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President Sargisian Arrives in Boston

Reception Hosted At Baikar

WATERTOWN – President Serge Sargisian and his entourage arrived in Boston on Monday, March 28, for the Armenian leader's inaugural visit to Massachusetts.

As part of his first day's activities, the president, accompanied by Diaspora Minister Hranoush Hakobyan, as well as his chief of staff, Vigen Sargisian, and a large entourage including the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Armenia's Ambassador to the US Grigor Hovhannisian and Minister of Education Levon Mkrtchyan, visited the offices of the Tekeyan Cultural Association and the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, sponsored by the parent organization, the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party.

About 50 people awaited the arrival of the Armenian president. Young children, Raffi Arkun and Patil Mardiros, dressed in Armenian costumes, greeted President Sargisian as he was entering the building, with the traditional bread and salt.

Another half a dozen youth surrounded the president and his entourage on their way into the building.

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The President was greeted by Raffi Arkun and Patil Mardiros with the traditional salt and bread. Hasmik Mardiros stands with the children.

NEWS IN BRIEF

19 Percent of Armenian Children Under 5 Are Stunted

YEREVAN (Mediamax) – Around 15 percent of households in Armenia have not had adequate food since 2010 and a significant proportion are at risk of becoming food insecure. This statistic was stated in the joint report of Armenian National Statistical Service, UN World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Children's Fund, which reports that numerous households have serious nutrition problems.

According to the report, the dual malnutrition burden hampers the ability of Armenia to reach its full human and socio-economic potential.

The report indicates that Armenia is exposed to multiple risks, and that 28 percent of households are at risk of becoming food insecure if affected by any financial downturns. Moreover, 19 percent of children under age 5 are reported to have stunted growth, and almost 15 percent were found to be overweight. The stunted condition is caused by chronic malnutrition in which children are small for their age.

UN World Food Programme Representative in Armenia Pascale Micheau noted that previous international studies had shown that child under-nutrition impacts negatively the Gross Domestic Product of the country as a result of increased healthcare costs and lower productivity.

The report recommends early identification of malnutrition risks as a means of reducing stunting, while tackling obesity through increased awareness on proper nutrition.

It also suggests strengthening food security through investments in youth and women employment, rural development, social protection and education.

Deputy PM Says Joining EEU Has Been Positive

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Based on the analysis of one-year membership rates, this week Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia, Minister of International Economic Integration and Reform Vache Gabrielyan said he is happy with Armenia joining the Eurasian Economic Union.

"We analyzed the indicators of the first six months of Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union, which are posted on the ministry's website. There is also a brief overview of the whole year. This analysis separates the developments of Russian economy from EEU opportunities, which in any case, being a union member or not, the effect of the economic situation of the Russian Federation impacts all the surrounding countries, including Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and others. From this perspective, our analysis shows that Armenia's membership has been positive," he said, adding that the situation could have been worse if Armenia had not joined the Eurasian Economic Union.

Diyarbakir's Surp Giragos Church Expropriated by Turkish Authorities

ISTANBUL (Agos, Armenpress) – While clashes and curfews continue in Diyarbakir, the Turkish cabinet took an urgent decision to expropriate Surp Giragos Church, the largest Armenian church in Middle East.

Left to its own fate for years, the church was finally restored and opened to worship in 2011. With the same decision, Assyrian, Chaldean and Protestant churches have also been expropriated.

According to the cabinet decision published in Official Journal on March 25, an "urgent expropriation" decision is taken concerning 6.300 plots of land in the Sur. With this decision, many places in Abdaldede, Alipasa, Cemal Yilmaz, Camikebir, Cevatpasa, Dabanoglu, Hasirli, Inönü, Iskenderpasa, Lalebey, Malikahmet, Özdemir, Süleymanoglu, Savas, Semhane and Ziyagökalp neighborhoods and two neighborhoods in Yenisehir province are expropriated.

Aside from Surp Giragos, Surp Sarkis Chaldean Church, the Armenian Catholic Church, Virgin Mary Ancient Assyrian Church and the Protestant Church are have also been expropriated.

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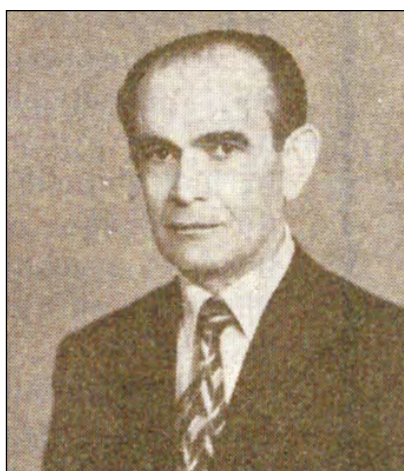


Surp Giragos Armenian Church in Diyarbakir

Writer Smpad Devletian Dies

By Hagop Vartivarian

NICOSIA, Cyprus – Writer and Armenian Democratic Liberal activist Smpad Devletian died here on March 24 at the age of 93.



Smpad Devletian

He was born on the Greek island of Lesbos in 1923, where his parents had fled to from Turkey. He studied through fourth grade in the Greek school in Kavala. He went to fifth and six grades at the Armenian school of Kavala, and afterwards continued his education at the Melkonian Educational Institute of Cyprus, from which he graduated in 1942.

He went to England to attend university, and after passing all the law examinations of the Council of Legal Education, he received the title of Barrister-at-Law. In addition, he graduated from the department of jurisprudence of the University of London.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Flemish Region to Help Karabagh out of Blockade: Parliament Speaker

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Flemish and Nagorno Karabagh schools will cooperate in the framework of a new project, in a move to help Artsakh out of blockade, Belgian MP, Flemish parliament speaker Karl Vanlouwe said Monday, March 14.

Currently in Armenia, the Flemish delegation, headed by Vanlouwe, will visit the Nagorno Karabagh Republic afterwards. At a meeting with Armenia's deputy parliament speaker Eduard Sharmazanov, Vanlouwe stressed the importance of protection of human rights and, in this context, Karabagh people's right to self-determination.

Sharmazanov, in turn, thanked the Flemish delegation for their willingness to visit the Karabagh, reiterating Armenia's resolve to achieve an exclusively peaceful settlement to the conflict.

Also, the Armenian official expressed gratitude to the Flemish delegate for his participation in the events commemorating the Armenian Genocide centennial and the global forum Against the Crime of Genocide. In addition, Sharmazanov hailed the Belgian parliament's reaffirmation of its stance on the first genocide of the 20th century. Sharmazanov described Turkey's policy of denial as a threat to the region and humanity in general, citing the developments in the Middle East.

Russian PM Dmitry Medvedev to Visit Armenia April 7

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev will visit Yerevan on April 7 to attend a meeting of the Intergovernmental Council of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the head of Armenia's government said on March 17.

According to Hovik Abrahamyan, also attending the gathering will be the prime ministers of other EEU member countries.

"During the meeting, we'll discuss the possibility of paying for the Russian gas with rubles," said Abrahamyan.

The Armenian official said talks with Russia over gas price reduction are still underway, with the Presidents of both countries having addressed the issue during a recent meeting.

The price of \$165 for the imported 1000 cubic meters of gas will be preserved through April 1., Armenia used to pay \$189 for the same volume.

Public Radio of Armenia To Augment Yazidi Service

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Public Radio of Armenia announced that its broadcast will dedicate more attention towards ethnic minorities of Armenia, their problems and religious-cultural identity. The representatives of the largest ethnic minority of Armenia, the Yazidis, were hosted at the Public Radio to introduce their perceptions and suggestions over the new cooperation format.

The Public Radio of Armenia has given voice to the Yazidi community by airing a 30-minute program every day for 26 years now. This is of key importance for the preservation of Yazidi language, religion and traditions, but it is high time to improve the Yazidi service.

The leadership of the Public Radio aims at expanding the radio platform for the Yazidi people. "We'll try to fill the gaps, by providing listeners with information related to Yazidis of the world, launching discussions on issues of concern featuring Armenian and international experts," said Gayane Gasparyan, head of the Overseas Service of the Public Radio of Armenia.

According to her, the "program will refer to the Yazidi communities all over the world and reflect the problems they face in different countries of the world.

Physics Lecture Series Continues at Alikhanian National Laboratory

YEREVAN – The primary goal of the Master's program started at the Yerevan Physics Institute (YerPhI – A. Alikhanyan National Laboratory) in 2014 was to impart expertise in current research topics based on a deep knowledge of the fundamentals of experimental physics. YerPhI physicists with broad international expertise teach research methods, data analysis and modeling, critical evaluation of scientific findings, and the ability to proceed methodically in high-energy physics and astrophysics. Building on the knowl-

edge gained during the first two semesters, these abilities were strengthened during the one-year-long research phase of the third and fourth semesters.

Since the beginning of the new semester in February, a series of new lectures with invited speakers are planned. Prof. Ashot Chilingarian, director of YerPhI and head of its Cosmic

In March a foreign member of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (NAS RA) and former employee of the National Laboratory, Prof. Alexander Khodjamirian from Siegen University, Germany, has been invited to present a lecture series at National Laboratory. His lectures will cover the modern theory of elementary particles, recent dis-

IDEA and National Geographic Announce Collaboration for Tourism Boost

YEREVAN (Mediamax) – The Initiatives for Development of Armenia (IDEA) Charitable Foundation and National Geographic Partners have signed a memorandum of understanding to conduct a preliminary review of sustainable tourism development opportunities in Armenia.

The initial research will include recommendations on product potential for developing Armenia's cultural and natural attractions based upon the three pillars of sustainable tourism: environmentally-friendly practices; support for the protection of cultural and natural heritage; and delivering social and economic benefits to local people.

Costas Christ, editor at large for National Geographic Traveler, will travel to Armenia in late April to lead a preliminary tourism development assessment on behalf of National Geographic. Christ, who is recognized as one of the world's foremost experts on sustainable tourism, works with National Geographic's Travel group, for which he serves as director of sustainable tourism and oversees field audits for the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World.

As part of the Armenia research trip, Christ will meet with government representatives, community leaders, business owners and tourism operators to assess the challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism development to promote economic growth, while safeguarding Armenia's natural treasures and rich cultural heritage for future generations. Working closely with IDEA, Christ's recommendations will provide guidance on Armenia's tourism strategy based upon globally recognized criteria for sustainable tourism principles and practices.

"Global scope and collaboration and using best international practices and standards for creating new local benchmarks are among the key principles of IDEA Foundation and based on that we are starting to work with National Geographic Partners. I am sure that this cooperation will help us to explore the best ways of presenting Armenia to the world and include them in the IDEA's Tourism Development Strategy," said Edgar Manukyan, CEO of IDEA Foundation.

"Armenia is a beautiful country with a rich and proud cultural heritage. Protecting that heritage and caring for the environment are fundamental to Armenia's sustainable tourism development strategy to deliver economic and social well-being for the Armenian people. I am looking forward to working with such a visionary organization like IDEA to introduce Armenia to the world," said Christ.



Physics Lecturer Ara Daryan with Armenian master's program physics students at Yerevan Physics Institute / AANL

Ray Division (CRD) has started joint video lecture courses for YerPhI master courses for students of National Research Nuclear University (MePHI in Russia) dedicated to a new scientific topic in which physicists of the Cosmic Ray division have made major contributions; namely "High energy physics in the atmosphere." Students in Russia follow these lectures, ask questions, and respond with comments via the Internet. Foreign citizens and stateless individuals are permitted to enroll in MePHI according to the laws of the Russian Federation. The cycle of 6 lectures will be continued until the end of March. Below is the link to the master courses of YerPhI:

<http://www.yerphi.am/index.php/y-oung-scientists-and-students/master-courses>

coveries at Large Hadron Collider, the basics of Quantum Electrodynamics, and the role of hadronic effects in electroweak phenomena.

These lectures are at an introductory level and are intended mainly for the physicists working in experimental groups and for the master and PhD students specializing in experimental physics.

In May Professor Jean Lilensten, research director at the Institut de Planétologie et d'Astrophysique de Grenoble (France) is invited to deliver lectures to YerPhI master students.

These new series of short lecture courses are not limited by the duration of the talks; they have tendency to be extended to include additional interesting and relevant topics thus deepening the students' knowledge.

Armenian National Assembly VP Praises Warm Relations with Kuwait

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – On March 22 Armenian National Assembly (NA) Vice President Eduard Sharmazanov received Minister of Justice Yaqoub Abdulmohsen Al-Sane and delegation led by him.

The meeting was attended by Ambassador of Armenia to Kuwait Fadey Charchoghlyan and Kuwait's Ambassador to Armenia Bassam Mohammed Al-Qabandi.

Sharmazanov highly assessed warm relations between the two countries and noted that despite the existence of a strong partnership, there are sectors which have potential and opportunity to get developed.

Sharmazanov expressed gratitude to Kuwait for the humanitarian measures to Armenian refugees who had survived the Armenian Genocide and given them a welcome. He expressed confidence that Al-Sane's visit to the Armenia's parliament will be a new impetus to develop already developed ties and implement new and mutually beneficial projects. In this context, the interlocutors stressed the importance of cooperation and mutual visits of the parliamentary friendship groups.

The two also discussed terrorism worldwide as well as finding a solution for the security of Nagorno Karabagh.

He stressed that terrorism has neither nationality nor religion. He condemned the terrorist act in Brussels held hours before, which caused the loss of innocent lives and injuries.

Sharmazanov considered necessary to combine efforts to fight against this xenophobic phenomena. Armenian Vice President of the National Assembly, touching on Nagorno Karabagh conflict, noted that Armenia, unlike Azerbaijan's resolution, sees the problem exclusively by peaceful means, based on the self-determination of nations, in the context of the OSCE Minsk Group. In this context, Sharmazanov informed the guests that Turkey has been blockading Armenia for 23 years, which is unacceptable in the 21st century.



