



Arsen Galstyan

Galstyan Wins Russia's First Gold, Dedicates it To Flood Victims

LONDON (*Moscow Times*) – Arsen Galstyan has become Russia's first Olympic judo winner since the Soviet collapse, and he dedicated his gold medal to those affected by recent floods in the Krasnodar region.

"I feel absolutely wonderful," said Galstyan, 23, who stunned favorite and world number one holder, Rishod Sobirov of Uzbekistan, on his way to victory Saturday. "My medal will mean a lot, especially [to] people who are suffering from the flood."

Flash floods earlier this month killed at least 171 people and damaged more than 4,000 homes in Russia's Krasnodar region.

Galstyan's route to gold could hardly have been more difficult. Having only just overcome South Korean Choi Gwang-Hyeon, his close encounter with

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LONDON – At the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games on Friday, July 27, the team from Armenia made its way. Thus far, athletes from Armenia have not won a medal. President Serge Sargisian and his delegation, including his chief of staff, Vigen Sargisian, to his right, and the president of Armenian's National Olympic Committee, Gagik Tsarukian, first from right, took in some of the games in London.

Syria Fighting Goes Unabated

Armenians Worry About Safety

DAMASCUS (Combined Sources) – While fighting continues to rage in Syria, its residents, including Syrian-Armenians continue to escape. According to a United

Nations survey, about 120,000 people have left Syria, most of them for Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon.

During the recent few days there were heated clashes in the capital city of Damascus, as well as near Aleppo, where about 45,000 Armenians have lived.

It is reported that Syrian-Armenians are

being kidnapped and ransoms are demanded to set them free. Some Armenians have even got warnings by the rebels not to open their shops.

The press secretary of the Prelacy of the Armenian Church of Aleppo, Zhirayr Reisyan, reported at a briefing that both loyalists to President Bashar al-Assad and rebel forces are digging in their positions. As for the situation of Aleppo Armenians, the condition remains the same and the conflicts have not yet reached Armenian districts.

"Our national, religious authorities are going to monitor their supervision aimed at ensuring security of Syrian Armenians. Already, an Emergency Situation Body is being established, tasked to provide assistance not only to Armenians, but the ones who have left their apartments, found shelter in other places," Reysyan noted. He added that the members of the community will spare no effort to ensure the security of Armenian churches and monuments as well.

"Fortunately neither an Armenian church nor monument was damaged, yet the city life, trafficking and economy have been paralyzed, hindering the community's livelihood," he said.

In accordance with the Syrian Human Rights Defense Organization, the ongoing clashes have resulted in the deaths of more than 17,000 people. Among the victims there were seven Armenians, two of whom were in the Syrian armed forces.

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Sam Simonian Receives Armenia's Highest Medal of Honor

YEREVAN – President Serge Sargisian this week presented Sam Simonian, president of the Simonian Education Foundation, the nation's highest award, the Anania Shirakatsi Medal.

Simonian was awarded the medal through a decree by the president of Armenia on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Armenia's independence for his contribution to the preservation of Armenian identity, services to the Motherland as well as for contributing greatly to the friendship between Armenia and foreign states.

Sargisian and Simonian spoke about the activities of the Simonian Educational Foundation and implemented programs, including the Tumo Educational Center for Creative Technologies. They also discussed future plans for the foundation.



President Serge Sargisian, right, presents Sam Simonian with the Anania Shirakatsi Medal.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Galustyan, Martirosyan Among 50 Richest Russian Celebrities

MOSCOW (Arminfo) – Two Armenians, Mikhail Galustyan and Garik Martirosyan, appeared on the list of the 50 most popular and richest Russian celebrities in the Russian edition of *Forbes*.

Galstyan, who ranked 35th, is reported as having an annual income of \$2.7 million, 245 appearances in media outlets and 1,180,000 Yandex hits. (Yandex is the largest Russian search engine.)

Martirosyan's annual income is \$2.8 million. He appeared in the press 201 times and has had 790,000 Yandex hits.

At the top spot is singer Stas Mikhaylov, with 14.4 million Yandex hits and an annual income of \$20 million; second is tennis player Maria Sharapova with \$24.8 million and third is singer Alla Pugacheva.

Armenia Favored by Italian Tourists

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – Armenia is popular among Italian tourists who say Armenian cultural heritage is similar to their own, according to Anahit Dabinyan, a travel agent at Imega Tour and Travel Agency.

She said that the cultural heritage of Armenia also appeals to tourists from Australia, Canada and the US. Californians are frequent visitors to Armenia, she said, and their favorite spots in Armenia are the resort towns of Dilijan and Jermuk.

Tigranuhi Aleksanyan, a travel agent at Sirov Travel Agency, agrees that Armenia is very popular among Italian tourists, as well as Ukrainian, English and Japanese tourists. Their top place to visit is Lori.

However, one of the complaints tourists have is the high prices of hotels, according to Gegham Aghouzunyan, director of Gamo Tour Agency. As a result of high prices, the inflow of tourists in Armenia fell from previous years. He said the cost of trips to the country rose by 10 to 15 percent. Most of the tourists in Armenia are from Russia.

Hunchakian, Ramgavar Parties Ready to Assist Syrian-Armenians

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – The Social Democrat Hunchakian Party and the Ramgavar Party in Armenia issued separate statements on the tragic events currently taking place in Syria, which are threatening the safety of the local vibrant Armenian community.

The parties expressed their readiness to assist Syrian-Armenians find safety in their historic homeland.

"We are ready to cooperate with relevant institutions to help and support our compatriots, the Ramgavar Party said in their statement.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Armenia to Ban Foreign Funding of Religious Organizations

YEREVAN. (news.am) – Armenia plans to ban foreign funding of the religious organizations.

Such a requirement is included in the new law “On freedom of conscience and religion,” which is scheduled to be submitted to the government on August 2, representative of Justice Ministry Edward Astsatryan told reporters.

In addition, religious organizations will be prohibited from conducting mass propaganda, coming up to the same person more than once. Religious organizations also have to publish annual financial reports on their websites or submit them to the government.

Unless they obey the rules, religious organizations will have to pay a fine of nearly \$1,000.

However, the law contains a number of more liberal provisions, including reduction in registration membership fee. The ideology of the organization will not undergo an examination as well.

The latter caused disapproval of Vardan Markaryan, the head of the religion department at the Armenian government.

“Even if Satanists appeal, we are forced to register them,” he emphasized.

Sardarapat Movement Calls on Artsakh to Settle Liberated Lands With Syrian Immigrants

STEPANAKERT, Karabagh (Arminfo) – The Sardarapat Movement here called for Nagorno Karabagh (Artsakh) authorities to consider the Karabagh problem only in the context of all-Armenian interests and to take the most active part in the implementation of the topical tasks faced by the Armenians worldwide. One of these tasks is to provide relevant conditions for the Syrian Armenians to return to their homeland, Sardarapat says. The movement thinks that the liberated territories around the NKR can and must be settled with the Armenians of Syria.

The group also praised the most recent presidential elections there, noting that they indicated the people of Karabagh were interested in pursuing democracy.

Oskanian Appeals Court Judgment

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – Vartan Oskanian, the founder of the Civilitas Foundation, ex-foreign minister of Armenia and member of parliament from the Prosperous Armenia Party (PAP), has taken his case to the Court of Appeals after the court of general jurisdiction of the Center and Nork-Marash administrative districts refused to dismiss the criminal case against the Civilitas Foundation and its founders.

The press service for the Civilitas Foundation said that Salpi Ghazarian, director of the foundation, addressed a letter to Gagik Khachatryan, head of the State Revenue Committee, asking him to explain the reason for the delay in the audit conducted by the commission. The audit for the Civilitas Foundation should have concluded on August 3, however, under Khachatryan’s order, on July 23, the audit was suspended for 30 days.

The National Security Service (NSS) of Armenia instituted a criminal case against the Civilitas Foundation concerning a \$2-million transaction for the sale of Huntsman Building Products, an Armenia-based company owned by US-based Polymer Materials and Huntsman International. “As a result of some inaccuracies in the contract, the transaction was not submitted to the tax authorities and therefore left untaxed. Of the charity funds left in Armenia according to the wish of the American side, as much as \$1.135 million was not spent for charity but was transferred to accounts opened by the founder and president of the Civilitas Foundation Vartan Oskanian and the foundation’s trustee Tigran Karapetyan, with part of the money used for personal needs,” the NSS said.

Armenia Fund USA Celebrates School Openings in Armenia, Karabagh

YEREVAN – On May 30, the Board of Trustees of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund held its 21st annual meeting here, where its chairperson, President Serge Sargisian, and representatives of all of the fund’s 25 international affiliates reviewed a year’s worth of work and discussed plans for the future.

It was a joyous occasion as the fund celebrated its 20th anniversary with a string of opening ceremonies, seeing its many water, healthcare, infrastructure, community and education projects come to life. Armenia Fund has made education projects a priority for years, ensuring that the leaders of the future are given the best possible resources to succeed. As Ara Vardanyan, Executive Director of Hayastan All-Armenian Fund,



The ceremonial ribbon was cut at the opening of Gishi School.

stressed, “stay put in your land, and the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund will do its utmost to support you.”

This year, a boarding kindergarten in Yerevan, serving children from economic and socially vulnerable families, underwent a complete renovation and celebrated its opening this past May. Two brand new schools in Vaghuhas and Gishi villages, both located in Karabagh, also celebrated by opening their

doors to the younger generation. Pure excitement was felt from the crowd during these opening ceremonies, each having its own unique flare. Vaghuhas and Gishi School, both brand new constructions, will be able to accommodate almost twice the number of students than before, 240 and 300 students, respectively. Vaghuhas School will now serve the residents of the neighboring village of Khnkavan as well, bringing these two communities closer together. For Gishi, the opening ceremony was accompanied by the graduation of its 2012 students. Vice-principal Adelaida Ohanjanyan said that 20 of this year’s 26 graduates intend to continue their studies at various colleges and universities. “This wonderful school has given us wings to fly,” she added. Gishi’s two-story campus, with its unique architec-

ture and all new modern amenities, will soon boast a sizable outdoor recreation area, including a brand new soccer field.

Both the Vaghuhas and Gishi schools are located in Karabagh, where the



The children of Shengavit Boarding Kindergarten

implementation of water infrastructure projects has been a main focus of the Fund for the past few years. With the delivery of clean and accessible water distribution networks, new and renovated schools are now being opened throughout Karabagh.

As more schools are opening their doors to the younger generation, the fund now turns some of its focus to equipping these schools with all the modern amenities.

The opening ceremonies were attended by the president of Karabagh, Bako Sahakian, and other officials, including Vladik Khachatryan, Karabagh’s minister of education and science. Reflecting on the joyous events taking place, Khachatryan said, “The Armenian people have endured through the ages thanks to its venerable traditions of learning.”

Golden Apricot Artistic Director: ‘In Armenia we Lack a Film Industry with all Necessary Components’

YEREVAN (Hetq) – Golden Apricot Film Festival Artistic Director Sousanna Harutyounyan spoke to Hetq about her thoughts on this year’s festival.

Hetq: How would you compare this year’s ninth festival to previous ones?

Sousanna Harutyounyan: I would say look at this year’s festival poster. It’s a big comma. That punctuation says it all. We have to take a step back and see what we have achieved over nine years and what needs to be done for next year’s 10th anniversary.

In a way, this year’s festival was a preparation exercise for next year. It will be a showcase of the good and the not so good.

Hetq: What came before the comma, the pause?

SH: It’s utter madness to organize a film festival in a country with no real international experience and with a very limited film industry. But we persevered and over the years have brought the best names in cinema to Armenia. We have also attracted up and coming young talent to the festival.

Hetq: Under the Armenian Panorama film category, Armenian directors mainly focused on themes related to the Genocide and Western Armenia, in an attempt to return to their roots. Was this standard for the festival?

SH: It’s our pain and these are issues that still exist. We can’t rest until some sort of resolution is reached. If these are public issues, then the cinema must reflect them in an attempt not only to find answers but to raise those issues on an international level. And it is doubly important to maintain certain artistic standards while doing so. If these themes were so prevalent, it means they are of concern to Armenian directors.

I don’t think this is anything new. The Armenian Panorama category always displayed this tendency. Diaspora Armenian directors especially carry around this family trauma and history.

In 2015, the 100th anniversary of the Genocide, the festival must have a separate large project on the subject. It’s my hope that between now and then some really quality films will be made about this collective pain we bear.

Hetq: It turns out that Armenian directors are only represented in the Armenian Panorama category where they basically compete against each other. Why aren’t Armenian films represented in the international feature category?

SH: This is not a case of devaluing Armenian films but rather it’s an internationally accepted format. There’s a national and international competition. The aim of this format is to show as many national films as possible.

Hetq: Isn’t there an Armenian feature film that corresponds to international standards and be included in that category?

SH: I believe it was correct to include Armenian feature films in the Armenian Panorama category. Our strategy is to increase national completion according to our means. We are trying to create the best conditions in which to present Armenian films.

There is the fear that if an Armenian film is entered in the international features category it will be pushed aside and not stand up to scrutiny. Our directors must recognize this; that we are merely motivated by the best of intentions when we include their films in the Armenian Panorama section. We just want to ensure the best conditions to

present them.

Take a look at the Armenian film, “If Only Everyone,” which won the Best Armenian Fiction Film award this year. It’s already been invited to be shown at several important film festivals.

Hetq: So what’s preventing the development of our local cinema?

SH: In Armenia we lack a film industry with all the necessary components. It’s a complex organism and the production side is just one aspect. Films must be shown and we have no mechanisms to gauge the response of viewers. Then too, there is no connection between our Armenian cinema and the international cinema, so that Armenian cinematographers understand the tendencies taking place in the wider world – the language, themes, etc.

Furthermore, film reviewing in Armenia is lacking. The cinema is an integrated whole. If one of the chains is lacking the entire system suffers. But I see a trend, step by step, to connect the Armenian cinema to that which exists outside.

Hetq: Let’s get to some technical issues. What happened to the showing of Alexander Sokurov’s film “The Sun?” It wasn’t shown in its entirety and people left the theatre. Even Sokurov didn’t want to respond to what had happened.

SH: In this case, the festival can’t be blamed. Everything was checked beforehand; the color and sound. Who would have thought that the end of the film was missing? This is the first such case in nine years. The DVD sent to us by Sokurov’s studio didn’t contain the entire film. While we respect Sokurov’s situation he must reciprocate that respect. We arranged for a full showing of the film in just one day at great cost.



INTERNATIONAL

Turkey Sets up Secret Base to Bring Aid to Syria Rebels, Sources Say

ANKARA (Reuters) — Turkey has set up a secret base with allies Saudi Arabia and Qatar to direct vital military and communications aid to Syria's rebels from a city near the border, Gulf sources have said.

News of the clandestine Middle East-run "nerve centre" working to topple Syrian President Bashar Assad underlines the extent to which Western powers — who played a key role in unseating Muammar Gadhafi in Libya — have avoided military involvement so far in Syria.

