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At Inauguration, Sargisian Vows to Deal With Emigration, Unemployment, Poverty

Some Protests Take Place

By Gayane Mkrtchyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – Tuesday, April 9, during the extraordinary session of the National Assembly of Armenia held at the Karen Demirjian Sport and Concert Complex, the newly elected President Serge Sargisian assumed the office of President of Armenia for his second term. This was

the sixth inauguration ceremony of independent Armenia. While the official winner of the February 18 ballot was swearing-in in the presence of high-ranking officials and diplomatic missions, at Liberty Square the official runner-up, leader of oppositional Heritage party Raffi Hovannisian also took an oath in front of his supporters.

With a special procedural order early this morning the state flag, presidential coat of arms, the original draft of the Constitution and a 7th century Holy Bible were taken to the Sport and Concert Complex.



President Serge Sargisian

With his right hand on the Gospel that belonged to the Catholicos' Mother, Sargisian took his oath in accordance with the respective Constitutional provision: "Assuming the office of President of the Republic of Armenia, I swear to unreservedly fulfill requirements of the Constitution to respect human and civil rights and freedoms, to safeguard independence of the Republic, its territorial integrity and security for the glory of the Republic of Armenia and for the benefit of the people of the Republic of Armenia."

see INAUGURATION, page 2

Genocide Prevention Symposium Held at UN

By Florence Avakian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

NEW YORK – The trauma of genocide does not end with the killing. The tragic effects can be long-term and very damaging. In the 20th century alone, tens of millions have been killed in Armenia, Germany, Cambodia, Bosnia, Guatemala, Darfur, Iraq, Rwanda, Sarajevo, South Sudan, as well as countless Greeks, Assyrians and Palestinians.

At the New York headquarters of the United Nations (UN), on Thursday, April 4, a special symposium took place, titled, "Toward Preventing Genocide – Nations Acknowledging their Dark History, and Practicing Mindful Non-Violence." It was organized and moderated by Dr. Ani Kalayjian, president of the Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP).

Opening the conference was Armenia's Ambassador to the United Nations Garen Nazarian, who reminded the audience of more than 60 UN delegation representatives see PREVENTION, page 7



New Shape at Heritage Park

BOSTON – On Sunday, April 7, the annual reconfiguration of the abstract sculpture at the Armenian Heritage Park in Boston took place.

The split dodecahedron is a symbol of Armenians and all who were pulled apart from their country of origin and came to these shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways.

This year's reconfiguration marks the first in a series of changes that will take place annually.

Above, the process of the reconfiguration can be seen.

Marathoner Chekijian Runs for Dana-Farber

Gabriel Aljalian Inspires Community

By Gabriella Gage

Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN – Five years ago, the idea of running a marathon would have seemed a daunting, if not nearly impossible, challenge to Sarkis Chekijian of Belmont. Though an active and athletic individual, he had never particularly enjoyed long-distance running, but he was determined to undertake a new challenge.

Through conversations with friends and see MARATHONER, page 8



Chekijian at the 2010 Boston Marathon

NEWS IN BRIEF

Oçalan Sends Message To Armenians

ISTANBUL (ArmeniaNow) – Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Oçalan, who is serving a life sentence in Turkey, has sent a message to Armenians and Assyrians in Turkey.

The Istanbul-based Armenian-Turkish newspaper, *Agos*, reported that the message was forwarded through the Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party Co-chairman Selahattin Demirtas, who met with Oçalan in Imrali Island last week.

"From now on any initiative that will be aimed at violating the rights and freedoms of the Armenian and Assyrian peoples will be unacceptable. There can be no democracy without that," said Oçalan, as relayed by Demirtas.

Mexico to Return Aliyev Statue to Azerbaijan

MEXICO CITY (Armenpress) – The statue of the late Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev, which was dismantled in January upon the request of local residents, will be transferred to the Azerbaijani Embassy, said the head of Miguel Hidalgo region, Victor Hugo Romo.

The monument of Aliyev was installed in one of the central Mexico City parks, after Azerbaijan had spent a large sum of money on the renovation of two Mexican parks. Installation of the statue was followed by a number of protests by the residents, as the statue of a dictator was located near the statues of Mexican national heroes. As a result, a special committee advised the city to dismantle the statue of Aliyev, noting that authorities had made a mistake by accepting the money and letting a foreign country to install a statue.

Krunk Seeks to Become New National Airline

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – A relatively unknown private company confirmed on Monday reports that it is seeking to become Armenia's new national airline following the bankruptcy of the Armavia.

Vladimir Poghosian, director of Krunk Air, said it will soon file an application to the Armenian Civil Aviation Department and is ready to launch flights in about three months' time.

Poghosian stated that Krunk would fly to more than 60 destinations, including major cities in the US, with fares expect to be much lower than Armavia. "We will be using our own fuel which will be cheaper by 50 percent," he claimed.

Armavia filed for bankruptcy on April 1, citing its inability to repay debts to Yerevan's Zvartnots airport and other partners.

The private carrier went bankrupt less than a month before the expiration of its exclusive rights to international flights to and from Armenia.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Russian Oil Giant to Enter Armenian Market

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – According to recent reports, Russia's largest oil company controlled by the Kremlin is looking to gain a foothold in Armenia, a development that could reshape the Armenian fuel market dominated by a handful of government-linked businessmen.

Igor Sechin, the chairman of the Rosneft giant, and the chief executive of an Armenian company signed a tentative agreement on the creation of a joint venture specializing in fuel sales during a visit to Armenia last week.

The little-known company, Oil Techno, supplies lubricants to Russian agricultural businesses, transport companies and food producers.

The agreement was signed after Sechin's meetings with President Serge Sargsian and Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian.

The president was quoted by his press service as saying that Rosneft's presence in Armenia will give a major boost to Russian-Armenian economic ties.

"We are happy with the entry of such a serious investor into the Armenian market and will make every effort to make the project a success," the prime minister said.

Sechin said he sees "serious potential for supplies of petrol and aviation and diesel fuel" in Armenia. No further details of the planned joint venture were reported. The Rosneft chief, who is a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, made no statements to the media in the Armenian capital.

Mexico Appoints New Ambassador to Armenia

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – The newly-appointed Mexican Ambassador to Armenia Rubén Beltrán Guerrero presented his credentials to Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian on Monday.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during the meeting Nalbandian said that he believes the new envoy will contribute to the expansion and strengthening of relations between the two countries.

Nalbandian also noted that the Armenian government has decided to open an embassy in Mexico as a result of recent cooperative efforts between the two countries.

Guerrero, in turn, pledged to continue these cooperative efforts and strengthen ties between Mexico and Armenia.

Several Arrests Made in Proshyan Murder Case

PROSHYAN, Armenia (ArmeniaNow) – The Armenian Police announced they have made multiple arrests in connection with the murder of the village mayor.

On April 2, Hrach Muradyan, 50, was found dead near the administrative building in the village where he was elected mayor last autumn. Police said Muradyan sustained a fatal gunshot wound.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun), of which Muradyan was a member, as well as other opposition parties and groups, condemned the crime, immediately linking it to the man's political views and activities as mayor. They called for a prompt and comprehensive investigation of all circumstances of the crime and revelation and punishment of those who committed and organized it.

A report published on the police department's official website last week said that several dozen people have been interrogated as part of an ongoing investigation and complex expert examinations have been conducted.

"As a result of coordinated efforts by different police divisions there are now people who have been arrested on suspicion of committing the crime," the police statement read.

The identities of the detainees and further information were not provided.

AUA Extension Offers Beacon of Hope to Syrian-Armenians

YEREVAN – The American University of Armenia (AUA) Extension continues to provide the Syrian-Armenian population in Armenia with vital assistance, harnessing philanthropic support to provide tuition-free courses for college preparation and career development.

"Education is Armenia's strength and future," said Judy Saryan, who recently joined philanthropists Sonia and Zaven Akian and Rita and Adam Kablanian in support of the much-needed scholarship. "I am very pleased to support AUA's outreach to Syrian-Armenian students."

AUA has expanded the program to meet the growing needs of Armenia's nascent Syrian-Armenian community. Thus far, more than 170 students have benefitted from the program and another 230 students, previously on a waiting list, are now scheduled to receive funding from the scholarship.

Earlier this year, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund also contributed to ensure access to the program was available to more students. Donations from anonymous sources have also contributed to the success of this program.

"These generous, gifts came at a critical time for us, allowing AUA to swiftly develop classes and meet the needs of the students who were coming to us for help," said AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian. "We are grateful for the community's support," added Boghosian.

Established last year, the scholarship allows Syrian-Armenian students now living in Armenia to enroll in any two courses offered by AUA Extension for free. The majority of these students have taken courses in English or preparatory courses for the TOEFL iBT and GRE exams required for admission to AUA.

"By offering these classes, free of charge, AUA is able to provide some stability to these students at a time of uncertainty in their lives," said Dr. Arpie Balian, Director of AUA Extension. "The program we developed provides tuition-free courses in both our degree programs as well as

in Extension."

AUA Extension's mission is to expand Armenia's academic, industrial, and technological development by fostering growth through accessible, high-quality

education, adult training and lifelong learning opportunities. To support the expansion of AUA Extension and this vital scholarship program, please visit <http://www.aua.am/giving>.

'Anush' Opera to Get 'Fresh' Treatment in Yerevan Premiere

By Siranuyshev Gevorgyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – French-Armenian actor, director and producer Serge Avedikian promises to give fresh life to Armen Tigranyan's "Anush" (or "Anouche" by French spelling) opera, first staged a century ago. The re-staged opera will premier in Yerevan on April 26.

The Armenian audience will have the chance to enjoy the new "Anouche" staged with joint efforts of Armenian and French professionals at Yerevan's Sundukyan National Academic Theatre. In May it will further be presented to the judgment of French opera fans at Nanterre-Amandiers Theatre, which will wrap up the season with it.

The opera, based on Hovannes Tumanyan's "Anush" poem, tells the tragic love story involving a simple village girl. It was first staged in Alexandrapol (modern day Gumri) in 1912; the music and libretto were authored by a musician Armen Tigranyan between 1908 and 1912.

The authors of new "Anouche" promise to turn the Yerevan premier into "this spring's most outstanding and much talked-about cultural event."

The director of the promised hit of the season is Cannes Film Festival award-winner Avedikian, choreographer is French Nicolas Musin, who is also the creator of the costumes and stage decorations. The music has been re-worked by Paris- and Barcelona-based Armenian composer and pianist Anahit Simonian. All the solo parts are trusted to Armenian actors. As Adibekian told during his meeting with the press hosted Tuesday by the French Embassy in Yerevan, all the solo actors have been selected to match the main characters' ages – Anush, Saro and Mosis.

He also said that to create the adaptation of the performance and libretto he re-read Tumanyan's poem over and over again, and for the instrumental arrangement and re-work of the music he found Tigranyan's hand-written score at another prominent Armenian writer Yeghishe Charents's museum. It is based on this score that Simonian did her work. As a result they decided to re-introduce "Anouche" in a new way, because since 1935 it has not undergone any changes, Avedikian says.

He added that Anush's story is contemporary in today's reality as well, because Tumanyan as a "writer with foresight" was able to create a universal work. Avedikian believes the French audience will easily relate to it as well.

"There are Saros, Anushes and Mosis nowadays too... it can happen in Corsica, Sicily, Germany and France, when a brother can kill his sister's beloved man for honor," says the director.

At Inauguration, Sargsian Vows to Deal with Emigration, Unemployment, Poverty

INAUGURATION, from page 1

In his inauguration statement Sargsian thanked citizens of Armenia for high turnout in the presidential elections, as well as those who entrusted him once again the task of serving as the president of the Republic of Armenia; he also thanked those who cast their votes for other candidates.

"Thereby they expressed their discontent with the problems existing in the country. By doing so, they sent a clear message to the authorities, demanding more efficient work. Rest assured that all messages are duly received," he said. The newly sworn-in president stressed economic development as top priority for the next five years.

"Let me highlight three main ones: emigration, unemployment, and poverty. The solutions for these problems are to be found on the same field. Efficient economy that is on the rise, this is the formula to our success. The second priority is in ensuring the rule of law. Equality of everyone before the law is a binding prerequisite both for our economic and political advancement. The third priority, most directly linked to the one before, the rule of law, is the deepening of democracy," he said.

He stressed that in the area of foreign policy, a peaceful settlement to the Nagorno Karabagh issue is and

will remain a priority for as long as necessary to arrive at a final solution, at the same time, consistently work to enhance the level of Armenia's security.

"We have never terrorized our own people with war. Moreover, we have never used this issue as an excuse to gag the opposition. However, we deemed it our duty to earnestly and realistically state that such a threat does exist," said the president.

Sargsian then completed his statement by a call to move from words to actions:

"Through the electoral campaign we all enjoyed ample opportunities for exposure and introducing our programs. At the same time, each of us was eager to get our ideas down fully and succinctly. Elections do not mark a destination; they signify a new phase. This is the phase for unrelenting and persistent work. The time has come to move from words to work, to reinforce words with work," he said.

Some 2,000 invited guests were present at the inauguration ceremony, among them international delegations and diplomats representing around 60 countries, including Nagorno Karabagh led by President Bako Sahakyan, Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Secretary General Nikolay Bordyuzha, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali

Akbar Salehi, Russian president's chief of staff Sergey Ivanov, FIDE president Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, and others.

Three oppositional parties Armenian National Congress, Heritage and Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaktsutyun shunned the inauguration ceremony.

