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NEWS IN BRIEF

The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party

It is a painful reality to note that the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (Ramgavar) has been split for the last ten years. All endeavors to heal the rift during that period unfortunately have failed. Finally a reconstruction movement evolved through the initiative of well-meaning elements of the party. The worldwide movement engaged almost all regions of the party leading to a gathering in Yerevan in October of 2015. The convocation developed a platform and a road map towards a general reconciliation.

To finalize the action plan a second convocation will be held in Yerevan, Armenia on April 19-22, 2016.

The following statement is a call for participation to the above convocation.

A Call for Unity and Reform

FOLLOWING the resolutions of the Yerevan International Consultation (October 31, 2015) that was held in conjunction with the ADLP Armenia Convention, and whose primary aim was to try and bridge the gap between the various factions of ADL that has plagued the Party for over 20 years; by exploring the possibilities of a dialogue and compromise instead of engaging in futile exercises that time has shown to produce no tangible results.

ACTING UPON its main resolution to nominate a committee of 6 formed by Engerner Edmond Azadian, Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian, Hagop Vartivarian, Ardavazt Melkisetian, Dr. Kevork Erzingatsian and to be coordinated by Vartan Nazirian in order to implement its resolutions (First Party);



TAKING NOTE of the various actions and the timeline proposed by this Committee in order to initiate a dialogue with the other camps represented by the current Central Committee (Second Party) whose term had already expired by November 2015;

RECALLING the fact that the Second Party has declined all recent efforts to meet the First Party in order to work out a genuine reconciliation program;

CONDEMNING the recent suspensions and expulsions from the Party ranks, without due democratic process, of party activists who were demanding reform and dialogue and were critical of the actions of the Second Party, as being incompatible with the spirit of dialogue and reconciliation;

DETERMINED to continue our mission in order to reorganize the Party along modern concepts, while at the same time keeping open all venues for a dialogue and unity, we have taken the following decisions:

To pursue the reorganization of ADLP leaving the door open to the Second Party and all other willing partners to join efforts in a spirit of reconciliation for a constructive dialogue; see ADL, page 16

German Bundestag Holding Debate On Armenian Genocide

BERLIN (Public Radio of Armenia) – The German Bundestag is set to hold a debate on the Armenian Genocide on February 25 (after MS press deadline). The Alliance 90/The Greens faction will make mention of the Armenian Genocide 100 years ago. Forty-five minutes are allocated for the report.

“There will be a statement followed by a debate,” Cem Özdemir, president of the Greens Party said in an exclusive interview with Public Radio of Armenia.

According to him, the Greens will present a statement, which has the same emphasis as the draft bill debated with the ruling coalition back in November 2015. Although the parties had reached some common ground, the

bill was later prevented by the coalition.

“Obviously, the political motives are more important for the coalition than joint recognition,” Ozdemir said.

“We want the debate to be followed by voting. However, this is still uncertain, as we don’t know what the disposition of the ruling coalition is. If no voting follows, the bill will again be sent back to the Commission, where it is doomed to share the fate of an earlier motion submitted on April 24, 2015. It will remain pending, as the ruling coalition is not interested in raising the issue again,” President of the Greens Party said.

see BUNDESTAG, page 16

Reception Held in Honor of NY Tekeyan Benefactors

ENGLEWOOD, NJ. – A reception was held on February 6 at the home of Hagop and Maria Vartivarian to thank benefactors who helped the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) of Greater New York in 2015.

Plans for TCA activities in 2016, including theatrical performances in Yerevan and Gumri this April, were presented.

Among the benefactors present were Nazar and Artemis Nazarian, Edward and Carmen Gulbenkian, and Henri Dimidjian. Dr. Raffy and Shoghag Hovanessian, Saro and Hilda Haroutunian, Dr. Hagop Gulekjian, Helen Misk and Charles and Diana Mkhitarian were also in attendance.

see RECEPTION, page 16

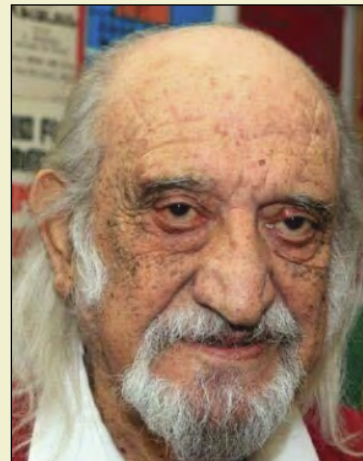


Tekeyan Cultural Association benefactors at the Vartivarian residence in NJ

Tribute Actor and Director Fazlian Played Important Role in Armenian and Lebanese Theater

By Hagop Vartivarian

I am happy that in those distant places with large Armenian populations, the foundation of the Armenian dramatic arts exists, one of the initiators of which is a youth educated from the same source as I.
– Vahram Papazian



BEIRUT – Berj Fazlian, who died last week at age 90, was born on December 4, 1926 in Istanbul. He obtained his education at a local drama institute, and by 1944 was participating in local plays. He directed some 10 plays in Istanbul, among which were Ben Johnson’s “Volpone” and Moliere’s “The Miser.”

see FAZLIAN, page 7

Tatoyan Elected Human Rights Defender

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – With a vote of 96 to 7 the National Assembly elected Deputy Justice Minister Arman Tatoyan as Human Rights Defender.

In compliance with the new constitutional changes, his candidacy was proposed by the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs.

According to the Constitution, the Human Rights Defender is elected by 3/5th of the total number of MPs.

Ambassador Meets Canadian Cabinet Member

OTTAWA (Public Radio of Armenia) – On February 22, Armen Yeghanyan, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Canada, met with John McCallum, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship of Canada.

Highlighting the necessity of opening Embassy of Canada in Armenia, Yeghanyan informed Minister that every year several thousands Canadian citizens visit Armenia and sometimes they experience the need of consular and immigration services of the Embassy.

The two also discussed a number of issues concerning the recent flow of refugees to Canada. McCallum noted that he is well informed about the problems Syrian-Armenians are facing while arriving in Canada. He stressed that the Canadian Government is implementing numerous assistance programs, which in particular are aimed at the improvement of refugees’ social conditions. Yeghanyan expressed his gratitude to Canadian government for its support.

During the meeting the two also discussed current visa policies between the two countries.

Yeghanyan briefed McCallum on the commemorative events of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, organized throughout 2015.

NKR President Meets With Hovhanissyan

STEPANAKERT – On February 15, President Bako Sahakyan of Nagorno Karabagh Republic (Artsakh) received Armenia’s newly-appointed ambassador to the United States, Grigor Hovhanissyan.

Sahakyan congratulated Hovhanissyan on assuming the responsible position.