"It's the Turks who are militarily controlling it. Turkey is the mainco-ordinator/facilitator. Think of a triangle, with Turkey at the top and Saudi Arabia and Qatar at the bottom," said a Doha-based source.

"The Americans are very hands-off on this. U.S. intel(ligence) are working through middlemen. Middlemen are con-

trolling access to weapons and routes."

The centre in Adana, a city in southern Turkey about 100 kilometers from the Syrian border, was set up after Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Abdullah al-Saud visited Turkey and requested it, a source in the Gulf said. The Turks liked the idea of having the base in Adana so that they could supervise its operations, he added.

A Saudi foreign ministry official was not immediately available to comment on the operation.

Adana is home to Incirlik, a large Turkish/US air force base which Washington has used in the past for reconnaissance and military logistics operations. It was not clear from the sources whether the anti-Syrian "nerve centre" was located inside Incirlik base or in the city of Adana.

Qatar, the tiny gas-rich Gulf state

which played a leading part in supplying weapons to Libyan rebels, has a key role in directing operations at the Adana base, the sources said. Qatari military intelligence and state security officials are involved.

"Three governments are supplying weapons: Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia," said a Doha-based source. Ankara has officially denied supplying weapons.

"All weaponry is Russian. The obvious reason is that these guys (the Syrian rebels) are trained to use Russian weapons, also because the Americans don't want their hands on it. All weapons are from the black market. The other way they get weapons is to steal them from the Syrian army. They raid weapons stores."

The source added: "The Turks have been desperate to improve their weak surveillance, and have been begging Washington for drones and surveillance." The pleas appear to have failed. "So they have hired some private guys come do the job."

President Barack Obama has so far preferred to use diplomatic means to try to oust Assad, although Secretary of State Hillary Clinton signaled this week that Washington plans to step up help to the rebels.

Reuters has established that Obama's aides have drafted a resolution which would authorize greater covert assistance to the rebels but still stop short of arming them.

The White House's wariness is shared by other Western powers. It reflects concerns about what might follow Assad in Syria and about the substantial presence of anti-Western Islamists and jihadi fighters among the rebels.

The presence of the secret Middle East-run "nerve centre" may explain how the Syrian rebels, a rag-tag assortment of ill-armed and poorly organized groups, have pulled off major strikes such as the devastating bomb attack on July 18 which killed at least four key Assad aides including the defense minister.

A Turkish diplomat in the region insisted however that his country played no part in the Damascus bombing.

"That's out of the question," he said. "The Syrian minister of information blamed Turkey and other countries for the killing. Turkey doesn't do such things. We are not a terrorist country. Turkey condemns such attacks."

However, two former senior U.S. security officials said that Turkey has been playing an increasing role in sheltering and training Syrian rebels who have crossed into its territory.

One of the former officials, who is also an adviser to a government in the region, told Reuters that 20 former Syrian generals are now based in Turkey, from where they are helping shape the rebel forces. Israel believes up to 20,000 Syrian troops may now have defected to the opposition.

Former officials said there is reason to believe the Turks stepped up their support for anti-Assad forces after Syria shot down a Turkish plane which had made several passes over border areas.

Sources in Qatar said the Gulf state is providing training and supplies to the Syrian rebels.

"The Qataris mobilized their special forces team two weeks ago. Their remit is to train and help logistically, not to fight," said a Doha-based source with ties to the FSA.

Qatar's military intelligence directorate, Foreign Ministry and State Security Bureau are involved, said the source.

Sargisian Meets with International Leaders, London Armenians

LONDON (Panarmenian.net, Armenpress) — On July 27, President Serge Sargisian attended a reception given on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II to honor visiting dignitaries and heads of state attending the Olympics.

Earlier the president and his official delegation during his visit to Great Britain will hold meetings with the representatives of Armenian community of Great Britain.

On July 30, Sargisian attended a reception organized by Hayastan All-Armenian Fund's British chapter.

"The more powerful and developed

the Republic of Armenia is, the stronger each Diaspora Armenian feels," he said, hailing the fund's efforts in uniting diaspora institutions and representatives.

Sargisian further briefed the participants on Armenia's current economic situation, development programs and prospects, as well as the steps taken to overcome the consequences of the global financial crisis.

"Armenian Diasporan representatives can greatly contribute to development of their homeland through investments and involvement in reform implementation," he said.



From left, Dr. Hratch Tchilingirian, President Serge Sargisian, Bishop Vahan Hovhanessian and TCA London Trust Chair Vartan Ouzounian



President Serge Sargisian is flanked by Bishop Vahan Hovhanessian and Armenia's Ambassador to the UK Karine Kazinian, as well as other guests at a reception in his honor.

International News

Catholicos of All Armenians to Visit Nice

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II will be in the French city of Nice on a pastoral visit from September 7 to 9. Information systems director of the Holy See of Echmiadzin, Rev. Vahram Melikyan announced that there he will meet with members of the Armenian community.

Nouvelles d'Armenie-reported that the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations in France welcomes the visit of the catholicos and calls on the Armenian community representatives to remain faithful to the Armenian Apostolic Church and their religion.

Spanish Parliament Postpones Discussion of Armenian Genocide

MADRID, Spain (Arminfo) — The Spanish Parliament has postponed the discussion of the Armenian Genocide issue, Armen Sirunyan from Hay Dat Committee in Barcelona told Nouvelles d'Armenie magazine.

The official reason for the postponement is the difficult financial situation in Spain, but complicating the situation, according to Sirunyan, is the lack of unity within the local Armenian community.

Syria: Turkey Jet Crash May Have Been Accident

ANKARA (Telegraph) — After concluding a partial survey of the remains of the Phantom F-4, Turkey's general staff issued a statement saying: "No traces of explosives or flammable products were found on the debris recovered from the sea."

The findings added a bizarre twist to an incident that provoked a major diplomatic crisis between the two countries, leading to Turkey stationing missile batteries along its border with Syria.

Syria itself admitted to felling the fighter jet, killing both its pilots, with a surface-to-air missile and Bashar al-Assad later expressed his regret, insisting it had intruded on Syrian airspace.

Turkish authorities seemed to back away from asserting categorically that the plane had been shot down in the wake of the tests, declining to use the term "shot down by Syria" and instead referring to "our plane that Syria claimed to have destroyed."

But with experts concluding that the aircraft probably crashed due to human error after the pilots failed successively to perform an evasive maneuver, it seemed likely that Turkey would still continue to blame the loss of the plane on Syria.

"It is better not to come to different conclusions by getting hung up on certain nuances," said Bulent Arinc, the Turkish government spokesman.

"The Turkish jet was downed, the Syrian government which downed it has said 'we downed it.'"

Armenia's Wine Wins Silver Medal

PARIS (News.am) — Armenia's Muscat grape wine received a silver medal at the "World's Best Muscat" international wine competition, said Jean-Baptiste Soulat, founding director of the French Wine Association, at a press conference last week.

"The first time when we spoke about Armenia's participation in this event, there was a view that Armenia cannot participate because it was never included in such international competition. [But] with its participation, Armenia proved to the world yet again that it has a soil which enables [it] to receive wine that meets all international standards," Soulat stated.

Armenia Wine Factory had introduced the "Armenia"-brand Muscat-grape wine to the 2012 "World's Best Muscat" international wine competition.

During the event, the international jury tested 232 wines from 24 countries.

Armenia took part in the competition for the first time, but the event organizers assured that Armenia would continue to participate in this international contest.



Community News

Stonehill Prof. Anna Ohanyan Earns Fulbright Fellowship

EASTON, Mass. — Stonehill associate professor of political science, Anna Ohanyan, has earned a Fulbright Fellowship Award to Armenia, where she will spend the 2012-2013 academic year both teaching and conducting research.

Ohanyan's goal while teaching in Armenia will be to diversify instructional technologies in higher education. She will work with the Yerevan State Linguistic University (YSLU) to introduce two new courses and will also collaborate with its new Center for Quality Assurance, which focuses on establishing tools and policies of quality control as well as developing and implementing learning assessment standards. Ohanyan plans to assist the center with professional development programs for faculty.

"I will be working with my colleagues at YSLU to develop programs for regular professional development seminars which will help establish a culture of continuous learning and discovery of innovative teaching tools that may be used by instructors in their teaching," said Ohanyan, who was born in Armenia.

Topics for the seminars will range from course development to skills-based learning and writing infusion to prospects of student autonomy and empowerment in the learning process, she said.

One of the courses she plans to introduce while teaching at YSLU is her International Organizations course, which she has taught at Stonehill since her arrival in 2005.

"Graduates of YSLU are often recruited to work for international organizations and NGOs that are active in Armenia and for such students, a background on the workings of international organizations as well as of the economic, social and political dimensions of globalization, will be a significant compliment to their educational experience," said Ohanyan.

On the research end, she plans to continue her investigation on regionalism in politically-divided areas such as the South Caucasus region. Her research this summer and during her time in Armenia will focus on the involvement of the Regional Cooperation Council in the Balkans and the role of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization in Armenia and its neighboring countries.

Through a grant from Civil Society, Education and Media Development (IREX), Ohanyan will travel to the Balkans this summer for fieldwork and in the fall, will begin conducting interviews in Armenia.

"Professor Ohanyan has set a high bar with her scholarship and teaching. Since her arrival we have seen a steady increase in the numbers of students wishing to pursue careers with non-governmental organizations or post graduate work in the area of peace and conflict studies. We are thrilled that her excellent work has been recognized with a Fulbright Fellowship," said Peter Ubertaccio, professor and chair of Stonehill's Political Science Department.

At Stonehill, she actively works with the Center for Teaching and Learning, which supports faculty in their roles as educators and facilitates collaboration among faculty members at the college.

Ohanyan established the multidisciplinary minor Peace and Conflict, which has attracted a growing number of students at Stonehill. As part of the program, she developed three new courses.

She has served as a fellow at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University from 2002-2004 and at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2007.

Ohanyan is the author of NGOs, IGOs, and see FULBRIGHT, page 5



A young Sunday School student at an Easter basket sale held as part of this year's Lenten Drive

Lenten Drive Raises Funds For Hunger Relief in US And Armenia

NEW YORK — This year, Sunday Schools across the Eastern Diocese raised more than \$14,000 as part of the annual Lenten Drive. Three schools in particular — St. Leon Sunday School of Fair Lawn, NJ, Holy Virgin Mary and Shoghagat Sunday School of Belleville, Ill., and St. James Sunday School of Watertown, Mass. — were at the forefront of the effort.

The money will be distributed to two charities: Feeding America, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief organization, and the Fund for Armenian Relief's Nor Hajn Soup Kitchen, which serves 300 elderly and low-income people in Armenia's Kotayk Province.

"The Diocesan-sponsored Lenten Drive is so important for our Sunday School students," said Andrea Carden, superintendent of St. Leon Sunday School in Fair Lawn, NJ. "Children need concrete lessons to help them understand almsgiving and the Lenten process."

As part of the Lenten Drive, students at St. Leon took part in a Poon Paregentan celebration, which included storytelling, singing, dancing, cupcake decorating and cleaning the classrooms. They learned about the significance of Lent and how they can grow during their Lenten journeys.

"The Lenten drive is an event our students truly look forward to every year," said Jane Matoesian, superintendent of Holy Virgin Mary and Shoghagat Sunday School of Belleville. "The sense of responsibility and the chance to do good is empowering."

At the local school, students make and serve lunch for the parish. They also sell plants and host an auction to raise funds and collect canned food for the needy.

"I think Lent allows the children to 'give unto others' — something we all need to be reminded of," added Matoesian.

The Diocesan-sponsored Sunday School Lenten Drive was first launched some 50 years ago and has since distributed almost \$1 million to dozens of charities.

In Armenia, the Lenten Drive has helped feed the homeless, assist with Karabagh relief, summer camps, orphanages, tree planting, youth centers, foster care, soup kitchens, Christian Education and health care. The drive has also helped support the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem and assist victims of natural disasters, hunger and other calamities in the United States and abroad.

Lenten fundraising activities have included sponsored Scripture verse memorizations, housecleaning coupons, car washes, Easter basket sales, family dinners, children's craft sales and sponsored walk-a-thons.



Sunday School students decorated cupcakes as part of this year's Lenten Drive.

Assembly Interns Discuss Turkey Trade Bill with Rep. John Sarbanes before Historic Vote

WASHINGTON — Last week, as part of the Terjenian-Thomas Internship Program, the 2012 Armenian Assembly summer intern class met with Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD), reported the Armenian Assembly of America.

Sarbanes, an active member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, represents the third congressional district of Maryland.

During the meeting, Sarbanes discussed HR. 2362, the Indian Tribal Trade and Investment Demonstration Act of 2011 and shared his concerns with the interns, including the dissenting committee views. Sarbanes indicated that the bill was controversial and specifically singled out Turkey.

The interns, who were making calls to activists across the country, expressed their appreciation for Sarbanes' principled position. In addition, the Assembly sent letters to every representative outlining its opposition to the bill. A few days after the meeting with Sarbanes, HR 2362 was rejected by the House of Representatives on July 23.

"On behalf of the Assembly internship class and Armenian-Americans across the country, I want to thank Congressman Sarbanes for his leadership and bringing to light the true nature of the bill," said Simon Shahinian who hails from Maryland and serves as the Assembly's intern coordinator.

Armenian Assembly Interns Discuss Bill Affirming Armenian Genocide With Rep. Anna Eshoo

WASHINGTON — Recently, as part of the Terjenian-Thomas Internship Program, the 2012 intern class met with Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), reported the Armenian Assembly of America.

Eshoo, now in her 10th term, represents California's 14th Congressional District, home to Silicon Valley. Of Assyrian and Armenian background, she is the co-chair and co-founder of the Religious Minorities in the Middle East Caucus and is also a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues. Previously serving on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Eshoo currently serves as the ranking member on the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

An ardent supporter of US affirmation of the Armenian Genocide, Eshoo reflected on recent congressional efforts as well as the current resolution pending before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Expressing her steadfast determination, Eshoo stated that "we will prevail" as long as we continue to put forth the effort and never give up hope. Eshoo also discussed current issues regarding Armenia and the Nagorno Karabagh peace process.

"It was a special honor to meet with Congresswoman Eshoo," stated Lori Yenikomshian, who hails from Eshoo's district and is currently interning at the Armenian National Institute as well as Halo Trust in Washington, DC. "It was heartening to hear her views and to know how dedicated she is to Armenian issues. She is a role model for those of my generation interested in public service," Yenikomshian added.



COMMUNITY NEWS

AGBU Tarouhy-Hovagimian Alumni Hold Reunion in Los Angeles

PASADENA, Calif. — The alumni reunion of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Tarouhi Hagopian and Hovagimian Manoogian schools in Beirut, Lebanon took place on Sunday, June 10, at the AGBU Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Center.