INTERNATIONAL

Families of US Personnel Ordered to Leave Parts of Turkey amid Security Concerns

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — The Obama administration ordered the families of US military and diplomatic personnel to leave parts of southern Turkey on Tuesday, March 29, and warned US citizens against travel to the region amid mounting security concerns.

The Pentagon said 670 dependents of US military personnel would be affected by the order to depart areas of southern Turkey, including Incirlik air base, which is used heavily in the fight against Islamic State militants.

The US State Department said a small number of diplomatic families would be affected but did not give numbers. The Pentagon said 100 military dependents in Ankara and Istanbul were not affected by the departure orders because of security measures in place there.

State Department spokesman John Kirby said the move had been under consideration for several weeks, and was not the result of any specific threat and had nothing to do with the visit to Washington this week by top

Turkish officials.

Secretary of State John Kerry met Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu on Monday, and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan is due to attend a Nuclear Security Summit with other world leaders later in the week. Kirby said Kerry had discussed the security announcement with Cavusoglu at their meeting on Monday.

“The decision to do this wasn’t taken lightly. It was done after careful thought and consideration, and inter-agency coordination,” Kirby told a daily briefing at the State Department.

“The timing of it was completely considered independently of the Nuclear Security Summit and the visit here to Washington by Turkish officials,” he added.

The US military’s European Command said it had ordered the departure of families of personnel stationed in Adana, home of Incirlik. It said families of US military personnel also had been told to leave Izmir and Mugla provinces in southeastern

Turkey.

“We understand this is disruptive to our military families, but we must keep them safe and ensure the combat effectiveness of our forces to support our strong ally Turkey in the fight against terrorism,” General Philip M. Breedlove, commander of the US European Command, said in the statement.

The departures do not indicate a decision to permanently end US families’ presence at military facilities in southern Turkey, the statement said.

The US State Department said it had ordered the departure of family members of government workers at the US Consulate in Adana. Dependents of US government employees in Izmir and Mugla provinces were also asked to leave.

The State Department issued a statement cautioning US citizens more broadly against traveling to southeastern Turkey.

It also warned of “increased threats from terrorist groups throughout Turkey.”

Experts Volunteer to Save Armenian, Greek Architecture in Turkey

ISTANBUL (Public Radio of Armenia) — Architects, art historians and engineers from Turkey, Greece and Armenia have come together to review Turkey’s Greek, Armenian and Jewish heritage.

Speaking to Anadolu Agency, project coordinator, Cagla Parlak, said that they aimed to reach an estimated 140 structures across Turkey which are at risk.

The group will document findings from their visits to sites in seven regions across Turkey, including the central Anatolian province of Kayseri, the southern region of Adana and Aegean Izmir.

Financed by the U.S. embassy in Ankara, the project took a year to come together and ran parallel with the foundation of the association in 2014.

The project has publicized its first results by publishing a book called Kayseri: With Its Armenian and Greek Cultural Heritage in February.

The team conducted a risk assessment of 18 Greek and Armenian buildings in Kayseri such as the Surp Asdvadzadzin Church, Surp Stepanos Church, Sakis Gümüyan School, the School in Molu and the Agios Georgios Church.

Kayseri, like many other parts of the country, was home to various minorities until the beginning of the 20th century but their numbers fell after the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian population in the city was around 15,000 at the end of the 19th century, the book states. Today only one Armenian lives there, according to local media.

The group uses an inventory prepared by the Istanbul-based Hrant Dink Foundation, registration decisions by local heritage Protection Boards and literature reviews, Parlak said.

The Hrant Dink Foundation was founded in the name of a Turkish-Armenian journalist who was assassinated by a Turkish nationalist in 2007.

The foundation worked for more than two years making an inventory to gather information about Turkey’s cultural heritage.

According to the research, there are 4,600 Armenian, 4,100 Greek, 650 Assyrian and 300 Jewish structures across the country.

Writer Smpad Devletian Dies

DEVLETIAN, from page 1

Devletian practiced law in Cyprus from 1956, but he was also a writer by avocation. He chose law so that he could become a financially independent individual, and he was able to maintain an independent stance on Armenian community and national affairs, though this always was consonant with Armenian Democratic Liberal thinking.

He played an active role in all aspects of Cypriot-Armenian life until 1986. Among other things, he was chairman for approximately one decade of the board of trustees of the Cypriot-Armenian schools. He remained a member of the board of trustees of the Melkonian Educational Institute for 25 years, until 1986.

He participated in the second and eighth conventions of the Armenian Writers Union in Yerevan.

Throughout the Soviet Armenian era, he firmly remained a partisan of Armenian patriotism on the island. He was one of the leaders of Nicosia’s Armenian Democratic Liberal (ADL) Vahan Tekeyan Chapter.

Devletian, using the penname of Derounian, published the following works: Minchev veratartz [Until Return] (Cyprus, 1946), Lse dghas [Listen, My Son] (Cyprus, 1948), Hametsogh aykapats [Lingering Dawn] (Beirut, 1959), Jarakayght u mshush [Ray and Fog] (Beirut, 1968) and Darakir dagher [Exile Poetry] (Yerevan, 1981; and a second edition in Beirut, 1996).

He contributed to the ADL press, and in particular to the Beirut newspaper Zartonk and the literary journal Shirag.

He married Takouhi Bchakjian in 1942. She, too, was a graduate of Melkonian. Their son Asadour Devletian was also a Melkonian graduate and an ADL leader. Takouhi worked as a teacher and one of the leaders of the Girl Scout movement in Cyprus who was helpful to Melkonian’s Girl Scout group. Takouhi in 2007 published her autobiography, Voghchoyn geank [Greetings, Life].

(Translated from the Armenian)

Five Killed, 39 Injured in Istanbul Suicide

ISTANBUL (Hurriyet) — Five people were killed and 39 others were injured in a suicide bomb attack on March 19 in central Istanbul, on the busy Istiklal Avenue in Taksim.

All victims of the attack besides attacker were foreign nationals: Israeli citizens Simha Siman Demri, Yonathan Suher, Avraham Godman and Iranian Ali Reza Khalman.

Turkish Health Minister Mehmet Müezzinoğlu said 39 people, including 24 foreign nationals and a child, were injured, and seven of the victims in hospitals were in critical condition.

“We as a nation are unfortunately now face to face with a situation of unlimited, immeasurable acts that are inhumane, defy human values and are treacherous,” Müezzinoğlu said.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu condemned the “inhuman” attack in a written statement, extending his condolences to the families of victims and wished the injured a speedy

recovery.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack on the long pedestrian street lined with global shops and foreign consulates, a few hundred meters from an area where police buses are often parked.

Two Turkish officials told Reuters evidence suggested the attacker was likely from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Turkey’s Supreme Board of Radio and Television (RTÜK) imposed a temporary ban on broadcasting pictures and video footage from the scene of the attack.

An ethnic Armenian was among those injured. Oksan Khachanyan, 40, was at his workplace, when the bomb blast occurred in the city’s shopping area, editor-in-chief of the Istanbul based Armenian Jamanak daily Ara Gochunyan told Public Radio of Armenia.

International News

Armenian President Beats FIDE Chief in Blitz Chess

MOSCOW (Armenpress) — Armenian President Serge Sargisian defeated the International Chess Federation (FIDE) President Kirsan Ilyumzhivov in an impromptu blitz chess game on March 15, Narek Nikoghosyan, assistant to the press secretary of the president of Republic of Armenia wrote on his Facebook page.

Radio of Armenia reported that the game took place along the sidelines of the Candidates Tournament in Moscow.

Sargisian is also the chairman of Armenia’s Chess Federation.

Armenia’s leading chess player, Levon Aronian, is participating at the tournament along with 8 other acclaimed contenders. The winner of the tournament will compete for the World Champion’s title in New York on November 11-30.

As the Chess Federation of Armenia is a sponsor of the event, the opening ceremony was dedicated to the 25th anniversary of Armenia’s independence.

One of Oldest Everest Climbers Keeps Mountains in His Heart

TBILISI (Public Radio of Armenia) — Only mountains can be better than mountains, Tbilisi-based Armenian mountaineer Lev Sarkisov says.

Sarkisov first discovered his love for mountains, when working at the Tbilisi Aviation Factory. A group of mountain climbers there was organizing periodic expeditions. In 1962 the group decided to climb Kazbek, the highest peak of the Caucasus Mountains.

Sarkisov later joined the mountaineer group of the Armed Forces and worked as coach for a long time.

Sarkisov is one of the few Armenians to have climbed Everest — the highest peak in the world. In 1999 he was recognized by the Guinness book of world records as the oldest mountaineer to conquer the highest peak.

He climbed Mount Ararat four times and took the Armenian tricolor to the peak. “Taking the Armenian flag was a great risk. I could be arrested had the flag been found in my rucksack. I bought fabric of three colors at a store in Bayazet and sew the flag at the hotel,” he said.

In 1999 Georgian President Edward Shevardnadze awarded him with an Order of Honor. He’s also the recipient of Snow Leopard award, a Soviet mountaineering award, given to climbers conquering all five peaks of 7,000m and above located in the former USSR.

Even at 70, Lev Sarkisov is ready to take the road to mountains.

Radovan Kradzic Sentenced to 40 Years

THE HAGUE (Armenpress) — The former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Kradzic has been found guilty of genocide over the 1995 massacre in Srebrenica and sentenced to 40 years in jail, “Armenpress” according to the Guardian. The key verdict from a United Nations tribunal in The Hague was delivered 18 months after a five-year trial of Kradzic, who was accused of being one of the chief architects of atrocities during the 1992-95 Balkans war.

The 70-year-old, who insisted his actions were aimed at protecting Serbs during the Bosnian conflict, was found guilty of 10 out of the 11 charges he faced at the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Prosecutors said that Kradzic, as political leader and commander-in-chief of Serb forces in Bosnia, was responsible for some of the worst acts of brutality during the war, including the 44-month deadly siege of Sarajevo and the 1995 massacre of more than 8,000 Bosnian men and boys in the Srebrenica enclave.

Kradzic’s other convictions were for five counts of crimes against humanity and four of war crimes, including taking UN peacekeepers hostage, deporting civilians, murder and attacks on combatants.

Community News

'PAST AND PRESENT: Commemorating Women Affected By Genocide'

WATERTOWN – On Sunday, April 10, the Armenian Museum of America, along with Facing History and Ourselves, will present a genocide commemoration program: 'Past and Present: Commemorating Women Affected By Genocide.' This program will commemorate all women, across history and around the world, who have been affected by the destruction of genocide.

This year's joint commemoration will feature a lecture by Anna Aleksanyan, of Clark University, and survivor testimonies from Bosnian genocide survivor Edina Skaljic and Rwandan genocide survivor Chantal Kayitesi.

The program will also feature musical performances by violinist Armen Ghazaryan and pianist Levon Hovsepian, as well as a special blended poetic musical piece with poetry written and performed by Frank Cunningham.

To coincide with the program, there will also be a number of guest exhibitions created and inspired by women who have experienced genocide. Exhibits will include Kindling Sandy Smith-Garcés, Pax Rwanda: Embroideries of the Women of Savane Rutongo-Kabuye curated by Juliana Meehan and Rutongo Embroideries, and Every Stitch A Memory by Netty Vanderpol.

All of these guest exhibitions, along with the Museum's own Stitching To Survive and Traveling Genocide exhibits, will be available for viewing on the 3rd Floor of ALMA in the Adele & Haig Der Manuelian and Terjenian-Thomas Galleries.

Refreshments will be served after the formal program and this event is free and open to the public.

The keynote speaker, Anna Aleksanyan, is a Harry and Ovsanna Chitjian Fellow and doctoral student in Armenian Genocide Studies at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Her research delves into physical and non-physical destructive techniques used against women during the Armenian Genocide.

Sandy Smith-Garcés' Kindling exhibit was inspired by the plight of Darfuri women, driven from their homes and living in refugee camps in eastern Chad. Smith-Garcés was struck by the divide between the lives of mothers in her own community and the lives of mothers working to provide for their families in the camps, where basic needs are scarce. Venturing outside the camps in search of kindling to cook meals often ends in rape and other forms of violence. The search for firewood takes on new meaning, as essential for survival as the quest for fire, food and shelter from the elements since time immemorial.

The Pax Rwanda Embroideries are a traveling exhibit owned and curated by Juliana Meehan, a New Jersey educator who supports the Savane Rutongo-Kabuye embroidery workshop. This workshop was created by a group of Rwandan women living in the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsis. They came from both sides of the conflict, yet they put events of the past behind them to work together in the hope that their children would have a better future.

Savane Rutongo-Kabuye and Christiane Rwagatare, the founder and creative director of the workshop, have won awards for their work in Rwanda, and their embroideries are displayed in the national Rwesero Art Museum at Nyanza. The workshop is one of many collectives of artisans that reflect a larger phenomenon taking place all over Rwanda: reconstruction, reconciliation and the desire for peace.

Netty Vanderpol is a Holocaust survivor from Holland and was a classmate of Anne Frank in Amsterdam. Forty years after she escaped with her family from Theresienstadt concentration camp in what is now the Czech Republic, Netty took up the art of needlepoint. She has used this artform as the vehicle to tell the story of how she and her family survived the Holocaust.

Armenian Museum of America is located at 65 Main St.



Rep. Adam Schiff presents the plaque to Dr. Frieda Jordan.

Bone Marrow Registry Founder Honored by Schiff As 28th Congressional District Woman of the Year

LOS ANGELES – On March 15, Dr. Frieda Jordan, president of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, was honored in the US Congress by being named the 28th Congressional District Woman of the Year. The honor was bestowed on Jordan by Rep. Adam Schiff (D), who represents California's 28th Congressional District, in a speech he delivered on the floor of the House of Representatives. Schiff's tribute was entered into the Congressional Record.