The meeting touched upon a range of issues related to providing truthful information about Artsakh in various US platforms and deepening the inter-Armenian ties.

NKR Foreign Minister Karen Mirzoyan was present at the meeting.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Armenia and Czech Republic to Organize Joint Production of Military Equipment

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – An agreement on military cooperation is being signed between Armenian and Czech governments this week.

The agreement provides the supply of military products, repair, modernization, operation and technical support, organization of production allowed for military products, ensuring control of the military product's quality and preparation of professionals and technical staff in educational institutions. According to the agreement, cooperation between the Armenian and Czech companies, signing separate agreements in the field of military-technical cooperation between organizations and institutions are expected.

Karabagh President Awards Renowned Russian Writer

STEPANAKERT – President of the Nagorno-Karabagh Republic (NKR/Artsakh), Bako Sahakyan, this week signed a decree on awarding the Medal for Gratitude to renowned Russian writer and Armenian Studies specialist Kim Bakshi.

The said medal is awarded to Bakshi in recognition of his substantial contribution to the popularization of the Artsakh cultural heritage, and in connection with his 85th birth anniversary.

Armenian News-NEWS.am has learned the above-said from the Central Information Department of the Office of the NKR President.

Armenia, World Bank Sign \$55 Million Loan Agreement

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Armenia's Minister of Finance Gagik Khachatryan and World Bank's Regional Director for the South Caucasus Mercy Tembon signed an agreement on February 23 for a \$55-million loan with a 25-year maturity period and a 14.5-year grace period.

The Local Economy and Infrastructure Development Programme loan agreement signed with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is set to improve infrastructure and institutional capacities to further boost tourism development in Armenia's Ararat, Vayots Dzor and Lori provinces.

'The Last Inhabitant' to Debut at Golden Apricot Festival

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – "The Last Inhabitant," a film directed by Jivan Avetisyan, is slated for release later this year. The film tracks the events of 1988-1989 and shows how the Sumgait massacres affected destinies.

The shooting of the film was completed last year. The soundtrack is currently being recorded in Armenia.

The score, by System Of A Down's Serj Tankian, will be performed by the Armenian National Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hover State Chamber Choir.

"The Last Inhabitant" is about an Armenian village that has been forcibly emptied of its residents. The film's main character, Abgar, lives with his mentally ill daughter. After Azerbaijanis enter the village and attempt to rape his daughter, Abgar has no choice other than fighting to ensure her safety.

The film stars world-renowned Iranian actor Homayoun Ershadi, Sandra Dauksaite, Armenian actors Sos Janibekyan, Aleksander Khachatryan, Naira Muradyan, Anne Bedian and Babken Chobanyan.

The film will be presented to the public during the 2016 Golden Apricot Film Festival.

Syrian-Armenian Refugee Thrives at AUA

YEREVAN – It is tragic to lose one's home and to have one's dreams and aspirations cut short. This is what fate had in store for 20-year-old Syrian Armenian Gasia Atashian, an undergraduate student at the American University of Armenia (AUA). But this was her fate only up to December 2013, when Atashian and most of her family escaped their war-torn hometown of Aleppo, Syria, for a safe haven in Armenia.

When the Syrian war reached Aleppo in 2011, Atashian was in class with other 11th graders. "There was a rumble. Later, we learned that it was a bomb," Atashian recounts. Since that day, the situation in Aleppo has grown progressively worse. "Bombs were falling. There was no water, no Internet, and no electricity. Going to school was dangerous because there were snipers. In 12th grade, I decided to study information technologies (IT) and worked hard to get into university. I studied by candlelight," Atashian continues. Despite the dangers and challenges, she was accepted into a selective technical university in Aleppo, which was no easy feat for a young Syrian Armenian woman living in an Arab Muslim, male-dominated society. Her dream had come true, but she could not fully savor her accomplishment. She attended university just one week, before she had to stop going. "My family decided that we would leave Aleppo. Staying might have cost us our lives," she says. Atashian had been in Armenia only once before, as part of a ten-day trip with her scouts troop in 2010. She was feeling uneasy and sad about the move. "I was sad because I had gotten accepted into my desired university, but had to abandon my studies; I was worried, as I didn't know what I would do in Armenia; I might not be able to continue my education. I didn't know anything about Armenia's universities and didn't understand how I could get accepted," she says. The family made their way to the homeland by way of Beirut, Lebanon; the airport in Aleppo was closed due to the threat of bombardments. Once she reached Yerevan, she found out that AUA has an IT department and immediately threw herself into preparing for the University's admission exams: she studied hard for the TOEFL exam for English language competency – an especially challenging proposition since her schooling in Syria had been in Arabic. She passed the test and was accepted into AUA, leaving the admissions committee in awe of her accomplishment.

Atashian aspired for more than just this achievement and pushed herself towards making even greater strides towards a better future. Her already impressive academic and extracurricular accomplishments, including high grades, basketball training for almost ten years, participation in scouts activities, and even a certificate for the video-archiving of Genocide-related photos, contributed towards other important developments.

Among them, remarkably, was the highly competitive Best Diasporan Student Educational Award of the President of the Republic of Armenia in



Gasia Atashian, who escaped the war in Syria in 2013, excels academically as a sophomore in AUA's Department of Computational Sciences. She is shown here posing with President of the Republic of Armenia Serge Sargsian who awarded her with a highly competitive prize for her educational accomplishments in IT.

the Sphere of IT (Category II), which Atashian won in 2015. For the 2015-16 academic year, she was also awarded AUA's Kablanian scholarship, which is a full, merit-based scholarship given to a Syrian Armenian student to cover his or her tuition fees. Atashian has also received the Munushian scholarship for Syrian Armenian students during the 2014-2015 academic year.

As Atashian studied hard and excelled at AUA, normalcy slowly returned to her family as her sister, too, who was set on going to medical school, was admitted to Yerevan State Medical University and

showed excellent results there. By then, her father, who had stayed behind in Aleppo, had finally given up hope that peace might be restored in Syria and joined his family in Armenia.

And things kept getting better and better. "AUA surpassed my expectations of the level of education that it offers. It's the best university in Armenia. The professors are very good. They make you work hard and help you further your interest in the field you're studying. They force you to do your best. That's what I like the most," Atashian says.

Studying at AUA has allowed Atashian to have a new kind of life. "I don't just come to study at AUA. We have extracurricular activities; we are offered general education courses; there are volunteering opportunities. In this way, we get exposed to other fields. Our education is not limited to just our specialization. It's very cool. I like that very much," Atashian says.