The breakfast gathering was attended by more than 275 guests, mostly alumni of both AGBU schools in Beirut; among who were faculty members including, Louise Hadidian, Haigouhi Patapoutian, Sona Tabakian, Hratch Manougian, Yenovk Balikian, Panos Titizian and Dr. Giragos Minassian.

Haig Messerlian, chairman of the AGBU Western District Committee, made the opening remarks. He dedicated the event to former Hovagimian professor, Osheen Keshishian, who had recovered from a life threatening illness. Keshishian is a staff member at Glendale City College and publisher of the *Armenian Observer*.

Messerlian then noted that the AGBU Central Board of Directors had appointed him as AGBU alumni worldwide coordinator, with the purpose of organizing and revitalizing alumni associations and committees for all AGBU schools, which was the focus for this gathering. He called upon every alumnus to join this endeavor with the intention of help-

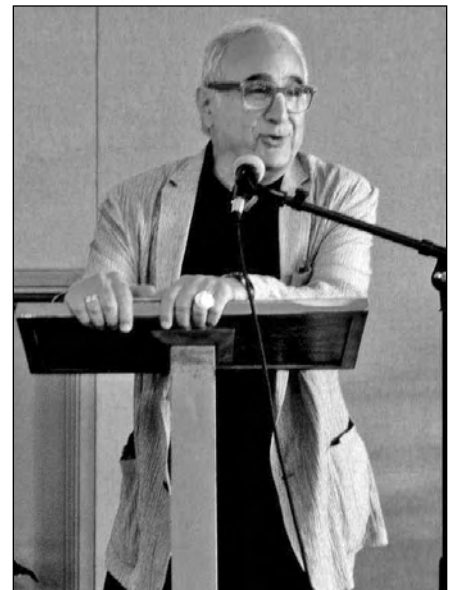


Krikor Satamian and Dikran Ekizian entertain.

ing their school which now, more than ever, needs their financial and moral support for survival. He finally asked every alumnus to fill out a questionnaire to form a database for

future contacts.

The highlight of the gathering was the entertainment provided by two Hovagimian-Manoogian classmates and close friends,



Haig Messerlian, WDC chairman and alumni coordinator, addressing the reunion

Krikor Satamian and Dikran Ekizian. They both related humorous stories about their school experiences with comic flare, much to the delight of the audience.

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Bay Area's Award-Winning Casper's Hotdogs Now Sold in LA

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — SPAR Sausage Company, makers of the award-winning Caspers Famous Hot Dogs, announced recently that Caspers Hot Dogs will be available for the first time at retail locations in and around the greater Los Angeles market. Beginning July 27, six Sam's Club locations in Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange and Riverside Counties will carry the hand-crafted franks which SPAR Sausage Company hopes will develop into a long-term relationship.

Caspers Famous Hot Dogs is a restaurant chain with eight locations throughout the Bay Area. Since 1934, the family owned-and-operated brand established by Armenian immigrants, has been serving its secret recipe foot-long frankfurters, to generation after generation of hot dog lovers. It is distinguished with a signature "snap" when bitten into providing a tasty, old-fashioned style hot dog.

The family also owns SPAR Sausage Company which manufacturers the hot dogs in its San Leandro facility. Today, Jack Dorian, Ronald Dorian and Paul Rustigian, all grandsons of the original partners, run both Caspers Famous Hot Dogs and SPAR Sausage Company.

The Caspers Hot Dogs products first became available outside of the brand's signature fast-casual locations in 1989. Since then, they have been available in most of the Western United States but never in the LA area where legions of dedicated customers now reside.

Stonehill Prof. Anna Ohanyan Earns Fulbright Fellowship

FULLBRIGHT, from page ?

the Network Mechanism of Post-Conflict Global Governance, published in 2008. She has published widely on transnational politics, international organizations and peace-building in such post-conflict settings such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan and Abkhazia.

Ohanyan has also served as a consultant for numerous organizations such as the United Nations Foundation, the World Bank, the National Intelligence Council Project at the University of Maryland, the US Department of State, the Carter Center and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



COMMUNITY NEWS

HMADS Graduation amidst Celebration of 45th Anniversary

By Florence Avakian

BAYSIDE, N.Y. — The great American writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson has said, “The purpose of life is to be useful, honorable, compassionate, and to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.” This has been, and is the history of the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School (HMADS) during its 45 years. This special anniversary was celebrated with many notable events during 2012, culminating with its 30th commencement exercises on Friday, June 15.

Attending were special guests Ambassador Garen Nazarian and Armenian Foreign Ministry representative Tigran Sarkissian, as well as a number of HMADS current benefactors, including Barbara Peters, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Dadourian, Mr. and Mrs. Noubar Mahdessian, Mr. and Mrs. Vahan Tanal and Mr. and Mrs. Hratch Arukian.

As the parade of teachers and graduates marched into the Holy Martyrs Kalustyan Hall, the overflow crowd of parents, friends and supporters gave them a standing ovation. The ded-

sized through the creative writings of the graduating class as it paid tribute to the founding fathers of the school — Suren D. Allelemjian, George G. Bashian, Dadour Dadourian, Suren D. Fesjian, Edward Peters, as well as the benefactor of the HMADS Endowment Fund Irwin Wayne Uran.

HMADS alumna Hooshere Bezdikian-Kaligian, a 1987 graduate, in her keynote address, in both English and Armenian, called HMADS “our second home,” and reminded the graduates that “your sense of self-identity and character development were nurtured here. This school did more than educate you. It shaped you. The years you spent here are a special gift. You, your teachers and your friends in this school are one big family.”

Currently the vice president of the People’s Choice Awards, as well as a professional singer and songwriter, Bezdikian-Kaligian pointed out that her singing was “nurtured” while she was a student here. Speaking directly to the graduates, she urged them to “hold tightly to your roots as Armenians, and cherish, respect and continue your culture. This school is a small Armenia. These are the pillars. Explore beyond our community; spread your wings; follow your



Pre-K 45th Kindergarten graduation



Graduating Class with Armenia’s Ambassador to the UN Garen Nazarian

icated principal of the school since 1987, Zarmine Boghosian, welcomed all present with her well known enthusiasm and beaming smile, and declared, “It takes a whole village to raise a child. This school is a small diamond with 45 years of life, with 240 graduates in these 45 years. We are here, we prospered and our children are talented.”

The five graduates, Shushan Agavian, Vartkes Arakelian, Melissa Ashbahian, Sarkis Galstian and Nicole Mark started the program by singing the American, Armenian and HMADS anthems, after which they presented a series of Armenian and English poems dedicated to the 500th anniversary of Armenian printing, which is also being celebrated this year. These included works by Hagop Meghabard’s first Armenian book published in Venice, Italy in 1512, and poetry written by David Kherdian. The fifth- and sixth-grade students delighted the audience with several Armenian and American songs and recitations.

The HMADS 45th anniversary was empha-

heart; pursue your dreams and respect your parents, teachers and most of all yourself. These bonds will last a lifetime.”

Special awards given by state, city and different Armenian organizations were announced, and the teachers of the school were acknowledged from Hye Bardez, nursery, pre-kindergarten to sixth grade, including those of the graduating class — Houri Ghougassian (Armenian) and Christopher Conterelli (home room), as well as the piano accompanists Janet Marcarian, Nevart Z. Dadourian and choirmaster Anahid Boghossian.

The evening’s high point came as each graduate stepped forward to receive the diploma from both Ambassador Nazarian and Boghosian, who again reminded the graduates that “the most important lesson to be learned is character. Character means doing the right thing when no one is looking.”

Nazarian in his remarks congratulated the school on its anniversary and expressed appreciation to the parents, teachers and students.

OBITUARY

Queeney Boghosian

WORCESTER — Queeney (Tutunjian) Boghosian, 86, of Worcester died on Tuesday, July 24, after a period of declining health.

She leaves a son, Dr. Bruce M. Boghosian, and his wife, Laura, of Lexington; two grandchildren, Taline and Aram Boghosian of Lexington; a sister, Marion Tateosian, and her husband, Charles, of Bedford; two sisters-in-law, Alice Tutunjian of Milton and Margo Montecalvo and her husband Joseph of Whitinsville; and her close friend, Mary Shamoian, of Worcester. She was predeceased by her husband, Harry Boghosian; her brother, Robert; and her sister-in-law, Martha Garabedian. She also leaves several nieces and nephews.

Born in Dorchester, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Maritza (Janigian)

Tutunjian. She graduated from Boston Girls’ High School and worked as a secretary in the Boston Naval Shipyard during and after World War II. She moved to Worcester in 1952 upon her marriage.

Funeral services were on Friday, July 27 at the Armenian Apostolic Holy Trinity Church, 635 Grove St. Interment followed in Pine Grove Cemetery, Whitinsville.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Armenian Apostolic Holy Trinity Church of Worcester, or to the American University of Armenia in support of scholarships for students in Armenia (checks may be made to the American University of Armenia Corporation and mailed to 300 Lakeside Dr., 7th Floor, Suite 700, Oakland, CA 94612).

“Your achievement is an enormous source of pride for Armenia and America,” he said, and stressed the “primary importance” of the Armenian language. “We recognize the importance of the Armenian schools in the diaspora in keeping Armenia strong, and preserving our heritage. Our children are the stewards of our future,” he noted, and urged the graduates to “stay faithful to your heritage.” (During this anniversary year, one of the most anticipated events took place when fourth- and fifth-grade HMADS students, carrying American and Armenian flags, were invited to Battery Park to

meet Armenian President Serge Sargsian.)

During the graduation ceremonies, Arek Nisanyan and Edouard Garabedian, co-chairs of the HMADS Board of Directors, also addressed the graduates and attendees, pointing out the school’s role in nurturing “family values” which involves not only the academic program, but also the ties to the Armenian community.

Following bouquets of flowers presented to Boghosian, and school secretary Maro Jamgotchian, the crowd enjoyed a festive evening of congratulations and succulent Armenian delicacies that lasted long into the evening.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School 2012 Graduation Ceremonies

WATERTOWN – In June, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) completed its 28th academic year. The graduation ceremonies were held on June 14 for the kindergarten students and June 15 for elementary graduates, in the presence of parents and friends of the school as well as Rev. Archpriest Antranig Baljian and the pastors of the surrounding Armenian churches.

On both days Principal Houry Boyamian focused on the school's recent achievements, especially the 2012 Expansion Project.

The principal then thanked the faculty, the administrative staff, the PTO, the parent volunteers, the school board and committees, the St. Stephen's Church board of trustees, Baljian, Rev. Karekine Bedourian, as well as all the organizations and individuals that contribute to the betterment of the school.



Principal Houry Boyamian and members of the clergy from area Armenian churches, as well as the fifth-grade teachers stand with the graduating fifth-grade class.

Hovanes Aroian, Beatrice Bilezikian, Vrezh Gyulakian, Krikor Hachikian, Michelle Joubanian, Antrias Kahvejian, Naera Margios, Zepur Merdinoglu, Aren Panian, Sienna Soghomonian, Nora Vartanian, Serena Antoine, Alina Chaparian, George Chapian, Krikor Iskenderian, Sarah Joubanian, Talar Markarian, Brian McCarthy, Sebu Najarian, Ani Ohannessian, Bianca Tamburrini and Gregory Tinkjian.

On June 15, 15 students graduated from SSAES. They are: Hovannes Aroyian, Karyl Ashjian, Mary Boyajian, Natalie Gebeyan, Melanne Ghahraman, Anelga Hajjar, Mark Haroutunian, Sanan Mahrokhian, Armen Michaelian, Moushegh Monteiro, AJ Movsesian, Juliana Rizza, Samuel Sagherian, Narek Sahakian and Nareg Stepanian.



Fr. Arakel Aljalian speaks at the kindergarten graduation ceremony at St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School. From left are Aljalian, Principal Houry Boyamian and Fr. Antranig Baljian, with longtime kindergarten Armenian teacher Anahid Joubanian.

On June 14, Boyamian and Maral Orchanian, the preschool director, honored Svetlana Vehapetian for her 10 years of service at the preschool.

Orchanian presented the theme for the preschool and kindergarten graduation program, which was The Armenian Village. The preschoolers and the kindergarteners presented through songs and poems the different aspects of Armenian village life.

On June 15, the elementary program was dedicated to the



The kindergarten graduates sing at the program.

Armenian Book, as Catholicos of the See of Cilicia Aram I had proclaimed 2012 "The Year of the Armenian Book" and as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was marking the 500th anniversary of the first printed Armenian book. The elementary students presented the theme with poems and songs, followed by a video presentation of the fifth grade class trip to Armenia, coordinated with great expertise by Ardemis Megerdichian, the school's Armenian teacher for grades 1-5.

On both days, Baljian expressed his appreciation to the administration and faculty for their dedication and effort. He also praised the students for their excellent performance

On June 14, 23 students graduated from Kindergarten. They are: Maral Abrahamian,

Awards

- Gr. 5 Awards for Excellence in Armenian Studies**
- Prelacy Award: Karyl Ashjian, Anelga Hajjar, Sanan Maroukhian, Mary Boyajian
 - Armenian Relief Society Award: Armen Michaelian
 - St. Stephen's School Award: Mark Haroutunian, Melanne Ghahraman, Samuel Sagherian and Narek Sahakian
 - St. Stephen's Education Committee Award: Arman Movsesian, Nareg Stepanian and Juliana Rizza
 - The following students are recognized for their special love for and interest in Armenian Studies: Hovannes Aroyan, Natalie Gebeyan and Moushegh Monteiro

President's Education Award

- Presidential Award for Academic Excellence: Anelga Hajjar, Armen Michaelian, Mark Haroutunian, Sanan Maroukhian
- Presidential Award for Academic Achievement: Narek Sahakian, Karyl Ashjian, Mary Boyadjian, Samuel Sagherian and Arman Movsesian

Citizenship Award

Armen Michaelian and Sanan Maroukhian

ARS Essay Contest: 2nd Place

Arman Movsesian
Honorable Mention: Samuel Sagherian, Mark Haroutunian and Narek Sahakian

Gr. 4 Awards for Outstanding Effort in Armenian Studies:

Anahid Kazaian Scholarship (\$100) Taline Chaprazian and Ani Ganjian

Perfect Attendance Award

Kindergarten: Sarah and Michelle Joubanian;Grade 1: Chris Ashjian; Grade 2: Nareg Minassian; Grade 3: Berj Chekijian; Grade 5: Karyl Ashjian

Gr. 5 Special Strength Awards

Excellence in Math: Narek Sahakian, Arman Movsesian, Nareg Stepanian, Karyl Ashjian, Mary Boyadjian; Excellence in Science: Natalie Gebeyan; Excellence in Writing: Juliana Rizza, Moushegh Monteiro, Sanan Maroukhian, Melanne Ghahraman; Excellence in Reading Comprehension: Hovanes Aroyan and Mark Haroutunian; Excellence in Social Studies: Anelga Hajjar, Samuel Sagherian and Armen Michaelian