Three days later, Schiff personally presented Jordan with a plaque featuring the text of his tribute to her, at a luncheon held in Echo Park. During the event, which was organized on the occasion of Women's History Month, Schiff honored a group of outstanding women, including Jordan, from communities in the 28th Congressional District.

"I rise today in honor of Women's History Month," Schiff said in his remarks at the House of Representatives on March 15. "Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Dr. Frieda Jordan, of Glendale, Calif."

Jordan said, "I am absolutely humbled by this prestigious honor. I convey my deep gratitude to Congressman Adam Schiff, who is an extraordinary, long-time supporter and advocate of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, as well as the House of Representatives as a whole, for selecting me as the 28th Congressional District Woman of the Year."

Jordan is the director of DNA Molecular Typing at Foundation Laboratory in Los Angeles. She is also a laboratory inspector with the European Federation for Immunogenetics, representing the Republic of Armenia. Prior to her work at Foundation Laboratory, she was associate director of the Human Leukocyte Antigen and Immunogenetics Laboratory at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Jordan is an active member and participant of various medical organizations, including the World Marrow Donor Association, the National Marrow Donor Program, the European Federation for Immunogenetics, and the Armenian Medical Association. Jordan has made presentations at numerous conferences and workshops in the United States and around the world.

Connecticut State Capitol to Host Genocide Commemoration

HARTFORD, Conn. – The Armenian Genocide Commemoration Committee of Connecticut has announced that it will conduct its annual program honoring the Holy Martyrs and the survivors of the Genocide on Saturday April 23rd. The commemoration of the 101st anniversary of this tragic event will take place at the Connecticut State Legislature in the magnificent Hall of the House of Representatives at 11:30 a.m. and will be preceded by the raising of the Armenian flag over the Capitol building at 11 a.m.

The keynote speaker will be Shant Mardirossian, chairman emeritus and a member of the board of the Near East Foundation. Mardirossian will make a presentation on the unprecedented humanitarian role played by the then Near East Relief in connection with the Genocide.

NEF began in 1915 when a group of American political, business and philanthropic leaders came together to provide critical relief to those affected by the Armenian Genocide.

The organization mobilized thousands of Americans to work toward its humanitarian goals and raised over \$116 million dollars for direct relief. As the first mass American non-governmental movement to send humanitarian aid overseas, NEF has since defined the American tradition of international relief and development.

From 1915 to 1930, Near East Relief saved the lives of over a million people. It built 40 hospitals and cared for and educated 132,000 orphans in Near East Relief orphanages.

Based in Syracuse, NY, the Near East Foundation is a non-profit international development organization that works to build inclusive, prosperous and sustainable societies in the Middle East and Africa by providing vulnerable and disenfranchised people with skills, training and resources to fully engage and prosper in their own communities and economies. NEF's headquarters consist of 15 people who oversee operations across nine countries, which include Armenia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, the West Bank, Senegal and Sudan, where it employs 170 people in the field.

NEF recently celebrated its Centennial and continues to lead programs that strengthen resilience and create economic opportunity through small business creation, agricultural development, peace building, and civic engagement, working together with community leaders and local partners.

Mardirossian is a partner and the chief operating officer at Kohlberg & Company, LLC, a leading US middle-market private equity firm. He is a graduate of the Lubin School of Business at Pace University and holds a B.B.A. in Public Accounting and an M.B.A. with dual concentration in Investment Management and Strategic Management.

Also participating in the presentation will be Molly Sullivan, Esq, director and curator of the Near East Relief Historical Society.

A number of Connecticut governmental, religious and civic leaders are expected to be in attendance.

Following the ceremonies, there will be a reception and an opportunity to view NEF materials



Shant Mardirossian



COMMUNITY NEWS

Members of Congress Request Assistance for Armenia, Nagorno Karabagh

WASHINGTON – This past week, 33 Members of Congress sent a letter to the Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Chairwoman Kay Granger (R-TX) and Ranking Member Nita Lowey (D-NY) in support of continued US assistance in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 budget for the Republics of Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh, the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia, and at-risk minorities in the Middle East. “Continued US support in the region is critically important,” the letter read.

Members of Congress requested at least \$5 million for humanitarian and development programs in Nagorno Karabagh, appropriating no less than \$40 million in overall economic aid (including Economic Support Fund, International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement, and Global Health Programs) for Armenia, suspending all military aid to Azerbaijan, allocating at least 10 percent of aid given to Georgia towards funding sustainable job-creation programs in Samtskhe-Javakheti, enhancing Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, and reinstating Karabagh in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group peace process as a full negotiating partner.

“The Assembly applauds the initiative supported by over 30 Members of Congress and their efforts to ensure the well-being of Armenia and Artsakh. I look forward to work-

ing with Congressional leaders to promote the important issues outlined in the letter,” Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouy said. “We live in a dangerous time, as ISIS commits genocide against Christians and other minorities, millions of people have become displaced by violence and civil war, and Azerbaijan threatens a new war in the South Caucasus with its repeated cease-fire violations. With the proposed changes to the FY 2017 Appropriations Budget, the Administration has the opportunity to help resolve some of these critical concerns.”

The letter calls for a stronger US stance regarding Azerbaijan’s increasing number of hostile acts against Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh. Earlier this month, the Obama Administration released its budget for the upcoming year, maintaining a military parity between Armenia and Azerbaijan at \$1 million for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and \$600,000 for International Military Education and Training (IMET), a decrease from the previous year. The letter recommends a suspension of US military aid to Azerbaijan “until its government ceases cross-border attacks, ends its threat of renewed war, and agrees to a settlement of regional conflicts through peaceful means.” Members of Congress are also requesting supplemental language to strengthen Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act.

US priority focuses on a peaceful settlement

of the Karabagh conflict, yet the letter points out that Karabagh government officials have been excluded from the peace process since 1998. “Nagorno Karabagh should, in the interests of peace and basic fairness, be permitted to fully participate in all talks regarding its future. The best and most sustainable path to peace requires direct engagement with the people and government of Nagorno Karabagh, whose fate and future are the subject of ongoing talks and whose security will rest on the outcome of these negotiations,” the letter reads.

Last week, Secretary of State John Kerry confirmed that the crimes committed by ISIS constitute genocide against Yazidis, Christians and other religious minorities, including Armenians. Armenia does not have adequate resources to continue helping refugees escaping from genocide. The Administration’s proposed budget allocated nearly \$3 billion for migration and refugee assistance, some of which could go towards Armenia’s resettlement efforts. Armenia accepted the third largest amount of refugees in Europe, sheltering nearly 20,000 displaced Syrians. Armenia hosts six Syrian refugees per 1,000 nationals - a ratio much higher than many European countries or the US, especially noteworthy given the country’s economic circumstance, reports the Armenian Agenda.

“As a host country, Armenia has been absolutely exemplary in terms of the ratio of welcomed Syrian-Armenian refugees to the number

of native inhabitants,” said United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative in Armenia Christoph Bierwirth.

The letter suggests allocating international and US aid to Armenia and “supporting the efforts to regional states to resettle those fleeing from Syria.” The Appropriations Subcommittee suggests to putting in place “policies and programs to close gaps in the distribution of need-based aid to at-risk minority populations in Syria, including Armenians.”

The letter supporting increased assistance to Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh for FY 2017 was signed by Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ); Robert Dold (R-IL); Gus Bilirakis (R-FL); Tony Cárdenas (D-CA); David Cicilline (D-RI); Judy Chu (D-CA); Katherine Clark (D-MA); Mike Coffman (R-CO); Jim Costa (D-CA); Joseph Crowley (D-NY); Anna Eshoo (D-CA); Chaka Fattah (D-PA); James Langevin (D-RI); Barbara Lee (D-CA); Daniel Lipinski (D-IL); Zoe Lofgren (D-CA); Stephen Lynch (D-MA); Carolyn Maloney (D-NY); James McGovern (D-MA); Grace Napolitano (D-CA); Collin Peterson (D-MN); Jared Polis (D-CO); Mike Quigley (D-IL); Charles Rangel (D-NY); Linda Sanchez (D-CA); Loretta Sanchez (D-CA); John Sarbanes (D-MD); Jan Schakowsky (D-IL); Adam Schiff (D-CA); Brad Sherman (D-CA); Jackie Speier (D-CA); Dina Titus (D-NV); and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD).

Established in 1972, the Armenian Assembly of America is the largest Washington-based nationwide organization promoting public understanding and awareness of Armenian issues. The Assembly is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization.

Dr. Lerna Ekmekcioglu to Present on ‘Survivors Into Minorities: Armenians In Post-Genocide Turkey’

FRESNO – Dr. Lerna Ekmekcioglu will give a presentation on “Survivors into Minorities: Armenians in Post-Genocide Turkey” at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 18, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191, Fresno State campus.

The talk follows the trajectories of the survivors of the 1915 Armenian Genocide who remained inside Turkish borders after the signing of the 1918 Mudros Armistice (and during the Allied occupation years of Istanbul) and after the 1923 establishment of the new country as the Turkish Republic. How did the Kemalist state treat the remaining Armenians? What were Armenians’ responses to the new (but also old) Turkish regime? Ekmekcioglu will discuss multiple strategies Armenians-including feminist Armenians-improvised in order to cohabit with unapologetic perpetrators and survive the new Turkey.

Ekmekcioglu is McMillan-Stewart Associate Professor of History at Massachusetts Institute of Technology where she is also affiliated with the Women and Gender Studies Program. She specializes on Turkish and Armenian lands in the beginning of the 20th century and the history of Armenian feminism. In 2006 she co-edited a volume in Turkish about the first five Armenian feminists of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic. Her most recent book, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, came out from Stanford University Press in early 2016.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



Dr. Lerna Ekmekcioglu



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Genocide Museum Mobile-Friendly Website Launched

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Genocide Museum of America (AGMA) announces that its online museum (www.armeniangenocidemuseum.org) is fully accessible on mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones.

The interactive site, which was launched in April 2015, invites visitors to explore the story of the Armenian people and its fateful experience in 1915. Initially available only for laptop and desktop computer viewing, the online museum is now optimized for mobile devices.

Presenting the Armenian Genocide from multiple perspectives, the online museum highlights the role and extent of American involvement in denouncing the atrocities committed against the Armenian people during World War I and in delivering the humanitarian aid that rescued the remaining survivors from further mistreatment.

The story begins with an exploration of the rich culture of the Armenian people created over millennia to underscore the gravity of the loss of an entire civilization with the destruction of historic Armenia.

This theme has been expanded upon with the preliminary installation of the online museum's galleries that feature additional information about the richness and creativity of Armenian civilization. They cover such topics as Armenia's ancient history, its spectacular architectural heritage, the variety of arts created across the centuries, as well as the tragic record of their destruction during and since the years of the Armenian Genocide.

The enormity of the human losses during the Armenian Genocide is set against this background to stress the relationship that once existed between the Armenian people and their now decimated homeland. It reveals the extent to which the places once associated with worship and celebration, with commerce and education, and the historical memory of significant events from the time of the Armenian monarchies, have been erased from the face of the earth.

By underlining with resonant content the historic identity of the Armenian people, their art and culture, and their perseverance in the face of adversity, the online museum also reinforces the universal message of our common humanity and collective responsibility, and explains why the story of the Armenians and other peoples who have suffered similar fates must be told.

The museum is also dedicated to educating the public about the continuing consequences of the Armenian Genocide. Viewers will learn how the international community's failure to condemn the genocide and hold the perpetrators accountable made the Armenian Genocide a prototype for later crimes against humanity, including the Holocaust, Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur, and most recently the Syriac, Armenian, Yezidi and other minority communities subjected to genocide by the Islamic State noted in the resolution adopted this March 14 by the U.S. House of Representatives.

An educational video introducing the entire online museum explains the Armenian

Genocide in the context of a century and more of mass atrocities around the world and examines the role of American leadership in responding to the problem of genocide.

The introductory video, as well as the online exhibits, feature the oral testimony of survivors supported with pictorial and other documentary evidence. The title of the video, "Coming to Terms: The Legacy of the Armenian Genocide," echoes the expression that became the international theme of the centennial as governments and world leaders joined Armenians around the world on calling upon Turkey to face up to the evidence.

The testimony of other significant figures underscores the world's reaction and America's response to the Armenian Genocide with observations by Theodore Roosevelt, Major General James Harbord, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Consul Jesse Jackson, subsequent remembrance day statements issued by sitting presidents Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, supplemented by the striking invocations made by Pope Francis during the April 2015 commemorative observance at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

The online museum also confronts the Turkish government's denial policy by recalling the late Hrant Dink's heroic role in exploring avenues for creating a common ground for understanding. Dink was assassinated in 2007.

In the spirit of cooperation to pay due respect to the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide, many individuals and organizations joined with AGMA in supporting the creation of the online museum and its many components. Among them are the Armenian Film Foundation, Zoryan Institute, Armenian

Genocide Museum-Institute, and Armenian Studies Program at the California State University in Fresno. They augmented the resources available from the United States National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Republic of Armenia National Archives, and Armenian General Benevolent Union's Nubarian Library, among others. AGMA also extends special thanks to film makers Carla Garapedian and Ted Bogosian, as well as historian and geographer Dr. Robert Hewsen.

AGMA also thanks again with particular appreciation the renowned photographer Hrair Hawk Khatcherian whose commitment to documenting the cultural and religious heritage of Armenians across their historic homeland and the diaspora is on display through the magnificent photographs he shared with AGMA and which form such a central part of the visual experience of visiting the online museum.

Joining Khatcherian in making the online museum an exceptional experience is the soulful musicianship of Gevorg Dabaghyan, enveloping viewers with haunting melodies from the mountains of Armenia. He continues the unique tradition of composing and playing music on the national instrument of Armenia, the duduk, made from the native apricot tree.