"I feel I belong at AUA. I feel we are one family," Atashian continues. "It was different in Syria. I was the only Syrian Armenian girl in my university and needed time to adapt to the new environment, after having graduated from an Armenian private school in Aleppo."

As Atashian looks forward to even greater accomplishments in the IT field, she feels pride and contentment in her current situation. "I'm so happy and proud to be on this incredible path towards success. The war in Syria disrupted my life; but AUA is giving me a better and brighter future."

Photojournalists Changing Image Of Women in Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – In Yerevan's Victory Park, an enormous copper statue of a woman brandishing a sword stands sentinel over the city. "Mother Armenia" is a symbol of national strength and reverence for women, but photographer Anahit Hayrapetyan says women in her country often don't enjoy the freedom and respect the statue evokes.

"mOther Armenia," an exhibition of the work of 10 women photographers held in 2013, was one of the first projects of 4Plus, an Armenian organization co-founded by Hayrapetyan that seeks to empower women through photography. The title is a play on the name of the statue, and refers to the exhibition's ten photo collections, each of which highlighted a different problem facing women in Armenia, such as transgender issues, violence against women, and treatment of Yazidi girls and refugee women.

One subsequent exhibition organized by 4Plus has sought to illustrate taboos associated with the types of professions women can have, defiantly featuring photographs of women taxi drivers, boxers, and war veterans. Another exhibition showcased non-thematic documentary photography done by women.

"We noticed that there are many women working in the field in Armenia, our friends and colleagues," said Hayrapetyan. "But women have fewer opportunities and more limitations in their work, so we decided to come together and help each other."

Hayrapetyan, whose photographs have been published widely in local and international media, including by

RFE/RL, the Institute for War and Peace Reporting and Eurasianet, co-founded 4Plus in 2013. Her partners are Nazik Armenakyan, a former freelance photographer with Agence France-Presse and Reuters, who now works for the website ArmeniaNow; and Anush Babajanyan, who has worked as a photographer for several NGOs, and in 2013 received a production grant from the



The founders of 4Plus from left to right: Nazik Armenakyan, Anahit Hayrapetyan, and Anush Babajanyan. Armenia, undated.

Open Society Foundation's Documentary Photography Project to photograph Armenian women's labor migration to Turkey, a project she continues to work on.

In addition to organizing exhibitions of photography by and about women, 4Plus holds training sessions with internationally renowned photographers, arranges workshops and feedback for women photographers who would otherwise be working in isolation, and publishes collections of women's photography.

Hayrapetyan says this year 4Plus aims to expand beyond the capital city and bring training and exhibitions to regional cities in Armenia.

"I believe that visual art and photography can change society," said Hayrapetyan. "They can show the many things we can do other than having babies and taking care of kids."

– Emily Thompson

Correction

The article "Papasian Is Trying to Put Armenian Opera on International Stage" in the *Mirror-Spectator* issue of February 20 stated, "Internship during his studies included assistant directing at the National Opera of Armenia and later in Leningrad..." This should be replaced by: "Internship at that period included studying at the National Opera..."



INTERNATIONAL

Paruyr Sevak, Patriot and World Citizen

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN – “Can poetry open the hearts of people, even at a distance?” This is a question that Azad Ordukanyan, President of the Armenian Academic Society in Bochum, Germany, had included in a letter written to Armenian Ambassador Ashot Smbatyan, inviting him to open an event in Berlin featuring the poetry of Paruyr Sevak. In his greetings to the attendants of the musical reading at the Literaturhaus in the German capital on February 20, Smbatyan responded with an unhesitating “Yes.” And the event bore testimony to this fact; the lively recitations of poems by Paruyr Sevak, both in the original and in a new German translation, embedded in musical offerings, opened the hearts of those attending, even in Germany, far away from the poet’s homeland, Armenia.

For those who were not familiar with the poet, a brief introduction was provided. Born in 1924 in the village of Chanatsshi (today Sangakatur), he acquainted himself early with literature and began to compose poems. An independent spirit, he dared to read the works of poets who were banned under the Soviet dictatorship of the 1930s, including Yeghishe Charents. Sevak studied at the Philological Faculty of the



Stepan Gantralyan, Tim Mücke, Publisher, Ambassador Ashot Smbatyan (left to right)

faithfully, yet without sacrificing any of the poetical power in German.

Poems in Dialogue with Music

The musical reading at the Literaturhaus offered a program that had been presented the evening before, in nearby Potsdam at the Lepsiushaus. The authors had prepared the program as a dialogue between poetry and music, whereby a musical offering would be followed by a poem, or a block of several poems, then again music, and poems, alternating. The evening opened with the patriotic Armenian song “Kele Lao,” then, following greetings by the ambassador and a short introduction, the famous Hayastan. After a song, *Crane*, came seven shorter poems, each recited in Armenian and German. The next two musical pieces were cello solos, a Catalan folk song, *Song of the Birds*, and a piece by György Kurtág, concluding with *Soufflez une brise* and *My Past Days*. Just as *Hayastan*, recited first in German, had opened the evening, it concluded with “We are few, but we are called Armenians” in the original.

Most fortunately, it was the two author-translators themselves who delivered recitations of the poems in German, while Stepan Gantralyan recited in Armenian. Gantralyan and cellist Christiane Conradt provided the music as well. Both translators are accomplished authors and teachers. Heide Rieck, born in Szczecin, has composed poetry since her youth in Krefeld. She studied pedagogy and acting in Cologne and taught for 35 years both in France and the Ruhr region of Germany. Since 1999 she has published works of poetry, drama, essays, short stories and novels as well as poetical translations. Twelve of her books, and contributions to over 20 anthologies have appeared in Germany and abroad. She has won two prizes for poetry, is a member of the Union of German Writers, the European writers group Die Kogge and is speaker of the Bochum Writers. Her recitation brought out the pathos as well as the humor in some of Sevak’s works, and highlighted the lyrical aspects.

Agapi Mkrtchian, born in Armenia, studied German as a foreign language in Yerevan, then continued her higher education with a scholarship for study abroad, majoring in German Language and Literature in Jena, and German and Russian for Teachers, in Frankfurt. She

currently teaches at a comprehensive school in Wiesbaden. She, too, has published poetry and short stories, both in German and Armenian, many of which have also appeared in anthologies. A volume of her poetry and another of prose works have appeared in Armenia. In addition her poems and stories have appeared in Armenian language periodicals in Lebanon, the Czech Republic and the United States. She is a member of the Literature Club of Women from Around the World and the Armenian Writers Union, which late last year honored her in Yerevan with the Vasdakovor Order, as an author of outstanding merit. Although Armenian is her mother tongue, Mkrtchian feels completely at home in German, and her delivery in that language was described by attendants as strong and powerful.