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COMMUNITY NEWS

AGBU New York Summer Internship Program's 25th Anniversary

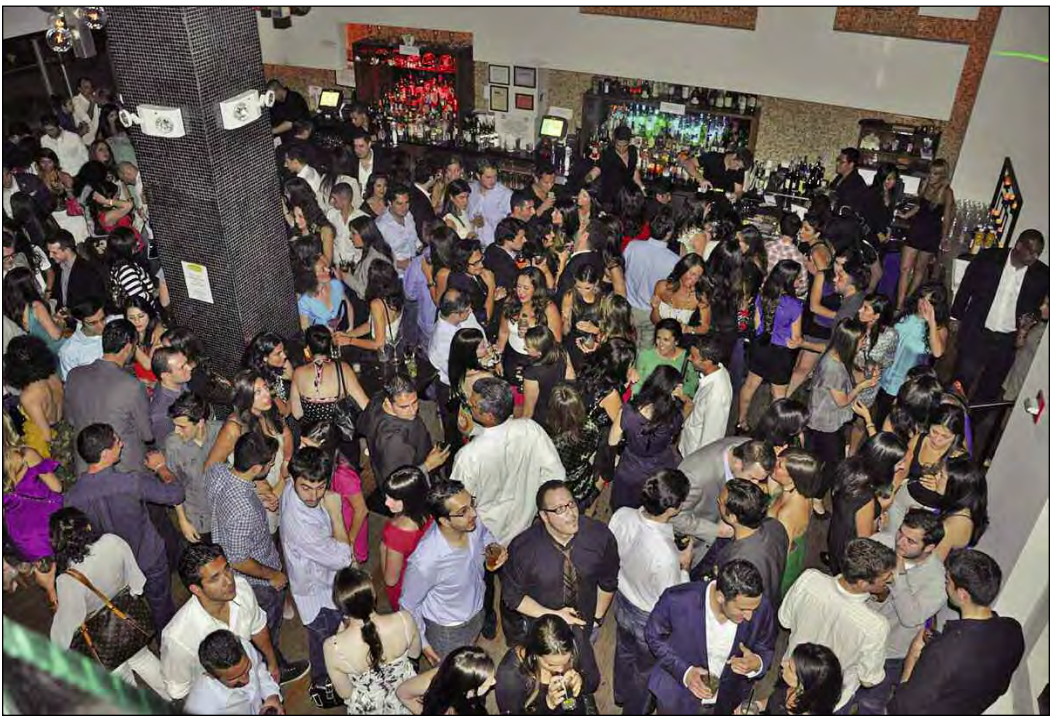
Hundreds Gather for Weekend of Festivities

NEW YORK — For 25 years, the AGBU New York Summer Internship Program (NYSIP) has been creating professional development opportunities and lasting memories, and the silver jubilee celebrations gave alumni and supporters even more to look back on. From July 20 to 22, hundreds gathered in the city to reconnect with old friends, learn about new NYSIP initiatives and honor all who have made the program possible. The highlight event was the gala on Saturday, July 21, which was attended by AGBU President Berge Setrakian and Vera Setrakian; Central Board members M. Michael Ansour, Nazareth Festekjian and Sarkis Jebejian; Ambassador Garen Nazarian, Armenia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and Nana Nazarian; Very Rev. Simeon Odabashian, Diocesan Vicar, and Rev. Mardiros Chevian, dean of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America; and NYSIP Committee Co-Chair Raffi Balian.

The festivities began at a Friday night mixer that gave close to 340 alumni and friends the first opportunity to greet familiar faces. Organized by the AGBU Young Professionals of Greater New York (YPGNY) and held at the popular lounge, Pranna, the event also served as a fundraiser benefiting NYSIP scholarships, which enable deserving students to participate in the program.

The following afternoon, more intimate gatherings were held across Manhattan, as individual NYSIP classes came together for their own mini reunions. Different groups spanning generations met at sites they had frequented during their NYSIP summer to reminisce about discovering the city together and the defining moments that helped them pave their career paths.

On the night of the gala, more than 275 guests



Close to 340 AGBU New York Summer Internship Program alumni and friends reunite at a Friday night mixer to kick off the program's 25th anniversary weekend celebrations.

filled the halls of the downtown venue, Battery Gardens. Against a backdrop of New York City landmarks, Serge Kassardjian, the chair of the 25th Anniversary Planning Committee and Summer Internship Program Committee member, delivered the welcoming remarks. He thanked all who had traveled from Brazil, Canada, France, Lebanon, South Africa and Switzerland, in addition to several US cities, to take part in the celebration. Kassardjian, himself a former intern from 2000, said, "I know I speak for everyone who has completed or been affiliated with this program when I say it provides a key to a unique Armenian community that is both a

professional network and international group of lifelong friends." Kassardjian then introduced Father Odabashian, who spoke on behalf of the Eastern Diocese Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, noting that over the past five years, the Diocese has benefitted from its partnership with AGBU to host the Diocesan interns.

It was the NYSIP alumni, representing nearly half of the attendees, who were full of praise for the event's honorees — all of whom were chosen by the former interns comprising the NYSIP 25th Anniversary Celebration Committee. Their sentiments were echoed by Raffi Balian, co-chair of the Summer Internship Program Committee,

as he led the subsequent presentation of awards. Balian stated, "Tonight, we honor three important categories of individuals, who have inspired us through their examples. First, we are grateful to our founders, Rita and Vartkess Balian, who volunteered countless hours and raised significant funds for more than 20 years to turn their vision into reality, building a program that has helped over 800 Armenians from around the world to advance in their careers. Second, we are thankful to the director of Central Board Programs, Anita Arserian, who serves with devotion and dedication as a tireless advocate for the program and our youth. And finally, we recognize the committed individuals who have acted as supervisors for six or more years."

The first awards presenter, 2006 alumna Ella Baroyan, acknowledged the 10 supervisors who have given scores of students both the skills and the confidence to start their careers, namely: Gregory Amerkian (Merrill Lynch senior vice president), Anna Bruno (AXA Advisors financial consultant), Ted Candella (Merrill Lynch senior financial advisor), Yervant Demirjian (Interaudi Bank managing director), Dr. James Giglio (Columbia University Medical Center emergency room associate clinical professor), Dr. Edgar Housepian (Columbia University Medical Center former professor of Neurological Surgery), Movses Hovsepian (New York University Langone Medical Center pharmacy supervisor), Chris Parnagian (O'Hare Parnagian LLP attorney), Patrick Sarkissian (SarkissianMason founder/CEO) and Emmanuel Tchividjian (Ruder Finn ethics officer). Reflecting upon the honor, Candella commented, "AGBU has been a

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Wed.	Cayman Islands	10:30 AM	6:30 AM
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COMMUNITY NEWS

special relationship for me. I am proud to be a part of an organization that puts so much time, effort, energy and financial resources behind their leaders of tomorrow. I have mentored many hard working, intelligent, dedicated students from AGBU that I consider to be of the highest caliber, and I only wish I had the same opportunity to be a part of a program like this when I was in school."

Following the supervisors' awards ceremony, a special tribute was paid to Anserian for her numerous years of dedication not only to NYSIP but to all of the organization's youth initiatives. Presenter Melania Melikian (NYSIP 2008) applauded her continuous and passionate championing of AGBU's younger constituents, acting as a strong role model for all youth. Taking the podium, Anserian explained that NYSIP has always been a labor of love and that she takes great pleasure from meeting the new interns year after year, and forming a special bond with

years and build a \$750,000 endowment, of which Vartkess and I were honored to contribute personally \$150,000. I am happy to see that our alumni have helped rejuvenate AGBU and become the backbone of the program, as mentors and donors. It is time for the alumni to now take on the role that the President's Club had played for so many years by raising the funds needed to maintain the program."

As the evening unfolded, Setrakian took the opportunity to share his vision of an even brighter future for NYSIP – one that depends on an active alumni base. Appealing to the program's recent interns, he urged, "You have reaped the many benefits of this unique initiative, and future generations of NYSIP participants will turn to you for support as they pursue their own aspirations. It is your responsibility, your duty, to fill a void by rising to leadership positions in top institutions around the world. The future of NYSIP, and AGBU as a whole, lies



AGBU's supervisors stand together before receiving their honors at the NYSIP 25th Anniversary gala. From left: NYSIP coordinator Michael Hovsepian, who accepted on behalf of his father, Movses Hovsepian; NYSIP Co-chair and AGBU Central Board member Sarkis Jebejian; Gregory Amerkanian; Elena Sarkissian, who accepted on behalf of her brother, Patrick Sarkissian; NYSIP Committee Co-chair Raffi Balian; Anna Bruno; Ted Candella and Chris Parnagian. Missing from photo are honorees Yervant Demirjian, Dr. James Giglio, Dr. Edgar Housepian and Emmanuel Tchividjian.



AGBU President Berge Setrakian and Vera Setrakian (left) and Garen Nazarian, Armenia's permanent representative to the United Nations, and Nana Nazarian (right) flank honoree Rita Balian, who was honored with her late husband, Vartkess Balian (inset).

every one. Addressing all NYSIP participants, she stated, "Each year, I wait anxiously for June to come so that I can meet that summer's interns. You should know how much I enjoy getting to know each of you throughout the program. It gives me immense pride to see you grow as individuals by the end of each session, and to continue to watch you prosper and give back to AGBU in the years that follow."

Each intern that passes through NYSIP's doors knows that their experience would not have been possible without Rita Balian and the late Vartkess Balian, her husband, the program's visionary co-founders and Emeritus Life Chairpersons. Together, the couple established and managed an unprecedented initiative. Before bestowing Rita Balian with an honorary gift, Alexis Halejian (NYSIP 2005) recounted the many ways they led NYSIP's remarkable growth, helping it expand from its first year, when it hosted 13 students, to a total of 800 young leaders today. To a standing ovation, Balian addressed the guests, stating: "My husband Vartkess and I initiated the New York Summer Internship Program in 1987, the year he became president of AGBU's Central Committee of America, to give Armenian students career and life-enhancing opportunities. I will always be grateful to the members of the President's Club who helped the program sustain itself for over 20

in your capable hands, and I look forward to watching your ideas manifest." Setrakian also acknowledged the memory of Vartkess Balian, whose legacy will always remain strong.

Early in the night, guests learned about NYSIP's recent efforts to broaden its reach through a new website, newsletters, alumni engagement activities and an alumni directory. Yet, the greatest reveal came as the evening drew to a close, when the total amount of funds raised to benefit NYSIP was announced: \$100,000.

As Sarkis Jebejian, NYSIP co-chair, commented, "The success of the Internship Programs would not be possible without the financial investment by AGBU. The tremendous support we received from friends and alumni in the weeks leading up to the anniversary weekend was incredible. We hope this celebration is the start of a tight-knit network of alumni engaged in community life and ready to give back to the Internship Programs." The funds will be allocated to providing financial assistance for high-achieving students accepted to NYSIP, ensuring that the program will continue to thrive over the next quarter century and beyond.

The AGBU NYSIP 25th anniversary celebrations were organized by the Event Planning Committee, which included: William Albrecht, Raffi Aynilian, Robin Barone, Ella Baroyan,

Nicholas Burdman, Stephanie Dolik, Alexis Halejian, Michael Hovsepian, Serge Kassardjian (Chairperson), Arpiné Kocharian, Vadim Krisyan, Melania Melikian, Ani Minassian, Alex Nalbandian, Amy Parks and Tania Voskertchian, in collaboration with Ani Manoukian.

To learn more about AGBU's Internship Program, visit: <http://agbu-internship.org/>.

New York City Reception for Congressional Candidate Terry Phillips

NEW YORK – A reception for Terry Phillips, an Armenian-American candidate for the US House of Representatives from Bakersfield, Calif., was held at the home of Jon and Charlene Simonian on Sunday, July 22.

Forty people participated in this event that had an interesting and productive format. Instead of the usual speeches, the program was a discussion on American political issues that people feel strongly about and the strategy of addressing them in an election campaign.

Everyone participated in the discussion which lasted three hours over dinner. The issues included equitable taxation; immigration and border control; drug enforcement; support for education; American foreign policy and foreign intervention; private sector job creation; public works; and social security and health care.

Phillips said the ideas and especially the words used to express them has been the best input he has heard from any group, and it will positively influence his approach to the election.



Terry Phillips, second from left, accompanied by *Zartok* editor Badzyig Kalaydjian, is surrounded by supporters.

His goal is to convince 100,000 voters in the Great Central Valley of California that he is a voice of fairness and equality for all. The ideas from this cross-section of Armenian-Americans in New York directly address that objective, and the message has a good chance to win the election.

Phillips also said that he is touched by the generosity of the Armenian-Americans in New York who collectively made the single largest contribution to his campaign so far. The contribution covers all his office and communication expenses for the campaign through November.

Phillips is a journalist and wrote *Murder at the Altar*, a historical novel based on the assassination of Archbishop Levon Tourian in 1933. He is running as an independent candidate; the incumbent is a Republican. There is no Democratic candidate running.



The AGBU New York Summer Internship Program 25th Anniversary Celebration Committee gathers outside Battery Gardens for the gala reception on Saturday, July 21.



Arts & Living

Submissions Now Being Accepted for the 2012 AGBU International Composition Competition

GENEVA – Musicians around the world are now being invited to participate in the AGBU Sayat Nova International Composition Competition for the chance to win up to 2,500 euros and showcase their work under an international spotlight.