The online museum was primarily made possible by the contribution of the Estate of Agnes Kazanjian. Donors to AGMA, Anoush Mathevosian, Hirair & Anna Hovnanian Foundation, Edele Hovnanian, Dr. Sarkis Kechejian, Dr. Nishan Kechejian, the Alice Ohanessian Irrevocable Trust, Julie Kulhanjian Strauch, Noubar Tcheurekjian, and the Trustees of the Armenian Assembly of America, are also gratefully acknowledged.

Assembly Requests \$15 Million to Armenia for Refugees Forced to Flee Genocide by ISIS

WASHINGTON – This past week, the Armenian Assembly of America Executive Director Bryan Ardouny submitted testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs where he outlined nine key policy priorities for the Armenian American community in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017.

Given Azerbaijan's blatant ceasefire violations, the Assembly called upon the United States to "directly condemn such actions and avoid engaging in false equivalency between the aggressor and those defending themselves." The Assembly urged that Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act be fully enforced. "Azerbaijan's violations skyrocketed to over 30,000 in 2015, and include the inexplicable targeting of a kindergarten in Armenia's Tavush border region and other civilian areas, not to mention the continual acts of vandalism, such as destroying centuries-old Armenian cemeteries noted for their historic monuments," Ardouny points out in his testimony. In addition, "the Assembly urges the cessation of US military assistance to Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan does not need it, and America cannot afford it."

The Assembly testimony also laid out eight additional policy goals and specifically asks for: not less than \$40 million in US assistance to Armenia; not less than \$5 million to Nagorno Karabagh, especially for the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Center; advancing the Nagorno Karabagh peace process; support to Christian minorities at risk in the Middle East; US military assistance to Armenia; assistance to the Samskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia; regional energy security; and reaffirmation of the US record on the Armenian Genocide.

The destruction of Armenian heritage in the region by Azerbaijan and the armed violations of the ceasefire parallel the crimes committed by ISIS in Iraq and Syria, which Secretary of State John Kerry confirmed

constitute genocide against Christians and minorities, including Armenians. In light of this, "the Assembly also urge[d] enhanced assistance to Christian and other minority communities at risk in the Middle East, with a particular focus of concern regarding the continued unrest in Syria, particularly the battleground city of Aleppo where Armenian churches and other institutions have come under attack."

The Administration's proposed budget envisions nearly \$3 billion for migration and refugee assistance. The Assembly recommended that \$15 million be allocated for Armenia, which according to The Economist has taken on the third largest number of refugees in Europe as a proportion of its population. "As a host country, Armenia has been absolutely exemplary in terms of the ratio of welcomed Syrian-Armenian refugees to the number of native inhabitants," said United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) Representative in Armenia Christoph Bierwirth. Armenia hosts six Syrian refugees per 1,000 nationals - a ratio much higher than many European countries or the US, an especially noteworthy effort given the country's economic circumstance.

Earlier this week, Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs, Representatives Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Robert Dold (R-IL), spearheaded an Assembly-backed letter to the Subcommittee regarding assistance to Armenia and Karabagh. The letter, which was signed by 33 US Representatives, outlined key priorities regarding US-Armenia/US-Karabagh relations.

In addition to the testimony, the Assembly relayed a message of condolence for the recent attacks in Brussels. "The Armenian Assembly stands in solidarity with the people of Belgium and expresses its deepest sympathies to the victims and families of the latest terrorist attacks, which serves as a painful reminder of all those lost in other senseless acts of terror," Ardouny stated.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School Celebrates 30th Anniversary

WATERTOWN – A crowd of about 450 friends and supporters of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) gathered on March 12 at the Sorenson Center for the Arts at Babson College in Wellesley to celebrate the school's 30th anniversary. The celebration, presided over by Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Prelate of Eastern United States, raised approximately \$150,000 to support the school's endowment fund.

The outpouring of love and support expressed for the school was a testament to the role that this educational institution holds in the Armenian community of Greater Boston.

The anniversary celebration started with a cocktail reception which gave parents, alumni and friends the opportunity to mingle and reconnect. Then, the attendees were invited into the auditorium where the program was



Tamar Kanarian

introduced by master of ceremonies and SSAES Alum Tamar Kanarian (Class of 1994), who welcomed everyone and reflected on her own journey at the school.

The program began with an invocation by Cholyan, followed by a touching testimonial from Alum Ani Nalbandian Attamian (Class of 1992), who had flown from London for the occasion.

In her remarks, the school's principal of 28 years, Houry Boyamian, paid tribute to the school founders, to past and present mem-

bers of the school board and committees, the St. Stephen's Church pastor, Rev. Antranig Baljian and its Board of Trustees, as well as, to the administrative and teaching staff. She thanked the 30th Anniversary Committee, headed by Sarkis Ourfalian, for their work to make this a memorable event. She also expressed her gratitude to the local Armenian organizations, as well as, to past and present donors and benefactors of the school for their generosity and continued support.

In her speech, Boyamian noted, "From the

with her warmth, her distinctive accents and her emotionally-charged songs. Pianist Jasmine Atabekyan accompanied her and won the audience's acclaim after performing a breathtaking rendition of Khachaturian's Sabre Dance.

The event concluded with a lavish dessert reception.

St. Stephen's is the only Armenian day school to be fully accredited by the Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE), the accrediting body for independent elementary schools. The



Principal Houry Boyamian



Some of the members of the organizing committee

early days of the School, we were aware of the challenge facing us. In a region that is home to some of the best educational institutions in the nation, an Armenian school would have to offer an excellent education in order to thrive and meet the demands of a modern American society, all the while preserving and maintaining our Armenian culture and heritage.

"Over the past 30 years, we have succeeded in rising to the challenge, by providing a competitive educational curriculum with a strong foundation in Armenian language and culture, and by instilling a deep sense of identity into hundreds of Armenian American students."

Boyamian concluded by saying, "We have reached our 30th anniversary together and together, with your faith, your commitment and your support we shall continue our journey ahead, to a future that is brimming with promise and potential. So tonight, I invite you all to join me in ensuring a bright future for many more generations of proud Armenians to come".

Following the principal's address, Ourfalian took the stage to recognize major donors and contributors to the event. "You are all part of the SSAES family and each one of you holds the key to its future," he said.

The second part of the program featured singer Alla Levonyan from Armenia who transported the guests back to the homeland



St. Stephen's graduates with Principal Boyamian

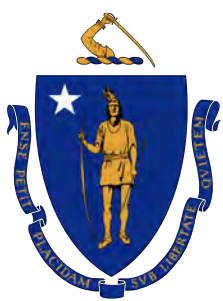
school's accreditation in 2003 by the Association of Independent Schools in New England confirmed that the School holds itself to high standards and is in compliance with the best practices of AISNE's accreditation protocols.

To learn more about SSAES, visit www.ssaes.org.



Houry Boyamian with several members of the Mardiros family

Commemorate the 101st Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at the Massachusetts State House



starts at 10:30 am

12 noon reception in the Great Hall

With a proclamation from the Governor of Massachusetts
Prominent keynote speaker
Massachusetts officials
Joint Senate/House Resolution recipients
And musical program

April 22, 2016

Details forthcoming.

Organized by the State House Armenian Genocide Commemoration Committee, Boston



COMMUNITY NEWS



All those gathered, including President Serge Sargisian, posed for a group picture.



President Sargisian Arrives in Boston

VISIT, from page 1

The president arrived to applause from those assembled, including several members of the Knights of Vartan, members of the ADL from the United States and Canada, and their families, as well as several other activists.

Representing the ADL were Ara Balian of Montreal, Dr. Nubar Berberian of Waltham, Mass., Dr. Arshavir Gundjian from Montreal, Kevork Marashlian of Washington, D.C., Vartan Nazerian of Los Angeles, Apet Torosian of Cambridge, Mass. And Hagop Vartivarian from New Jersey,

After the president and his entourage were seated, Gundjian kicked off the welcome, toasting the president and telling him about the ADL and its partisans in the US and Canada, as well as about the history of the party's press in

their efforts. He also stressed that Armenia needs the diaspora and the diaspora, as well, needs Armenia.

Finally, Sargisian, rising, accepted a gift presented to him by TCA Executive Director Aram Arkun and Armenian Mirror-Spectator Editor Alin Gregorian, a theological book published in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1864. In return, he gave a recording released by the Komitas Museum in Armenia, as well as engraved medals.

Toasts were made with traditional Armenian Dvin brandy, prompting the president to joke that "it was just like Armenia."

That same night, he made visits to several other local Armenian institutions, including St. Stephen's Armenian Church in Watertown, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, in Cambridge, as well as the Armenian



Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, President Serge Sargisian and Archbishop Khajag Barsamian



Hagop Vartivarian and Serge Sargisian



A group picture at the Baikar building, with the president, staff, dignitaries and guests

the US and Canada.

Marashlian then spoke about the *Mirror-Spectator* as well as the cultural activities of Tekeyan. He also presented Donald Tellalian, the architect of the Armenian Heritage Park, including its abstract sculpture, which President Sargisian was scheduled to visit the following day.

Vartivarian spoke about the heritage of the ADL in the US and its continued efforts in planting the seeds of the Armenian spirit among the youth, throughout its history. He said the ADL was the pioneer in the US in efforts for creating structures that would allow the perpetuation of Armenian identity and culture aboard, as well as to pursue the just cause of the Armenians.

Sargisian thanked those assembled and expressed his respect for all the traditional Armenian political parties and

Museum of America and the Hairenik Building, both in Watertown.

During his visit, the president is visiting several local offices and parties, including the State House, where he is due to meet with Gov. Charlie Baker, and the Armenian Heritage Park, as well as a talk and meeting at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard.

Aram Arkun said, "I am very grateful for the support provided by Apet Torosian in facilitating the reception at the Baikar building."

(All photos, with three exceptions, are by Jirair Hovsepian. Text is by Alin K. Gregorian. Further coverage of the president's various stops will be in next week's paper.)



From left, Kevork Marashlian, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, Vartan Nazerian, Ara Balian, Dr. Nubar Berberian and Hagop Vartivarian



COMMUNITY NEWS



Hagop Vartivarian and Hranush Hakobyan



From left, Vartan Nazerian, Dr. Nubar Berberian, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, President Serge Sargisian, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan and Chief of Staff Vigen Sargsyan



Several young persons were present during the president's visit to the Baikar Building.



From left, Dr. Nubar Berberian, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian and President Serge Sargisian



Mirror-Spectator Editor Alin K. Gregorian and Aram Arkun at the program



Dr. Arshavir Gundjian proposing a toast to President Serge Sargisian



Hagop Vartivarian



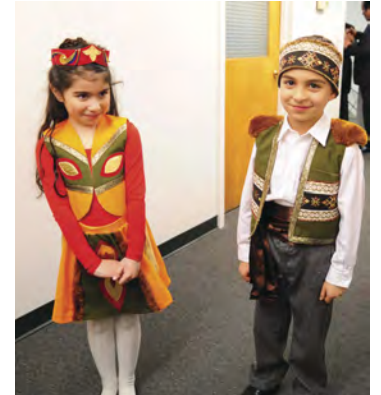
Members of the Knights of Vartan were present, from left, Aram Belorian, Sarkis Antreassian, at center Antranik Mardiros, and at right Nelson Stepanian



Kevork Marashlian and Hagop Vartivarian



Apet Torosian at left



Patil Mardiros and Raffi Arkun



President Serge Sargisian at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge



President Serge Sargisian with Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan and Fr. Antranik Baljian at St. Stephen's Armenian Church.



President Serge Sargisian at the Armenian Museum of America

Arts & Living

Arzruni Concert on April 5 to Benefit Old Age Home in Vanadzor, Armenia

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – A special benefit concert by acclaimed pianist Sahar Arzruni to benefit the Vanadzor Old Age Home in Armenia, will take place on Tuesday, April 5, at Merkin Concert Hall, starting at 7:30 p.m. The Home located in Armenia's third largest city, Vanadzor has been established in 2001 by the Kevork and Sirvart Karamanuk Charitable Fund, and is administered by the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR).

Arzruni explained that some 60 residents live in the home which has a staff of 27, including full-time nurses and a doctor. In addition, every Saturday, the home sees to the feeding, bathing and clean clothes for about 30 homeless persons.

To make the Old Age Home more visible, several times a year, young people visit and interact with the residents, cleaning and playing chess, tavloo and other games. In addition, the residents partake of other activities, including fishing, and tending an organic vegetable garden and bee hives which provide delicious greens and honey to their palatable meals.

Though the Karamanuk Charitable Fund has been the backbone of the home, more funds are needed to continue its quality of care. In light of this, the pianist has been performing major benefit concerts during the past few months at the Armenian Embassy in Washington, DC, as well as in Boca Raton and Philadelphia, with all five Armenian churches joining together.

On April 5, at Merkin Hall, the concert will feature New York and world premieres, as well as several works by Armenian composers, Komitas, Alan Hovhaness and Aram Khachaturian.

An extraordinary surprise will be 11-year old violinist Simon Hagopian, whom Arzruni describes as a "wunderkind" with whom he has worked. They will present Khachaturian's Chant-Poeme, written in honor of Armenia's troubadours.

Also performing will be accomplished percussionist Adam Rosenblatt who goes to Armenia every year, and works with FAR. He will perform with Arzruni, the New York premiere of Alan Hovhaness' Invocations to Vahagn, five pieces for percussion and piano, "dedicated to the god of fire in Armenian mythology." Arzruni will also present the New York premiere of Hovhaness' complete Yenovk cycle, composed in homage of Armenian singer Yenovk der Hagopian who introduced Hovhaness to Armenian music.

Hovhaness was a disciple of Komitas during his 1940s Armenian period, Arzruni explains. "He has internalized Komitas' music, and has created an aesthetic approach which is very close to Komitas. Hovhaness' pieces are as spare as those of Komitas. They happen. One can imagine the piece going in various directions. It's not framed, but instead, left to one's imagination."