Stepan Gantralyan is a man of many trades, actor, director, singer and composer. Born in Yerevan, between 1988 and 1991 he held leading positions as director and/or actor at the Peoples Theater at the Armenian Adult Education Center, as well as the Gissane and the Kumairy Theater Studios, all in Yerevan. Following a year as director at the State Experimental Theater there, he travelled to Germany with two Goethe Scholarships and from 1999 to 2005 was engaged as an actor at the Theater in the Ruhr with Roberto Ciulli. Since then he has been active in his various capacities in Berlin. Gantralyan made an impact on his audiences, with his extremely dramatic and forceful delivery of Sevak in Armenian. As a vocalist he presented several songs, either accompanying himself on the guitar or with cello accompaniment.

Cellist Christiane Conradt grew up in Thuringia, studied with Konrad Lechner, Hans Adomeit and Leo Koscielny. Following an engagement with the Nuremberg Symphonic she joined the Bochum Symphonic. Her special interest lies in contemporary composers, both in chamber music and cello solo works. She is a member of the kwr5 - Collective for Improvised Music, and in Bochum she developed a Center for New Music and Performances.

The combination of contemporary compositions for cello solo which she performed, together with the vocal offerings by Gantralyan from the Armenian repertoire, – musical interludes which framed the German and Armenian renditions of the works – functioned as a metaphor for the many faces of poet Sevak: he is both the fervent patriot of his beloved Armenia and the voice of universal values for all mankind, just as he is the reflection of a cultural heritage stretching back millennia and a spirit comprehensible to the contemporary world.

Muriel Mirak-Weissbach can be reached at mirak.weissbach@google-mail.com

International News

Armenia to Switch to Karabagh ‘Deterrence’ Strategy

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia plans to abandon its “static defense” strategy and switch to a more active deterrence in its standoff with Azerbaijani troops in the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict zone, an Armenian official said.

Speaking at a seminar organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna on February 18, Armenian Deputy Defense Minister David Tonoian said that in order “to alleviate” the confrontation, Yerevan is “gradually” turning to the “deterrence system.”

Iran Supports Political Solutions, Tells Aliyev

TEHRAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Iran hopes for a political solution to regional problems, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said last week, the Iranian IRNA news agency reported.

He made the remarks at a joint press conference with his Azerbaijani counterpart, Ilham Aliyev, in Tehran.

Iran’s president also said that they had constructive talks on energy, oil and gas, division and joint use of Caspian resources, and also Islamic issues and the Syria crisis.

Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey FMs Visit Railway

BAKU (AzerNews) – The Foreign Ministers of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey visited the Georgian section of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway main line, as part of the trilateral meeting in Tbilisi on February 19, Georgian Foreign Ministry’s press service reported.

According to the Foreign Ministers of the three countries, it is a project of historic importance which will connect Asia with Europe.

The Georgian Foreign Minister believes the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway will considerably increase the competitiveness of the transport corridor, will attract greater volumes of cargoes and will contribute to the realization of the Silk Road project.

“The three countries continue to contribute huge amount of resources towards this project. Over 700 million has already been spent on the Georgian section alone. This project will create additional job places. Once completed, over 1400 people will be employed here. This is going to be a watershed project. We will soon have the first shipment of cargo freighted via this road,” Mikheil Janelidze said.

Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway is being constructed on the basis of a Georgian-Azerbaijani-Turkish intergovernmental agreement.

Belarus, Armenia Sign Cooperation Agreement

YEREVAN (BelTA) – Belarus and Armenia signed an agreement on cooperation in the nuclear power industry, the Economy Ministry of Armenia announced this week.

Armenia’s Economy Minister Karen Chshmaritian told the press that Armenia and Belarus have developed a robust foundation for the development of bilateral relations in every sphere and area. “Further strengthening of economic cooperation as well as the EEU potential will help expand the cooperation range in the future,” he stressed.

Armenia invited Belarus to invest in mechanical engineering, processing and food industry, agribusiness, alternative energy and tourism.

Other areas that will be beneficial for both, according to the terms, are free economic zones in Armenia where companies working in the area of high technology, engineering, jewelry are fully exempted from taxes.

Galstyan said other topics under agreement are policies to promote the expansion of the transit potential of Armenia, improve the conditions for investment and strengthen Armenia’s importance as an significant link between Europe, Middle East and Asia.



Ambassador Ashot Smbatyan delivering greetings, with Stepan Gantralyan at his side (left to right)

Yerevan State University from 1940 to 1945 and in that period began to publish his own works. At the end of the 1950s he wrote what was considered a revolutionary work, *The Never Muted Bell-Tower*, which literature professor Samuel Muradyan has called “the literary chronicle of the 100-year-long history of the Armenians.” Armenia, Hayastan, the homeland, the Armenians and their sad past are the leading themes treated by Sevak, but his work is not limited to national themes. Universal are his poetical and philosophical thoughts on Nature, Man and, above all, Love. If today he is the most beloved Armenian poet, it is due to his ability to lend intense expression to the feelings of an entire people, whether young or old. And his universality has made him known in other cultural circles outside his homeland.

Sevak was not only a poet, but also a prose writer, literary historian and critic, and translator. Among the Russian authors he translated are Pushkin, Lermontov und Mayakovskiy. His own works have been translated into numerous eastern and western European languages. And now with their new German translation of a selection of his poems, Heide Rieck and Agapi Mkrtchian have produced a very courageous version, which reproduces content and rhythm of the original very

Community News

First-Ever Genealogy Conference in Watertown

WATERTOWN – On April 9, the first-ever Armenian genealogy conference will be held at the Armenian Museum of America. Throughout the day, featured speakers will detail the tools and methods specific to tracing Armenian family roots. In addition, there will be a workshop in the afternoon where volunteers will help answer questions from those wishing to learn more about their families.

Tracy Keeney, one of the conference organizers and a scheduled speaker, noted “At some point in our lives, most people feel a tug at the heart to reach into the past and connect with those who came before us. For those of Armenian descent, that was a seemingly hopeless quest for decades. But that is simply no longer the case. That’s the significance of this conference. Armenians around the world are longing to find traces of their ancestors, to learn their stories, the name of their ancestral village, etc. They feel a pull—like the voices of their ancestors are calling from dust. This conference will help them answer that call.” Keeney is the person behind the Armenian genealogy facebook page which has more than 2,500 members from around the world.

The conference grew out of a phone conversation between two of the other organizers, Mark Arslan and George Aghjayan. Arslan is the creator of the Armenian Immigration Project (<http://arslanmb.org/ArmenianImmigrants/shiplists.html>). Aghjayan maintains a website devoted to Western Armenia (<http://westernarmenia.weebly.com/>).