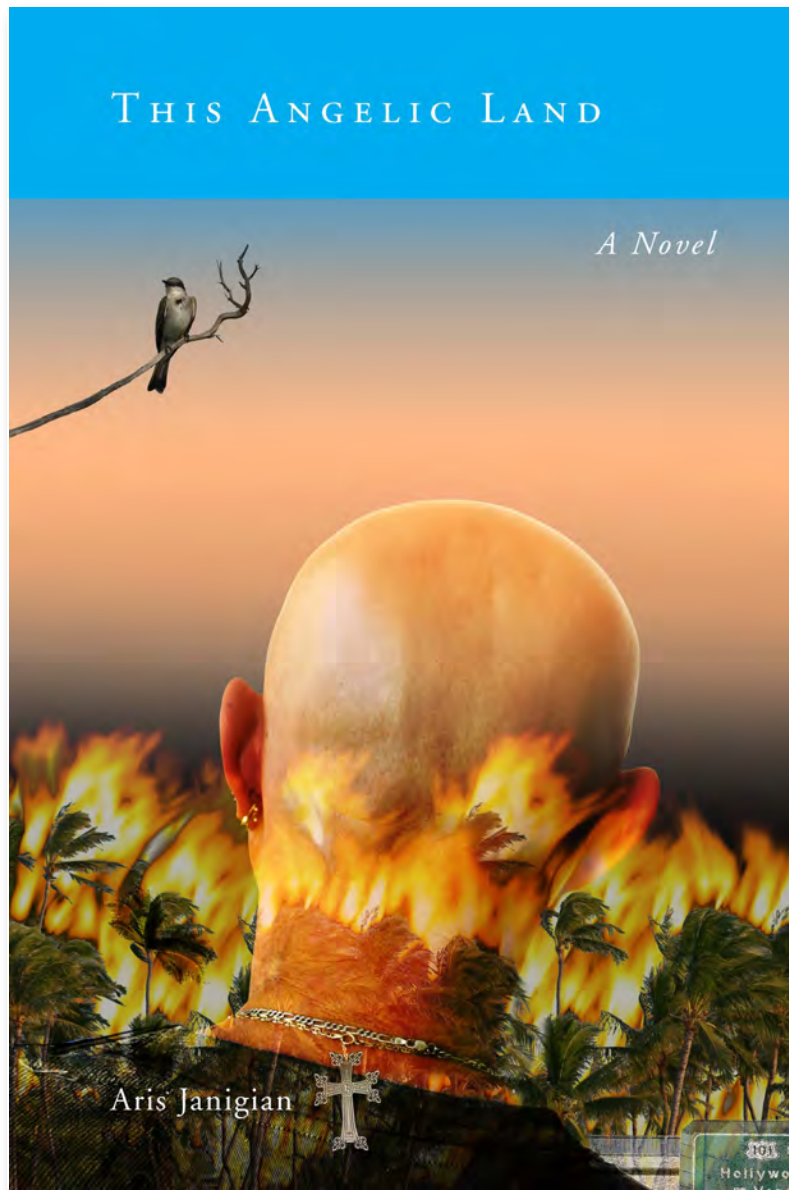
The Sayat Nova International Composition Competition, now in its second edition, has three main objectives: to discover new talent, provide emerging artists with financial support and record and distribute their work to a broad audience. For composers, it presents the perfect opportunity to raise their profile while paying tribute to the celebrated troubadour.

The 2012 Sayat Nova International Composition Competition, which marks the 300-year anniversary of the birth of the composer, is calling for submissions from young musicians in every corner of the globe. Participants need not be of Armenian descent; submissions from all artists who are interested in creating Armenian-influenced music are being considered. As Christian Erbslöh-Papazian, a pianist and musicologist who initiated the competition comments, “As an artist, blending classical music, which has mostly been documented on paper, with traditional music, which has long been transmitted orally, is most difficult, yet incredibly rewarding. By utilizing both the classical and the traditional, we can create the musical heritage of tomorrow.” To that end, participants are asked to create a composition for a chamber ensemble that incorporates six instruments, including the duduk, the traditional woodwind instrument that can be traced back centuries in Armenian culture. Submitted work must also contain one quotation, spoken or sung, from a text of Sayat Nova in Armenian or translated into a Western language (i.e. English, German, French, Italian, Spanish or Russian). The winning pieces will be recorded and produced at a special concert on the occasion of the tercentenary of the birth of Sayat Nova, an anniversary celebration with which the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is associated. The concert will be held at the prestigious Parisian venue Salle Cortot in December 2012.

When the competition was first introduced in 2006, it proved to be a laboratory of creativity that helped launch the career of its winners. Numerous submissions were received, and each was reviewed anonymously by a panel of anonymous expert judges, which included internationally renowned figures in the field of music and composition. The third prize was awarded to Argentinian composer Hernan Dario Palmieri, second place to Grégoire Lorieux, a native of France, and the winner was Armenian-born Artur Akshelyan. Since then, each has risen to new heights in their respective careers, carving a space for themselves in the international music scene and attracting a diverse body of listeners. Building on his experience with the AGBU competition, Palmieri went on to receive prizes in the Galperin Iascha Composition Competition (Argentina, 2007) and the Gustav Mahler Kompositionspreis Competition (Austria, 2007), while Lorieux is now teaching at IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique), one of the world’s most important research centers dedicated to musical creation and scientific research. For his part, Akshelyan saw his winning piece, the string quartet “Im Memoriam,” performed at the AGBU 2006 centennial celebrations in Paris before he continued to receive numerous international honors including first prize in the Geneva International Music Competition (2011) and the Kiefer-Hablitzel Composition Award (Bern, 2012).

The deadline for submission is September 1. Participants will be considered for three prizes of 2,500, 1,500 and 1,000 euros.

For more information and a complete list of rules and regulations, visit <http://sayatnova.agbueurope.org> or email Zarouhi Odabashian at zodabashian@agbueurope.org.



The Darkness of A Burning City: Aris Janigian's *This Angelic Land*

It took seven years living in Los Angeles to realize it was not the city that Adam, whose dearest friend “believed him to be mad,” had admired as a young boy in Lebanon. Much as it gave him a feeling of normalcy and of belonging, the city also pushed the “crazy handsome” Angeleno to “the brink.” It is difficult to miss the truth of the Kurd’s pronouncement following Adam’s

By Arpi Sarafian

death, “America killed [Adam].”

Adam Derderian, the protagonist of Aris Janigian’s newly-released novel, *This Angelic Land* (West of West Books 2012), is a victim of the senseless violence that overtook the city of Los Angeles following the acquittal, in 1992, of the white officers who had savagely beaten a black construction worker named Rodney King during a traffic stop. Janigian tells his story against the backdrop of what came to be known as the Rodney King Riots.

The novel follows Adam who, with his family, while still a boy, flees the Civil War in Lebanon to start a new life in America. Adam settles in Los Angeles, the “cool and agile” city that provides exiles like him a chance to reinvent themselves. “Anything was possible in LA,” writes Janigian. It is through his engagements with Sacha (a curator from Iran), the Wizard (a Jewish professor who takes Adam under his wing), the Kurd (a landscape artist and “buddy” to Adam) and other exiles who had fled a bloody past in search of a new home, that we get to know Adam’s sweetness and generosity. Adam never holds a grudge. His selflessness is evident in his support of his immigrant parents whom he cares for while his older brother Eric settles in New York in pursuit of his own dreams.

Adam’s kindness, however, his youth and his beauty, are no match for the subtle, and the not so subtle, destructive forces surrounding him. The special bond he has with a strong-willed and spirited grandma – the only survivor of the death march – and “the shelter of a family” prove inadequate against the disdain and the darkness of a burning city. “And yes, there was a dark irony in the fact that [Adam was] now reliving the horrors [he] had crossed half the world to escape,” writes Janigian. The city where he comes to survive abruptly ends Adam’s life.

This Angelic Land explores a dangerous topic unflinchingly. Janigian recreates the King Riots, an episode he says he “personally went through and never got over.” “It’s a massive event but we have no literature about it,” he adds, incredulous. Perhaps race is too hot a topic to handle and the central issue of the riots is race. Nonetheless, Janigian “tells it the way it happened here,” giving us an almost mythic recreation of the brutal beatings and of the lootings and the fires that consumed

see ANGELIC, page 11

Peter Musurlian Nominated for Two Los Angeles-Area News Emmys

LOS ANGELES – Veteran broadcast journalist Peter Musurlian has been nominated for two 2012 Los Angeles-area Emmys: one for a local story on the Burbank Rose Float, and the other for an in-depth look at a Europe-based non-profit environmental organization, which focuses on national parks in the Caucasus region of the former Soviet Union.

The 50-year-old station manager and senior producer of the City of Burbank’s government access station, called “The Burbank Channel,” has garnered 10 RTNA Golden Mikes over the past decade and, over that same time period, has received six Emmy nominations from the Academy of Televisions Arts & Sciences in North Hollywood.

Musurlian hopes to win an Emmy on August 11, since, so far, that distinction



Peter Musurlian

has slipped his grasp.

Musurlian was nominated in the public and municipal-operated cable category for his mini-documentary, called “The Burbank Centennial Rose Float.” His fellow nominees in that category hail from the cities of Santa Monica, Lakewood and Glendale.

The second Emmy nomination came in the Information Segment category for his piece called, “Saving the Wild: The Caucasus Nature Fund.” Musurlian shot the story last summer in Armenia and Georgia.

He faces stiff competition from KCET’s flagship news program, “SoCal Connected,” which was nominated for its investigation into the spending habits at the Los Angeles Housing Authority.

Musurlian has a bachelor’s degree in broadcast journalism and political science from USC in Los Angeles, as well as master’s degrees from Baylor University (political science) in Texas, American University (journalism) in Washington, and the University of Redlands School of Business (management) in California.

In the 1980s, Musurlian reported for television stations in Montana, Texas and Washington DC, and for nearly a year in the 1990s, worked as a solo television journalist for the US Army in Central Europe, venturing into Hungary, Croatia and Bosnia, for which he received a NATO Medal and an Army Commendation Medal.



ARTS & LIVING

Dr. Arda Ekmekji Travels to West Coast For US Launch of *Towards Golgotha*

GLENDAL, Calif. — Glendale's Central Library buzzed with excitement on the evening of July 25, as the crowd poured into its second floor auditorium to hear Dr. Arda Arsenian Ekmekji, dean of Arts and Sciences at Haigazian University. She had traveled more than 7,000 miles to launch the US release of *Towards Golgotha*, the memoirs of her grandfather, Hagop Arsenian, a pharmacist and survivor of the Armenian Genocide.

Elizabeth Grigorian, director of Armenian Outreach at the library, invited Ardashes Kassakhian, Glendale's city clerk, to the podium

the Middle East.

Arsenian documented his early life in the suburbs of Constantinople and the eventual deportation of his family to Aleppo, Syria, then described his life in Palestine from 1919 until 1940. Ekmekji, during her research at the comprehensive Derian Armenological Library of Haigazian University, read numerous accounts of other survivors and, in comparing their identical descriptions, discovered that the authors had been detained in the same encampments, but never met.

The audience hushed when an audiotape was



Dr. Arda Ekmekji lecturing

to introduce Ekmekji. Kassakhian is the great grandson of Arsenian and a nephew of Ekmekji who had painstakingly translated the memoirs from Armenian to English. She revealed that she wasn't aware her grandfather's handwritten memoirs even existed until her uncle, visiting from Ottawa in 1996, carried them with him to

played of her father, Noubar, reading a portion of her grandfather's writings in Armenian in which he chronicled the atrocities he had witnessed using the terms "massacres" and "slaughter house." (The word genocide was coined later by Raphael Lemkin in the 1940s and thus was not used by Arsenian.)



High School Finalists Awarded Prizes For Essays About ALMA

WATERTOWN — Four high school students from across the country were awarded monetary prizes for essays describing their visit to the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) in June. They were among the 10 finalists of the annual Holocaust Essay Contest and visited ALMA to view the Armenian Genocide and the Ukrainian Genocide Exhibits. The contest was sponsored by the international law firm of Holland & Knight, LLP and organized by the Boston office this year. More than 2,800 essays on the Holocaust were submitted.

The first prize in the ALMA essay contest was awarded to Kendall Jones from the Capital High School (Boise, Idaho). Tied for second prize were Anissa Lee from the Winsor School (Wellesley, Mass.) and Daniela Hernandez-Fujigaki from Clarksburg High School (Clarksburg, Md). Third prize went to Brian Hula from the Mother of Divine Grace High School (Bellevue, Neb.). Above, the 10 finalists are seen touring ALMA.

Ekmekji, a professor at Haigazian, holds a Master of Arts in ancient history and archaeology from the American University of Beirut and a doctorate in archeology from the University of Paris. Her translation is the first book to be published by Haigazian University Press. As it came off the presses, Dr. Paul Haidostian, president of the University, remarked that "all memoirs of Genocide survivors or stories of the Armenian genocide are considered as a resurrection, in the Armenian collective conscience."

Audience members who were present during the evening were Elise Kalfayan, president of the Friends of the Glendale Library; Arno Yeretizian, representing Glendale's Abril Bookstore; Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Prof. Emeritus at UCLA; Rev. Ghevont Kirazian, pastor of the Crescenta Valley Armenian Apostolic Church and Frank Quintero, the mayor of Glendale. Also in attendance were members of the Haigazian University Board of Trustees.

— Phyllis Hamo

The Darkness of A Burning City: Aris Janigian's *This Angelic Land*

ANGELIC, from page 10

the city following the "not guilty" verdict. He writes about white boys and black boys and that in-between world that his Lebanese-Armenian protagonist has to traverse. Adam, who could easily be taken for a white boy, but who was not a white boy, is the perfect metaphor for the American experience, says Janigian. "The experience of becoming American is the central American experience," he adds.

The book, however, goes well beyond the LA riots. Through Adam's story Janigian explores the human condition of exile and of survival. Enduring the pain of endless dislocation appears to be the only reality in a world ravaged by wars and by violence, a bloody present the inevitable next step to a bloody past. In the novel, the burning of LA alternates with the burning pasts of the Lebanese Civil War and of the Armenian Genocide — Janigian's Armenian heritage being an essential part of his identity.

One closes the book wondering if Adam's death indicates an end, or if it is perhaps the beginning of a more fulfilling life for the survivors. Indeed, following Adam's death, there is a sense of the senselessness of "the willful destruction of the city," and the promise that LA will be rebuilt "in unison." A new brotherhood forms between Adam's brother Eric and the Kurd, erasing a bloody historical trail. Yet, the book ends on a deliberately ambiguous note. It is "impossible to say," writes Janigian, if the light that the "horizontal band of sunlight" provides in the painting the Kurd finally com-

pletes and offers to Eric "and Adam," is "coming or going....whether it was breaking on the horizon, or draining away from beneath a door."

Janigian has a passion for ideas. His characters are always conversing, pondering the significance of various philosophical and psychological ideas. They are, nonetheless, specific people in specific settings, engaged in dialogues that are true to their inner truths as well as to their contexts. Additionally, Janigian has the uncanny ability to observe, with insight into the nature of things. His description of old people in retirement homes, "slumped in wheelchairs like banana peels, some Filipino girls smiling 'open wide' and shoving the microwave lasagna into their mouths," conveys a truth that goes beyond the truth of matter-of-fact accuracy.

This Angelic Land follows *Bloodvine* (2003) and *Riverbig* (2009), two novels set in the Central Valley of California. Reading these earlier novels had given me the excitement of novelty, the rural scene and the drama of the immigrants' attempts to take root in a new land—which Janigian recreates so truthfully — being alien to me. The rootlessness of the city, however, "a nowhere place where nowhere people congregated before moving onto another nowhere place....taking root everywhere but nowhere deep," is a scene I experience on a daily basis. The urban setting of *This Angelic Land*, with Janigian's penetrating comments on the vices of Hollywood and the media that extinguish the human imagination — which Janigian exposes through his recreation of the

television broadcasts of the riots — gives me the thrill of recognition.

Fiction is not about ideas, but there are "a lot of little mirrors in *This Angelic Land*, my most ambitious book by far," says Janigian. Janigian cares deeply and he reaches us deeply. Buried

deep inside his fictional world is the plea to bring America back to America.

(Arpi Sarafian is on the faculty of the California State University, Los Angeles. *This Angelic Land* was issued in 2012 to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1992 LA Riots.)