Also on the program is Kara-Mourza's Potpourri, a collection of Armenian urban folk songs, which was published in 1872 in Tbilisi where the composer primarily worked. "Kara-Mourza expertly weaves into the melody Armenia's national anthem, Mer Hayrenik, ascribed to Parsegh Ganachian, but clearly, Kara-Mourza used it much earlier," notes Arzruni, and points out that he was the first composer to write for piano from Eastern Armenia, and the first conductor to bring female and male singers together in a chorus.

Also on the program will be Khachaturian's complete cycle of Recitatives and Fugues, which will receive its world premiere by the pianist. "The Fugues were written as student pieces at the Moscow Conservatory in 1928 see CONCERT, page 11



From left, Tom Vartabedian and E. Philip Brown

Book Talk on Merrimack Valley at Armenian Museum

WATERTOWN – The Armenian Museum of America will present a book-signing and presentation by Haverhill authors E. Philip Brown and Tom Vartabedian on their new book titled *The Armenians of the Merrimack Valley*. The presentation will include images of Armenians covering four generations of life along the North Shore of Boston, specifically Merrimack Valley where Armenian immigrants settled prior to the 19th century.

The book, published by Arcadia, details life in eight specific areas including business, culture, education, today's youth, military, athletics, church and community and immigrant life.

"When one thinks of the Merrimack Valley, shoe shops and mills come to mind," said Vartabedian. "For that reason, it was a hotbed for Armenian refugees following World War I. This could be any community that opened its doors to the Promised Land. Through it all came a population that remained tenacious to the overall success of America."

The program is being co-sponsored by Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives and takes place Saturday, April 2, beginning at 2 p.m. at 65 Main St., followed by light refreshments. It is free and open to the public.

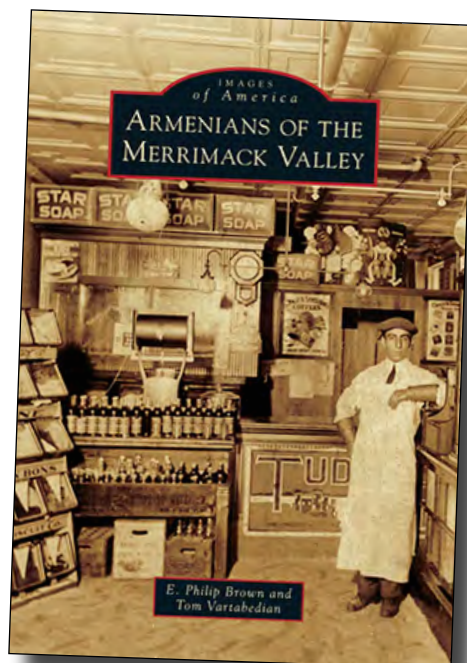
Brown is currently a social studies teacher at Haverhill High School and teaches World History in Haverhill. He received his BA in Political Science at the University of Massachusetts, a MS in Applied Management at Lesley University and an MA in Public History through American Public University. He is a member of the Haverhill Historical Commission and author of two other books on local history.

He was moved by Armenian genocidal history and collaborated with Vartabedian for a thesis.

"Despite the genocide, Armenians have contributed immensely to world civilization," said Brown. "Greater Merrimack Valley has shared in that success with many fine accomplishments."

Vartabedian is a veteran reporter and photographer, having spent 50 years with the *Haverhill Gazette*, winning numerous awards from United Press International, Associated Press and New England Press Association. He has been a columnist with the *Armenian Weekly* since 1970 and has served the past seven years on the Project SAVE Board of Directors. Over the past decade, he has provided educational discussions throughout the schools of Massachusetts as a member of the Armenian Genocide Education Committee of Merrimack Valley.

Inscribed and autographed books will be available that day or by writing Vartabedian at: tommyvart@aol.com.



Bergen Community College Hosts Staged Reading of 'Women of Ararat'

By Ruth Bedevian

PARAMUS, N.J. – From the Republic of Armenia, to several venues in New England, including part of the New Play Series at Wellesley College (2014-15 Season), "Women of Ararat" now comes to New Jersey. Bergen Community College will sponsor a staged reading of the play on Friday, April 22 at 7 p.m.

Judith Boyajian, playwright, draws upon the experiences of her grandmothers who witnessed the atrocities of the Armenian Genocide.

One hundred years ago, the Genocide riveted the American public. News of the atrocities flooded the mainstream media in Europe and America and evoked a great outpouring of humanitarian aid. As decades ensued, the persistent denial of the Genocide by the Turkish government created an even greater wound among Armenians worldwide who had survived in various safe havens abroad, including the US.

Boyajian states, "Because the script emphasizes the voices and experiences of women who experienced both violence and loss, including its effects on subsequent generations – it offers an excellent vehicle for inter-generational community discussions... And because it focuses on a love story between a young Armenian woman and a young Turkish man (both musicians) who each discover important facts about their respective pasts, the play reinforces a message of hope about Armenians and Turks working together to challenge Armenian Genocide denial..."

"Women of Ararat" illuminates the ways in which the descendants of the perpetrators reconcile their innocence with the acts of their ancestors. In recent years Turkish scholars, historians, editors, journalists, film makers, activists have discovered their own nation's secreted past and have come forth with books, articles, statements researching and documenting the Ottoman government's premeditated and thoroughly executed act of genocide. According to Koray Caliskan, a professor at Bogazici University in Istanbul, whose elementary and secondary education made no mention of the massacres said that it was only during his university years that he discovered "curious tensions about what happened in our historical past." He referred to this issue as "the unbearable silence."

The office of Peace Justice and Reconciliation (PJR) of Bergen Community College was founded in 2009 with a mission to "examine issues of war, genocide and social justice, and to develop skills in conflict resolution through interdisciplinary study." It has embraced the message of "Women of Ararat" and encourages the public to attend.

Bunny Mateosian, director, is a 30-year member of the Bergen County Players of Oradell, NJ. She is an actress, director, costume designer. The college offers refreshment during intermission.

Admission is free and RSVP is necessary to Tom LaPointe at 201-493-8977 since open seating is limited. Parking is ample in LOT B of the college campus located at 400 Paramus Road. Curtain opens at 7 p.m. in Room A-104, Pitkin Education Center. Early arrival strongly advised.



Judith Boyajian



ARTS & LIVING

'Evening of Laughter' by Actors of TCA

After celebrating the centenary of the Armenian Genocide the actors of the Tekeyan Cultural Association Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group have recently created "An Evening of Comedy" initiating an atmosphere of smile and laughter on the faces of the members and the theater loving Armenian community.

In the past such evenings were performed by individual efforts but this one was a work by a group of 8 actors. Thru Harout Barsoumian's vision and creation this affair introduced a novelty into the life of our community's cultural life. With the participation of Harout Chatmajian, Harout Barsoumian, Roy Bahian, Talin Bahian, Talar Zokian, Armenag Kroushian, Khachig Sariminassian and Shmavon Atamian the group presented funny situations from the social lives of our community.

Presentations of this sort have always been offered in the city of New York with a great popularity. However in this case what was striking was the usage of the Armenian language at its high level of propriety and cleanliness yet generating a lot of smile and laughter.

A short movie was shown with an interesting story of which all the technical work was prepared by Harout Barsoumian.

All the organizational work for this project was performed by Harout Chatmajian (the new chairman of the Theatrical Group) Marie



The actors take a bow, with Harout Chatmajian at right

Zokian, Ani Chatmajian and Hratch Zokian.

On February 20 the Tekeyan Center at Englewood Cliffs in New Jersey was fully occupied with lovers of theater. Due to the popularity of the program it was repeated on February 21 and March 19 with additional future engagements to be declared shortly. There are invitations for the group from other cities in the country.

At the end of the Evening Harout Chatmajian presented the members of the group individually and their talents. He spoke about future plans of the theater group.

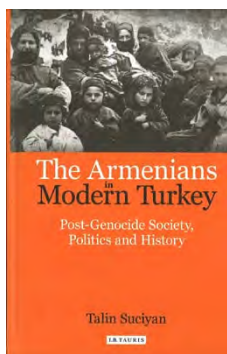
The group is also informing everyone that the TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group will travel to Armenia on April 8 for stage presentations in Yerevan and Gumri, of Berj Zeytountzian's theatrical work "All Rise...The Court Is In Session."

— Hagop Vartivarian



The audience

THE ARMENIANS IN MODERN TURKEY



A DISCUSSION WITH DR. TALIN SUCIYAN

After 1915, Armenians lived and worked in the Turkish state alongside those who had persecuted their communities. Living in the midst of pervasive denial, how did those remaining in Anatolia and Istanbul record their history and cope with subsequent discrimination?

Talin Suciyan explores the life experienced by these communities. Special emphasis is given to the period between 1944 and 1950 and the crisis that surrounded the patriarchal election.

The Armenians in Modern Turkey examines remarkable new primary material: Turkish state archives, minutes of the Armenian National Assembly, a kaleidoscope of personal diaries, memoirs and oral histories, various newspapers, yearbooks and magazines, as well as statutes and laws which led to continuing persecution.

Join us and meet author **Talin Suciyan** from Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich where she is currently an assistant professor at the **Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies**.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2016 @ 7:45 P.M.

St. Leon Armenian Church/Charles & Grace Pinajian Youth Center
12-61 Saddle River Road, Fair Lawn, NJ / For information call 201-791-2862

This event is **jointly sponsored by**

AGBU Ararat, Armenian Network of America- Greater NY,
Constantinople Armenian Relief Society (C.A.R.S.), Daughters of Vartan Sahaganoush Otyag of NJ,
Esayan-Getronagan Alumni Inc., Knights of Vartan Bakradouny Lodge of NJ,
National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR),
St. Leon Armenian Church, Tekeyan Cultural Association

THE EVENT IS FREE. A RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW THE DISCUSSION AND BOOK SIGNING.

Arzruni to Benefit Old Age Home in Armenia

CONCERT, from page 10

and then the composer added the Recitatives in 1968," Arzruni revealed. Komitas' rarely performed Moushi Shoror, and Babajanian's soul-searing Elegy are also on the musical menu.

Arzruni is a concert pianist, composer, eth-

nic Sts. Sahak and Mesrob Medallion from the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin I. This year he received the Presidential "Moses Khorenatsi" Medal. On the occasion of the Aram Khachaturian Centennial in 2003, he was appointed the "representative" of Armenia's Ministry of Culture in the diaspora. A well-



Sahan Arzruni

nomusicologist, producer and teacher. He has given command performances at the White House, at the British, Danish, and Icelandic courts, has performed with the famed Victor Borge, and has been featured in many television and radio broadcasts.

In 1996, he received an encyclical and the

known Komitas specialist, Arzruni in 2008, was also awarded the Komitas Conservatory's "Honored Professor" title by Armenia's Ministry of Culture.

For tickets to the April 5 concert at Merkin Hall, readers should call the Merkin Concert Hall Box Office.



LIKE US ON FACBOOK

SR Socially Relevant Film Festival New York 2016 Announces Winners

NEW YORK – SR Socially Relevant Film Festival New York wrapped its third edition with an elegant award ceremony and celebration at the Tenri Cultural Institute in New York's Village last night in the presence of the filmmakers, jury members, partners and sponsors of the festival, the SR Socially Relevant Film Festival's team, and volunteers.

Festival Founding Artistic Director Nora Armani thanked the filmmakers present and her team, mentioning them as the two most important pillars without which the festival could not take place. She then proceeded to thank the sponsors and partners of the festival who had come onboard since the beginning as well as the most recent additions. Hospitality sponsors of the evening were Bocca East/Vella NYC, Fair Vodka, Baum's Sho cakes, and Le Grand Triage Wines.

The awards were handed by the jury members present and the awardees were presented with the Sona Vessel, designed and created by New York-based designer Michael Aram, symbolizing storytelling.

Armani mentioned in her opening speech that the fact of being here and being selected in the festival meant that all the filmmakers and their films were winners. She then proceeded with calling out the award categories, and inviting the jury member or guest invited to present in the particular category.

Below is the list of the award categories, and the awarded films and directors.

- The Vanya Exerjian: Empowering Women

and Girls Award in memory of Founding Artistic Director Nora Armani's cousin and uncle, victims of a hate crime was presented by Ruchira Gupta of Apne Aap, together with Armani and it went to: Myriam Zaki for her work in "Who Killed the Armenians?" directed by Mohamend Hanafy (Egypt)

- The Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature Award went to: "Before the Spring" directed by Ahmed Atef (Egypt). The award was presented by narrative feature category jury member Claus Mueller

- The Grand Prize for Best Documentary Feature Award went to: "Beneath the Olive Tree" directed by Stavroula Toska (USA/ Greece)

- In the Best Narrative Short category the Award went to "Eclipse" directed by Ara Yernjakyan and "My Beautiful White Skin" directed by Stuart Gatt (UK).

- The Best Documentary Short Award went to "One if by Land" directed by Nandini Sikand (USA)

- The Best Script Award went to "A Mother's Legacy" by Cilla Lowen (South Africa)

- The SR Film Festival's Humanitarian Award went to "Sail the Wind" directed by Christine Knowlton (USA) and to "Vision: Healing the Blind in Ethiopia" directed by Eric Perlman

- The SR Film Festival's Activism Award went to "Caged No More" directed by Lisa Arnold

- The SR Film Festival's Audience Award went to "Who Killed the Armenians?" directed by Mohamed Hanafy

Holy Trinity Armenian Church's Erevan Choral Society to Present Concert on April 17

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – In commemoration of the Sainted Martyrs of 1915, and dedicated to Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian of blessed memory, the Erevan Choral Society of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church will present a Concert on Sunday, April 17, at 2:30 p.m., in the church sanctuary at 145 Brattle St.