Arslan noted, “The recent proliferation and acceptance of social media has allowed a level of collaboration on genealogical and historical research never before possible. Tracy Keeney’s Armenian Genealogy group on Facebook has brought together people from the Armenian diaspora worldwide, as well as the Republic of Armenia, who share a passionate interest in learning more about their Armenian families and heritage. The collective knowledge of our online community is amazing, everyone bringing their own special talents to uncover genealogical treasures from the primary records online and in archives, as well as sharing their own family anecdotes, memories, and experiences.”

Beside Arslan and Keeney, other speakers include Vahe Tachjian (houshamadyan.org), Janet Achoukian Andreopoulos and Stephen Kurkjian. Tachjian will speak about the Houshamadyan project to reconstruct Armenian village life prior to the genocide. Andreopoulos and Kurkjian will be speaking about how DNA testing was able to reconnect one family to their Armenian roots. There will be DNA kits available at the conference for purchase and testing.

“Armenian genealogy has grown by leaps and bounds over the last 10 years. Advances in technology have allowed access to information previously thought unattainable,” Aghjayan said. “It is a natural progression to hold annual conferences for those desiring to advance knowledge of their Armenian roots. For so long, Armenians were told no records exist, everyone has passed away and other messages of futility. I think many Armenians will be surprised by just how much is possible to repair the rupture in our family histories caused by the genocide.”

Sponsors of the conference include the Armenian Museum of America (AMA), Project Save Armenian Photographic Archives, Houshamadyan.org, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and the Boston chapter of Hamazkayin. Conference registration can be done on-line (<https://www.armeniangenealogyconference.com/>). The registration is free, but there is a small cost for lunch, if chosen.



Professor Simon Payaslian shows slides

Panel Presents Personal Perspectives on Karabagh At Northeastern University

BOSTON – The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), with the cosponsorship of the Northeastern University Armenian Students Association, presented a panel discussion on Karabagh on February 12 moderated by Professor Anna Ohanyan at Northeastern’s student center. Different personal perspectives of Armenian discussants with varying connections to the region made for an accessible and informative event. The sizable audience of approximately 110 included both a good number of students as well as older individuals from the Boston area Armenian community.

By Aram Arkun

Mirror-Spectator Staff

After a welcome from the vice president of the Northeastern student club, Ani Semerdjian, and master of ceremonies Marc Mamigonian, Director of Academic Affairs of NAASR, a video from Northeastern University president Joseph Aoun, was screened. Aoun declared that he had Armenian friends while growing up as a youth in Lebanon, and so learned all about the Armenian soccer teams there. He encouraged the students to simultaneously celebrate their Armenian roots and American identities, and said they were sending the world a message – that no matter where the students lived now, they continued to care about Armenians and Armenian issues.

Dr. Simon Payaslian, holder of the Charles K. and Elizabeth M. Kenosian Chair in Modern Armenian History and Literature at Boston University, provided a short historical overview of Nagorno-Karabagh or Artsakh from ancient times to the present, accompanied by PowerPoint slides.

Ohanyan concisely described the recent shift of the situation in Karabagh from what many observers called a frozen or low-intensity conflict to a more active one, with a greater number of frontline deaths last year and heavy military buildup. It has become a frontline for the new conflict between Russia and the West. For the rest of the program, she directed a series of questions on Karabagh to four panelists.

Ohanyan is Richard B. Finnegan Distinguished Professor of Political Science and International Relations and Chair of the Department of Political Science and see NORTHEASTERN, page 4



From left, moderator Dr. Anna Ohanyan with panelists Armine Mosiyan, Constantine Grigoryan, Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte and Olya Yordanyan, with Northeastern University President Joseph Aoun on the screen above them.

Armenian Assembly of America Recalls Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s Efforts for Karabagh Peace

By Danielle Saroyan

WASHINGTON – This week, the Armenian Assembly of America mourned the loss of former Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) Boutros Boutros-Ghali and recalled his efforts towards a lasting peace in Nagorno Karabagh. Boutros-Ghali died on Tuesday, February 16, at age 93.

“The Assembly was saddened to hear of the passing of former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali,” stated Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. “Armenians will always be grateful for his work and remember how he took diplomatic measures to counter Azerbaijan’s violence against the freedom-loving people of Nagorno Karabagh,” he said.

“As Secretary-General, he presided over a dramatic rise in UN peacekeeping. He also presided over a time when the world increasingly turned to the United Nations for solutions to its problems, in the immediate aftermath of the cold war,” current Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said in a statement about Boutros-Ghali’s death.

In March 1992, Boutros-Ghali sent then-UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Cyrus Vance to Karabagh in order to mediate and moderate the hostilities. This was the first official move by the UN in the Nagorno Karabagh War, two weeks after Armenia became a member state of the UN.

In a cable to the then-President of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Jiri Dienstbier (former Czechoslovakia), Boutros-Ghali explained he



Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

was sending Vance to gather information about the problems in the region, not trying to overstep CSCE efforts in any way. “Please be assured . . . that my purpose in sending Mr. Vance on this fact-finding mission is to complement regional efforts in search of peace,” Boutros-Ghali clarified. “The grave situation in that region calls for a concerted effort to prevent further violence and to create conditions for a peaceful solution,” he said.

Reflecting on Boutros-Ghali’s role in Karabagh, the Assembly hopes his dedication will inspire a renewed effort to resolve the stalemate. Increased ceasefire violations by Azerbaijan has led to more Armenian casualties along the Line of Contact in 2014-2015 than in the previous 20 years combined. Azerbaijan’s obsession with reigniting a war with Armenia prompted U.S. Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper, Jr. to include Nagorno Karabagh in his 2016 conflict risk assessment which he provided to the Senate Armed Services Committee last week.

Boutros-Ghali was an Egyptian diplomat and the sixth Secretary-General of the UN from 1992 to 1996, and the first from Africa. While he was Secretary-General, he wrote “An Agenda for Peace,” an analysis on ways to strengthen UN capacity for preventive diplomacy, peace-making, and peacekeeping.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Panel Presents Perspectives on Karabagh at Northeastern University

NORTHEASTERN, from page 5

International Studies at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass. She is the author of *Networked Regionalism as Conflict Management* (Stanford University Press, 2015) and *NGOs, IGOs, and Network Mechanism of Post-Conflict Global Governance* in *Microfinance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), and is organizing a global security studies internship program which includes choices of placement in Armenia, Georgia and Serbia.