Later in the day, Sargsian, who is also Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, at the Presidential Palace attended the military parade dedicated to his inauguration as president of Armenia.

The police stopped opposition leader Raffi Hovannisian and thousands of his supporters from marching past the Presidential Palace in central Yerevan in protest against Sargsian's reelection and inauguration.

Clashes occurred between protesters and riot police standing in several rows to block the way towards 26 Baghramyan Ave., the residence of the president.

Part of the protesters led by Hovannisian chose to take another route towards Tsitsernakaberd bypassing Baghramyan Avenue. Another, apparently hardline group of opposition activists, including Nikol Pashinyan, Andreas Ghukasyan and others, however, continued the standoff with the police not far from the presidential compound.



INTERNATIONAL

Armenian Community of China Celebrates Easter in Shenzhen

SHENZHEN, China – The relatively small but dynamic Armenian community of China, commonly known as ChinaHay, organized its Annual Easter gathering on Sunday, March 31, here, with more than 90 members of the community present for the occasion including Armenia's Ambassador to China Armen Sargsyan and his family.

The event was a big success and, in typical Armenian tradition, included the traditional Easter egg hunt for the kids, Armenian food as well as lively Armenian traditional dance music.

"As most of the Armenians living in China are here for work purposes, such gatherings are of particular importance as they provide a great opportunity for the community to come together and recreate that traditional Armenian family spirit," said Mihran Papazian, a French-Armenian entrepreneur living and working in China since 2006 who organized the event.

The Armenian community of China, that frequently gets together in Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, and that is estimated to be more than a 1,000-member strong, to discuss and present some of the exciting projects for the year ahead. Such projects range from the restoration of old 19th-century Armenian graves still standing in Hong Kong to



Members of the Armenian Chinese community gather to celebrate Easter

having an Armenian priest based or regularly traveling to Hong Kong and China by 2015.

"What is most interesting is the average profile of the new generation of Armenians moving to Hong Kong and China: ambitious young professionals that are highly qualified, multilingual, widely travelled, leaders in their field and who are moving here from all around the world to capture some of the endless opportunities that Asia has to offer," said Henri Arslanian, a Canadian-

Armenian lawyer based in Hong Kong since 2008.

The next event of the community will be a Pan-Asian Armenian Bahrahantes (dance) that will take place in Guangzhou on June 15, with a live Armenian band being flown in from North America for the occasion.

Anyone interested to learn more about the Armenian community of China is encouraged to visit www.chinahay.com or the Facebook ChinaHay group.

Canadian Museum of Human Rights and Zoryan Institute Reps Meet with Diaspora Minister

YEREVAN/TORONTO – On March 20, representatives of the Zoryan Institute and the Canadian Museum of Human Rights ("CMHR") met with the Republic of Armenia's Minister of Diaspora to discuss the significance of the new museum being developed in Winnipeg in relation to the Armenian Genocide.

KM Greg Sarkissian, president of Zoryan, pointed out that the exhibits on the Armenian Genocide will be significant, given their permanent nature and

tion, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to be part of a collective ideology, collective ideal. Our relationship as citizens with each other is defined through a doctrine, through a written constitution that gives rights to every ethnic, religious, racial human being, irrespective of their color, their beliefs, or their sexual orientation. In short, it is a country that truly upholds absolute human rights... And that charter of rights serves as a base which has given birth to the Canadian Museum for Human

Rights. The new museum will be an educational center to present to the world the true meaning of human rights... One of the worst kinds of human rights violations is genocide, and as all of you know, Raphael Lemkin, who defined genocide, did so with the Armenian Genocide very much in mind..."

Dr. Clint Curle, head of external relations for the CMHR, added, "You know, it's almost 100 years since the Genocide began. If I look back

30 years ago in Canada, almost nobody knew about the Armenian Genocide and almost nobody knew about Armenia. It was the forgotten genocide, and people didn't even have a concept of what a genocide was 30 years ago in Canada. I would say that the Zoryan Institute, in its decades of work, has changed this in Canada. I mean not only did they educate Canadians about the Armenian Genocide, but also about genocide in general and about human rights. They found a way to talk to Canadians and to tell them about the genocide and to approach it with a scientific point of view. And because of Zoryan's work over the decades, today there is a strong and growing awareness of the Genocide, our government acknowledges the Genocide and we owe a debt of gratitude to the Zoryan Institute. The museum I work for is continuing to build on the strong foun-

ation that was laid by the Zoryan Institute and other groups like this. I just want to thank you all. I feel very welcome and honored to be in Armenia and to be talking about these important issues, such as human rights with you."

During their visit, the CMHR and Zoryan officials visited historic sites, churches and museums, including the Matenadaran and the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute. Upon his return home, Curle wrote the following in his blog:

"Last month, I travelled to Yerevan, Armenia, to meet with people from the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute (AGMI). They're working to raise greater awareness of a horrific genocide that saw the murder of 1.5 million people during the final years of the Ottoman Empire around 1915. Ongoing denial of this historic atrocity, waged in the name of racial and religious homogeneity, makes it a contemporary human-rights concern.

"When the CMHR opens next year, information about this atrocity will be included in its galleries. We are also working to establish formal ties of cooperation with the Museum in Yerevan that could help both institutions in our efforts to use awareness and dialogue as a way to promote enhanced human rights for Armenians and all of humanity.

"On my trip, I was accompanied and assisted by members of the Toronto-based Zoryan Institute of Canada, a group that supports scholarship and public awareness relating to issues of universal human rights, genocide, and diaspora-homeland relations."

The Zoryan Institute is the parent organization of the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, which runs an annual, accredited university program on the subject and is co-publisher of Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal in partnership with the International Association of Genocide Scholars and the University of Toronto Press.



KM Greg Sarkissian with Hranush Hakobyan

the impact of the CMHR in a country such as Canada, which has officially recognized the Genocide of the Armenians by Ottoman Turkey. Minister Hranush Hakobyan shared some of her ministry's recent publications on both the history and commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

Hakobyan took the opportunity of the visit to officially present to Sarkissian the Movses Khorenatsi Medal, which had been granted by Armenian President Serge Sargsyan for the Zoryan Institute's contributions to the study and preservation of Armenian identity in the Diaspora.

In accepting the honor on behalf of the institute, Sarkissian mentioned Zoryan's original scientific research and more than 40 publications, and praised Canada especially, which "provides us the forum, the structures, the constitu-

International News

US Secretary of State, Turkish FM discuss OSCE Minsk Group Activity

ISTANBUL (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Armenian-Turkish relations require a comprehensive approach, Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said at a joint press conference with US Secretary of State John Kerry, this week. The two discussed the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group and the preservation of balance in the Caucasus were discussed during Kerry's visit to Turkey.

Kerry, in turn, expressed his country's readiness to intensify talks with Ankara on regional issues and support the conflict resolution.

Kerry arrived in Istanbul on April 7, with the restoration of Israeli-Turkish ties and the Syrian conflict on his agenda.

Serge Sargisian Meets With Romanian Parliamentarian

YEREVAN (Armenpress)– President Serge Sargisian hosted President of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania Valeriu Stefan Zgonea, who had come to Armenia to participate in the official inauguration ceremony of the Armenian president.

Sargisian told his guest that he hoped that this visit would be an impetus for the activation of Armenian-Romanian political dialogue and the development of bilateral relations.

Zgonea congratulated Sargisian and assured him that his visit and the visit of the delegation to Armenia, as well as participation in inauguration ceremony showed Romanian willingness to activate relations with Armenia.

Armenian-Japanese Cooperation Discussed

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Foreign Minister of Armenia Eduard Nalbandian hosted Shin Maruo, the Japanese ambassador for cooperation in spheres of science and technologies.

Nalbandian stressed the importance of continuous development of relation with Japan. The two also discussed a visit by Armenian President Serge Sargisian to Japan.

He also expressed gratitude for the Japanese technical assistance since Armenia's independence.

Maruo noted that Armenian-Japanese cooperation had great potential, especially in the spheres of science and technology.

Hovik Abrahamian Welcomes Vice President Of Argentina

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President of the Armenian National Assembly Hovik Abrahamian had a meeting last week with Vice President of Argentina Amado Boudou during his visit to Armenia.

Abrahamian greeted Boudou and expressed gratitude for his participation in the Armenian presidential inauguration ceremony. Abrahamian said he hoped this visit would promote the development of cooperation between Armenia and Argentina.

According to Abrahamian, even though Argentina is a leader in Armenian investment, trade turnover between the two countries does not meet its full potential. Abrahamian said he hopes to further bolster mutual economic cooperation.

Abrahamian also spoke about regional issues, such as the history of the Nagorno-Karabagh (NKR) conflict, historical injustice in the area and the fact that Armenia remains the strongest supporter of a peaceful resolution of NKR conflict.

Boudou congratulated the newly-elected president, Serge Sargisian, and thanked Abrahamian for his hospitality.

Community News

Preparations Underway For Gala Honoring Pontifical Medal Recipients

NEW YORK – On Wednesday, April 3, the committee planning the upcoming tribute gala in honor of Nazar and Artemis Nazarian met at the Diocesan Center to discuss preparations for the event. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), presided over the meeting.

The committee meeting, chaired by Nila Festekjian, included a review of the gala venue, audiovisual needs, booklet publication, as well as other arrangements for the ceremony.

"I am very honored to be chairing this dynamic committee," Festekjian said. "We are excited to plan this grand banquet in recognition of an outstanding Armenian couple for their longtime service and dedication to the Armenian community."

Barsamian expressed his appreciation to Festekjian and her team for accepting the invitation to serve on the committee.

The gala is co-sponsored by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and the Eastern Diocese. It will be held at the Plaza Hotel on Friday, May 10, 7 p.m. Karekin II, the supreme patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, will be present to preside over the occasion and will bestow the "Knight of Holy Etchmiadzin" Pontifical Medal on the honorees, in recognition of their lifetime commitment, service and philanthropy to both Armenia and the diaspora.

The Nazarians have donated to several institutions across the globe, including Holy Etchmiadzin, the AGBU and the Eastern Diocese. In addition, the Nazarians have sponsored numerous educational, cultural and religious programs.

The "Knight of Holy Etchmiadzin" Pontifical Medal is the highest lay honor of the Armenian Church and has been awarded to a small number of recipients since its inception in 2011. Louise Manoogian Simone, Armenian philanthropist and past president of the AGBU, was the first honoree.

"I wish to express my great joy that his Holiness has chosen Nazar and Artemis Nazarian to be in the distinguished company of those who have



Committee members met with Abp. Khajag Barsamian at the Diocesan Center on April 3.

received this rare honor," said Barsamian. "The Nazarians are shining examples of our Armenian Christian heritage in action."

"The Nazarians have been noble, influential figures in the American and global Armenian communities," said AGBU President Berge Setrakian. "This event will be a memorable occasion to express our admiration and gratitude as a community in the presence of His Holiness."

The Nazarians are longtime members of the St. Thomas Armenian Church of Tenafly, NJ, where Nazar Nazarian was among its founders and served on the Parish Council as a diocesan delegate and on the board of trustees. He also served on the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary board of directors. In addition to contributing to numerous charitable organization, the Nazarians have been contributors to both the parish and St. Nersess Seminary.

For information, or to make a reservation, readers can contact local diocesan liaisons. The Plaza Hotel is located at 768 5th Ave.



PTO Chair Armine Gasparyan and MC Violet Tatoian

TCA-ADS Celebrates with Annual Dance, Raises More Than \$25,000

LOS ANGELES – Guests, parents, teachers, students and supporters of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Arshag Dickranian School (ADS) gathered at the Walter and Laurel Karabian Hall on Friday, March 22, to celebrate the school's 32nd Annual Dinner Dance. The evening was organized by the school's Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO).

The theme of the evening was "Greek Night" offering Greek food and Greek music.

The event was sponsored by Ara and Julia Aghishian. Ara Aghishian, an attorney, was a former member of the Board of Trustees of TCA Arshag Dickranian School. He currently serves as the president of Armenia Fund Inc., US Western Region. His wife is a volunteer teacher at Dickranian School and teaches elementary and high school grade levels.

Among the guests attending the event were the Rev. Manoug Markarian, school benefactress Laurel Karabian, retired California Supreme Court Justice Armand Arabian and his wife, Nancy, Albert Boyajian, a philanthropist and member of the International Board of Trustees and Hayastan All Armenian Fund and his wife, Tove.

The celebration started with the opening remarks of ADS alumna and third-grade teacher Violet Tatoian, who was the MC of the event. In her welcoming message, Tatoian made a point to expound on the purpose of the evening, after which she invited the Rev. Archpriest Manoug Markarian for the invocation. First on the program were the messages by PTO Chair Armine Gasparyan and Principal Dr. Maral Yeranossian. Gasparyan thanked the attendants for supporting the school emphasizing on the importance of keeping the Armenian educational identity alive. Yeranossian spoke of her goals as the new principal, stating that throughout her 15 years at Dickranian School, first as counselor and now as principal, she has learned that ADS students are persistent, passionate and prudent, and their hunger for education gives them the determination to excel. She then proceeded by inviting guest of honor Ara Aghishian to the podium.

