian origin, three months ahead of a tough re-election battle.

“I hope the Senate will not make France a country contradicting its own values,” Erdogan said. “This is a debate which is entirely against the freedom of thought. This is merely a step taken for the upcoming elections.”

Erdogan had closely followed the debate and had met with Davutoglu to put final touches on the measures Ankara could take, according to media reports.

The Turkish media showed intense interest in the vote, with many Turkish news channels broadcasting the session live.

Turkey’s deputy prime minister Bulent Arinc warned that Ankara could ask Europe’s top rights court to denounce Paris if the legislation is adopted, a move he said would be a “historic shame.”

Around 15,000 Turks from France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg rallied peacefully on the streets of Paris on Saturday to protest the law.

Several hundred Turks and Armenians sepa-



Armenians citizens from France gather in front of the Senate in Paris, Monday, January 23, as a bill that would make it a crime to deny that the killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks nearly a century ago was a genocide is scheduled to begin debating in the mid-afternoon.

for the condemnation and prevention of crimes against humanity,” Sargisian wrote. He said it was “a historic day for Armenians all over the world.”

Several hundred young political activists and students also gathered outside the French embassy in Yerevan to express their gratitude, bringing flowers and candles and waving French and Armenian flags.

Some carried placards with slogans like “France is a guarantor of historical justice,” while others chanted: “Long live Armenia, long live France, long live the Franco-Armenian friendship!”

“We came here to say thank you to the French ambassador and ask him to convey our huge thanks to President Sarkozy, the senators and the French people,” one of the rally’s organizers, Artur Kazarian, told AFP.

“France has shown once again that it places human values higher than economic and military interests,” he said.

Armenia and its large diaspora around the world has long campaigned for international recognition of the mass killings by Ottoman Turks during World War I as genocide, despite strong denials from Turkey.

The issue, which inspires intense feelings among Armenians, has poisoned relations between the two neighbors whose mutual border remains closed.

(Armenpress contributed to this report.)

## PM Rebukes Traffic Police for Delays in Issuing Licenses

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Prime Minister Tigran Sargisian criticized the Armenian traffic police on Thursday for what he described as excessive delays in the registration of cars and the ongoing replacement of drivers’ licenses.

Sargisian said he has instructed the chief of the national police department, Vladimir Gasparian, to personally address long lines formed at traffic police offices in Yerevan.

The long queues are a result, in large measure, of the government’s decision last year to replace all drivers’ permits issued in Soviet times and in the 1990s with new, plastic ones. Scores of motorists scrambled to receive them before the January 2012 deadline. The deadline has been extended to June.

“Lately we have been receiving complaints regarding services provided by the police and in particular the car registration and the issuance of drivers’ licenses,” Sargisian said, during a weekly meeting of his cabinet. “Instructions regarding this problem have been given to the police chief, and we must improve the quality of the services within a short period.”

“This is an area where more than 300,000 citizens of Armenia deal with the state each year. It creates an attitude towards the state,” he said.

The premier announced that the traffic police are now developing a new computerized database of vehicles and will open a new office in the capital this April. He said car owners should be able to spend no more than 20 minutes completing the police paperwork.

Sargisian has also initiated other major changes in road policing. That includes the ongoing gradual installation of surveillance and speed cameras.

## Czech Police Detain Armenian on the Run for Eight Years

PRAGUE (CTK National News Wire) – Czech police have detained an Armenian man, wanted on suspicion of property and violent crimes, who has evaded justice for eight years, in Brno last week, South Moravia police spokeswoman Petra Vedrova said this week.

She did not specify the acts that he had committed.

The man used false personal documents. Police have been searching for him since 2003. A European warrant for his arrest has been issued.

The Armenian worked in Brno at a fruit and vegetables stand.

During a police check, he submitted a Bulgarian passport and other documents of Bulgarian origin. Policemen checked them thoroughly and found out that they were forged.

They also compared the man’s fingerprints with the police register and revealed his real identity.

## President of Nagorno Karabagh Visits Stepanakert Airport

STEPANAKERT, Karabagh (Armenpress) – On January 24, Nagorno Karabagh (NKR) President Bako Sahakyan visited the Stepanakert airport, got acquainted with the ongoing work on site and convoked a working consultation on issues related to putting the airport into operation.

The head of the NKR Civil Aviation Department, Dmitriy Adbashyan, representatives of the department and the airport delivered corresponding reports, the press service of the NKR president said.

Sahakyan expressed satisfaction with the work being done at the airport, adding that quality of the work should be maintained.

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