The panelists included Konstantin Grigoryan, Armine Mosiyan, Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte, and Olya Yordanyan. Each first presented his or her personal background. Grigoryan's family, originally from Karabagh, settled in Baku until the events of the late 1980s forced them to flee. After brief stays in Armenia and Russia, they settled in Kentucky, where Grigoryan grew up. After studying engineering, he switched fields, and now is doing his residency in medical school. He remains in contact with relatives in Karabagh.

Armine Mosiyan, a native of Artsakh who went to Yerevan State University, has come to the US to study at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

Turcotte was born in Baku in 1978, but her grandfather was from Khndzoresk village of Syunik province in present-day southeastern Armenia. He fled the Armenian Genocide to Baku where Azerbaijani violence against Armenians in 1918 forced him to flee to Turkmenistan, but eventually he ended up in Yerevan. However, the family moved back to Baku, now part of the Soviet Union, for work reasons. As hostility in Azerbaijan towards Armenians escalated, Turcotte and her family left Baku in the fall of 1989, just before the January 1990 attacks and killings of Armenians. After a period of time in Armenia, they received American refugee status and moved to North Dakota. In 2012, Turcotte published her memoirs, *Nowhere: A Story of Exile*, based on the diary she kept.

Yordanyan, raised in Yerevan, has no direct

roots in Karabagh, but lived in Armenia during the war. She is a freelance journalist pursuing a master's degree at Boston University who has undergraduate and master's degrees in International Relations from Yerevan State University (as well as a bachelor's degree in Musical Arts from the Komitas Yerevan State Conservatory). She holds a graduate certificate in Public Policy and Administration from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

Ohanyan's first question was how the lack of international recognition and the blockade of the Republic of Mountainous Karabagh (NKR) affects daily life. Mosiyan responded that NKR enjoys all the attributes of a country, and said that in daily life, "I don't feel any kind of difference with other countries." However, Azerbaijani threats to shoot down civilian planes do not allow the use of an airport, while diplomas from Artsakh State University are not recognized in places like the US. The blockade prevents many international investments, and loans from the World Bank or International Monetary Fund are not possible. Tourism is affected, and this impacts the economy.

Grigoryan said that there is a fear that war may break out again. The youth have to serve in the military, and even now shootings takes place, leading to sporadic deaths. He said, "It is a fear that we don't experience here in the United States. ... Having been there, it is also eerie, going through some of the regions where you see empty villages. ... You are always reminded of the atrocities that had happened. The city of Shushi, yes, is being rebuilt, but there are parts of it where you go and you are reminded of the war. There is always the unease that people have."

Turcotte pointed out that there is stable economic growth, and said that this "is unusual for a country that is not considered to be a country, that is blockaded and whose only trade is with Armenia." She said the people of Karabagh want good government, peace, and construction. The roads are better than in

Armenia, thanks to foreign investment, and despite areas reminding visitors of the war, the capital of Stepanakert is beautiful and Shushi, an artistic center, is progressing. Mining, food processing, telecommunications, construction and tourism produce income, but educational opportunities and health care are limited.

She declared that the borders are constantly being attacked, and demining is necessary. The US is the only country in the world that sends

Budapest was a disturbing aspect of the situation.

Turcotte said that up to several months ago she would have said that Armenia would have successfully continued its balancing act between the various powers in the region, but now, with the fall of the Azerbaijani currency along with oil prices, ordinary citizens are committing suicide because of their debt. Azerbaijani criticism of the Aliyev regime has increased, which may lead Aliyev to irrational actions. He already has begun the use of tanks at the borders. In sum, she said, she no longer knows what may happen next.

Yordanyan said that changes for the worse in Russian-Western relations will affect the Karabagh negotiation process negatively and slow it down. The Middle Eastern situation is important. As the US wants to cooperate with Iran to achieve a solution to the Syrian conflict, an increased role of Iran in the region may also help Armenia directly, and indirectly in the negotiation process. On the other hand, a rise in Islamic fundamentalism in the region may spread to Azerbaijan and pose a threat in the future to Armenia.

Ohanyan's third set of questions included what NKR might gain through a demilitarization of the line of contact with Azerbaijan and how important international recognition is for the people of NKR.

Yordanyan responded, saying "I do not think that the demilitarization of contact line borders is possible considering the extent of anti-Armenian hatred now in Azerbaijan." International recognition is important as the final step or end. Without it, Karabagh does not exist, and it will provide many more opportunities. However, a lot of other steps are necessary before this, she said.

Finally, Ohanyan asked what is the significance of NKR for Armenians outside Armenia who grew up with the legacy of the Armenian Genocide.

Turcotte said that she just received a question after an event in Boston which led her to write an article afterwards. An Armenian community leader asked why can we not empty Karabagh of its Armenian population and give it to Azerbaijan in order to end this conflict. She said that this cynicism is shocking. "For the first time in our history, we have won back land...yet millions of Armenians do not know about Karabagh. They don't support its fight for independence. That is why these kinds of events are important." Turcotte said it is important to send the message to Azerbaijan that while Armenia may not have oil, it has its diaspora.

Grigoryan said, "I haven't been part of the greater Armenian diaspora. I grew up in Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio, where there were not many Armenians around, but I always felt connected with Artsakh growing up...it should be important for the whole Armenian diaspora. We are all Armenians and should be united as much as we can." He added that with Armenians from Syria settling in Karabagh, that may create further bonds with diaspora Armenians.

Yordanyan eagerly said, "I was waiting for this moment. This is the best part, where a lot can be done." She said there is a lot of potential for developing information technologies in Karabagh which would overcome its isolation, and diasporan Armenians can be of great help. Furthermore, a lot of people in NKR are self-employed, so comparatively small sums of money can allow their projects to continue. Finally, she said, diasporan Armenians need to discover Karabagh for themselves in a new way, such as through summer internships. Yordanyan said, "You do not need formal recognition — just the will and a project."

Mosiyan said "I myself feel that Karabagh plays a huge part in diasporan life. When someone asks where you are from and I say Armenia, and when someone is Armenian and I say Artsakh, I can feel the warmth. ... We can see the diaspora caring about Karabagh when we look at the roads. It is not only financial support — it is caring about the state." Diasporan Armenians come to live in the villages with families for several days to get to know them better.

At the conclusion of the program, audience questions were fielded by the panelists.



Northeastern University Armenian Students Association Vice President Ani Semerdjian

aid officially, and that is only two million dollars for demining, which is insufficient. There is no UN presence because of the conflict.

She concluded, "All the things that we hold dear here, they hold dear there. They don't care that they are not recognized. ... They are still living [there] and their kids are going to school. We need to support them."