Aghishian presented his remarks in fluent Armenian. "I have seen the school see DANCE, page 5



Banquet Committee, seated, from left, Principal Dr. Maral Yeranossian, Arpy Mazlounian and Ani Bambalyan; standing, from left, PTO Vice Chair Caroline Mkrchyan, PTO Chair Armine Gasparyan and PTO members Zarouhi Sulian, Julian Aghishian, Elmira Nadjarian and Emma Gankanian

St. Vartan Cathedral Celebrates Easter Sunday

NEW YORK – Approximately 2,000 people participated in Easter Sunday services held at St. Vartan Cathedral on March 31.

Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian, dean of St. Vartan Cathedral, celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), presided and delivered the Easter homily. Barsamian spoke of the qualities Christ exemplified – including outreach, sacrifice, forgiveness, compassion and love – and encouraged parishioners to live by this example.

"Our own homeland of Armenia was transformed by this living message. Our ancestors built the church as the vessel which would carry the living message of Christ down to our own day," Barsamian said.

"When you depart from the cathedral today, I ask you to carry the life of Christ with you – back to your homes, your churches, your families. Through the way you live, let those around you see Christ's message brought to life," he added.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Primate led a procession to the cathedral plaza, where 12 doves were released, symbolizing the dispatch



Archbishop Barsamian and Ambassador Djerejian release doves on the cathedral plaza.

ing of the 12 apostles.

Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, the former US ambassador to Syria and Israel, was the godfather of the "Release of Doves" ceremony.

The service "brought back many memories because I was born in New York City and my family came to St. Vartan Cathedral," Djerejian said. "I'm a very strong believer, as an Armenian-American, in the role of the Armenian Church in the lives of the Armenian people and nation."

A reception followed in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium, where Barsamian officiated over a home-blessing service. Participants received *nshkhars* to take home.

Concurrent with the Easter observances, an art exhibit was on display in the cathedral complex on March 30 and 31. Curators Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian and Angela Kazarian of the St. Gregory the Illuminator mission parish of Brooklyn, assembled works by Armenian artists.

The St. Vartan Cathedral Choir sang the Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday under the direction of conductor Khoren Mekanejian. Florence Avakian accompanied on the organ.

Easter was preceded by Holy Week, which commemorates the events leading to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

At St. Vartan Cathedral on Palm Sunday, March 24, Kiledjian celebrated the Divine Liturgy and conducted the *Turun-Patzek* or see EASTER, page 5



COMMUNITY NEWS

TCA-ADS Celebrates with Annual Dance, Raises More than \$25,000

DANCE, from page 4

grow in size and I am proud to see our graduates' accomplishments and successes, but there is a lot more to be done for which we need the community's financial support to keep up with the advances in educational technology," said Aghishian. He added that assisting all other organizations is essential as well, but assisting an educational institu-

tion is far more important to prepare better Armenian-Americans in the Diaspora.

The event progressed with guests enjoying the food and live music, while students ventured from one table to another, selling raffle tickets and collecting donations. The grand raffle prize of the event was a one week paid vacation in Greece donated by the Aghishians.

Next, the guests of honor were invited to cut the cake.

Over the years, the PTO has been instrumental in holding various educational and social functions and, most importantly, organizes the annual banquets to support the school.

The traditional take home memento of the event was the special booklet printed for the

occasion, which contained the greetings of the chairman of the Board of Trustees as well as the congratulatory remarks of sister-chapters and supporters.

Finally, young and old filled the dance floor stepping and swaying to the lively music of the DJ till the wee hours of the morning.

For more information visit the school website at www.dickranianschool.org.



Sponsors' table, seated, from left, Benefactress Laurel Karabian, Principal Dr. Maral Yeranossian, Zohrab Babian, Mrs. and Mr. Albert Boyajian, retired judge Armand Arabian and his wife, Nancy; Standing, from left, Hasmig Mandossian, Board Chair George K. Mandossian and banquet sponsors Julia and Ara Aghishian



PTO members and parents with the senior class members

Archival Video Screening at NAASR of Thomas Amirian's 'Epochal Defense of Van'

BELMONT, Mass. — The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) will present a special archival video feature, "The Epochal Defense of Van — 1915," by Thomas T. Amirian, on Thursday, April 25, at 7:30 p.m. at the NAASR Center, 395 Concord Ave. The lecture was originally delivered by Amirian (1910-1993), a native of the Van region, on April 20, 1983. Amirian, along with the late Arra S. Avakian and Manoog S. Young, was one of the three original founders of NAASR and instrumental in establishing and developing the organization.

The defense of Van, the ancient capital of

the Urartian Empire, was one of the most heroic episodes of World War I during the attempted genocide of the Armenians in 1915. Amirian, who as a little boy escaped with his family, made a study of this epochal defense a life-long interest. He describes in detail how 80,000 Armenians with limited arms and ammunition managed to hold off the superior Turkish forces until they were saved by the Russian Army. A version of Amirian's account was published in Ararat Quarterly in 1993.

Amirian was born in Shadakh, near Van. As a child he experienced the siege of Shadakh (April-May 1915) where his father, Tovmas,

was a prominent Ramgavar and community leader. A graduate of MIT, Amirian was a well-known and successful architectural engineer and was active in the Armenian Student Association in addition to his role as a NAASR founder. After his death, the Thomas T. Amirian Fund was established at NAASR in his memory to further the objectives towards which he worked.

In presenting this unprecedented encore video presentation of a classic lecture, NAASR pays tribute to the contributions of Amirian, 20 years after his death and 30 years after he gave this talk.

St. Vartan Cathedral Celebrates Easter Sunday

EASTER, from page 4

"Door Opening" Service. At the conclusion of services, attendees walked from the cathedral plaza to the western entrance of the building, carrying palms in commemoration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

On March 28, Great and Holy Thursday, Kiledjian celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the morning. In the evening, Barsamian officiated at the "Washing of the Feet" ceremony, which commemorates Christ washing the feet of the 12 apostles after the Last Supper. The "Washing of the Feet" ceremony was followed by a Khavaroom or Vigil Service.

The Order of the Crucifixion of Christ and the Order of the Entombment of the Lord (or Taghoom Service) were commemorated with services on Great and Holy Friday, March 29.

On Easter Eve, Saturday, March 30, Kiledjian celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Students from the Diocesan Khrimian Lyceum read scriptures and sang in the choir.

Similar celebrations were underway at parishes across the Diocese.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Boston College Biology Major Receives Goldwater Scholarship

CHESTNUT HILL, Mass. — Boston College sophomore Maria Asdourian, a biology major whose research interests focus on the neurobiology of Alzheimer's disease, has been awarded a Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship, which is considered the premier undergraduate fellowship in the sciences.

Goldwater Scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic merit to the country's most promising college students in math, science and

engineering. This year, 271 sophomores and juniors were selected from among 1,107 nominees. Many Goldwater Scholars go on to earn prestigious post-graduate fellowships, including Rhodes, Marshall and Churchill scholarships, and many others.

"I am grateful for this opportunity," said Asdourian. "There are so many phenomenal science, math and engineering students throughout the country. It's an honor to be a part of

this group of Goldwater scholars."

The 2011 graduate of Burlington High School said she was home for the Easter break when she found out she had received the prize, which provides scholarship assistance for two years.

"I think I screamed," Asdourian said. "My mom was home and she thought there was something wrong. But it was such a surprise. Both of my parents were so happy. It was nice to be home to share it with them."

Asdourian attributes her interest in biological research, specifically in Alzheimer's, to the difficult experience of watching her grandfather eventually succumb to the disease.

"He always looked lost in his own thoughts and it was hard to see that," said Asdourian. "But there were areas of cognition where he was fine — like playing backgammon or counting out jelly beans. I just felt sad and frustrated that he was written off while still here."

In addition to better understanding the pathology of Alzheimer's, she is particularly interested in whether the brain's ability to adapt and "re-wire" itself holds secrets that could one day lead to therapies to combat Alzheimer's and other neurological diseases.

Asdourian, who plans to earn an MD/PhD after graduation, has been an undergraduate researcher in the lab of Prof. Daniel A. Kirschner, a structural neurobiologist who studies the molecular organization of Alzheimer's disease proteins and diseases of nerve myelin in the peripheral and central nervous systems.

Kirschner, who nominated Asdourian for the scholarship, said she devoured scientific articles he suggested she read and later established herself as a quick study in the lab despite having had no bench experience prior to arriving at the university.

Among the many undergraduates who have worked in his lab throughout the years, Kirschner said Asdourian "has uniquely demon-

strated an unusual talent for and exceptional passion about neurobiological research." Her independent research, using the sensitive technique of x-ray diffraction, has revealed previously unsuspected changes in peripheral myelin structure that bear similarities to cuprizone-induced defects found in the central nervous system.

Kirschner wrote in his nomination letter, "Maria is precisely the kind of exceptional student who would truly benefit from the opportunities [a Goldwater Scholarship] would provide — not only for the encouragement it will give her in her laboratory research and intended career, but also for the networking opportunities with peers and scientists that will be afforded to her through this honor."

Asdourian credited her father, Avo, an architect, and her mother, Esther, a chiropractor, with setting examples that inspired her work ethic and instilled a desire to help others.

"Growing up, the most important thing was to be of service to others and to be welcoming to the people in your life. Those were constant messages," she said of her parents, who emigrated from Lebanon to the US, where Maria Asdourian was born.



Maria Asdourian

OBITUARY

Dr. Mariam Chamberlain, 94 Champion of Women's Studies

By Paul Vitello

NEW YORK (*New York Times*) — Dr. Mariam Chamberlain, who played a pivotal yet little-known role in establishing women's studies in the American college curriculum, and financing early research about the inequities women faced in the workplace and other realms of society, died Tuesday in Manhattan. She was 94.

Her death was confirmed by the National Council for Research on Women, a nonprofit organization of university-based research centers that she founded in 1981 and served for many years as president.

Though she rarely gave speeches, and considered herself more of a researcher than an activist — she had a PhD in economics from

The Center for Women Policy Studies in Washington, founded in 1972 with another of her grants, was among the first to study domestic violence, pay inequities, and discrimination against women in loan policies.

The Ford Foundation, which Chamberlain joined in 1956, had a policy of encouraging changes in American college curriculums to keep pace with changes in the culture. In the 1950s, it encouraged expanding international studies programs; in the 1960s, it provided seed money for black studies research.

In 1967, when Chamberlain was named director of the foundation's higher education program, she began looking for ways to address what she called — ever-temperate in her language — "the limits that society places on the aspirations of women."

Florence Howe, the founder of the Feminist Press, which received one of the foundation's first women's studies grants, said that Chamberlain's background as an economist defined her approach to philanthropy.

"She always wanted numbers," she said. "She would say, 'give me the numbers' to back up the case for funding feminist studies." Howe received a \$12,000 grant in 1971 to find out whether and where women's studies was already being taught in colleges and universities.

The report, "Who's Who and Where in Women's Studies," found a few hundred courses already being taught. By 1976, a follow-up survey counted thousands of courses, and 270 degree-granting programs in women's studies. In 1977, Chamberlain arranged a small grant to help establish the National Women's Studies Association, which helped organize international conferences that have since taken women's studies to more than 100 countries.

Mariam Kenosian was born on April 24, 1918, in Chelsea, Mass., one of three children of Avak and Zabel Kenosian, immigrants from Armenia. Despite the initial objections of her father, a shoe factory worker who did not believe in women's education, she completed high school and attended Radcliffe College on a full scholarship.

Her studies toward a PhD in economics at Harvard were interrupted during World War II, when she worked as an analyst for the Office of Strategic Services. She received her PhD in 1950.

Her marriage to Neil Chamberlain, a fellow Harvard PhD in economics who taught for many years at Columbia University, ended in divorce in 1970. There are no immediate survivors.

Miriam Chamberlain held teaching positions at Connecticut College, the School of General Studies at Columbia University, and at Hunter College, before joining the Ford Foundation. After leaving the foundation, her work as the president of the National Council for Research on Women helped consolidate and coordinate research centers that she had helped seed at Stanford, the University of Michigan, the University of Arizona and Memphis State, among 100 others.

An essay in "The Politics of Women's Studies," published in 2000 by the Feminist Press, was one of the few articles Chamberlain ever wrote about herself. In it, she used the image of a car climbing a steep mountain in describing her role in the movement.

"The car, in this case women's studies, was already on its journey," she wrote. "But outside funding gave it the extra power to get to the top."



Dr. Mariam Chamberlain

Harvard — Chamberlain came to be known in the women's movement as "the fairy godmother of women's studies."

She earned the sobriquet as a program director for the Ford Foundation from 1971 to 1981, granting about \$5 million in seed money to a few dozen groundbreaking academic studies, sociological projects and statistical surveys that laid the groundwork for women's studies departments and public policy research programs across the country.

Chamberlain's contribution to the women's movement was incalculable, said Heidi Hartmann, the president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a Washington group specializing in public policy issues. "It's hard to imagine how bad things were when she came on the scene," she said. "Women's suffrage was not taught in most American history classes." Female writers were footnotes to the literary canon as taught in most colleges, she added.

"She made a huge impact with small but strategic grants," Hartmann said.

In 1975, Chamberlain approved a grant for a Princeton University study, for example, that analyzed introductory courses in English, history, sociology and psychology at 172 American colleges. The study found that women's history and literature were virtually being ignored. It warned that unless changes were made "most undergraduate men and many undergraduate women would continue to leave college without considering the role of women in history, the implications of sex discrimination in the labor market, or the influence of sex stereotyping on their daily lives."

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Genocide Prevention Symposium Held at UN

PREVENTION, from page 1

that the "horror of genocide is repeating itself in different parts of the world today, and innocent victims continue to be persecuted for no other reason than their ethnicity, religion or national origin. International cooperation and action are required to facilitate the timely prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide," he stated.