Under the direction of Konstantin Petrossian, music director and conductor, the Erevan Choral Society will present a befitting program that will include Armenian memorial, folk and patriotic songs.

Guest soloists will be David Ayriyan, kamancha, and mezzo-soprano Gohar Manjelijian, with Nune Hakobyan on the organ and piano. Ayriyan is one of Armenia's greatest musicians, a living legend, and a virtuoso kamancha performer. The kamancha is an ancient stringed musical instrument of Armenia. David entered Baku Conservatory where he studied this unique instrument. He has won Gold Medals in many worldwide competitions, including one in Moscow, Russia (1957), and he has toured Europe, Asia, US and Canada. In 1991, David and his family moved to the United States, where he has expanded his repertoire and is able to meet new requests and exploit the full range of the kamancha. Mezzo-Soprano Gohar Manjelijian is an Armenian artist now living in the United States. She began her singing career in Armenia, in 1981, when she was accepted as a member of the State Academic Chorus. She graduated from the Komitas State Conservatory

of Yerevan. Since her arrival in the United States, Gohar has sung in many Armenian and American churches. Her extensive repertoire includes a wide range of European, Russian and Armenian operas as well as classical, romantic and sacred music. "How Great Thou Art" is Gohar's first CD with sacred Armenian songs. Also included in the program will be recitations of inspirational poems by students of Holy Trinity's Armenian School.

"It is extremely fitting," states Fr. Vasken Kouzouian, pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, "to be dedicating this concert in memory of His Eminence Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian, who was an avid and long-time supporter of the Erevan Choral Society and attended as many of the concerts as he was able."

Gizirian served as pastor at Holy Trinity Armenian Church from 1974 to 1976; he was the former Primate of the United Kingdom; long-serving pastor among churches of the Eastern Diocese; and he was the eldest clergyman of episcopal rank in the Armenian Church.

"We invite the Armenian and non-Armenian community to join us on Sunday, April 17," Kouzouian added, "as we commemorate through music and poem, the Sainted Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide and fondly remember Yeghishe Srpazan."

The concert is a gift to the community, but those interested in supporting the Erevan Choral Society may make contributions to Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

with Ardziv, an eagle, describing the young sibling's escape.

Dana Walrath is the granddaughter of survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. She earned a PhD in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania, an MFA in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts, and a BA from Barnard College, Columbia University. She completed *Like Water on Stone* (Delacorte/Random House, 2014), her first novel, during the year she spent as a Fulbright Scholar in Armenia working on a project that builds on her award-winning graphic memoir series *Aliceheimer's* (Penn State Press, 2016). When not in the mountains of Armenia, she lives in the mountains of Vermont where she is on faculty at the University of Vermont's College of Medicine.

Dana Walrath to Speak on Latest Book at Fresno

FRESNO – Anthropologist, Artist, and Award-winning author Dr. Dana Walrath will speak on her latest book, *Like Water on Stone* (Delacorte/Random House, 2014), on April 6, at 7 p.m. at the Armenian Museum of Fresno, housed at University of California Center, 550 East Shaw Ave.

Walrath will also share excerpts from Yerevan's Tumo Center's animation of her book.

Like Water on Stone is a novel in verse about the Armenian Genocide of 1915. This absorbing novel tells the story of three siblings who flee into the mountains, hiding by day and running by night when Ottoman pashas implement their plans to eliminate all Armenians. Lyrical language and musical threads wrap the description of the Armenian genocide in a note of magical realism



Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Stuffed Roma Tomatoes with Three Cheeses

Christine Vartanian Datian shares with us her recipe for "Stuffed Roma Tomatoes with Three Cheeses" which was originally published in the Las Vegas Review Journal on December 9, 2014.

INGREDIENTS

12 large Roma tomatoes
1 medium red or white onion, finely minced
2-3 cloves garlic, finely minced
Olive oil
1/2 pound lean ground beef or lamb
1/4 cup Italian flat-leaf parsley, finely minced
1/4 cup medium-sized bulgur (found in Middle Eastern markets)
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon each dried basil, dried thyme, sea salt and chopped lemon zest
1/2 teaspoon each black pepper, red pepper flakes, and paprika or Aleppo pepper
Dash of cinnamon
3/4 cup crumbled Feta and Kasseri cheese, combined
Fresh chopped mint or dried mint for garnish

Marinara or tomato sauce
Parmesan cheese
Juice of one lemon

PREPARATION:

Wash the tomatoes, cut in half lengthwise, scoop out and reserve pulp and discard seeds. Chop reserved pulp and set aside.

Sauté the onions with the garlic in a few tablespoons of olive oil until the onions are translucent. Add the beef or lamb and brown the meat for a few minutes; drain.

Add the parsley, bulgur, tomato paste, spices, and tomato pulp, and heat through, stirring, for 5-10 minutes or until bubbly. Remove from heat and stir in the Feta and Kasseri cheeses, to taste. Let mixture cool for 5-8 minutes.

Using a tablespoon, spoon some meat mixture into each tomato shell. Place stuffed shells on a cookie sheet or in a large greased casserole dish. Top each tomato with a tablespoon or two of marinara or tomato sauce and bake, uncovered, in a preheated 350-degree oven for 30-35 minutes or until heated through and sauce is bubbly. (Check occasionally and spoon more sauce over tomatoes as they are cooking, if desired.)

Remove from oven, top tomatoes with a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese and some mint, and drizzle with lemon juice and olive oil. Place on a serving platter with a bowl of marinara sauce and small slices of garlic cheese toast. Serve hot or cold.

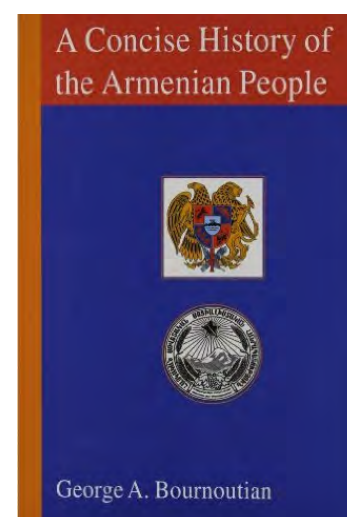
Serves 4-6.

Christine's recipes have been published in the Fresno Bee, Sunset and Cooking Light Magazines, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>. For Christine's recipes that have been published in Sunset and Cooking Light Magazines, go to: <http://www.myrecipes.com/search/site/Datian>

Japanese Translation of Bournoutian Book Published by Fujiwara-Shoten

NEW YORK – A Japanese translation of George Bournoutian's *A Concise History of the Armenian People* (Aruménia-jin no Rekishi) has been published. The book, in hardcover, is 528 pages, published by Fujiwara-Shoten. It is available on Amazon-Japan.

The translators are professors



Shohei Komaki and Daisaku Watanabe.

Several years ago, while in Tokyo to present two lectures at the invitation of Sophia University, Bournoutian signed a contract with the Fujiwara-Shoten Publishing House to publish the Japanese translation of his book.

A Concise History of the Armenian People, currently in its sixth edition, has sold more than 20,000 copies and is used in many institutions of higher education in the US.

It has been translated into Spanish, Turkish, Arabic, Armenian and Russian.

A Persian translation is expected soon.



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CONNECTICUT

APRIL 23, 2016 Annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration. Connecticut State Capitol; Flag Raising at 11:00 a.m.; Commemoration in the House Chambers at 11:30 a.m. Keynote Speaker, Shant Mardirossian, Chairman Emeritus, Near East Foundation.

MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 13-MAY 21 — Book Tour Schedule for Armenians of the Merrimack Valley. Authors E. Philip Brown and Tom Vartabedian are embarking on a presentation tour and book signing of their new book.

• **April 2:** Armenian Museum of America (ALMA), 2 pm, 65 Main St., Watertown, sponsored by ProjectSAVE

• **April 7:** Avak luncheon, St. Gregory Church, 158 Main St., North Andover, noon

• **May 21:** Vermette's Market, 6 Pond St., Amesbury, 10-2, book-signing only

APRIL 2 — Swing into Spring Dinner-Dance. Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, Chelmsford, Kazanjian Ballroom, 180 Old Westford Rd. Chelmsford. Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by non-stop Armenian and Middle East music by the Jason Naroian Ensemble featuring Jason Naroian, dumbeg and vocals; Brian Anisbigian, oud; Ara Jeknavorian, clarinet; and Dave Anisbigian, guitar. Paid in advance tickets (received by March 27) are \$25 for adults, \$10 for children (6-12), and 5 & under, free. At-the-door, \$35 for adults and \$15 for children. For reservations, please contact Maria at ria.tk@verizon.net (617-240-3686).

APRIL 2 — Back by popular demand — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston (SNDC) proudly presents the return of renowned entertainer/comedian/ pianist **Kev Orkian** to Boston, with his brand new show "Little Fingers." Saturday, 8 p.m. (doors open at 7:30) in Shaw Auditorium, Watertown High School, 50 Columbia St., Watertown. Reserved seating only. Tickets are available by 617-852-1816. VIP tickets (limited amount available) are \$65 and include reserved priority seating and pre-show private reception with Kev. General show tickets are \$50, includes reserved seating. Visit www.sayatnova.com for the seating chart and see attached flyer for more details.

APRIL 4 — St. James Men's Club, Monday, featuring as speaker former CVS Health Vice President for customer service Mark Kolligian, whose topic will be "Healthcare in the 21st Century." Losh Kebab and Kheyra Dinner. Social Hour 6:15 p.m., Dinner 7 p.m. \$15 per person. St. James Armenian Church, Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown. Ladies are welcome.

APRIL 7 — Book Event: Reclaiming Konia: A Tale of Love, Loss and the Armenian Genocide by Heather Martin book talk and signing, 7:30 p.m., Adele & Haig Der Manuelian Galleries (3rd Floor). Heather Martin will speak about the development of the book, reading her favorite passages, and signing copies. The event is free and open to the public and light refreshments will be served at the reception.

APRIL 9 — Sayat Nova Dance Company 30th anniversary Alumni Reunion. Saturday, 7:30 p.m. in Cambridge. Calling all SNDC Alumni and members for an evening of fun and surprises. Come eat, socialize, reminisce.... RSVP by March 20, at sndc_info@sayatnova.com or call 617-923-4455.

APRIL 9-10 — Two days of workshops, presentations, community and discovering your Armenian roots. This conference grew out of the Armenian Genealogy group (*Haygagan Dzakumnapanutyun*) on Facebook. Watertown. Cosponsored by National Association for Armenian Studies and Research; Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, Houshamadyan, Armenian Museum of America, Tekeyan Cultural Association, and Hamazkayin-Boston. Various times, Watertown area. To register, visit <http://www.armeniangenealogyconference.com/registration/>

APRIL 15 — "Conversing with My Sister." Salpi Ghazarian, director of the Institute of Armenian Studies at the University of Southern California, interviews her sister, author Maral Boyadjian, on Maral's book, *As the Poppies Bloomed*, a family history. 7 p.m. Reception, 8 p.m. At the Armenian Cultural Foundation in Arlington. Sponsored by the Armenian Cultural Foundation, Armenian International Women's Association, and Amaras Art Alliance. Free and open to the public

APRIL 16 — Sainly Women's Day for the Parishes of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, hosted by Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. This year, we honor Saint Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Asdvadzadzin), Queen of Heaven. 10:15 a.m., Welcome & Coffee; 11 a.m., Church Service; 12:00 p.m., Lunch and Program. Guest Speaker: Sr. Bridget Haase, OSU. Donation: \$35 per person with RSVP deadline of April 11. Reservations should be made through each parish's Women's Guild/Church group. For further information or to make individual reservations, please contact Cathy Minassian atcminassian@hotmail.com, or call 617.947.1795.

APRIL 16 — Centennial Commemoration of the 1916 Consecration of the Sts. Vartanantz Church, Lowell. Worship Service and Program at the original Sts. Vartanantz Church, 60 Lawrence St., Lowell. Outdoor architectural tour of the original Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church at 60 Lawrence St., Lowell, starting at 5:30 p.m. followed by a prayer service and narrated slide presentation on the formation and early life of the parish at 6:00 p.m. The church is handicap accessible. Reception to follow. Complimentary admission. For further information, please call 978-256-7234, or email office@stsvartanantz.com.

APRIL 17, 2016 — Erevan Choral Society Concert, "In Commemoration of Our Sainted Martyrs of 1915 and Dedicated to His Eminence Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian of blessed memory." Sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 2:30 p.m., Church Sanctuary, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. The Concert is under the direction of Composer Konstantin Petrossian, Music Director and Conductor. Guest Soloists are David Ayriyan, Kamancha, and Gohar Manjelijian, Mezzo Soprano, with Nune Hakobyan on the organ and piano. We invite the Armenian and non-Armenian community to join us as we commemorate through music and poem the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide and remember Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian of blessed memory. The concert is a gift to the community.

APRIL 22 — The annual commemoration of the Armenian Genocide at the Massachusetts State House. Friday, 10.30 a.m., State House Chamber, Catered Reception at 12 noon in the Great Hall.

APRIL 23 — Procession and flag raising for 101st anniversary of Armenian Genocide at Lowell City Hall, 10 a.m., followed by a reception and cultural program by area schoolchildren at nearby Masonic Center. Sponsored by the Armenian National Committee of Merrimack Valley & Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee of Merrimack Valley. For the march, gather at corner of Merrimack & John Streets at 9:30 a.m.

APRIL 30 — Armenian / American Dance, Saturday, 7 p.m. — 12 a.m., 1 Market Street, Lawrence, Complimentary Coffee & Dessert, Cash Bar, 50/50 Raffle, Armenian music provided by Jason Naroian Ensemble, American music provided by DJ Kory Sirmaian. Tickets: \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door. Melanee Naroian:(978) 683-0613, Lucy Sirmaian: (978) 683-9121. Sponsored by The Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Women's Guild.