Florida Man to Study at Komitas State Conservatory

BOCA RATON, Fla. — On Sunday, July 23, Florida Armenians gathered at St. David Armenian Church to congratulate Sub-Deacon Arman Avedyan on his acceptance to Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory in Armenia. During this four-year program, Avedyan will train his voice and master the language of music, while embarking on new adventures and a new life in the homeland.

Like many of his friends in south Florida's growing Armenian-American community, Avedyan started serving God and fellow parishioners at the age of 14. Beginning as an acolyte on the altar under the guidance of Very Rev. Nareg Berberian, pastor of St. David Armenian Church, Avedyan began to develop and display his talents, delivering powerful and uplifting renditions of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Badark.

"In January 2012, at my 20th anniversary banquet in Mardigian Hall of St. David Armenian Church, Arman Avedyan sang Nessun Dorma, which is an aria from the final

act of Puccini's opera 'Turandot,' and is one of the best-known tenor arias in all opera," said Berberian. "It was then that I realized he would be a wonderful candidate for the Yerevan Conservatory. Since that time, all efforts to admit him to the conservatory have succeeded, and I am extremely pleased to see the fruition of all the many years of work in the Deacon's Training Program at St. David Church have such an exciting result for him. I am very proud of his accomplishment and am confident he will work hard in continuing his education and nurturing his career at the Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory in Armenia," Berberian said.

Avedyan has already performed at Lynn University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Suncoast Opera Guild and various Armenian-American community events throughout Florida. "Years of preliminary training, practice and performances have lead to the opportunity of a lifetime," Avedyan told FLArmenians. "I cannot wait to begin my studies. This really is a dream come true," Avedyan said.



ARTS & LIVING

Chicago AGBU YP Hosts Evening with Yanni, Samvel Yervinyan to Raise Money for Hye Camp

CHICAGO — On Thursday, May 3, the AGBU Young Professionals of Chicago hosted a group of 50 Young Professionals (YP) and community members at-large at the Chicago Theatre for an evening of world music featuring Armenian violinist Samvel Yervinyan.

The evening marked the last night of the tour stop in Chicago for “An Evening with Yanni.” Following the show, the AGBU YP of Chicago hosted an exclusive meet and greet with Yervinyan in a private reception where community members had a chance to meet the artist, take pictures and receive autographs. Yervinyan was greeted with a standing ovation by guests as he entered the private reception area. “It is always great to see an event pull together cross generational Armenians — we are grateful to Mr. Yervinyan for sharing his extraordinary talents and recognizing the Armenian community here in Chicago,” said Avo Mavilian, AGBU YP Chicago Steering Committee publicist.

Proceeds from ticket sales were donated to benefit the AGBU YP of Chicago’s Hye Camp scholarship fund. The fund provides assistance to support Armenian youth in the Midwest to attend Hye Camp.

For additional information or to join YP Chicago’s e-mail list, visit their website <http://yp.agbuchicago.org/>.



From left, AGBU YP Chicago Steering Committee Vice President Linda Sultanian, Samvel Yervinyan, Silva Sultanian and Gary Sultanian

Composer Serge Suny’s Music Performed in Mass., NY

NEW YORK — Serge Suny, pianist and composer, was born in 1930 in New York City. He graduated from Music and Art High School, and then the Juilliard School (NYC), where he obtained his bachelor’s and master’s degrees. His works have been performed at Town Hall and Carnegie Hall and were well reviewed by critics from the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune* and the *American Record Guide*. Suny has been awarded a number of Meet the Composer grants. He taught music as a professor at Suffolk County Community College in Selden, NY for 26 years.

This past season his music was performed at the New England Conservatory of Music (NECM) and the Rivers School Conservatory in Weston, Mass. On January 28, an entire program of his piano music performed at the NECM was performed by five different students on the occasion of the 22nd Annual Festival of Contemporary Music. His music was again performed on April 29 at the Rivers School Conservatory as part of the 34th Annual Seminar in Contemporary Music for the Young.

Suny, a longstanding member of the Long Island Composers Alliance, has given recitals and performed his music primarily in the Long Island and Philadelphia area throughout the years but also internationally, including in Korea. At LICA he served as vice president and finance director for years.

He is the son of Seda Suny, a longtime ballet teacher (noted as a “Teacher Assoluta” in the March 1976 issue of *Dance Magazine*) who studied dance with Michael Mordkin and had a ballet studio in New York City and Beacon, NY for more than 50 years; and the grandson of Grikor Mirzaian Suni, a prolific musician and composer who studied with Rimsky Korsakov and Glazounov. He was Suny’s inspiration.

Suny’s music is scheduled to be performed later this year in Long Island and Key West.

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 30 — Holy Trinity 50th Anniversary Grand Finale Banquet, following church services, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

OCTOBER 25 — K. George and Carolann S. Najarian Endowed Lecture on Human Rights. Speaker: Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, founding director, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University and former US ambassador to Israel (1992-1994) and the Syrian Arab Republic (1988-1991). Faneuil Hall, Boston. Thursday, 7 p.m. An endowed public program of Armenian Heritage Park. Free and open to the public.

NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 10-12 — Return to Asbury, Armenian Kef Weekend at the Beach. For tickets and information, visit returntoasbury.eventbrite.com. The event is sponsored by the ASA.

OCTOBER 5 — Save the date. His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of Armenian Church, invites everyone to attend a tribute banquet in honor of Hrant Gulian. Details to follow.

OCTOBER 21 — Hye Doon (Armenian American Support and Educational Center), 35th Anniversary Celebration, with the participation of Akh’Tamar Dance Ensemble of the Hye Doon, Arev Armenian Folk Ensemble of Hamazkayin of Boston, Sunday, 3:45 p.m. Bergen County Academics, 200 Hackensack, NJ 07601. All net proceeds to benefit the Hovnanian Armenian School. Tickets: \$50, \$35 and \$25. For tickets, call Sonya Bekarian, (201) 315-5916; Juliyet Tabibian, (201) 233-0326; Nivart Arslan, (201) 475-0224; Maral Kalishian, (845) 729-1888; Maral Kaprielian, (201) 289-6486; Lina Bakhtarian, (732) 299-1120; Linda Gezdir, (201) 394-6310 or the school, (201) 967-5940.

NOVEMBER 17-18 — Musical theater presentation by TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group, Yervant Odian’s “Love and Laughter” (Ser yev Dzidzagh), directed by Krikor Satamian, with more than 20 actors participating. Dwight Englewood High School, Englewood Cliffs, 8 p.m., Saturday and 4 p.m., Sunday. \$25, \$35, \$50. For tickets, call Marie Zokian or Noushig Atamian.

NOVEMBER 18 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group Cast Party and tribute to Karnig Nercessian on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the group. Special program and dinner, with Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of



On September 30, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church will celebrate its 50th anniversary in lavish style, with a Grand Finale Banquet, following church services, at the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass.

the Armenian Church, presiding. St. Thomas Armenian Church, Tenafly. Donation, \$30. For tickets, call Marie Zokian or Noushig Atamian.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 29 — Armenia Fund’s 20th Anniversary Gala, at Gotham Hall, New York City. Celebrity lawyer Mark Geragos, as master of ceremonies, entertainment by French-Armenian pop singer Patrick Fiori; keynote speaker, Eduard Nalbandian. Details to follow.

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COMMENTARY

Syria: Disintegration of a Community

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Any crisis in an Armenian community is a crisis for the entire Armenian nation, wherever they may be living.

Those people who fail to see that perspective may have lost their compass regarding their sense of ethnic identity. With the Genocide, the Turks not only snuffed the lives of the martyrs, they also triggered a process of alienation among the living. Thus any assimilated Armenian adds to the number of the martyrs, because their psyches as well as flesh and blood react differently to any tragedy afflicting the Armenians.

Thus, after the Genocide, a wave of exiled Armenians leaving their ancestral homeland crashed on the shores of the countries of the Middle East – Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iran, etc. – as well as further afield. Armenians have historically demonstrated that they blossom and thrive faster in foreign lands than on their own.

The settlement in mostly-Muslim countries proved one essential point: that Islam was not the driving factor behind the Genocide, as Muslim brethren of the Turks were offering succor to Armenians in their most bleak time of need. Armenians – who were received with open arms in Middle Eastern countries – experienced a lesser degree of discrimination than those who had settled in Europe and the US. Therefore, they integrated in their host societies but did not assimilate, perhaps as a result of the inherent taboo in both cultures of converting from either religion to the other. There they established their churches, schools and publications and organized their communities in a brief period of time.

Then, starting about four decades back, a second wave of Armenian emigration from Middle Eastern countries to Europe, Australia and the United States began, this time around with a high rate of attrition. The revolutions, turmoil and civil strife that gripped many of these countries in the Middle East once again forced Armenians to seek safer havens. The revolution in Iran was a devastating blow to the well-established community there. The Nasserite revolution in Egypt expropriated the wealth of individual Armenians and their institutions, driving the families out of the country. The Lebanese civil war, which lasted 16 years, decimated that flourishing community. After Jerusalem was annexed by Israel, the 25,000-strong Armenian community was reduced to 1,000.

Armenians experienced prosperity even in Saddam Hussein's Iraq but the subsequent dethroning of the admittedly tyrannical leader decimated the country's population, including the Armenians, drowning that community in blood.

Syria was the last bastion of Armenian power in the Middle East, much to the envy of the Turks. While Armenian language and literature was regressing in other communities, the Syrian-Armenian community reared a new generation of Armenian writers, thanks to a network of schools and social and cultural organizations.

Today that prosperous community is facing disintegration, as the country is caught in an imported civil war.

Turkey is at the forefront of the aggression against Syria, because it has everything to gain and nothing to lose by a regime change there. By arming and sending mercenaries across the border into Syria, Turkey has three distinct objectives: a) serving as a surrogate to the West and rendering much-needed services to the US, Europe and Israel, while maintaining its economic and political dominance in the region; b) Syria has never resigned to the fact that one of its provinces (Sanjak of Alexandretta or Hatay) was taken over by France and ceded to Turkey. Therefore, by Syria's defeat at the hand of Turkey, Ankara once and for all resolves that issue; c) the thriving Armenian community has always been a thorn in the side of Turkey, especially a community that builds monuments dedicated to the unspeakable cruelty of the Ottoman leaders on the sands of Deir Zor, now part of Syria proper, across the Turkish border to remind the world of the Armenian Genocide.

Our biased news media purports to bring a messianic message to the Syrian people, that with Bashar al Assad's downfall, democracy will be around the corner. But the most simple-minded person, looking at the continuing bloodbaths in Iraq and Libya, can see what kind of "democracy" is in store for Syria.

Syrian Armenians caught in the crossfire have been looking for refuge in neighboring countries. Many have already fled to Lebanon, while others have found temporary relief in Armenia and are waiting for some sort of conclusion there.

There are some critical voices in Armenia saying that the government is not doing enough for the Syrian-Armenian community. Actually, Armenia, this time around is more prepared to help the Syrian Armenians, should an overflow of refugees leave Syria, especially Aleppo, where the majority of the Armenians live. But Yerevan has to coordinate its policy with Russia, which has been opposing the violent overthrow of the Syrian regime in the United Nations.

His Holiness Catholicos Aram I of Cilicia has been playing a positive role, first by giving courage to the people through politically correct messages and second, by materially helping the stricken community.

It is not surprising that all Christian communities – and especially the Armenians – have been supportive of the Assad regime, because they have enjoyed personal and community-wide prosperity, contrary to what we see and hear in the Western media. Should the Muslim Brotherhood extend its tentacles from Cairo to Damascus, that will be the end of the Armenian community in Syria. In Iraq and Egypt, in the wake of violent uprisings and foreign intervention, Christian churches and minority institutions were bombed or attacked by extremists; a similar prospect looms also for Syria.

But the major powers who have determined to overthrow the government in Syria have other items on their agenda – the well-being of the Armenian community is the least of their worries. It should be our concern.

Turkey: A Permanent Threat to Armenia

By David Boyajian

If Turkey were to open its border with Armenia and the two established diplomatic and trade relations, Turkey would still be a threat to Armenia.

Turkey would be a threat even if it were to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide, pay reparations and return stolen Armenian property. And the threat to Armenia would remain even if it someday regains its homeland which now lies in eastern Turkey.

Why? Because Turkey's belligerent policies towards Armenians, its pan-Turkic goals in the Caucasus and Central Asia and its neo-Ottoman ambitions pose essentially the same dangers today as at the time of the genocide. And they show no sign of ever changing.

Aside from a general awareness of the genocide and present-day Turkish hostility, however, many Armenians and others are unfamiliar with key details of past and present Turkish policies. Consequently, they underestimate the dangers that Armenia faces.

Even the commonly held view that "in 1915 the Young Turk regime committed genocide against Armenians in Turkey" is dangerously misleading.

The Genocide actually lasted through 1923,

five years after Turkey's defeat in WWI. Two regimes conducted the Genocide: Ottoman Young Turk and Kemalist. The latter, of course, founded today's "modern" Turkey. And the Genocide took place not only in "Turkey" but also, ominously, on what was and is today the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

Endless Genocide

Turkifying and Islamizing the remnants of its empire was a key reason that Turkey destroyed its indigenous Armenian, Assyrian and Greek Christians during WWI (1914-18). But Armenians and Armenian soil also lay just across the border, in the Caucasus region of the Russian empire, directly in the path of Turkey's genocidal pan-Turkic jihad. Turkey committed genocide against those Armenians too and ripped large chunks of territory from the new Armenian Republic, which had just been reborn from Russian Armenia.

Azeris – Turkey's blood brothers then and now – also conducted large-scale massacres of Armenians in the Caucasus in WWI and through 1920.

After Turkey's defeat in 1918, Turkish forces under Kemal (known later as Atatürk) continued the Genocide in the Armenian Republic through 1920 and in Turkey through 1923.

Like Turkish leaders today who lie and deceive, Kemal publicly professed peaceful

intentions toward Armenia. Secretly, however, he told his commanders that it is "of the utmost necessity that Armenia be both politically and physically eliminated." Kemal, too, lopped off chunks of Armenia. Though it resisted heroically, only a Soviet takeover in December of 1920 saved Armenia from annihilation.

These facts are relevant to the perils that Armenia faces today because of Turkey's pan-Turkic and neo-Ottoman foreign policies.

Pan-Turkism

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Turkey has established ongoing relationships with Azerbaijan and Central Asia's new "Turkic-speaking" countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Turkey has invested billions of dollars and established Turkish schools and universities in these countries. Turkey's President Abdullah Gül declared that "Kyrgyzstan is our ancestral homeland" while visiting that country's International Atatürk-Alatoo University.

Turkey hosts major gas and oil pipelines originating in Baku, co-produces weapons with Azerbaijan and trains Azeri troops. In Turkic solidarity with Azerbaijan, Turkey has injected itself into the Artsakh/Karabagh conflict by closing its border with Armenia for two

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COMMENTARY

German Archive Material Raises Stir in Turkey

“Especially as 2015 approaches, the pressure will increase. Turkey will, as it has done before, react harshly. It will utter threats, but they will remain ineffective.