Nazarian noted that the United Nations Human Rights Council recently adopted a resolution initiated by Armenia, and co-sponsored by almost 60 member states of the international body which "stresses the importance of truth, justice, reparation and that perpetrators should be held criminally responsible on the national or international level, and affirmed." He also emphasized the importance of education in the prevention of genocide.

Concerning the Armenian Genocide, he stated that the process of international recognition of this genocide, the first of the 20th century, "will be continued despite Turkey's denial of that indisputable historical fact."

Following his remarks, Nazarian presented awards to the high school students who were winners of the Krieger Essay Contest on the prevention of genocide.

A film by Dr. Michael Hagopian, and produced by Carla Garabedian, called "Voices from the Lake," was shown featuring eyewitness harrowing accounts by survivors of the Armenian Genocide. Archival photography detailed the atrocities, including the torturing of women and children. "Grieving Armenian parents gave up their children to Turks who were lined up in every town and city as the death marchers passed through. They gave their precious children up so they would not be killed even though they would probably go into harems or become slaves," said survivor Garabed Der Minassian.

An aid worker, Marie Jacobsen, reported that "a nation was disappearing." An eyewitness to the atrocities, she said the Turkish gendarmes killed with axes and bayonets when they ran out of bullets."

Prevention and Healing

Introducing the distinguished panel of speakers who focused on lessons for prevention and healing, Dr. Kalayjian noted that the Ottoman

Empire following the Genocide, in its court sessions was the first to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Twenty-eight countries of the world have also recognized the Armenian Genocide. "Both sides - victims and perpetrators need to heal," she stressed.

Dr. Joyce Apsel, a professor at New York University and Institute for the Study of Genocide, in her talk on "Challenges and Initiatives for Prevention," recalled that two international declarations were passed in 1948: the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," and the "Declaration of the Prevention of Genocide." Across the world, the "human capacity to commit genocide has continued," she said. "It's important to understand and work for the prevention of any genocide."

Apsel revealed that at the Zoryan Institute's Genocide and Human Rights University Program, where she has taught, Armenian and Turkish students would come and talk to each other, a process which has been created over the years. She outlined "transitional justice mechanisms" which include many courses of education; the development of a series of norms which have a responsibility to protect an international community when states fail to meet this responsibility; a series of tribunals which would make the perpetrators responsible; and truth commissions to acknowledge what has happened. Atrocity prevention also includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs), lawyers, ordinary people to prevent the escalation of violence, she said with emphasis.

Thea Halo, a Pontian Greek and author of *Not Even my Name*, spoke about the role of memoir in the healing process. She confessed that growing up, she didn't know her heritage, and thus invented an ancient Egyptian one. She related that Greeks and Assyrians were ignored in Ottoman genocide history. Her mother, who is now almost 104, was on the death march for almost eight months with her five siblings, made into a slave and rescued by Armenians. "She never denigrated Turks, only the Turkish and Ottoman governments," said Halo, who read harrowing excerpts about the Genocide from her book. "A memoir can be a bridge for healing," she noted quietly.

Alexander Dinularis, who has written the award-winning play, "Red Dog Howls," which

details how he found out about his Armenian heritage, was the recipient of the Armenian American Society for Studies on Stress and Genocide (AASSSG) 2013 Outstanding Achievement Award. He revealed that though he is part Cuban, Puerto Rican, Greek and Armenian, he was raised by his Armenian grandmother who never spoke about her travails during the Genocide. "I have carried the fear and guilt for decades, and worried that I would pass them on to my unborn child at the time. I wanted to break the cycle of guilt, fear, shame, humiliation. Genocide depends on dehumanization, and plays do the opposite. My play, 'Red Dog Howls,' was a 'collective catharsis,'" he said, quoting Plato.

During the question-and-answer period, it was pointed out that one of the major reasons that the Turks have not acknowledged the Armenian Genocide is because of the potentially expensive reparation. What is needed is the

acknowledgment and validation of the Genocide, and appropriate reparation, the latter being a cause of vast differences of opinion in the Armenian community.

Again, it was repeated that the effects of a genocide persist through generations with the subsequent generations carrying survivors' guilt. Before healing can be achieved, the roots of the problem must be addressed, it was stressed.

The event concluded with a moment of silence for all victims of genocide in the past and present.

Co-sponsors of the symposium included the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations, ATOP, AASSSG, Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), Meaningfulworld, Armenian Constitutional Rights Protective Centre of Armenia, Voices for Freedom and the Institute for Multicultural Counseling & Education Services, (IMCES).

Vahé Tachjian to Present at NAASR Microhistory of Armenian Genocide

BELMONT – On April 17, at 7:30 p.m., historian Vahé Tachjian will give a lecture titled, "Genocide Diaries: A Microhistory of Two Armenian Families, 1915-1918," at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR.) The lecture is offered in commemoration of the 98th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

In 1915, two Armenian families – the Bogharians and the Tavukjians – were deported from Aintab (in the Ottoman Empire), together with many other Armenian inhabitants of the town. They were forcibly resettled, first, in Hama and then in the nearby town of Salamiyya (modern Syria). The tale of these two families has been preserved by the diaries of Father Nerses Tavukjian and Krikor Bogharian.

Tachjian's lecture and forthcoming book on the subject focuses on the re-creation of the quotidian world of deportees during this historical period.

Tachjian was born in Lebanon and earned a PhD in history and civilization at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. His research covers the period of the French occupation of Cilicia, Syria and Lebanon between the two World Wars, the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and refugee problems in the Middle East.

His publications include, *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mésopotamie: Aux Confins de la Turquie, de la Syrie et de l'Irak, 1919-1933*. He is the co-editor of *Ohannès Pacha Kouyoumdjian: Le Liban à la Veille et au Début de la Guerre: Mémoires d'un Gouverneur, 1913-1915* and *Les Arméniens, 1917-1939: La Quête d'un Refuge and Les Arméniens de Cilicie: Terroir, Mémoire et Identité*. Tachjian is also the chief editor and project director of the Houshadyan Project.

For more information on the event, contact hq@naasr.org. NAASR is located at 395 Concord Ave.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE 98th COMMEMORATION

Organized by

The Greater Boston Committee to Commemorate the Armenian Genocide

To be held on Wednesday, April 24, 2013

-6:00 PM Requiem service at St. James Armenian Church
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-7:00 PM Public event at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center
(ACEC), 47 Nichols Ave. Watertown, MA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Armenia's Permanent Representative to the UN
H.E. Mr. GAREN NAZARIAN

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98th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide

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Saturday, April 20, 2013

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Please join us for this commemoration event as we honor our ancestors and seek justice for the loss of 1.5 million Armenians at the hand of the Ottoman Turks in 1915-1923. We welcome as our keynote speaker, Dr. Susan Karamanian, a leading expert on international law who serves as Associate Dean for International and Comparative Legal Studies at George Washington University's Law School. Dr. Karamanian will explore the possibilities for Armenians to pursue justice through the U.N. International Courts for Human Rights and the International and Criminal court, both located at the Hague.

Program will include a presentation by the Alex & Marie Manoogian
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Marathoner Chekijian Runs for Dana-Farber

MARATHONER, from page 1

colleagues, Chekijian, an account executive in medical sales at Abbott Diagnostics, decided not only to take up running, but to tackle the Boston Marathon in 2010. He found his motivation for his months of training and the long trek itself by running and raising money for a cause — the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's research.

Chekijian, 39, currently training for the 2013 race, previously raised funds for Dana-Farber in 2010 and 2012 as part of the Marathon Challenge. Among the long list of

community, Chekijian knew of Gabriel Aljalian, the son of St. James Armenian Apostolic Church pastor, Rev. Arakel Aljalian, and his wife, Natasha. Gabriel, at age 4, is battling leukemia. Without hesitation, Chekijian chose Aljalian as his patient partner for 2013.

Through the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge Partner Program, Chekijian has had the opportunity to spend more time with Gabriel Aljalian through events such as a recent Jimmy Fund poster-making party — an opportunity he says he is grateful for. "The simple act of running and that it can raise money for cancer research, and just being able to spend time with Gabriel has had a positive impact on me," said Chekijian.

From his perspective as a runner, Chekijian said running in honor of Gabriel Aljalian has even helped him train for the arduous 26-mile run. "The motivation I get from him helps me. When I feel like giving up and I'm tired and in pain, I think about this little boy and his strength, suffering and what he is going through. He gives me the strength to keep going, to keep running," said Chekijian.

At a March 23 fundraiser held at St. James Church, the community helped raise more than \$7,000 towards Chekijian's running challenge. In total, Chekijian has raised more than \$18,000 this Challenge year, 100 percent of which will go directly to the Dana-Farber Claudia Adams Barr Program in Innovative Basic Cancer Research.

Chekijian hopes to reach his goal of \$20,000 during these final few days before the marathon on Monday, April 15.

Over the past three years, Chekijian has raised close to \$50,000 in total for cancer research through the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge.

Local members of the community have described Chekijian as a role model and an inspiration. Chekijian humbly responded to such praise, "It was a 'no-brainer' to want to help raise money for Dana-Farber. I never expected that it would have such an effect on those around me. It's been great."

Chekijian added that the community aspect and example he is providing his children have



From left, Gabriel Aljalian, Sarkis Chekijian, with daughters Nayiri and Lara at a Jimmy Fund poster party



Gabriel Aljalian

charities to select from, he chose Dana-Farber because at a young age, he had lost both of his grandfathers. "I never had the chance to really get to know them so I felt this connection to Dana-Farber."

Chekijian credits Dana-Farber's well-organized partnership program for approaching him with the idea of taking a "patient partner" this year.

As an active member of the local Armenian

been two unexpected, rewarding by-products of the Marathon Challenge. "My parents raised me in this community and being a part of the Armenian community and helping where I can is very important to me."

While the Marathon Challenge Partner Program officially ends on Monday, Chekijian said the bond between him and his running

inspiration, Gabriel Aljalian, is here to stay. "I have bonded with Gabriel and enjoy spending time with him. I plan on continuing to visit him. It doesn't end here," said Chekijian.

To donate to Chekijian's run and provide aid for innovative cancer research, visit his fundraising page at www.sarkisruns.com, or on Facebook at [facebook.com/SarkisRuns](https://www.facebook.com/SarkisRuns).

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Hit The Road India is Gazarian's second 8.5x11, hard cover book and includes more than 100 color photos. It is also available in an E-book format.

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New York METRO

AGBU Hosts Commemorative Event on 25th Anniversary of Sumgait Massacres

NEW YORK – Twenty-five years ago, the Armenian community experienced yet another dark chapter in its history: the Sumgait Massacres, which claimed the lives of scores of civilians in Azerbaijan and threw the region into tumult. The brutal manner of the attacks against the ethnic Armenian citizens of this Azerbaijani industrial town on the shores of the Caspian Sea was reminiscent of those of the Ottoman Empire in 1915. The anti-Armenian riots arose at the onset of the national liberation movement, when the legislative

body of Nagorno Karabagh demanded peaceful secession of the region from Azerbaijan and reunification with Armenia, which eventually sparked a full-blown war in the region. On Wednesday, February 27, AGBU honored the Sumgait victims and celebrated the rich cultural legacy of the Nagorno-Karabagh Republic (NKR) at a special commemorative event, "Nagorno-Karabagh: From Sumgait Memories to Independent State," which was hosted at the AGBU Central Office in New York.

Armenian Representative to the UN Garen Nazarian and Representative Robert Avetisyan Speak During Film Screening and Photo Exhibit

AGBU is very important, we must pay tribute, keep alive Sumgait's innocent victims' memory and remember our history," he said. "We must continue to raise awareness of the tragedy of Sumgait and build a strong and prosperous Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh that is capable of protecting its population's security and dignity." While Nazarian and Avetisyan discussed the challenges of informing overseas audiences about the Sumgait Massacres and demanding justice for the victims, Svetlana Amirkhanian focused on the needs of the Sumgait and NKR refugee community in New York. In the aftermath of the war, Amirkhanian, chair of Brooklyn's St. Gregory the Illuminator Mission Parish Council, recounted to the event's attendees how Manhattan's St. Vartan Cathedral and St. Illuminator's Church were overwhelmed with displaced families. Both churches provided those men, women and children, who were coping with trauma and struggling to support themselves, with a range of social services, resettling many in the predominantly Russian-



From left, President of the Armenian Society of Columbia University Narek Sevacheryan; Armenia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Garen Nazarian; Director of AGBU Central Board Programs Anita Anserian; Chair of the St. Gregory the Illuminator Mission Parish Council of Brooklyn Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian; Director of Alternative Education at AGBU Natalie Gabrelian; Permanent Representative of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic in the United States Robert Avetisyan; and US Affiliate for the Armenian Center for Development Programs Artur Martirosyan, at the commemorative event "Nagorno-Karabagh: From Sumgait Memories to Independent State," hosted by AGBU.

Coordinated by AGBU University Outreach in partnership with the Armenian Center for Development Programs and the Armenian Society of Columbia University, the evening featured a screening of the documentary "The Ordinary Genocide: Sumgait, February 1988," as well as a collection of photos that capture the beauty of NKR and the everyday lives of its citizens – before, during and after the war. The film, jointly produced by veteran journalist Marina Grigoryan and Armenian lawmaker Larisa Alaverdyan, included eyewitness testimony from victims, survivors, crime scene images as well as documents from the Supreme Court of the Soviet Union, which showed that the Sumgait attacks were both well-orchestrated and largely tolerated by local authorities. Together with the photography exhibit, the documentary served as a harrowing reminder not only of the crimes committed against the Armenian people, but also of the unrelenting pursuit of justice.

speaking neighborhoods of Brooklyn where they could assimilate more easily. By 2000, they formed their own Parish, which assists more than 500 families today.