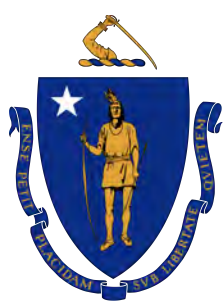
Yordanyan said, "There is a psychological element of permanent pressure and fear that there might be a war, but it has been 25 years so when it happens every day you get used to it even if it is extreme. ... People living there are really, really strong. They are like the Scots of Armenia." She found that many of the problems of daily life were the same as those facing Armenians living in the Republic of Armenia. Maintaining a self-sustainable economic is a great collective challenge, but, she said, there are many positive achievements in Artsakh, such as low unemployment at around two to three percent and real competition in the parliamentary elections. Yordanyan thought that "the people of Artsakh should concentrate on building civil society...which will make the Republic of Artsakh a stronger country. This is the only resource Karabagh can rely on." Another opportunity is to increase energy production to begin exporting to Armenia.

Ohanyan's second question concerned the recent increased intensity and breadth of violence on the 160-mile line of contact despite a formal ceasefire. How does the rapidly shifting geopolitical environment of the south Caucasus affect the peace process?

Mosiyan said that Azerbaijan has to choose between Turkey and Russia because of recent conflicts, and if Russian-Turkish relations turn sour, as part of the relations of Russia with the West, they affect the Karabagh issue too. Meanwhile, Iran is reemerging in the region after its nuclear deal. Finally, the economic collapse in Azerbaijan due to falling oil prices increases domestic dissatisfaction with the government, so President Ilham Aliyev may turn to Karabagh as his trump card.

Grigoryan said that Armenians have always been the pawn of the powers in the region, and lately Armenia has been aligning more with Russia. For him, the most likely scenario is the indefinite continuation of the status quo. Iran does not want a strong Azerbaijan since it has a large domestic Azerbaijani population, while Turkey generally aligns with Azerbaijan and is at odds with Iran. Aliyev cannot sign a ceasefire since he would lose face domestically. For Grigoryan, however, the Azerbaijani celebration of Ramil Safarov as a national hero after his brutal murder of an Armenian in 2004 in

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OBITUARY

Assembly Issues Statement Mourning Death of Supreme Court Justice Scalia

Scalia was the First Supreme Court Justice to Visit Armenia

WASHINGTON — US Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died on Sunday, February 14, at age 79. Scalia was appointed to the high bench by President Ronald Reagan in 1986. He was born in Trenton, NJ and received his LLB from Harvard University.

While Scalia is known generally to Americans



(L-R): Aram Kaloosdian, Justice Antonin Scalia, Carolyn Mugar

as a high-profile figure, he is also well known in the Armenian-American community. In July 1995, Scalia became the first sitting US Supreme Court Justice to visit Armenia.

"In our world of law, he was a giant. His heart had no boundaries; his mind had no limits," former California Supreme Court Justice Armand Arabian told the Assembly upon learning of Scalia's passing. "There was nobody like him. He was my judicial brother," Arabian said.

Scalia traveled to Yerevan to participate in a

USAID-funded conference of judges, lawyers, and legal experts, sponsored by the Technical Assistance for the Republic of Armenia (TARA), a non-profit group focused on promoting an independent judiciary in Armenia following that country's independence from the Soviet Union.

Accompanying Scalia on his trip to Armenia were five other American judges: Armand Arabian and Marvin Baxter of the California Supreme Court, Paul Michel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, Dickran Tevzian of the US District Court in Southern California, and Eric Bruggink of the US Court of Federal Claims. American attorneys participating in the Yerevan conference include TARA Board of Directors Chair Nancy Najarian, TARA Executive Director Dan Maljanian, Sam Ericsson, Van Krikorian, Peter Kezirian, Tom Samuelian, Karen Lord, Carmen Bullard, Professor Mark Movsesian of Hofstra University Law School, and Professors Bob Sharlet and Herman Schwartz of the Rule of Law Consortium.

The Armenian Assembly of America reported in 1995 that, "Scalia emphasized the importance of establishing an independent judiciary in Armenia and the means by which the country has begun to do so." Armenia held a referendum on the adoption of the country's first constitution days before the US delegation arrived.

"I made a point of reading it from top to bottom. I thought it was quite good," Scalia said of Armenia's constitution. "I don't think it's as good as ours. Maybe it's better than ours, for the Armenians," he said.

During the conference in Yerevan, Scalia



(L-R): Nancy Najarian, Dan Maljanian, and Justice Antonin Scalia

noted the difficulty of moving beyond the rhetoric of change to implementation, and stressed the importance of legal training and education. "I think people are very much aware of...the enormous difficulty for all of the emerging democracies to jump-start a new democracy without a corps of [newly trained] judges," he remarked.

Scalia also emphasized the value of becoming personally acquainted with members of the judiciary in different countries. He expressed enthusiasm about the meeting with Armenia's Supreme Court justices, including Chief Justice Taniel Parseghian, as well as the lower court judges. "I think we can support one another and learn from one another," Scalia said. "He does believe enormously in the new system, in the rule of law, in human rights," Scalia said of Parseghian.

According to Scalia, one of the many benefits of the 1995 TARA conference was the increased attention given to the judicial branch of Armenia's government. "[American judges] can buttress the self-respect of the judiciary in another

culture [and] get the members of the government who are not in the judiciary to think more about that branch of government," he commented.

On October 5, 1995, the Armenian Assembly of America held a reception in Scalia's honor at the Grand Hotel in Washington, D.C. At the reception, Scalia presented his observations on the legal transformation underway in Armenia to over 60 officials from the White House, various government agencies, think tanks, organizations administering democracy-building and rule-of-law programs in Armenia, and the press, as well as Assembly Life, Full and Associate Trustees. Notable attendees include former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Harry Gilmore, Armenian Ambassador to the U.S. Rouben Shugarian, and USAID Administrator Tom Dine.

During the Assembly's reception, Board of Trustees President Carolyn Mugar presented Justice Antonin Scalia with a wood carving from Armenia symbolizing man's faith in justice. Mugar also presented him with a framed certificate signifying the 50 trees planted in Armenia in Scalia's name by the Assembly's sister organization, the Armenia Tree Project.

Armenian Assembly Board of Trustees Counsel Aram Kaloosdian, who served as master of ceremonies at the 1995 reception in Justice Scalia's honor, told the Assembly that Scalia "was elated at having gone to Armenia and he was very much impressed with the work being done out there. Many people came to the reception to hear his views, and he was very positive and enthusiastic about Armenia."

Marilyn Altoon Arshagouni

NORTHRIDGE, Calif. — Marilyn Altoon Arshagouni, wife of Hagop Arshagouni and mother of Robert, Mary (Papazian), Michael, and Paul Arshagouni, passed away peacefully on February 14, surrounded by her loved ones.