“Do you know why? It is because the Armenians have gotten a significant part of the world to accept their claims of genocide.”

Who is speaking here? Is it a Diaspora Armenian bragging about progress towards Turkish recognition of the 1915 Genocide? That might seem most likely. But, no, these are the words of a Turkish journalist writing in the pages of the daily, *Hurriyet*. The article, titled, “We are surrendering ourselves to ‘genocide,’” appeared in the April 28 edition of the paper. Although *Hurriyet* is generally considered rather nationalistic, the commentator, Mehmet Ali Birand, is known as a liberal. He is not bragging. Quite the contrary: he raises the alarm that as the centenary of the Genocide looms, Turkey may finally be forced to acknowledge its occurrence.

The reason for concern he identifies in the circulation of a new book in Turkish, a hefty 1,000-pages-long, which presents irrefutable evidence of genocide. The book, issued on January 12, 2012 by Belge Publishing House, whose owner, Ragip Zarakolu, was recently put on trial on trumped-up charges, contains translations “into an extremely comprehensible and beautiful Turkish” of documents from the German Foreign Ministry archives during World War I. Wolfgang Gust, “the famous German journalist and writer,” put it together; first published in German in 2005, Birand tells us that it also exists in other languages. It is titled, *Alman Belgeleri: Ermeni Soykırımı 1915-1916* (German Documents: Armenian Genocide 1915-1916).

His assessment of the power of the documents is straightforward. “Without going into detail,” he writes, “if you read the book and look at the documents, if you are a person who is introduced to the subject through this book, then there is no way that you would not believe in the genocide and justify the Armenians. Even if you are an expert on the subject,” he adds, “or have researched what went on from the Turkish side, again, you will be confused. You will have many questions.”

Birand concludes his somewhat agitated report with a challenge directed to the leaders of his nation. “Now, I want to ask all Turkish officials: In the last 50 years, have you done

such a study? Have you researched international sources and, however biased or one-sided it may be, have you been able to publish such a book? What kind of study have you made, moving outside our own sources that would convince the international public? Were you limited to or satisfied with using only Turkish archives because you could not find plausible documents or evidence?” And his conclusion is brutal. “Let us not deceive each other: If you can give answers to these questions, then you will be able to clarify some very key facts for us.” But will they do so? Birand’s view: “I know you will be silent.”

The Turkish edition of Gust’s monumental compilation of historical records has indeed shaken the fragile edifice of lies and distortions which constitute the official Turkish denial of events. It is one thing if historical records on the Genocide from Armenian sources – or American or British archives – are published, because denialists can shrug them off as “propaganda” by Turkey’s wartime adversaries. It is quite another matter when detailed accounts of the atrocities and official discussions about the extermination policy originate from the archives of Turkey’s wartime ally Germany, and that they now appear in Turkish translation.

In October 2011, another book containing much of the same documentation had appeared in Turkish, translated and with a lengthy introduction by Serdar Dincer. This book, titled *Alman-Türk Silah Arkadaşlığı ve Ermeniler*, was published by İletişim Yayinevi publishing house and was reviewed, among other places, in *Agos*, the Istanbul-based paper of the late Hrant Dink. Dincer, who lives in Berlin, drew his material from the same archives and stressed the role of German militarism in his analysis. In addition to positive reviews in *Agos* and *Radikal*, several Turkish journalists picked up the themes without directly citing the source, possibly because they objected to left-leaning references in the introduction; others, seeking to deny that genocide occurred, picked out isolated references to argue that the Armenians had been “terrorists” and deserved to be deported, etc. Prior to the appearance of Dincer’s book, other volumes claiming to deal with the German documents had appeared, among them one whose leitmotif

was that the “Armenians are lying.”

Blame It on the Germans

The more serious writers who attempt to blunt the impact of the documents as Gust presented them seize on the German connection and distort it. Umit Kardas, a retired military judge, published a major piece in *Today’s Zaman*, a leading Turkish daily on May 20, in which he tried to twist the facts. Titled, “German militarism’s connivance with Committee of Union and Progress,” the article identifies the book issued by Gust and his wife Sigrid explicitly, then proceeds to argue that it was German militarism which was ultimately responsible for the Genocide.

Kardas writes that the Germans “perceived the region as an area of interest as a German colony,” and, through their military alliance with Turkey, “meddled with the political affairs of the CUP.” He claims that, “non-Muslim groups living in the Ottoman Empire posed an obstacle to Germany’s economic and ideological aspirations in the East” and “Thus began the connivance of German militarism with the [Committee of Union and Progress] CUP for inhumane practices against non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire.” The author states that “Germany’s policies had overlapped with the CUP’s policy of homogenizing the country,” i.e. turning it into a Turkish Muslim state. He quotes a passage from one of the documents which refers to those Turks and Arabs who disapproved of the massacres and who held the Germans responsible “as Turkey’s schoolmaster” during the war. Kardas ends with this assertion: “The conclusion confirmed by the documents published by Gust is that German military officers as agents of German militarism endorsed the forced relocation, and they found military justifications for it. And the CUP leaders violently implemented its Turkification and Islamification policies with support and connivance from Germany.”

Kardas’s review grossly misrepresented the work by Wolfgang Gust. The German scholar set the record straight in a Letter to the Editor of *Groong Armenian News Network* on May 21. In it, Gust explicitly stated his thesis as follows: “The Armenian Genocide was genuinely a project of the CUP and the Germans accepted it more or less. Some of them protested against the extermination of the Armenians, others even recommended the deportations, two German officers actively participated in the assassinations. But the Armenian Genocide was never a German project, what the Turks at the time often tried to propagate.” He added that “other conclusions of the author [Kardas] are not based on my documents.” In sum, “the Armenian Genocide in the First World War was a Turkish undertaking with despicable German assistance.”

Psychological Truth

With the exception of some crude falsifications committed by die-hard denialists in Turkey, the debate sparked by the circulation of the German Foreign Ministry archive material represents an attempt to deal with the factual documentation of an atrocity, which Turkey, since its founding as a modern state, has categorically denied. To “deal with” the matter is psychologically complicated because acknowledging the Genocide is tantamount to undermining the identity of Turkey and Turkish citizens. It is no coincidence that the legal code’s infamous Article 301, which penalizes discussion of the Genocide, did so under the rubric of protecting “Turkishness.” Orhan Kemal Cengiz, writing in *Today’s Zaman* on November 24, 2011, explained the difficulty in discussing the Armenian issue with “the fact that ‘modern Turkey’ and the ‘Turkish identity’ are founded upon a sort of ‘exclusiveness,’ meaning that the founders of Turkey were ‘those who were not the non-Muslims.’” And, since some of those responsible for 1915 were also the fathers of the Republic, it follows that to acknowledge the genocide would mean “that we may lose our founding ‘heroes’ and have

them turned into a series of ‘murderers’ to be embarrassed about instead.” He went on to state: “It is now clear that we in Turkey have constructed an identity on top of this whole denial mechanism.” And he urged his compatriots to face up to the past.

The psychological pressure placed on commentators by this complex inevitably erupts in their writings. Thus, Kardas ends his article confessing that “Reading the details of the documents Gust has managed to retrieve has left me in utter shame and gripped my soul.” Referring to Germany’s “tradition of offering official apologies about such periods of shame”, i.e. the Holocaust – Kardas concludes: “If German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan together condemn the atrocities and massacres their ancestors performed, the souls of the victims, squeezed somewhere, will turn into doves. Does conscience tell us to spare our words from the oppressed?”

Significantly, this is not the first time Kardas has addressed the issue. Back in May 2010, he published a lengthy commentary titled, “Do we have to defend the actions of the Committee of Union and Progress?” in *Today’s Zaman*. Summarizing the history of the concept of genocide as shaped by Raphael Lemkin and embodied in the UN Genocide Convention in 1948, Kardas reviewed the Ottoman persecutions of Armenians and other Christians up to the 1890s, then presented the CUP’s “homogenization” campaign of ethnic cleansing through deportations and massacres. He offered the following reflections:

“A regime that hinges upon concealing and denying the truth will make the state and the society sick and decadent. The politicians, academics, journalists, historians and clerical officials in Turkey should try to ensure that the society can face the truth. To face the truth is to become free. We can derive no honor or dignity from defending our ancestors who were responsible for these tragedies. It is not a humane or ethical stance to support and defend the actions of Abdulhamit II and senior CUP members and their affiliated groups, gangs and marauders. Turkey should declare to the world that it accepts said atrocities and massacres and that in connection with this, it advocates the highest human values of truth, justice and humanism while condemning the mentality and actions of those who committed them in the past.”

He concluded with the proposal that Turkey should invite all Diaspora Armenians to return to their former homeland and become citizens. This “may serve to abate their sorrow, which has now translated into anger.” Furthermore, he urged the opening of the border to Turkey. Through such actions, “Turkey will become free by getting rid of its fears, complexes and worries by soothing the sorrows of Armenians.”

Breaking the Floodgates

Three years remain to the centenary of the Armenian Genocide. During this period, the discussion process inside Turkey will only accelerate, hopefully culminating in the psychological-political breakthrough of which these and other Turkish intellectuals are harbingers: official recognition of the genocide. The publication in Turkish of documents from the German archives has turned a simmering debate into an explosion. Yet more documents from the archive have recently been posted on Gust’s website, dealing with Germany’s Orient policy during the war years. Although available only in German thus far, the new material has attracted widespread attention. Of the almost 8 million visits to the site, a large and growing number are from Turkey. Articles like those by Kardas have provoked a stream of comments on the internet and the trend will only intensify. The floodgates have been broken, and Birand was right in saying, “This process is like a Chinese torture. Especially as 2015 approaches,” he added, “the pressure will increase.”

(Muriel Mirak-Weissbach is the author of *Through the Wall of Fire: Armenia, Iraq, Palestine: From Wrath to Reconciliation* (edition fischer, Frankfurt). Her new book, *Madness at the Helm: Pathology and Politics in the Arab Spring* (Ithaca/Garnet, London), will be released soon.)

View from Lebanon

Pre-Election Campaign Shapes up in Lebanon

Although it is yet early to discuss the upcoming parliamentary elections of 2013 here, since it has not officially been launched, but the Armenian parties are already polarized, especially the alliance of the Tashnag party with General Michael Aoun’s Change and

Reform bloc – and consequently with Hezbollah – worries many Armenians. Furthermore, the Tashnag leaders have been unconditionally backing Aoun’s dangerous and adventurist strategy regarding regional issues

and his collaboration with the Syrian regime and its Iranian counterpart.

Aoun, the former Lebanese army commander and current politician and leader of the Free Patriotic Movement, declared “The Liberation War” against the Syrian Occupation on March 14, 1989. He was driven out of power by Syrian Forces on October 13, 1990 and was forced into exile in France, where he remained until 2005. While in exile, he appeared before a US Congressional subcommittee to support the Syrian Accountability Act, which was designed to punish Syria’s regional role.

He returned to Lebanon on May 7, 2005, after the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, 11 days after the withdrawal of Syrian troops. After his return, he controversially shifted to adopt a pro-Syrian agenda (according to many analysts, for some personal ambitions to achieve the presidency of Lebanon) going as far as signing a memorandum of understanding with pro-Iran Hezbollah in 2006. Aoun, currently a member of parliament, visited Syria in 2009. He leads the “Change and Reform” parliamentary bloc of 27 members that include the Tashnag members of parliament.

It is even more worrying the irresponsible statements of Tashnag representatives in public announcements and in private salons. The language and terminology used are surprisingly similar to those of Aoun’s and those of Hezbollah officials reading many controversial Lebanese issues, like for example, the UN Special Tribune for Hariri’s case against the Syrian regime.

I have many questions for the Tashnag leaders in Lebanon. What is the benefit of the Armenian-Lebanese community in general, and the Tashnag party in particular, in backing Aoun’s political agenda? Is this a political adventure practiced by the Tashnag party

see LEBANON, page 16

By Sevag Hagopian



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Armenia Should Retaliate against Turkish Ban on Buying Real Estate

Turkey's Cabinet is in the process of finalizing a law adopted by parliament last May, which bans citizens of six countries — Armenia, Cuba, Nigeria, North Korea, Syria and Yemen — from buying real estate in Turkey, according to Sabah. No reason was given for blacklisting these countries.

The law demonstrates the persistent hostility of Turkish officials, contradicting their sugarcoated announcements about wanting to normalize relations with Armenia. After reviewing the restriction placed on its citizens, the Armenian Parliament should consider adopting retaliatory measures against citizens of Turkey interested in purchasing Armenian properties.

The proposed Turkish law is doubly provocative since it places a ban on citizens of Armenia, while expanding from 53 to 129 the list of countries authorized to invest in Turkey, and allows citizens of another 52 countries to invest with some limitations. The new law even permits nationals whose governments ban Turkish investments to purchase property in Turkey. Relaxing restrictions on for-

eign investments in the Turkish real estate market would bring an additional \$300 billion of revenue over the next 10 years, Sabah wrote.

Here are the restrictions that the new law places on certain countries: citizens of China, Denmark, East Timor, Fiji and Israel may only purchase a single residence in Turkey. Jordanians, on the other hand, may purchase two houses and one place of business. Russians and Ukrainians may buy real estate anywhere in Turkey, except on the Black Sea coast, while Georgians cannot buy real estate in the coastal and border regions. Greek citizens are not permitted to purchase property near the Aegean Sea and the border areas, except for those who are of Turkish origin. Citizens of Afghanistan, Egypt, Latvia, Morocco and some other African countries are not allowed to buy agricultural land, vineyards or orchards. Albanians can purchase a residence or a business, but not land.

Citizens of another 16 countries, including Iran, Palestine and India, need permission from the Ministry of Interior before acquiring real estate in Turkey. Iraqis, on the other hand, need a permit issued by the Turkish Foreign Ministry. A foreign individual or firm cannot purchase more than 10 percent of the land in a particular district or a total of 30 hectares in all of Turkey. The law also bans foreigners from purchasing or leasing real estate in military and security zones.

Among the 129 countries allowed to purchase property in Turkey without conditions or restrictions are: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan.

What steps should Armenia take in retaliation for this new Turkish law? Article 31 of the constitution of the Republic of Armenia states: "foreign citizens and stateless

persons shall not enjoy the right to land ownership except for cases prescribed by the law." According to a report submitted by the Armenian government to the World Trade Organization (WTO): "foreigners are allowed to use land through lease contracts with an Armenian counterpart. Furthermore, foreigners have the right to own real estate properties built on Armenian land, and to exploit renewable and non-renewable natural resources on the basis of concession contracts granted by the Government." Armenia's report to the WTO also stated that "the legislation grants the Government the power to limit and prohibit foreign investment for national security concerns."

It would be important to know the number of foreign individuals and companies that lease land or own buildings and businesses in Armenia, their names, citizenship, locations, sizes and market value. How many of these leases are held by Turkish citizens? Raising these questions is relevant because in the past Armenian officials have stated that there is no need to restrict foreigners who are interested in investing in Armenian real estate.