Amirkhanian helps organize the Parish's weekly language, history and culture classes for children, as well as programs for adults and cultural events. St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Mission Parish is currently raising funds to buy a building and



Screening of the documentary "The Ordinary Genocide: Sumgait, February 1988"

The decades-long struggle to achieve peace and stability was the focus of remarks by Armenia's ambassador to the United Nations, Garen Nazarian, the event's featured speaker along with NKR Representative to the United States, Robert Avetisyan. Nazarian stressed the need to respect international law and end impunity for crimes perpetrated against Armenians. Avetisyan joined to call for accountability and reconciliation. "The event organized by

school to call their own. To learn more and contribute, visit their website: <http://www.armeniansny.org>.

To watch the documentary "The Ordinary Genocide: Sumgait, February 1988," which contains graphic scenes that some viewers may find disturbing, visit: <http://Karabaghrecords.info/gallery/an-ordinary-genocide-sumgait-february-1988-eng>.

98th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
 ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՑԵՂԱՍԴԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆ
 TURKEY IS GUILTY OF GENOCIDE • DENYING THE UNDENIABLE IS A CRIME

TIMES SQUARE
 46th Street & Broadway
 NEW LOCATION
 New York City
Sunday, April 21, 2013
2:00-4:00 PM

Sponsored by the Knights & Daughters of Vartan
 Co-sponsored by AGBU, Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of America, ADL-Ramgavars, and Armenian Council of America
 With the participation of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Catholic Eparchy for US and Canada, Mid-Atlantic ACYOA, AYF-YOARF, Armenian Youth Organizations, and University Armenian Clubs

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St. Thomas Armenian Church Highway 9 & E. Clinton Ave., Tenafly, NJ (201) 567-5446	Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs 209-15 Horace Harding Expwy., Oakland Gardens, NY (718) 225-0235
St. Leon Armenian Church 12-61 Saddle River Rd., Fair Lawn, NJ (201) 791-2852	St. Vartan Cathedral 630 2nd Ave., New York, NY (212) 686-0710
Holy Cross Armenian Church 318 27th St., Union City, NJ (201) 864-2480	Coordinators Eddy (917) 885-9729 John (718) 631-2247
Armenian Presbyterian Church 140 Forest Ave., Paramus, NJ (201) 265-8585	Brooklyn Chase Bank (@ Coney Island Ave.) 1002 Brighton Beach Ave., Brooklyn, NY Tigran (718) 891-8486 (347) 291-7765
Coordinators Andy (201) 368-2791 Kostan (201) 741-9789 Sona (551) 427-8763	

For more information about the commemoration, please visit <http://kofv.org> and click April 24 or <http://www.facebook.com/events/196650670480913>
 To learn more about the Armenian Genocide, please visit www.theforgotten.org, www.armenian-genocide.org, www.twentyvoices.com

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Thursday, April 18, 2013
 8:00 PM

Armenian Cultural & Educational Center
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Arts & Living

Armenian Night at the Pops to Feature Violinist Emmanuel Tjeknavorian

BOSTON – The Friends of Armenian Culture Society (FACS) will present the 62nd annual Armenian Night at the Pops on Saturday, June 1, at 8 p.m. at Symphony Hall. The evening will feature the young violinist Emmanuel Tjeknavorian from Vienna, who will make his debut in Boston. He will join Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops Orchestra in a performance of Franz Waxman's *Carmen Fantasy*.

The theme for evening will be film music, filled with the sophistication and romance of



Emmanuel Tjeknavorian

the 1950s and 1960s and feature song stylist Steve Lippia, whom Lockhart has called "the absolute vocal re-incarnation of the Sinatra sound."

As a tribute to Armenian film, Tigran Mansurian's music for Henrik Malyan's 1980 movie "Ktor me yerkinq" (A Piece of the Sky) will also be performed.

Tjeknavorian has been awarded several prizes in international competitions, including the International Nutcracker Competition in Moscow, the International Johannes Brahms Competition and the Eurovision Young Musicians 2012 competition as the Austrian representative.

He currently studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.

Tickets for this concert are available for purchase online at www.FACSBoston.org.

Updated Edition of My Mother's Voice Released

GLENDALE – *My Mother's Voice*, an updated book (2013 Edition) and new documentary of the same name, tell the story of Flora Munushian's teenage years, and are written and produced by her daughter, Kay Mouradian.

From 1914 to 1919, Munushian traveled from Hadjin, Turkey to Aleppo, Syria then ultimately to the US, as a survivor of the Armenian Genocide.

"I am my mother's voice," Mouradian declares in the new edition of her book and her moving documentary. "She told me in no uncertain terms that I was going to write a book about her." This had not been Mouradian's goal or even a thought until her mother's last years. Luckily, she did take up the challenge, presenting the story of her mother's harrowing teenage years from 1915-1919.

Munushian was a 14-year-old Armenian girl attending an American school in Hadjin, when a deportation order forced her community on a death march to Der Zor. Her father managed to stow his daughters in Aleppo, where she and her sister hid for the duration of WWI. Munushian never saw her parents or her brothers again. At the age of 18, she sailed to the US to marry an Armenian man she had never met.

Told from her mother's point of view, the story highlights Munushian's drive to get an education, her youthful idealism and her inner strength.

The film based on the book takes a more his- see MOURADIAN, page 12



Actress Nora Armani and cellist David Bakamjian

'Evocations of Armenia' at National Arts Club and Puffin Cultural Forum

NEW YORK – Actress Nora Armani and cellist David Bakamjian will perform their duet, "Evocations of Armenia," at the National Arts Club here on April 15, at 7 p.m., and the Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck, NJ, on April 20, at 8 p.m.

The rich tapestry of Armenian life and culture, both past and present, are interwoven by the haunting strings of cellist David Bakamjian with the spoken words of acclaimed actress Nora Armani. The duo weaves legends, folk songs and sacred chants, as well as 20th-century music. The texts are selected by Armani and the music arranged by Bakamjian for a blending both rich and poignant.

The piece was specially commissioned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and premiered in their "Sundays at the Met" series. Subsequently the duo was invited to perform it in Armenia under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and again at the New York Society Library. The premiere at the Metropolitan Museum of Art took place to a sold-out house, and the New York Society Library to a standing room audience.

"Evocations of Armenia" presents the essence of Armenian culture, with its sacred and secular stories, legends and music traversing the centuries, in an hour-long Internationally transcendent program.

Gripping and dramatic tales from early pagan times to the modern era to be presented include the "Birth of Vahagn," Armenia's God of Fire and conqueror of dragons; the ancient legend of the doomed lovers of Akhtamar and the story of the enchanted Dove Abbey. Presented in beautiful English translations by Gerald Papasian, the text is sprinkled with Armenian to give a flavor of the language. The program also includes heart-rending folk songs, beautiful sacred chants from the Middle Ages and evocative music by the 20th-century composer Alan Hovhaness.

The New York Society Library wrote, "The show is really a gem – a perfect balance of beautiful language and music, each advancing, receding, and complementing the focus of attention. It was clear that both those familiar with the material and neophytes could appreciate and feel at home with the prose, poetry, and musical selections. And of course, [the] terrific talent [of the] performers is no small part of that."

Armani was born in Egypt to Armenian parents and has lived in 18 cities, giving her a broad canvas for her stage and film performances. She has acted in several languages, recently appearing in the CBS TV series, "Golden Boy." Her recent film, "Moving Stories," premiered at the Cannes Film Festival and is scheduled to be screened in the official selection at the Monaco Film Festival in May.

Bakamjian, who holds a doctorate from SUNY Stony Brook, has soloed with the Beijing Symphony, among others. Bakamjian performs regularly as a recitalist, chamber player and recording artist in and around New York City. In addition to appearances in New York's premiere concert halls, he has appeared several times on National Public Radio and WQXR, and was a winner or finalist in four international chamber music competitions. As a member of the Casa Verde Trio, he completed six acclaimed national tours and a month-long tour of China.

The performance at the National Arts Club is free and open to the public but reservations are strictly recommended. RSVP to TheatreArts@thenationalartsclub.org

An alternate date is April 20, at 8 p.m., Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck, NJ.

Nor Or Weekly In LA Celebrates 90 Years

LOS ANGELES – March 17th marked a milestone in the history of *Nor Or* weekly as the 90th anniversary of the publication was celebrated at a dinner banquet in the Taglian Banquet Hall in Hollywood among state officials, dignitaries, press representatives, church officials and friends and supporters of the paper. The event, chaired by Cecile Keshishian who also served as mistress of ceremonies, brought together more than 230 guests who recognized the role of the newspaper in the lives of Armenians in Southern California.

Dr. Raffi Balian, chairman of the *Nor Or* Board of Directors, welcomed the guests and set the tone for the evening. He expressed his gratitude for the support and commitment that guests had made toward *Nor Or*. "I am appreciative and grateful that you did not refuse our requests and came through with your support. Your contribution to *Nor Or* is symbolic of your trust in the print media," he said. More than 50 guests had made the donor list.

A congratulatory message by Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians, was read by Fr. Manoug Markarian, pastor of St. John Armenian Apostolic Church in Hollywood. Congratulatory messages and proclamations on behalf of the cities of Los Angeles and Glendale were also read and presented to *Nor Or* weekly and accepted by Hagop Mardirossian, the paper's editor in chief.

A chronological display of the names of editors who served the paper since its inception in 1922 in Fresno was presented by Hratch Sepetjian, member of the *Nor Or* Editorial Board. Among the past editors of the weekly was Prof. Osheen Keshishian, who served as editor from 1968 to 1970. Keshishian, professor at Glendale City College and editor and publisher of his own weekly, *The Armenian Observer*, served as the keynote speaker for the evening enlightening guests with a global history of the Armenian press. "Imagine," said Keshishian, "that the Armenians had a newspaper published in Calcutta, India in the 17th century! He then went on to describe the roots of *Nor Or* in Fresno, its ideology and necessary survival among the communities. He said the success of a newspaper to survive over the years is directly related to its editors. "*Nor Or* has been fortunate to have had capable editors who have been exemplary mentors; whose principles have nurtured quality and pride in publishing," said Keshishian.

Five couples who had each donated \$5,000 were given special recognition for their generosity and support to help mark the 90th anniversary of *Nor Or*.

The event was a blessed one with the presence of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America and also Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian, former primate. "With its highly accomplished status, *Nor Or* has become the mirror of its community. Above all, *Nor Or* has always remained a faithful alliance to Holy Ecmiadzin," said Archbishop Hovnan Derderian as he addressed Mike Kharabian and commended *Nor Or* for its 90 years of accomplishment. Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian said, "*Nor Or* is like a school; a university that teaches its readers about patriotism and faithfulness."

Past editors of *Nor Or* who were present that evening and the current editor in chief, Mardirossian, and the editorial staff gathered around for the cake cutting ceremony. As one guest said, "*Nor Or* became the beacon of hope for its readers and the populace whose ideologies were tested in the turmoil of our history. *Nor Or* remained focused on its roots and provided support to the 'miracle workers' of Armenians in Armenia, strengthening the bond between them and the Diaspora."

see ANNIVERSARY, page 12



ARTS & LIVING

Kardash Onnig to Present New Book at Abril Bookstore

GLENDALÉ – New York-based artist and author Kardash Onnig's latest book will be presented on the evening of Saturday, May 4, at Abril Bookstore at 7 p.m.

The newly published work, titled *Leran Vokin* (The Spirit of the Mountain), is the author's first Armenian-language book. The book is two volumes in one, as it comprises Eastern-Armenian and Western-Armenian versions of the text. It was translated from the English original by Ishkhan Jinbashian and Shushan Manukyan.

"I wanted this work to be accessible to Armenians everywhere, irrespective of dialect," Onnig explained. "As importantly, I wanted the format – Eastern-Armenian and Western-Armenian side by side – to reflect the book's overarching message of universality."

Born in Zahleh, Lebanon, in 1941, Onnig escaped the Armenian fratricide of 1958, which was waged in the streets of Beirut, by immigrating to New York. After working in the emerging field of multimedia in the 1960s, he left the corporate world and eventually settled

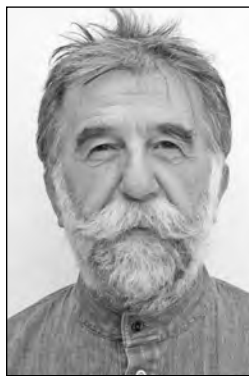
down in upstate New York, where he built his home and studio.

For the past 50 years, Onnig has focused his creative works on establishing cultural bridges and fostering dialogue, mutual understanding and collaboration, within a larger context of universal interconnectedness. As a sculptor, performance artist, toy-maker, teacher, author and political activist, Onnig's work has received both international acclaim and criticism due to the candid nature of his art.

Leran Vokin is a chronicle of Onnig's work, interwoven with his thoughts on art, cross-cultural dialogue and dimensions of spirituality. The book starts with a tapestry of the world of his parents, survivors of the Genocide and culminates in a chapter titled, "The First Stone," in which Onnig writes, "Today I realize that the wall which encloses Gaza is not meant to prevent Palestinian terrorists from entering Israel, but rather to keep the Israelis from getting out of their extended ghetto, and, God forbid, attempting a thoroughly unscripted, genuinely constructive, and ultimately spiritual transference with their Palestinian neighbors."