MAY 5 — "Can Feminists Revive a Nation? Afterlife of Armenians in Post-Genocide Turkey." Reception and illustrated talk with MIT Professor Lerna Ekmekcioglu on her new book, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey.* 7:30 p.m. Armenian Museum of America, Watertown. Co-sponsored by the Armenian International Women's Association, National Association for Armenian Studies & Research, and Armenian Museum of America. Info: 617-926-0171 or info@aivainternational.org; 617-489-1610 orhq@naasr.org.

MAY 7 — The Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe in Haverhill will have a one-day food festival on Saturday at the church hall. 12:00 to 7:00 p.m. Armenian Pride Food Festival. Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Hall, 110 Main St., Haverhill. Meal Choice of One: Losh/Chicken/Kheyra, with pilaf, salad, and hot/cold garnish Additional children's meal of hot dog & chips: also available will be pastry, choerig, Armenian cheese, and cold drinks.

MAY 7 — Experience Public Art! during ArtWeek Boston. Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway, Boston. At 1 p.m. - World Labyrinth Day: Walk As One At 1 Together with people in cities and towns worldwide, walk the labyrinth at 1pm joining this annual international initiative of The Labyrinth Society in collaboration with the Labyrinth Guild of New England and Friends of Armenian Heritage Park. For first-time

walkers at 12:45pm, an Introduction to walking a labyrinth with Chiara Megighian Zenati, Certified Labyrinth Facilitator. At 1:30 pm - Reception to View The 2016 Configuration of the Abstract Sculpture Welcome: Nanore Barsoumian, Editor, *Armenian Weekly*; Public Art: Lucas Cowan, Public Art Curator, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy; Personal Perspective: Alin Gregorian, Editor, *Armenian Mirror Spectator*; Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and Eastern Lamejun Bakers. All are invited.

MAY 12 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston Presents the Dr. Michael and Joyce Kolligian Distinguished Speaker Series, with John Prendergast, "Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity: Lessons Learned and Hope for the Future." 7 p.m., Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. John is founder of "The Enough Project," an initiative to end genocide and crimes against humanity and co-founder of "The Sentry," a new investigative initiative focused on dismantling the networks financial conflict and atrocities. Reception and book signing to follow talk. Open and free to the public. For further information, contact the Church Office, 617.354.0632.

MAY 14 — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston continues its 30th anniversary celebrations with a night of song and dance with beloved singer Arabo Ispiryian, direct from Armenia. Don't miss out on this night of pure Armenian entertainment. Come and celebrate with us as we sing and dance all night with Arabo. Generous appetizers (mezze) will be provided. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. To be held at St. James Armenian Church, Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mt, Auburn Street, Watertown. Tickets are available by calling Apo at 339-222-2410 or Hagop at 617-780-6295. VIP table seating at \$100/person (includes 1 free drink/person and a bottle of champagne for the table); Premium table seating at \$75/person (includes a bottle of champagne for the table); General seating: \$65. Please reserve your tickets early.

MAY 18 — Chefs Party for Our Park! Benefit for Armenian Heritage Park's Ongoing Care Royal Sonesta Hotel Boston, Cambridge. Celebrate with Boston's Top Chefs, presenting signature dishes inspired by parents, grandparents or mentors for you to taste while you mix, mingle and support a great cause. Advanced Reservations only. To be acknowledged in the Evening Thank You, please respond by May 6. To receive an invitation, please email your name and email address to info@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

ILLINOIS

APRIL 18 — Award-winning poet and critic Peter Balakian will give a Center for Advanced Study (CAS)/ MillerCommleure on "The Armenian Genocide, Poetry of Witness, and Postmemory" at the Spurlock Museum Auditorium at 4 p.m. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The event is free and open to the public and hosted by The Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies. Co-sponsored by: Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Department of English, Department of French and Italian, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Department of History, Department of Religion, European Union Center, Program in Comparative and World Literature, Program in Jewish Culture and Society, Spurlock Museum, The Future of Trauma and Memory Studies Reading Group.

NEW YORK

APRIL 5 — Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) presents Sahan Arzruni in Benefit Concert "Together for Armenia," Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. An evening of solo piano music to benefit the Vanadzor Old Age Home administered by FAR. Merkin Concert Hall - Kaufman Music Center, 129 West 67th Street, New York. Tickets \$35, will go on sale in February 2016. Please contact FAR for more info: noune@farusa.org or 212.889.5150.

RHODE ISLAND

APRIL 16 — Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence, Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, "Legacy of our Martyrs," Saturday at 7 p.m. Concert of Armenian Patriotic Songs Performed by the Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island, 70 Jefferson St., Providence. Fellowship- Egavian Hall, following concert



Mirror Spectator



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COMMENTARY

Jerusalem Patriarchate Up for Grabs

By Edmond Y. Azadian

In recent years, sexual scandals plaguing the Catholic Church in the US and elsewhere have become routine. These scandals dominate the headlines and have weakened the Catholic Church, which besides being a religious institution, is also a powerful political force. For instance, it was revealed recently that Pope Francis had played a major role in the US-Cuba rapprochement.

When there is such a powerful institution with awesome political clout, there certainly will be other forces offended or hurt by that clout and they will resort to any means at their disposal – in this case, the news media – to retaliate.

Having said that, the Catholic priests caught red-handed cannot be absolved as the courts have been handing down guilty verdicts in many cases, resulting in embarrassment and huge damages for the church and its coffers.

The issue of clergy celibacy is considered the root cause of those abuses while the Catholic Church obstinately remains attached to that anachronistic practice. The Catholic Church has gone through many reforms, and has still more to face, yet the issue of clergy celibacy is not on the agenda.

As we review the media coverage, more often than not, the Catholic Church seems to be singled out for exposure. Other denominations certainly experience similar problems, but we learn about them only casually or seldom.

When you don't have tangible facts at hand, you are on a very dangerous road to prove a conspiracy theory. But when you extrapolate the facts you may state with a certain confidence that there must be validity to such a conspiracy in operation and their motivation is a power struggle.

Warring factions always count on the weaknesses of the opponent to exploit and to score points or victory. And the Catholic Church – or its sinning clergy – has been exposing those weaknesses.

The above introduction was presented in order to outline the parameters of this multidimensional problem.

Now it seems that the scandal has come to knock on the doors of the Armenian Church. News has been circulating in Israeli and Armenian news outlets as well as social media about sexual abuse by Armenian clergy.

The scandal has many components. Armenians being part of the human race, they are also preconditioned to be afflicted by the vices of the rest of the humans. An element of primitive pride sometimes keeps us in the mode of self-denial. We think that there cannot be drug addiction among Armenians, nor domestic violence, nor prostitution, etc. In reality, all of the above are part and parcel of our social fabric. The issue remains how to identify them, find the root causes and face them realistically and how we treat them or deal with them prudently.

During the last week in February, an Israeli TV channel called Israel Today aired a 15-minute documentary titled "Demons of the Past," where an accuser, named Hrayr Yezegelian, is featured entering the Armenian Monastery of St. James in Jerusalem to face Fr. Khat Jundurian, who allegedly had abused him sexually at age 13 when he was a seminary student.

Viewing the video clip circulating on Facebook, it seems it is carefully choreographed and staged.

The same alleged victim, Mr. Yezegelian, 38, also accused Archbishop David Sahakian, who was the dean of Jerusalem Seminary in 1990. According to the *Le Progres* newspaper, a lawsuit was filed against the archbishop on July 22, 2013, and on January 22, 2015, the French law enforcement agencies launched an investigation. He was charged with sexual abuse of a child under 15. The archbishop passed away in the middle of March in Decieny (Rhone), France at the age of 81. He had been serving the Diocese of Lyon in France.

According to a knowledgeable writer, Nahabed Melkonian, who has released an article on the Internet ("When Pandora's Box Has Been Opened"), another priest from the St. James Brotherhood, Fr. Norayr Kazazian, visited Fr. Khat in

Bethlehem, asking him to admit misconduct and apologize to Hrayr Yezegelian. During three consecutive visits, he secretly recorded "the confessions" of Fr. Khat, probably to be used by the producer of the program on TV.

The interesting item to note is that the alleged victim has confessed on Facebook: "This individual has found the perfect prey in me and abused me for years also, even long after leaving the seminary school."

This raises the question of why he would return to the seminary after leaving if he were offended by the conduct of his abuser.

In the aftermath of the airing of this documentary by the TV station, an attorney, Roni Aloni-Sdovnik, has filed a lawsuit against the Patriarchate, seeking 15 million Israeli shekels in damages.

Officially, the Patriarchate has been silent so far.

The incident has several dimensions: a) The veracity of the accusation which in turn touches on b) the issue of celibacy and c) what the Israeli station gains by airing the incident, at the same time implicating the Patriarchate as an institution, beyond the alleged individual culprit.

A background check reveals that after the Israeli army's occupation of Beirut, Lebanon, in 1982, the Yezegelian family moved to Jerusalem, where the Patriarchate provided them with housing, according to its long-held tradition. The three brothers have been enrolled at the seminary, but they have chosen not to enter into the priesthood. Hrayr, at the age of 38, seems to be a life-long student, studying psychology. He seems to be a drifter, in need of some psychological help.

In the meantime, he decided to join the Mormon Church. For many years, the alleged sexual abuse did not bother him enough for him to take action. Only after the expiration of the statute of limitation did he come out to accuse his alleged abusers. In a dubious collaboration, Fr. Norayr Kazazian has secretly videotaped Fr. Khat Jundurian's confession. He also invited the Israeli TV to shoot the confrontation of the "victim" and the "abuser" while interfering during a church service.

We cannot absolve the predators and we can only sympathize with the "victim" if indeed the accusation has a foundation. But the theatrical denouement of the situation smells fishy. The people and the TV channel have gone too far and their actions do not pass the smell test. If Hrayr was indeed a victim, he is being victimized again along with the institution of the Patriarchate, which faces public embarrassment, beyond the 15 million shekel law-



suit.

The TV channel Israel Today has yet to dedicate a documentary to Yeshiva students who spit at the faces of the Armenian clergy and desecrate the walls of the churches, which the police and the courts ignore.

Another suitable topic for the same TV channel to investigate might be the causes for the dwindling Armenian community in Jerusalem. Indeed, in 1967 the Armenian community in Jerusalem was 10,000 to 15,000 strong. Today, the count is below 1,500.

Even if Hrayr Yezegelian's accusation have no foundation, we cannot rule out abuses in a monastic setting, where male celibate priests live together.

Until the fifth century, Armenian catholicoi and archbishops were married and raised families. Gradually, celibacy made inroads in the church, with ascetic monks sacrificing worldly pleasures and taking a vow of celibacy. There were even stylites, ascetic monks who drove the self-punishment to the extreme by living on top of pillars for many years on. The self-flagellation of celibate priests is well-described poetically in Gregory of Narek's *Book of Lamentations*.

The celibate priests practiced monastic life in isolation. The monasteries were called anabat (wilderness or desert).

Archbishop Malachia Ormanian states in his book, *The Armenian Church*, that the celibate priests could not assume pastoral positions nor perform sacraments of marriage and funerals, because they were not supposed to come into contact with parishioners or the public.

continued on next page



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Better to Support Armenian Activists Than Criticize Azeri & Turkish Lobbying

For years, many critical books and articles have been written about foreign countries and domestic groups for hiring lobbying firms or making campaign contributions to influence government officials.

One such article was published last week by L. Michael Hager in the Foreign Policy Journal titled, "The Best Congress AIPAC Can Buy." AIPAC is the acronym for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. The author acknowledges that "there is nothing illegal or morally wrong with lobbying Congress or candidates for office. In fact, it can serve a useful purpose in educating members and candidates about matters subject to legislation. The problem comes when the lobbyists use money to secure access or buy support for proposed bills and resolutions." After that benign introduction, however, Hager concludes that "for the sake of our democracy, the flow of interest group money that is buying off our elected lawmakers must be stopped."

Hager states that, "nowhere is the influence and power of a political lobby more evident than in the annual Policy Conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)" held on March 22-24 in Washington, DC.

Conference speakers addressed "more than 15,000 pro-Israel Americans (including 2/3 of the current Members of Congress). Among the speakers were 30 members of the U.S. Congress, 25 of whom received 2016 contributions from pro-Israel PACs and individuals, averaging \$36,000 per recipient (\$908,000 in total). From each of those speakers, AIPAC gains a public expression of high level support for Israel."

Hager reported that the AIPAC conference attracted nearly 400 speakers, including "Vice President Joe Biden and Presidential candidates Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, Ted Cruz and John Kasich." According to the writer, "AIPAC generated contributions in the amount of \$212,927 for Hillary Clinton and \$203,850 for Ted Cruz. Marco Rubio received \$132,552 and Lindsey Graham \$74,200. No surprise that all of those candidates have pledged 'full support' for Israel."

The author considers "The AIPAC-led pro-Israel lobby" as "probably the strongest, best organized and most effective lobby network in Washington, DC. For the 2015-2016 election cycle, the pro-Israel network has already dispensed \$4,255,136 in contributions. The largest single amount (\$259,688) went to Senator Charles Schumer of New York."

Hager explains that "AIPAC itself does not make political contributions and is in fact legally prohibited from doing so. Instead it uses its considerable resources (\$3 million annual lobbying budget) to link current and aspiring members of Congress with pro-Israel donors. AIPAC's projection of invincibility encourages political candidates and officeholders to accept pro-Israel contributions or risk seeing those funds go

to their opponents. For example, former Congressman Paul Findley and former Senator Charles Percy lost their seats for failure to adhere to the AIPAC line."

The author's criticisms emanate from his concern that "the appearance of conflict of interest erodes citizen trust in government. Given the critical importance of money for reelection campaigns, political contributions such as mentioned above have the potential to corrupt or create the appearance of corrupting otherwise honest officials."