While it is understandable that Armenia would encourage foreign investments, it is not known if certain sensitive border areas are exempt from leasing to foreigners such as Azeris and Turks for national security reasons. There are also lands that contain strategic reserves of certain precious metals and minerals. They too should not be leased to foreigners who are citizens of hostile nations.

In retaliation for the new Turkish law banning citizens of Armenia from purchasing real estate in Turkey, Armenia should immediately pass a law banning Turkish citizens from all purchases or leases of real estate. No exceptions should be made.

Armenians should not be too worried that they cannot buy land in Turkey. Hopefully, they will get their lands back someday without paying for it.

Turkey: A Permanent Threat to Armenia

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decades. The Turkish-Azeri axis — termed "one nation, two states" — harks back to its assault on Armenia during the Genocide. One hundred years has changed nothing. Turkey remains enamored of Turkic blood bonds.

In the former Armenian province of Nakhichevan — now part of Azerbaijan and emptied of its Armenians — Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan recently signed a treaty creating the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States.

Let's be clear. Only Soviet control of the Caucasus and Central Asia from the 1920s to 1991 and Russian and Chinese dominance since then have thwarted Turkey's pan-Turkic goals.

For several decades, of course, Russia and China have possessed nuclear weapons; Turkey has not. Imagine what an arrogant, genocidal Turkey would have perpetrated by now had it possessed nuclear weapons. Turkey could still, unfortunately, acquire nuclear weapons or other WMDs.

Turkey's dangerous imperial goals today also include "neo-Ottomanism."

Neo-Ottomanism

Turkey regards itself as the leader of not only its former colonies in the Middle East and Balkans but also the entire Muslim world. Turkey is investing heavily in those regions.

Its Education Ministry recently released multi-media material that shows Armenia, Cyprus and parts of Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Iraq and Syria as being part of Turkey. Turkey claimed it was just a mistake.

"You are the grandchildren of the Ottomans. It will be the Ottomans who will make the world tremble again. If the Ottomans do not come back, the unbelievers will never be brought down to their knees." A Turkish clergyman thundered those words to a frenzied Turkish rally in Belgium two decades ago.

In attendance were his admirers: Necmettin Erbakan, soon to be Turkey's prime minister and the latter's protégés, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gül, Turkey's current prime minister and president, respectively.

Far from renouncing its bloody Ottoman past, such examples illustrate that Turkey embraces and wants to recreate it. Consequently, its threats against Armenia must never be taken lightly.

Turkish Threats

During the Artsakh/Karabagh war, then-Turkish President Turgut Özal repeatedly threatened Armenia. Armenians, he warned, "had not learned the lessons" of WWI — that is, the Genocide.

According to Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos, former Greek ambassador to Armenia, US and French intelligence sources confirm that Turkey was poised to invade Armenia in 1993. Ruslan Khasbulatov, a Chechen who was speaker of the Russian Supreme Soviet and an opponent of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, had secretly given Turkey the go-ahead to invade Armenia if he toppled Yelstin. Fortunately, Yelstin survived the challenge.

If not for the Armenian-Russian alliance of these past two decades, Turkey and Azerbaijan would have jointly attacked Armenia, with catastrophic consequences.

Despite Turkey's hostile record, some Armenians have fallen victim to the constant drumbeat of propaganda that Turkey is "reforming."

Turkish non-Reforms

Some even believe that acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide would be tantamount to Turkey's having "reformed." That's absurd and a serious mistake.

An acknowledgment, which would almost certainly be incomplete, insincere or reversible, could psychologically disarm Armenians into letting down their guard. By not owning up to the Genocide, therefore, Turkey may unwittingly be doing Armenians a favor.

Turkey's actual record is one of repression, followed by mass violence, interspersed with so-called "reforms."

In the 19th century, large-scale massacres of Armenians, particularly those of the 1890s, followed Ottoman "reforms" such as the Tanzimat (anti-discrimination decrees). The Young Turk "reform" revolution of 1908 — cheered in the beginning by Armenians, Greeks and other national groups — was followed by the 1909 Adana massacres, the 1915-23 extermination and genocidal attacks on Russian Armenia and the Republic of Armenia.

Then along came the new "reformed, modern" Turkey of 1923. It confiscated Armenian property, destroyed Armenian churches and Turkified Armenian city and village names. In 1943, Turkey unleashed its malicious Capital Tax program against Armenians, Greeks and Jews.

Later came the devastating Istanbul riots of 1955. Did we mention Turkey's massacre of Greek Cypriot civilians and ongoing occupation of northern Cyprus? The death squads and torture chambers? The repression, deportation and massacre of Kurds and other minorities and the jailing of dissidents and journalists?

All the while, we are told that Turkey is "reforming."

Turkish Syndrome

In addition to Turkey's policies, its political leaders pose a danger because of what one may term Turkish Political Personality Syndrome.

This syndrome is on full display today in "modern" Turkey's constant threats, chest-beating, belligerence, malignant narcissism, hypocrisy, extortion, despotism, cruelty, crudeness, lies, broken pledges and, of course, the use of violence.

The countless victims of Turkish violence down through the centuries are proof of Turkish leaders' disordered state of mind.

There is little indication that either Turkey's policies toward Armenians or their leaders' disorder will ever change. Indeed, they may grow more threatening.

Yet, Armenians still hope that Turkey will change. How to make them aware that the Turkish threat is here to stay? Education.

Young people will, of course, become the adults who conduct the political, economic, cultural and military affairs of Armenia. They must be equipped intellectually and psychologically to deal with Turkey.

From a young age, Armenian students must study — but not in Turkish schools — Turkish history, geo-politics and language and their application to present-day Armenian-Turkish relations.

The Turkish political personality and its violent and deceitful tendencies must be dissected and understood.

This is not easy, for two reasons. First, Armenians are bombarded by pro-Turkish and "reconciliation" propaganda from around the world and even by some Armenians. Second, we Armenians are unlike Turks and often have difficulty understanding their political culture.

Ultimately, future generations of Armenians will have to choose whom to believe. Will it be the allegedly "reformed, modern" Turkey? The international media that kowtows to Turkey? Countries that historically have betrayed Armenia?

Or will Armenians learn from the past and the hard-earned wisdom of their forebears?

Their decision may determine whether Armenia lives or dies.

(David Boyajian is a freelance journalist.

Many of his articles are archived on Armeniapedia.org.)

Notice to Contributors

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

— All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10

point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.

— Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are encouraged.

— All submissions should include the name of a contact person and a daytime telephone number.

— Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is noon on the Monday of the week of publication.

— Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director.

Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.

— The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.

— Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.

View from Lebanon

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in Lebanon? Is it a gamble based on the personal interests of the party leaders, or a selfish, materialistic and dubious personal commitment of some of the party leaders – who are based abroad – to regional countries? Does the Tashnag party leadership really believe that the relatively weak (both in quality and quantity) Armenian community in Lebanon can handle the consequences of such an adventure?

What do the Armenians share with Hezbollah and its agenda – which I respect but definitely do not endorse – both on ideological and political grounds? I don't need to remind the Tashnag leaders that the Armenian General Vartan Mamigonian was martyred in his heroic struggle to stop the political and cultural influence of the Persians in Armenia. We shouldn't support the Persian Iranians now in their very same attempt to dominate the Lebanese political scene.

Is it not enough experience for the Tashag party – which left its “natural allies” (i.e. Christian classical parties) to join the Syrian camp after the Taiif Accord – to have lost most of the Armenian seats in the Lebanese Parliament that it held for decades? And this happened in front of the eyes – and maybe with the blessing – of their Syrian patrons whom they trusted the party's political future.

The Taiif Accord was an agreement reached to provide the basis for ending the civil war and the return to political normalcy in Lebanon. Negotiated in Taiif, Saudi Arabia, it was designed to end the decades-long Lebanese civil war. It politically accommodated a shift to a Muslim majority, reassert Lebanese authority in South Lebanon (then occupied in Israel), though the agreement set a time frame for Syrian withdrawal and stipulated that the Syrians withdraw in two years. It was signed on October 22, 1989 and ratified on November 4, 1989.

I remind our Tashnag friends that despite

their party's alliance with the Syrian regime – the Armenians have always failed to convince the concerned parties in Lebanon to recognize the Armenian Genocide in the Lebanese parliament. Tashnag leaders are definitely aware that in spite of their party's efforts, this was only achieved during the days of political and military tension in the late '90s between Damascus and Ankara over the issue of the Iskenderoun (Hatay) Province, which was ceded by French colonial powers to Turkey in 1938. I believe that this recognition didn't come from Syria to reward its Tashnag allies for their loyalty but was a clear political message sent by Syria to Turkey for the above-mentioned reason.

I should also advise the Tashnag Party to evaluate the political future of the Syrian regime and find out how long the Assads will stay in power. The current dramatic developments in Syria are not enough indication for the leaders of Tashnag party to consider their commitments with the Syrian regime? What will happen to the Syrian-Armenians when the regime is soon toppled? How shall the Armenian community survive there when because of the Tashnags they had failed to find common grounds with those who oppose the regime and who will take over one day? If chaos ensues, the Syrian Armenians will be one of the most vulnerable communities in Aleppo and Damascus.

It is noteworthy here to mention that I am not a supporter of the Clash of Civilizations theory. Nor am I engaged in promoting religious extremism and racism. On the contrary, I am a proponent of respect and tolerance among societies. But how can the Tashnag leaders explain the massive internal migration of Armenians from West Beirut (mainly occupied by Muslims) to East Beirut (mainly occupied by Christian) during the civil war in Lebanon? I do believe they

were seeking safety, security and peace of mind living with their co-religionists in days of crisis. Again, how can the Tashnag leaders explain the massive migration of Armenians during most of the last century from Syria, Iraq, Iran and other non-Christian countries to Lebanon and abroad?

It is wiser and more prudent for the Armenian community in Lebanon to stick to its “natural allies” with whom – whether the Tashnag pro-Iran leadership like it or not – they share the same destiny in the region.

After all, what gave the Tashnag Party the opportunity to have members in the Lebanese Parliament, or me the chance to have this freedom of speech as a citizen, but the Lebanese citizenship our forefathers were granted when they settled in Lebanon almost a century ago with the great support of our “natural allies,” while other non-Christian communities were fighting against this.

I, of course, sympathize with Pope John Paul II's statement that says Lebanon is a country of a message (Balad al-Risalah) on an emotional level, but my Tashnag friends and I in Lebanon all know, that the above-mentioned statements are more made in good intentions rather than a realistic political belief. We all know the real fact – that Lebanon is, unfortunately, the country of “realization of regional messages.”

Accordingly, what do you think is the best for the Armenian-Lebanese community, my fellow Tashnag friends? Where would you like our children to grow up, my dear compatriots? In a peaceful, pluralistic society – why not in a federal state of Lebanon – supported and protected by the international community?

(Sevag Hagopian is a political sociologist and an expert in Armenian-Lebanese sociopolitical affairs.)

Galstyan Wins Russia's First Gold, Dedicates it to Country's Flood Victims

GOLD, from page 1

Sobirov, who had been aiming to add an Olympic gold to his two successive world titles, was only settled with a waza-ari throw in the extra time golden score period.

In the final, it was a different matter, beating Japan's Hiroaki Hiraoka, silver medalist at last year's world championships, just 40 seconds into their clash.

Galstyan, who was born in Armenia, joined Russian teammates in celebrations in front of a standing ovation from a crowd that included a large number of disappointed Japanese fans.

“I always imagined this situation. I always had hope,” Galstyan said. “My medal will show that Russian judo athletes and Russian sport should be number one.”

Hiraoka, who suffered disappointment when losing in the first round in Beijing four years ago, was unhappy to only take silver in London.

“I worked really hard for the last four years and still I'm not satisfied with the color of my medal, but I did the best that I can,” he said.

President Vladimir Putin, himself a judo enthusiast and former champion, missed the weekend competition but will make a “short working visit” on August 2 to see British Prime Minister David Cameron and take in some Olympic events, the Kremlin reported, last week.

Athletes from Armenia have yet to medal. As of press time, Mikayel Koloyan, a swimmer, failed to make the grade in the 100 meter men's freestyle competition with a disappointing 53.82 second showing in his heat.

Syria Fighting Goes Unabated

SYRIA, from page 1

Many Armenians are leaving Syria, if they can, and heading to Armenia. One such person is Tigran Gaboyan, a Syrian-Armenian writer, who said the situation in Syria is very fluid. He added that he had arrived in Armenia with the aim of obtaining Armenian citizenship and working.

Syrian-Armenian Karlos Gasparayn, a pharmacist, also wants to obtain Armenian citizenship. Syrian-Armenian Vazgen Mesropyan said that they had some visa problems, and it would be great to make the process of getting visas easier. He also noted that it would be better to obtain citizenship within a shorter time.

Those who have recently arrived in Armenia from Syria said that the situation is very tense, especially in Aleppo, therefore the stream of Syrian-Armenians to the motherland will continue.

The Government of Armenia has once again addressed the issue of Syrian-Armenians who have suffered because of the civil war in Syria.

Under a new decree issued on Thursday, the Armenian government gives an opportunity to all Armenians who are citizens of a number of countries (including Syria) to get an entrance visa at border checkpoints of Armenia. Previously citizens of other countries with Armenian origin could get an entrance visa only at Armenian diplomatic offices and consulates in foreign countries and only based on an invitation from Armenia.

The government has also addressed the concerns of Syrian-Armenians, saying that in order to get an Armenian passport they have to come and back and forth to Armenia several times. The government has approved a list of countries whose citizens can get an Armenian passport for the first time in diplomatic representa-

tions and consulates of Armenia in foreign countries; Lebanon and Syria are on the list of those countries.

Negotiations between the government and Armavia Airlines to increase flights between Aleppo and Yerevan to twice a week went forward. Starting August 1, a second weekly flight is being added. Armavia has been repeatedly criticized for having limited number of flights and raising the ticket prices. The airline responded that the criticism is baseless, because unlike many European countries, Armavia continues carrying out flights in a war zone and thus needs to pay high insurance premiums.

Armavia has officially stated that it will be able to add one more flight a week if the

Despite these disturbing reports, on Sunday a video appeared on YouTube where one of the generals of the Syrian free army, reporting about the “liberalization” of Aleppo, which is considered to be the main residence for Assad's supporters, said that the religious and ethnic minorities, including Armenians, had no reason to be worried about the activations of military actions there, and that they would defend all of them.

According to the Armenian Foreign Ministry, the Armenian missions in Damascus and Aleppo have issued some 3,000 visas to mainly ethnic Armenian Syrian nationals this year. The missions will be allowed soon to give passports to those Syrian Armenians who have applied for and been granted Armenian citizenship. The authorities in Yerevan have received more than 6,000 citizenship applications since the start of the Syrian crisis early last year.

(Armenpress, ArmeniaNow and RFE/RL contributed to this report.)

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