The titular term *voki* (spirit) is a key concept throughout the book. As expounded by the author, the term symbolizes a certain audacity to go against the grain, do away with the sacred cows and cross cultural borders in order to bring about mutual understanding and synergies.

Voki in Kardash's lexicon also represents a quest for spiritual simplicity informed by a conscientious esthetic of survival: to produce things that are both useful and beautiful, often by hand; to create artworks and pro-



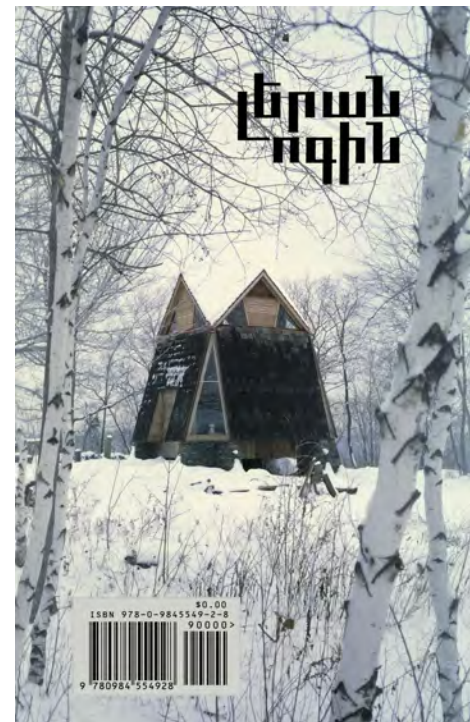
Kardash Onnig

jects which speak directly to the principle of the quaternary (the principle of four which is seen by the author as being "at the heart of all life"); to mentor the young, imparting a sense of responsible independence and initiative; to take daring actions that embrace "the other" and to relentlessly expose hatred and prejudice disguised as tradition or political necessity.

"I like describing my work as that of a universalist madman," Onnig said. "You need to be a bit mad to think – and act – out of the box."

The book release and presentation will include a wine and cheese reception, a period for questions from the audience and a book signing.

Abril Bookstore is located at 415 East Broadway Ave., Suite 102.

The cover of the Western-Armenian version of *Leran Vokin*

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ANEC Releases *Atlas of Historical Armenia*

NEW YORK – The Armenian National Education Committee (ANEC) recently published a bilingual, Armenian and English, *Atlas of Historical Armenia*, edited by Dr. Vartan Matiossian, executive director of ANEC. The publication was promoted by Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, on the occasion the 500th anniversary

of Armenian printing. The cost of the publication was underwritten through a donation by the Hagopian family of Providence, RI, in memory of their parents, Ervant and Serpouhi Hagopian.

Atlas creators said the main goal of the atlas is "to offer readers an essential core that may serve as a starting point to widen their knowledge." The new edition has been rewritten and updated, with the addition of four new chapters. The atlas contains 32 chapters, 30 maps and 174 photographs (148 in full-color.) The maps are also provided on a CD attached to the book.

The atlas combines three books in one: a book of historical geography (maps), a book of history (text) and a book of illustrated history (photographs.) The creators expressed hope that it will serve as an educational tool that may be used as a standard textbook of Armenian history in Armenian and English.

The book is structured in four sections. It opens with an overview of Armenian historical geography, followed by a second section on Armenian cultural heritage. The main section of the book is the third, which introduces compact chapters on Armenian history from the origins to 1991.

The final section, titled "Armenians Today," presents chapters on the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh and the Diaspora. An extensive chapter on the Armenian Church is followed by an "Afterword" that explains the current status of Armenians and Armenia.

As part of its series of publications in Armenian Studies, ANEC released the first edition of the atlas, written by Dr. Garbis Armen and edited by Vrej-Armen Artinian, in 1987.

Copies of the *Atlas of Historical Armenia* are available from the Eastern Prelacy Bookstore, books@armenianprelacy.org.

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ARTS & LIVING

Updated Edition of *My Mother's Voice* Released

MOURADIAN, from page 10

torical look at the Genocide's impact on Flora and her family. Among its visuals: a copy and translation of the deportation order posted in Hadjin; a photograph of Rev. Hovhanness Eskijian, who rescued Munushian, her sister and hundreds of Armenian orphans in Aleppo; and a photograph of Flora's family – most of whom perished during the march or in Der Zor.

A neighbor introduced Mouradian to award-winning filmmaker Mark Friedman, who worked diligently with her to produce the documentary. "He was so far-sighted, and very resourceful," Mouradian said. Together they searched out original film footage and were able to use portions of the 1919 silent film "Ravished Armenia," that appears on Zareh Tjeknavorian's DVD, "Credo."

Tjeknavorian wrote to Mouradian, "Congratulations to you and Mark for so beautifully and affectingly bringing the message of your mother's life to the world. Her voice speaks so eloquently through your own. This film, and the vast history it artfully distills into such a poignant and positive personal story, is

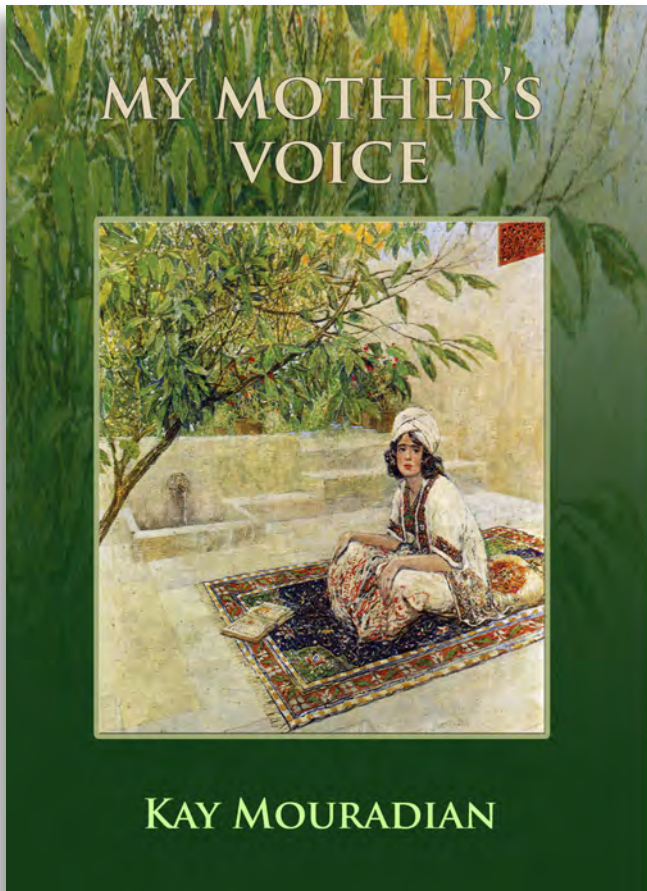


Kay Mouradian

as much a testimony to the resilience of family and culture across generations as it is to the evil that sought to destroy them. I am sure it will go a long way to honoring the memory of Flora and the millions she speaks for."

Mouradian's South Pasadena community links not only got her introduced to a film collaborator, they have also supported and recognized her educational and civic endeavors. While serving as an LA Community College professor of health and physical education, she published guidebooks and studies on yoga. She was honored for her professional and literary achievements by Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), who named her 2012 Woman of the Year for South Pasadena.

"My Mother's Voice" premiered at Toronto's Pomegranate Film Festival in October 2012, and was also featured at Los Angeles' ARPA Film Festival in December 2012.



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Blessing of Madagh and Requiem Services followed by fellowship.

Guest speaker
Dr. Mary Papazian, Ph. D.
President of Southern Connecticut State University.

Piano Selections by Vahe Hovhannisyan

Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection,
1910 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT

**Wednesday Evening
April 24, at 7:00 pm**

All are invited to attend this program.

Friends of Armenian Culture Society, Inc.

62nd Annual Armenian Night at the Pops

Saturday, June 1 at 8:00 PM, Symphony Hall, Boston

featuring
Emmanuel Tjeknavorian, violin
Boston Pops Orchestra
Keith Lockhart, conductor

For tickets and information, please visit www.FACSBoston.org

Photo Credit: Stu Rosner



ARTS & LIVING

Belmont Studio Cinema To Host Sandi Bedrosian CD Release Party

BELMONT – The Belmont Studio Cinema Theater will host a CD release party for jazz vocalist, Sandi Bedrosian, on Sunday, April 21, at 3 p.m.

Bedrosian recently released her new album titled, "There Is Such a Thing," which merges pieces from the Great American Songbook with her own original pieces. It features classic swing, jazz and poetic ballads.

The singer is also the owner of the Voice Studio in Andover, currently celebrating 25 years of operation.

The event will feature performances by Bedrosian, accompanied by musicians, John Hyde, John Baboian, Mark Earley, George Farrell, Keala Kaumeheiwa and Fabio Pirozzolo.

A reception will follow the performance.

For more information, including ticket prices, visit www.studiocinema.com. The Belmont Studio Cinema Theater is located at 376 Trapelo Road.

Consulate General Reception Honors Publication of *Armenia And Karabakh*

GLENDALE – The Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles hosted a reception to honor the publication of *Armenia and Karabakh: The Stone Garden Travel Guide*, at the House of Armenia, on April 4.

Consul General Grigor Hovhannissian praised the book for raising awareness of Armenia and Artsakh (Karabagh), and for its role in encouraging travelers to visit the two countries.

"This book – a world class book, really – has put Armenia on the map" for many people who might otherwise be unfamiliar, said Hovhannissian. He recognized author Matthew Karanian for his contribution in generating a better understanding of Armenia and Armenians, and for the good publicity he has generated for Armenia.

This third edition of *The Stone Garden Travel Guide* was published in February. The title is the first commercial travel guide to both Armenia and Artsakh and is the winner of three national book awards.

More than 50 guests attended the reception at the House of Armenia. Sample pages of the book may be viewed at www.ArmeniaTravelGuide.com.



Matthew Karanian in front of a poster of the book

Nor Or Weekly in LA Celebrates 90 Years

ANNIVERSARY, from page 10

With a program that informed and entertained, the evening combined camaraderie amid shared interests and a commitment by guests to continue to support the publication. A commemorative booklet with congratulatory letters and list of donors was received by all. Thanks go to the 90th anniversary organizing committee chaired by Cecile Keshishian and to the banquet committee chaired by Hermine Janoyan.

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

APRIL 17 – Chapman University hosts "Genocide & the Obligation to Remember: Elie Wiesel and Richard Hovannisian," 7 p.m., at the Wallace All Faiths Chapel. The event will focus on genocide and the obligation to remember, including preservation of memory, advantages and disadvantages of comparative approaches and relevance to today's students and youth. The dialogue will draw on the life experiences of the two writers. Admission is free and open to the public, but tickets and ID are required for entry. Limited tickets are still available at www.chapman.edu/wiesel-events. Chapman University is located 1 University Drive, Orange.

CONNECTICUT

April 24 – Armenian Genocide Commemoration, 7 p.m., at the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection, 1910 Stanley St., services will be held in remembrance of and to honor the 1.5 million martyred Armenians. Guest speaker will be Dr. Mary Papazian, president of Southern Connecticut State University. The program also includes piano selections by Vahe Hovhannissian. There will be Blessing of Madagh and Requiem Services followed by fellowship. All are invited to attend.

MASSACHUSETTS

APRIL 13 – Milford Public Library hosts annual poetry month celebration with featured poet Diana Der-Hovannessian, 3 p.m. before she departs for the International Poetry Festival in Yerevan. Der-Hovannessian will read from *Dancing at the Monastery and Armenian Poetry of Our Time*. The event is free and open to the public. The library is located at 80 Spruce St., Milford.

APRIL 13 – Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of Greater Boston presents musician Elena Yerevan 7:30 p.m., at the Papken Suni Agoump (Armenian American Social Club) located at 76 Bigelow Ave., Watertown. Tickets are \$20 at the door.

APRIL 19 – Armenian Genocide Commemoration at the State House, 10:30 a.m., House of Representatives Chamber, Massachusetts State House. At noon, participants are invited to march from the State House to the Armenian Heritage Park for additional remarks, music and a brown-bag lunch. Keynote speaker will be former US ambassador to Armenia, John Evans. Donald Tellalian, architect of the Armenian Heritage Park, will receive a joint Senate/House resolution thanking him for his efforts. Free buses will leave at 9 a.m. from St. James and St. Stephen's Armenian Churches in Watertown, courtesy of the Knights of Vartan. For more information, contact coordinator Lalig Musserian at (617) 319-2651.

APRIL 20 – Genocide commemoration and flag-raising, 10 a.m., Lowell City Hall, sponsored by the Armenian National Committee of Merrimack Valley; main speaker, Michelle Hagopian, executive director, Armenian National Committee of America Eastern Region. Please convene at 9:30 for a march downtown

APRIL 21 – Genocide Joint Commemoration: Armenia, Cambodia, Darfur, 2.30 p.m., Talks by Kowith Kret, survivor of the Cambodian Genocide by the Khmer Rouge, Eric Cohen, president of the Mass. Coalition to Save Darfur, and Prof. Armenian Marsoobian of Southern Connecticut University on the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide. ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. Free admission.