Hager acknowledges that AIPAC is "only one part of a larger picture, dominated by congressional fundraising and lobby contributions," such as "Defense, pharmaceuticals, the NRA and other lobbies...."

In my view, it is justified to criticize lobbying firms and their paymasters when they violate U.S. laws. However, it is more important to strengthen one's own lobbying efforts than disparage what others are doing. While it is necessary from an Armenian perspective to monitor closely the lobbying firms hired by Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenians should focus on what they can do to support their two public affairs organizations in Washington – The Armenian Assembly and Armenian National Committee of America. Despite their limited staff and resources, these Armenian-American groups have been successfully countering the activities of major lobbying firms hired for millions of dollars by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Fortunately, Armenian-American groups do not need such exorbitant sums to pursue their political goals in Washington because it costs much less to present the truth of their just cause, unlike Turkey and Azerbaijan which have to spend huge amounts of money to deceive the politicians and the public!

Jerusalem Patriarchate Up for Grabs

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In today's globalized world, these canons have outlived their usefulness. The celibate priests no longer observe the rigors of monastic life; they are out in public. The temptation is overpowering and that is why we come across clergy promiscuity and sexual abuse. One of the priorities in reforming the Armenian Church must be the abolition of celibacy, which is seldom truly practiced anyway. The elimination of celibacy is not a cure all but it will certainly reduce the number of incidences and some will be honest with themselves and relieve the church of hypocrisy. After all, it is not celibacy that creates child abuse, but since people who can find a life in a pseudo-celibate life can often be around children, it is an ideal situation for them to find victims.

Armenians occupy one fourth of the old city of Jerusalem – a disproportionate figure compared to the size of the population. In addition to many churches and monasteries, the Patriarchate also owns prime real estate there.

The St. James Brotherhood in Jerusalem has historically been a source of pride and embarrassment. For centuries it has trained clergy for Armenian Churches around the world. Many scholarly volumes have been produced there. And, Jerusalem's Patriarchate houses the largest collection of illuminated manuscripts after the Matenadaran in Yerevan. But it has also rocked the Armenian world with sporadic scandals, with valuable real estate "lost" from time to time, manuscripts and chalices disappear, and sexual abuse and promiscuity are reported from time to time. Sometimes, some priests are worthy of blame in those cases. But the Patriarchate's possessions are prime reasons for encroachment by others.

Many discredited methods are implemented by other religious orders and the Israeli government to bilk chunks of Armenian properties.

During the Camp David summit in July 22-25-2000, Ehud Barak of Israel and PLO leader Yasser Arafat had almost signed a peace agreement, under President Clinton's prodding. But the deal fell through because of some sticking points. Along with a number of critical matters, Israel insisted on keeping the Armenian Quarter under its rule, which Arafat refused.

That historic fact can attest to the importance of the Armenian Quarter for the Israeli government.

There are a number of properties lost or leased for 100 or 200 years. There may also be others which remain unreported.

The holy places are governed by a set of regulations enshrined in what is called the Status Quo. Those regulations had been established through a firman (decree) issued by the Ottoman Sultan Osman III in the 18th century. After the Ottomans, British colonial rule and the Jordanian administration have observed it carefully, the Israeli authorities are officially committed to it, but in the case of the Armenians, the regulations are being undermined at a steady process.

The St. James Brotherhood is technically independent from outside interference. Even the supreme authority of the Armenian Church legally has no say. That is why some clergy out there demonstrate their arrogance with impunity.

As the brotherhood weakens, opportunities are offered for intruders. If today Fr. Norayr Kazezian serves as a conduit to exposed so-called scandal, we may rest assured that other elements are being tested continually because the prize is so valuable.

In addition to the illuminated manuscripts there are other archival materials vital for Armenian history. For example, during World War I, the archives of the Constantinople Patriarchate were moved to Jerusalem for safekeeping. They contain crucial documents about the Armenian Genocide. No one for sure is aware of their fate.

St. James Brotherhood always prided itself with many scholarly works. The last Mohican was perhaps Archbishop Norayr Bogharian, the guardian and the cataloguer of the manuscripts. After his death, no catalogs have been published to our knowledge.

The sexual abuse scandal seems to be the tip of the iceberg. The TV exposure and the invasion of the Patriarchate do not auger well.

Indeed, the "Demons of the Past" have been resurrected but their target seems to be somewhere beyond the predators – it is the destiny of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

The Armenian Genocide – The Other Holocaust

By Stephen Kurkjian

For the Armenian people who have long had to suffer the world's indifference to the attempt to extinguish them a century ago, there was a moment last April when all the frustrations and tribulations of that sad history seemed to wash away.

In the center of the Vatican's St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis celebrated a Mass with the top prelates of the Armenian Church to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Near the end of the Mass, the Pope called on the world to recognize what had happened to the Armenians in 1915 was indeed a Genocide – and then, in a transcendent gesture, stood with his hands cupped in the traditional pose of accepting the offering as the Lord's Prayer was sung in Armenian.

It was a stunning moment for all Armenians. Practically every one of us lost a loved one in those massacres by the Ottoman Turks in 1915, and the losses have grown heavier during the ensuing century because of the lack of worldwide official recognition to that mass murder, no less justice from Turkey.

While many governments spurred by the historical record have adopted resolutions acknowledging the Genocide, three countries towards whom Armenians have looked the most – Turkey, the United States and Israel – have failed to follow the Pope's powerful words.

Turkey's reasons are the most specious. It contends that the more than one million Armenians who were killed were not victims of an intentional campaign by the Ottoman regime but rather casualties of World War I. Yet the International Association of Genocide Scholars unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide in 1997 and sent a letter to the Turkish Prime Minister urging recognition.

The reluctance of the US Congress and a succession of American presidents to adopt a resolution recognizing the Genocide is particularly painful for the estimated 1.5 million Armenians who live in America. As Bill Clinton and George W. Bush had done during their campaigns for president, Barack Obama pledged on running for the White House in 2008 that he would support the introduction of a Genocide Resolution in Congress.

And as Clinton and Bush had done, Obama

retreated from that pledge on assuming the presidency. While Obama has stated that he continues to believe personally that a Genocide had taken place, the Turkish government has mounted a multi-million dollar lobbying campaign and presented him with an offer that he has been unable to refuse. Regardless of any questions of conscience or the historical and moral upper ground that would be gained by recognizing the Armenian Genocide, Turkey has stressed to the United States that as a NATO member, it is America's strongest military ally in the increasingly hostile Middle East and to back the Genocide Resolution would be a diplomatic insult to it.

Particularly ironic in the debate is that one of the fiercest past advocates for recognizing the Genocide has been one of Obama's closest foreign policy advisors. Samantha Power, US Ambassador to the United Nations, authored the book "A Problem from Hell: America and The Age of Genocide." In the book, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Non-Fiction in 2003, Power said America's failure to act more forthrightly against attacks against ethnic or political minorities in the 20th century – whether against Armenians, Jews, in Cambodia, Rwanda or Bosnia – has only ensured that the problem will carry over to the next century.

If there is a flicker of hope that this year's commemoration might provide a revelatory moment of conscience as Pope Francis did last April on the 100th anniversary at St. Peter's, it rests with Ambassador Power. If she needs a model, all she need do is view the last season's episode of "House of Cards" in which the fictionalized US ambassador to the United Nations – the wife of the US President – decides at a press conference to unleash a withering verbal attack against the Russian president, standing a few feet away, because of his country's inhumane treatment of homosexuals, a policy which has led to the suicide of an imprisoned American citizen. Her outburst costs her husband's administration a diplomatic breakthrough with Russia but it is clear, at least in Hollywood's eyes, that in some rare moments choices of conscience are the better course to take.

In the real world, however, President Obama has remained a resolute friend of Turkey, even looking past increased acts of repression by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan against the press, ethnic minorities and political foes. The

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The Armenian Genocide – The Other Holocaust

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White House went so far as to block public display last year of a rug that had been woven by Armenian youths orphaned by the Genocide and given as a gift to President Calvin Coolidge and the American people in thanks for their life-saving generosity in the 1920s.

Nowhere is the moral argument for adopting of the Genocide Resolution seen stronger – and the loss felt deeper – than with Israel. But such recognition would breach the long-standing and deep strategic ties that exist between Turkey and Israel. Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognize the new state of Israel with the two countries formalizing ties in 1949, and those early ties developed into military and economic cooperation between them, which pertain despite frequent anti-Israeli outbursts by Erdogan in recent years.

Yet, the Armenians and Jews too have bonds between them – in shared suffering. Thirty years after the Armenian Genocide, six million Jews were killed by Adolph Hitler's Nazi regime.

In fact, before Hitler began his murderous campaign in eastern Europe, a campaign that would soon lead to the Holocaust, he is said to have told his generals not to worry about the consequences.

"Who Still Talks Nowadays of the Armenians?" Hitler stated less than 25 years after the Genocide, a quote that is etched on

the fourth-floor wall of the US Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., as a permanent reminder.

How could this shunning persist, Armenians ask, especially when the two men who played integral roles in alerting the world to what was taking place and the need for worldwide condemnation of such acts were Jews. When Henry Morgenthau, the US Ambassador to Turkey, was unable to convince the Wilson Administration to stop the killings, he made certain his diplomatic posts were shared with the New York Times so the American public was made aware of the extent of the massacres.

A generation later, Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish lawyer from Poland who was outraged that the Ottoman Turkish leaders had escaped prosecution in their attempt to exterminate the Armenians began a seminal study of such mass killings. His work led to the coining of the term Genocide and the passage by the United Nations in 1948 of a convention banning such acts of atrocities against a people.

Similarly, despite the official position of the Israeli government it is the extraordinary understanding and support that individual Jews and Jewish-American organizations have given to the Armenians in their search for recognition of the Genocide that has helped keep the bond between the two people strong.

And as was seen in Greater Boston almost a decade ago when a Jewish organization refuses to take a stand supporting Armenians, individuals within the organization have been willing to stand up and take a moral stand.

In 2007, the national Anti-Defamation League and its national director Abraham Foxman refused to adopt a forthright statement in support of the Armenian Genocide recognition, and Andrew Tarsy, the head of its New England office hesitated in speaking out. But within a short period, Tarsy criticized Foxman's position, which resulted in his being fired as ADL's regional director but served to rally most of the Jewish community to his side.

"I have been in conflict over this issue for several weeks," Tarsy said at the time. "I regret at this point any characterization that I made publicly other than to call it a genocide. I think that kind of candor about history is absolutely fundamental."

Stephen Kurkjian, a Boston native, is the son of a survivor of the Armenian Genocide. A retired investigative reporter and editor for The Boston Globe, Kurkjian won the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting on two occasions, and also was a member of The Globe Spotlight Team, whose coverage of the sexual abuse scandal within the Boston Archdiocese won the Pulitzer Prize's Gold Medal for Public Service in 2003. He recently authored a non-

fiction book on the historic theft from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, *MASTER THIEVES: The Boston Gangsters Who Pulled Off The World's Greatest Art Heist*.

(This commentary by Stephen Kurkjian originally appeared in the March 17 edition of the Jewish Journal. The link is <http://boston.forward.com/articles/189195/the-armenian-genocide-the-other-holocaust/#ixzz44Dd4kkc1>)

Diyarbakir's Surp Giragos Church Expropriated by Turkish Authorities

DIYARBAKIR, from page 1

Speaking to Agos, Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality Cultural Heritage Director Nevin Soyulukaya stated that all churches and properties belonging to the foundations have been seized. Soyulukaya also said that some properties belonging to the municipality are also expropriated and they will initiate legal action. She urged the owners of the expropriated properties to take legal action.

Walls of Diyarbakir and Hevsel Gardens were added to UNESCO World Heritage List in 2015. And Sur province is considered as a buffer zone for Walls of Diyarbakir.

Sur is the only center that have places of worship for non-Muslims. Surp Giragos Church, Surp Sarkis Chaldean Church, Armenian Catholic Church, Virgin Mary Ancient Assyrian Church and Protestant Church are in Sur and currently closed to worship. There is no other church in Diyarbakir.

Chaldean Church belongs to Mor Petyun Chaldean Catholic Church Foundation and Virgin Mary Ancient Assyrian Church belongs to Virgin Mary Ancient Assyrian Church Foundation. Apart from them, in Diyarbakir, there are 6 churches that is owned by various state institutions.

Surp Giragos Armenian Church was left to its own fate, after its congregants left. With legal changes in foundation administration, people from Diyarbakir living in Istanbul formed a new administrative body and initiated restoration work. With the help of funding campaigns started in the US and other countries, the church was restored. About 2 million liras was spent for restoration. And it was awarded with various prestigious restoration awards.

Member of Parliament Garo Paylan, who is a member of the Kurdish People's Democratic Party Garo Paylan said that he presented an inquiry to Prime Minister Ahmed Davutoglu regarding the expropriation of a number of areas and structures in Diyarbakir, Sur.

Paylan published the nine-point inquiry form on his Facebook page. The Prime Minister was specifically asked about the reason of "immediate expropriation" of the total 6,300 properties, what legislations are to be made under the act, and how the rights of the citizens living in Sur will be protected. In addition, the inquiry requests to clarify whether the expropriation decision affects the Christian, the Assyrian and Chaldean churches.

The MPs also asked whether the decision to expropriate the property of churches of minorities does not contradict the legislation and the Treaty of Lausanne.

British MP Visits Armenian Genocide Memorial in Yerevan

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Member of the UK House of Commons as well as member of the British delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Mark Pritchard visited the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial on Tuesday, March 29, accompanied by Armenian lawmakers Hermine Naghdalyan and Naira Zohrabyan.

Pritchard laid flowers at the Memorial to the Armenian Genocide victims and paid tribute to their memory with a minute of silence.

He toured the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute and wrote a note in guestbook.

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