APRIL 24 – St. James and St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Churches together with the Armenian Cultural and Education Center (ACEC) will host a **Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide** on April 24, 6 p.m. The event will begin at St. James for a requiem service, followed by the laying of the wreath at the Khatchikar in front of the church. A procession will form and march to St. Stephen's where another wreath will be laid before continuing on to the ACEC where the commemorative program will begin. The keynote speaker will be Garen Nazarian, Armenia's ambassador to the United Nations. There will also be a musical interlude. ACEC is located 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown.

APRIL 28 – The Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee of Merrimack Valley 98th observance, 3 p.m., North Andover High School; musical performance by soloists Knarik Nerkararyan, Victoria Avetisyan and Yeghishe Manucharyan, accompanied by pianist Levon Hovsepyan; complimentary admission; reception to follow.

MAY 3 – St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School's 27th Annual Bazaar, at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, Watertown. From noon to 9:30 p.m., offering Armenian



On Sunday, April 21, the Belmont Studio Cinema, 376 Trapelo Road, Belmont, Mass., will be the site of a CD release party for jazz singer Sandi Bedrosian. Her new CD is titled "There Is Such a Thing," which merges pieces from the Great American Songbook with her own original pieces. The event will feature performances by Bedrosian, accompanied by John Hyde, John Baboian, Mark Earley, George Farrell, Keala Kaumeheiwa and Fabio Pirozzolo. A reception will follow the program. The program will begin at 3 p.m.

foods and pastries all day. Take out available. Carnival and games for kids.

MAY 7 – Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston presents The Dr. Michael and Joyce Kolligian Distinguished Speaker Series, Peter Bergen, CNN National Security Analyst, "The Awakening: The Remaking of the Middle East," 7 p.m., Charles & Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Reception and book signing follows talk; open and free to the public.

MAY 18 – Hoy Lari in concert to benefit Armenian Children's Milk Fund. Returning to Boston by popular demand, Janet and Paola will entertain kids of all ages with songs in Armenian and English. Details to follow.

JUNE 20 – The Gregory Hintlian Memorial Golf Tournament, this year remembering Dan Dorian, sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, Marlborough Country Club, Marlborough MA.

NEW JERSEY

MAY 18 – Annual Meeting & Luncheon, Armenian International Women's Association. Sheraton Lincoln Harbor Hotel, Weehawken, NJ. Meeting, 9 :30 a.m. ; Luncheon, 12 :30 p.m. Luncheon Speaker: Dr. Mary A. Papazian, President, Southern Connecticut State University : "The Empowerment of Women through Education." Special guest, Maro Matossian, Director, Women's Support Center, Yerevan ; Woman of Achievement Award : Ruth Bedevian. Annual meeting free to members & friends ; Luncheon \$55. Info, reservations : 617-926-0171 or aiwainc@aol.com.

PENNSYLVANIA

MAY 18 – Mer Doon Armenian Dance, 8 p.m., Santerian Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, 101 Ashmead Road, Cheltenham. Sponsored by the Knights of Vartan Ardashed Lodge. All proceeds will support the Mer Doon home in Echmiadzin, which provides women over 18 years of age a loving home and a solid education. Advance tickets are \$15. For tickets or info, call Vick Bazarbashian, 610-389-4633.

Free Calendar Submissions

Beginning in March, the *Mirror-Spectator* accepts calendar submissions free of charge. Calendar entries of a maximum of five lines can be submitted to mirrorads@aol.com; entries exceeding five lines will be subject to charge. We encourage readers and community members to submit their events so that we may provide readers with a comprehensive calendar of events.



COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN Mirror- Spectator

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COMMENTARY

Another Setback in Armenian-Turkish

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Turkey has become a big player in regional politics and the scope of its foreign policy not only covers the Middle East and the Caucasus, but it has extended far beyond those geographic areas to include the Balkans and Europe (via its NATO affiliation) and even China. Indeed, Turkey's prime minister is not only the champion of the Palestinian cause, in order to lull the Arab world into delusions, but he has come out on as the champion of Uyghur rights in China.

Uyghurs are a restless Moslem minority, most of the time in conflict with the Chinese authorities. During one of the recent ethnic flare-ups, Prime Minister Erdogan accused the Chinese government of perpetrating genocide against the Uyghurs.

Erdogan's pronouncement certainly did not scare the mighty Chinese government, but perhaps it helped to push China closer to Armenia – a true victim of genocide, perpetrated almost a century ago by the Turkish government.

On the chessboard of the politics of the Caucasus, Armenia, with its size, is not a challenge for Turkey. But history weighs too heavily on Turkey's strategic planning. Another factor, which Turkey has to take into account, is not Armenia's size nor its military capabilities, but its alliances in the continuing cold war in the region.

Since Turkey is an unreliable partner for its allies, it has to invent and re-invent various deceptive policies, to fool its allies for a while, while consolidating long-term plans on the ground. One of those deceptions was the apology game with Israel, its long-term strategic ally in the region. Although Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu extended an apology to Turkey for the raid on the Mavi Marmara and promised to compensate the families of the Turkish victims, Israel's political circles do not believe that Turkey will make good on its end of the bargain.

Efraim Inbar has written a seething article about the apology game in the *Jerusalem Post*, under the title, "Israel's Apology to Turkey Was a Mistake." The journalist states that "the Israeli apology will hardly stop Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's regular Israeli-bashing rhetoric. Nor has it secured a clear Turkish commitment for the resumption of full diplomatic relations."

At this time in Turkey's domestic policy, the Kurdish minority has been facing such a deception policy. While the Kurds are laying down their arms, in view of the administration's demonstrative negotiations with their jailed leader, Abdullah Öcalan, no concrete commitments have been announced by Ankara.

Armenia has suffered the brunt of Turkey's deceptive policy over the last two decades. In flagrant violation of the international law, Turkey has blockaded Armenia since 1994. And there is no power on earth to even chide Turkey for that lawless behavior.

Yet Turkey continues to tempt and tease the international community that it is about to take an initiative towards establishing peace and stability in the region. The first farce in that direction was Foreign Minister Davutoglu's "zero problem with neighbors" policy, which soon proved to be nothing more than empty rhetoric. Yet Turkey's "good intentions" never reverberated around the world. Even world leaders encouraged Turkey's neighbors to take advantage of the historic opportunity.

One expression of Turkey's "good intentions" were the Protocols, supposed to become the crown jewel of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who rushed to Switzerland to witness the historic

breakthrough. True to its deceptive nature, Ankara never ratified the Protocols, but benefitted tremendously by the commotion it created.

The most recent incident was the cancellation of the planned twice-weekly chartered flights from Yerevan to Van. Although outwardly a positive move, the plan was of dubious nature for Armenia. It was necessitated primarily for the economic isolation of Eastern provinces in Turkey (historic Armenia).

There was mounting pressure by the governors of the region to open the border with Armenia to allow some economic activity. Ankara's intention was to punish Armenia with its blockade. In the meantime it punished the population on the other side of the border, but that did not bother policy planners in Ankara because that population happened to be mostly Kurds. For the Armenians, the 45-minute flight would afford them the opportunity to visit their ancestral lands, but economically it would present a drain on Armenia's economy, since cheap flights to Antalya had already forced out the competition in resort areas of Armenia and Georgia. However, the plan inspired an aura of positive sentiments, a hope that Armenian-Turkish relations are inching toward a better place.

The first flight was scheduled to take place on April 3, but a decision was made on March 30 by the Turkish side to cancel the flights, which were to operate by a private charter company. That company has not yet commented on the cancellation of the flights, but other indications emerged to prove that the cancellation was due to Azerbaijan's pressure. Indeed the spokesman for Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry, Elman Abdullayev, has publicly thanked Ankara for the cancellation. He has further commented, "In the present condition, the position of brotherly Turkey is critically important. It is important that Turkey exert pressure on Armenia. We always see Turkey's contribution to that affect and we are thankful for that."

Perhaps Turkey never intended to allow those flights, but the announcement reaped some dividends for Ankara; to begin with, it once more demonstrated Turkey's "good intentions" on the political markets. Second, out of nowhere it offered a free victory for Azerbaijan, against some political and business rewards. Together, Ankara and Baku enjoyed the satisfaction knowing they gave a slap to Armenia's face.

Azerbaijan is not hiding its intentions against Armenia. Baku's plans are to wipe Armenia out of the region. Aliyev himself has arrogantly announced that their intention is to continue the "liberation" of 20 percent of its territory "occupied" by Armenia. He has announced time and again that Armenia has been sitting on historic Azeri territory. He has also boasted several times that Baku was successful in isolating Armenia and leaving it out of all regional development plans, including rail and energy networks. This illegal plan is being implemented with the collusion of the great powers in the West and Russia.

When Azerbaijan threatens the very existence of Armenia, no restraining rebuke is heard from the UN headquarters nor its major world capitals.

Each time Azerbaijan violates the ceasefire agreement, the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), tasked with solving the Artsakh impasse, issues a polite warning to both sides to refrain from escalating the explosive situation.

The cancellation of flights may seem an insignificant, singular act, but it is the symbolic expression of a broader policy of stifling Armenia out of existence.

Continuing the Fight for Recognition

By Harry N. Mazadoorian

As Armenians in America commemorate the 98th anniversary of the Genocide which began in 1915, we are faced – once again – with a litany of falsehoods, misperceptions and organized lobbying, which make the task of achieving recognition so hard.

It is often said that the best defense is a good offense and the government of Turkey is a master at that. Bald-faced lies lead the parade of arguments. These include, first, that the deaths were exaggerated, secondly, that the turmoil was instilled by the Armenians and finally, that far more Turks suffered than Armenians.

Next bring in the lobbyists and some more heavy artillery. Corporations fearing losing business in Turkey join the opposition.

Finally, Turkey appeals to those not knowledgeable. Why does it matter what happened so long ago they ask. Why risk

offending a valuable ally in the strife-torn Middle-East?

This year, however, we see more and more cracks in the opposition to the recognition.

We have witnessed more acknowledgement of what really happened from those within Turkey. Scholars, journalists and humanitarians have begun to speak out with increasing regularity. The latest of these is the grandson of Cemal Pasha, one of the major perpetrators of the horrific atrocities committed.

At the same time, those loyal to the cause of recognition have maintained and expanded their efforts to bring the true story forward and to explain to the world why this epic tragedy – this genocide – of 98 years ago continues to be a keenly relevant issue.

The world is slowly beginning to see that enabling Turkey by looking away from the truth does not promote better relationships, but rather encourages a bully state to become more emboldened.

The US seeks to avoid offending the current Turkish government (which is not the

government which carried out the atrocities of 1915) by recognizing the Genocide in order to maintain a greater stability in the Middle East. However, these efforts seem to have produced contrary results. Turkey has taken an increasingly hostile stance toward Israel and in fact has accused it of "crimes against humanity." A volatile environment is becoming even more volatile.

Secretary of State John Kerry sought to "tone down" Turkey's inflammatory assaults on Israel during a recent visit, but, according to some press reports, hardly received the welcome one would expect for a representative of a country providing billions in total aid. While all agree the US should maintain its important allies in the Middle-East, good allies should be able to speak frankly with each other. Allies should not be enablers.

Finally, major inconsistencies are being exposed in the Turkish government's actions. It protests efforts at Genocide recognition by shouting that no good can come

continued on next page



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Istanbul Patriarchate Ignores Armenian Community's Religious Needs

The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul upset many Armenians in Turkey and around the world when it failed to send a clergyman to the recently renovated Saint Guiragos Church in Dikranagerd (Diyarbakir) to celebrate Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday.

St. Guiragos is not just any Armenian church. With seven altars and a capacity for 3,000 worshipers, it is one of the largest Christian churches in the Middle East. The church's belfry was destroyed on May 28, 1915, by Turkish artillery because it was much taller than the minarets of nearby mosques. Turkish soldiers forced the city's Deputy Prelate, Mgrditch Vartabed Chlghadian, to watch the destruction of the belfry as he was dragged to his eventual martyrdom.

Amazingly, St. Guiragos remained a functioning church until the 1980s, with a local priest performing regular church services year round. As the few remaining descendants of Armenian Genocide survivors left the city, the church fell into disrepair and was abandoned.

In recent years, Dikranagerd Armenians who had reset-

tled in Istanbul established the St. Guiragos Foundation, which renovated the church at a cost of \$3.2 million. Two thirds of the funds were donated by Armenians of Istanbul, Europe and North America. The remaining one-third was provided by Diyarbekir's Kurdish city government which has been highly supportive of local Armenian initiatives.

To their great chagrin, St. Guiragos parishioners were deprived of liturgical services on Easter Sunday as the Armenian Patriarchate informed them that it could not spare a clergyman to perform mass in their church. They were told that none of the Patriarchate's 23 clergymen were available, as they had to officiate in Istanbul's more than two dozen functioning churches, but were promised that a priest would arrive in Dikranagerd the Sunday after Easter.

St. Guiragos parishioners were terribly disappointed, since they had just installed new church bells procured from Moscow at great expense and effort. They had to ring the bells on Easter Sunday for the first time in almost 100 years, without a cleric's presence to hold services! The worshipers, inspired by the majesty of the church, lit candles and recited prayers, assisted by local Armenian language teacher Kevork Fikri.

The Armenian Patriarchate does not seem to be the least bothered by its inexcusable failure to provide a clergyman to the Dikranagerd church on the joyous occasion of Easter Sunday, even though the embarrassing details of its unacceptable behavior were widely publicized in the pages of several Turkish newspapers, including *Hurriyet* and *Radikal*.

In the absence of Patriarch Mesrob Moutafian, who has been hospitalized for years with a terminal illness, the Deputy Patriarch Aram Ateshian has been running the Patriarchate's affairs. He should have assigned a clergyman to serve in Dikranagerd not only on Easter Sunday but

throughout the year. He should have also provided all possible assistance to the many Islamized and Turkified Armenians who have come forward asking to be baptized in the newly renovated church.

Even more disturbing is the fact that Aram Srpazan on several occasions has made critical remarks about Diaspora Armenians asking the Turkish government to return to the Armenian Patriarchate more than 2,500 confiscated churches. He has repeatedly asserted that the Patriarchate has neither the funds nor the clergy to renovate and operate these churches. Archbishop Ateshian fails to understand that the first step is to secure the return of the church structures before worrying about renovating them. Whether the Patriarchate has the necessary funds or not, Armenians have the right to demand the return of these churches. Moreover, many of the confiscated Armenian churches owned adjacent lands and buildings that could provide the necessary income to renovate and operate these parishes.

Given Archbishop Ateshian's lack of enthusiasm about the return of Armenian churches to the Patriarchate, it is not surprising that, even though he is a native of Dikranagerd, he has not made a sincere effort to provide a clergyman to St. Guiragos Church on Easter Sunday. One wonders if he is buckling under Turkish pressure to discourage the budding national and religious revival movement among Dikranagerd Armenians. Otherwise, making advance arrangements to send a clergyman from Istanbul, Armenia, Lebanon, Jerusalem, Europe or even the United States, would have been an easy task.

It is unfortunate that Islamized and Turkified Armenians have to confront the Patriarchate while battling the Turkish government in their quest to return to their ethnic and religious roots, and regain their usurped rights and properties.

Continuing The Fight for Recognition

from previous page

from it and decries even the talk of apology. However, it insists that those offending it must apologize to Turkey. All of the US political muscle was mustered during President Obama's recent Middle-Eastern trip, when he leaned on Israel to apologize to Turkey for the 2010 deaths aboard the Mavi Marmara when Israeli commandos intercepted and boarded the ship. Apparently apologies and acknowledgements do have healing powers, but in the eyes of the Turkish government only when they come to Turkey and not from Turkey.

98 years after the beginning of the Genocide, a powerful dam of denial continues to block a deep reservoir of truth.

But increasingly, acknowledgements of the truth from within and without Turkey, are being heard. The futility of appeasing an ally to maintain its support is being recognized. The fallacy and inconsistency in Turkey's arguments are becoming increasingly transparent.

Because of this confluence of forces, both old and new, the dam shows increasing signs of decay and deterioration. Structurally unsound, it is built on a weak foundation of falsehoods and deceptions. The truth appears to be becoming a faster and faster current which has the potential to become a virtual torrent that can ultimately gush through.

But that is by no means inevitable. It requires a continued and expanded effort to present the truth before all audiences, including the US Government, in order to allow the crystal clear waters of truth to flow freely.

Do not doubt that the dam of denial is being continually reinforced. However, with continued efforts on the part of the Armenian community and its friends, the dam will not stand for 100 years.

(Harry N. Mazadoorian of Kensington, Conn., is a commercial arbitrator, mediator and a senior fellow at the Quinnipiac University Law School Center on Dispute Resolution. He is the son of Genocide survivors.)

The Cost of War Must Be Measured By Human Tragedy, not Artifacts

By Robert Fisk

What is a child's life worth against all the antiquities of Syria?

Any reflection of Syria's architectural disasters must include this question. The child, a humanitarian must say, is worth all the columns of Palmyra and mosques of Damascus. The child, a cold-hearted historian might suggest, could be sacrificed for the heritage of all future children. The pragmatist must announce that both the child and the heritage should be saved. Alas, both are being destroyed in Syria.

The inner burning of the Omayyad mosque in Aleppo, the city's souk, the Roman Dead Cities of northern Syria – which have acquired new ghosts as thousands of refugees now hide in the tombs and ruins of antiquity – are the latest victims of the war of archeology.

And Emma Cunliffe of Durham University sums up the dilemma succinctly in the latest issue of *British Archeology*. If there are 60,000-70,000 dead, with winter snow burying refugee tent communities, with gas and power shortages in shattered cities, "what does heritage matter in the face of such tragic desolation?"

Cunliffe, who is developing ways to monitor damage to Middle East archeological sites – more accurately, I hope, than the UN puts together the human variety – has produced a remarkably even-handed report which lays blame on both the regime and the rebels for the damage to Syria's heritage. While still not on the post-2003 Iraqi scale, "there now appear to be established networks (on the opposition side) that circumvent official inspection...Seizures of several thousand unmarked artifacts on the Syrian border, including pottery, coins, mosaics, statues, sculptures, writings and glassworks suggest the extent of looting could be vast." Perhaps, Cunliffe says, the trade in stolen Syrian antiquities now stands at more than 1.25 billion Pounds Sterling.

In Palmyra, however, it appears to be government army bullets that have scarred the Roman pillars and government army tracks that have used the Roman roads – not unlike the American Humvees which blithely crushed the highways of Babylon in 2003 – while in Homs (and Cunliffe does not apportion blame here), the Cathedral of Um al-Zennar, one of the city's oldest churches "now lies in ruins, its worshippers, dead and scattered, its ancient Aramaic liturgy silenced." It was one of the world's oldest churches, its site dating back to AD59, containing a belt said to belong to the Virgin Mary. If you want to search for responsibility, I suppose, then you must ask: who was the first to use firearms in this Syrian bloodbath?

Ever since the Independent on Sunday first gave large-scale publicity to the destruction of Syria's heritage, both sides in the war have used the damage in their own cause. Free Syrian Army officers have vouchsafed to prevent all looting – a dubious claim since the

Jordanian markets are now flooded with Syrian gold, mosaics and statues – and have even used Roman Palmyra in a propaganda U-tube. Produced by the 'Media Centre for the city of Tadmor (Palmyra)', a horseman gallops across the screen bearing the FSA's green, white and black flag in front of the Roman columns of the city's Via Maxima.

Interestingly, however, the Syrian government's own minister for antiquities, Prof. Maamoun Abdul-Karim, has appealed to all Syrians – whatever their attitude to the Assad regime – to protect the country's architectural treasures because "it is everyone's responsibility (to) work together to protect those antiquities." While acknowledging severe damage to some Roman heritage sites in the north, he praises local villagers for driving away looters and diggers. The locals, it would appear, realize that a town without antiquities is a town that will never earn tourist money in post-war Syria.

There are a few intriguing notes in Abdul-Karim's appeal. Government forces, he claims, have confiscated 400 items, beads, coins, statues and mosaic panels "though some of them were fake". Where, in heaven's name, did the fakes come from? The minister also assures us that the vast bulk of treasures have been secured in "safe places." But where are all these "safe places?" And if they are so safe, why do the internally-placed refugees not flock to them?

Deir ez-Zour, now a deserted city in largely rebel hands, seems to have suffered disproportionately as looters assaulted the Acropolis, excavated sectors of the Temple of the Rock – from Bronze Age Ebla (middle of the 3 millennium BC) – and bored down through the rock for earlier artifacts. One prominent Lebanese archeologist in the region tells me – and this one of the most disturbing characteristics of this tragic treasure-hunt – is that the smugglers are now working for the same networks created by the Iraqi looters. A taste for treasures has now been acquired internationally – and buyers are now asking Iraqi gangs to use the same methods in Syria. The Washington Post has been investigating rebel smuggling trails, and insurgents told the paper that an average haul can net \$50,000 for weapons purchases. "Some days we are fighters; others we are archeologists," an Idlib rebel told the paper, after claiming to have discovered Sumerian tablets from Ebla.

Several archeologists (the legal kind) have suggested that their approaches to NATO – even the British Ministry of Defence – led to attempts by pilots to avoid damaging Roman heritage sites in Libya in 2011, even switching munitions to avoid shrapnel spray while targeting Ghaddafi's legions. But there are no NATO planes over Syria and I doubt if Syrian government pilots carry Minister Abdul-Karim's appeal in their cockpits. So same old question: what is a child's life worth?

(This column originally appeared in the March 18 edition of *The Independent*.)



Growing Presence in Bosnia Has Given Turkey Expanding Field of Influence in Europe

Michael Birnbaum

SARAJEVO (*Washington Post* and *Guardian*) – Turkey conquered the Balkans five centuries ago. Now Turkish power is making inroads through friendlier means. Two Turkish-run universities have opened in Bosnia's Ottoman-influenced capital Sarajevo in recent years, bringing an influx of Turkish students and culture to a predominantly Muslim country still reeling from a brutal ethnic war almost two decades ago.

Turkish investment has expanded across the Balkans, even in Croatia and Serbia.

Turkey's presence in Bosnia was largely dormant during the more than 40 years that the Balkan country was part of communist Yugoslavia, which was not receptive to Turkish religious and historical influences. But during the mid-1990s, as Yugoslavia fell apart, Turkish aid started flowing to the Muslims who comprise about half of Bosnia. Since then, Turkish funding has helped reconstruct Ottoman-era monuments that were targets of ethnically motivated destruction.

Now Turkey's cultural influence is hard to miss. Turkish dignitaries are frequent visitors to Sarajevo. A grand new Turkish embassy is being built near "sniper alley," a corridor where, during the three-year siege of the capital city in the war, Bosnian Muslims struggling to go about their daily business were frequently shot at by Serbian snipers stationed on nearby hills. Billboards advertise round-trip flights to Istanbul for the equivalent of \$75. And this year, a baroque soap opera based on the life of Suleiman the Magnificent, a 16th-century ruler of the Ottoman empire, has mesmerized couch potatoes in Bosnia's dreary winter.

The biggest outposts in Bosnia have been the two Turkish-backed universities, which have mostly Turkish student bodies.

At the International University of Sarajevo, students who enter the main door of the building erected two years ago have to pass under the watchful eye of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, the Ottoman ruler who introduced Islam to Bosnia in 1463. The private university is backed by Turkish businessmen who are close to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's political party. The university started in 2004 and has grown to 1,500 students. It is shooting for 5,000, the capacity of its new building.

Classes are held in English, and there is a western curriculum heavy on practical subjects such as business and engineering. Administrators are transparent about the school's ambitions. "The Turks are attracted to come here because they believe that Bosnia, for all its problems, will be in the EU before Turkey is. And they see this as a bridge between two countries," said Muhamed Hadziabdic, the vice-rector of the school, who is a Bosnian Muslim.

The other Turkish school in Sarajevo, the International Burch University, opened in 2008 and has connections to Fethullah Gulen, an influential Muslim Turkish preacher who runs an international religious and educational movement from Pennsylvania.

The Turkish expansion into the region comes as Turkey's long-held dream of joining the EU seems remote. Western European powers, especially Germany, have been concerned that Turkey's 74 million residents could flood Europe in search of jobs.

Turkey's growing presence has upset some Bosnian Serbs, who maintain a parallel government in Bosnia under the complicated system dictated by 1995 peace agreements. Officials from the parallel government have complained that the Bosnian Muslim part of the country is falling under the influence of a former imperial power.

Still, even Serbia and Croatia have welcomed Turkish investment. Turkey was the third-largest investor in Mediterranean Croatia in the



From left, Ilse Kaprielian, Judith Ananian Sarno, Nancy Madanian Reppucci, Ed Kazanjian, Selectman Andy Rojas, Selectman Ralph Jones, Jirair Hovsepian, Selectmen Chair Mark Paolillo, Lenna Garibian, Newton Kupelian, Adrine Kaligian, Juliette Hatzadourian and Mary Ann Kazanjian

Belmont Selectmen Commemorate Genocide Anniversary

BELMONT, Mass. – This year marks the 98th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and the Belmont Board of Selectmen presented a Proclamation remembering the "over one and one half million Armenians [who] were killed" during 1915-1923, which constituted "an atrocity against humanity."

This is the fifth time the Belmont Board of Selectmen have recognized and commemorated the Armenian Genocide with a proclamation.

The Belmont Human Rights Commission had requested the proclamation from the Board of Selectmen.

– By Jirair Hovsepian

first three-quarters of 2012, and Erdogan has pursued closer ties with Serbia, a long-time rival. Turkish diplomats also have worked to broker talks between the Serbian and Bosnian governments.

The efforts in the Balkans have given Turkey a new venue for economic growth as it has grappled with ethnic violence that has engulfed

neighboring Syria.

Many in the Balkans think they are merely a waypoint on the route toward Turkey's broader goals. "They are a big regional power," said Hayruddin Somun, a former Bosnian ambassador to Turkey. "The Balkans was always their path to conquering Europe. They had to come through here."

98th Anniversary Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide

Friday, April 19, 2013, 10:30 am

House of Representatives Chamber • Massachusetts State House



**Keynote Speech
Ambassador John Evans**



**Joint Senate/House
Resolution Recipient:**

**Donald Tellalian
Architect of the
Armenian Heritage Park**



At noon, participants are invited to march to the Armenian Heritage Park for additional remarks, music and a brown bag lunch.

For more information contact:

Senator Will Brownsberger 617-722-1280
Representative Jon Hecht 617-722-2140
Representative Dave Rogers 617-722-2400
Representative John Lawn 617-722-2304
Lalig Musserian, Coordinator 617-319-2651

Buses will be leaving at 9:00 am from St. James and St. Stephen's Churches (Buses generously provided by the Knights of Vartan)