Born in Los Angeles in 1935 to one of the earliest Armenian families to settle in the Los Angeles area, Marilyn lived a fulfilling life of dedication to the Armenian community. A brilliant student from her earliest years, Marilyn graduated from Marshall High School in Los Angeles with highest honors and attended UCLA, where she became the first student at the university to be elected to the Phi Beta

Theirs was a marriage of love and shared commitment to their family and community.

While in graduate school at UCLA, Marilyn met the then young graduate student of Armenian history, Richard Hovannisian, who asked her to edit his dissertation. This work became the classic *Armenia on the Road to Independence*. She then went on to edit the first volumes of his *History of the Republic of Armenia*. This led to a lifetime of contributions to the Armenian community.

Together with her husband, Hagop, Marilyn was an active participant on the Armenian Monument Council that spearheaded the establishment of the Armenian Genocide Memorial in Montebello. She was involved in the first conferences in Airlie, Va., that established the Armenian Assembly of America, contributed a year-long feature page for the *California Courier* titled "Whispers of Armenia" to introduce Armenian literature, history, and culture to the growing California Armenian community, and was a driving force behind the creation of the Armenian timeline project at the Ararat Armenian Home.

In addition, Marilyn and Hagop dedicated their lives to bringing together their extended families who were dispersed across the globe as a result of the Armenian Genocide, traveling around the world to be sure they recorded as many of the names of family members and their stories as they could find. These efforts led to emotional family reunions and the establishment of relationships that would have been lost, if not for their efforts.

Marilyn leaves behind her husband, Hagop; her children Robert (Manya), Mary (Dennis), Michael, and Paul (Long), her five granddaughters Nina and Liana Arshagouni, Ani and Marie Papazian, and Beth Arshagouni; her sister Joyce, brother Ron, and countless nieces and nephews, cousins, students, and friends whose lives she touched.

She was laid to rest on Friday, February 19, at the Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood Hills. The family requests in lieu of flowers donations to be made to the Marilyn Arshagouni Memorial Scholarship Fund, which will be established in her honor.

In lieu of flowers donations can be sent to the Marilyn Arshagouni Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Jackson and Arshagouni, 9176 Independence Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311.



Kappa honor society as a junior. She graduated with a BA in English in 1956 with highest honors and went on to receive her teaching credential and complete her graduate studies, also at UCLA.

A dedicated educator and lover of the arts, she became a teacher of English literature and history at the Holy Martyrs Ferrahian Armenian High School in Encino, which she served for over 25 years, touching and transforming the lives of generations of students.

Marilyn met her husband, Hagop Arshagouni, while both were students at UCLA. They married in 1956 and would have celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this September.

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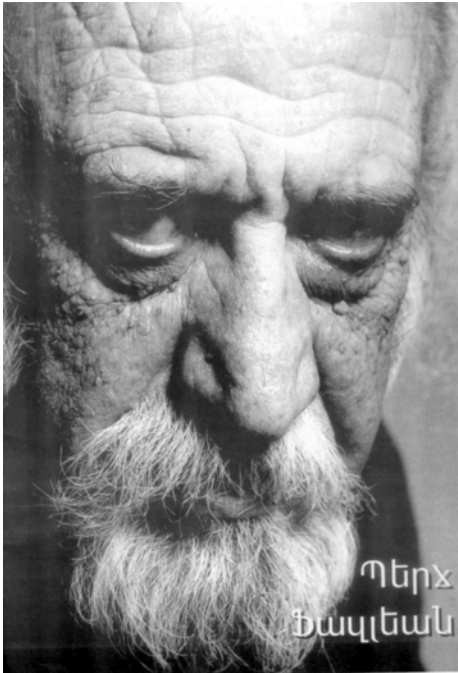
OBITUARY

Actor and Director Fazlian Played Important Role in Armenian, Lebanese Theater

FAZLIAN, from page 1

He conducted his initial experiments in Armenian theater through Armenian plays, but he also attempted to give new ascendance to his art. Istanbul no longer had anything to impart to him. A Turkish lecturer who was friendly toward Fazlian said to him: "Swear to me that you will never leave the theater... This place is not suitable for you. Do not forget that you are Armenian. Why would a leading role be given to an Armenian [here]?" This lesson was sufficient for Fazlian, who left Istanbul in 1951.

He settled in Beirut and formed a family while continuing his theatrical activities. He married the painter Sirvart Krikorian in 1959, and soon they had two children. His son Harout



Berj Fazlian

became a famous conductor and artistic director of various symphonic orchestras in a number of Middle Eastern countries.

In Beirut, he founded the Nor Pem ("New Stage") theater group in 1956, Vahram Papazian (for the Armenian Youth Association) in 1959, and Azad Pem ("Free Stage") in 1971. They were widely covered in Armenian, Arabic and French-language newspapers. Fazlian was invited to direct the plays of the Rahbani brothers, with the participation of the world-famous Lebanese singer Fayrouz, in the Baalbek festival, as well as in Beirut and Damascus. For 16 years he directed the musical dramas of the Rahbani brothers.

In 1975, he immigrated to Canada and settled in Montreal for several decades before even-

tually returning to Beirut. In Canada he continued his artistic work, joining the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA). In 1976, he founded Montreal's TCA Hay Pem and directed "Le Pendu," a work of the famous Canadian author Robert Gurik in Armenian translation as "Baran ge dzakhem." He participated in the local Theater Festival of Minorities and won first prize. In 1989, he founded Montreal's Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL) "Armenorama" television show.

The Hay Pem theater group held performances abroad, in London, Paris, and various cities of Syria, Egypt and the United States, including New York, Boston and Philadelphia. During the London performance, Fazlian joined the ADL with Vartan Ouzounian as his godfather, and thus formalized his adherence to the political and patriotic views that he had supported for so many years in the past.

He had established friendly relations with Lebanese ADL leaders like Kersam Aharonian and Hrachya Setrakian in the past. Furthermore, many of the members of Beirut's Vahram Papazian theater group were ADL members like Zaven Kalousdian, Haroutiun Kntouni, Khachig Tashjian, Haroutiun Toumayan, Vartkes Eurneshlian, Asdghig Basmajian, Toros Sarkisian, Hampartoum Dadourian, Krikor Degirmenjian, Berj Der Sahagian, Sarkis Minasian, Levon Torosian, Ani Yaghjian and Hagop Vartivarian.

The creation of the Vahram Papazian theater group was significant because until then there was only one permanent drama group in Beirut, Hamazkayin's Kasbar Ipegian group. Consequently, Armenian Revolutionary Federation members and sympathizers would become its actors and only presented partisan plays. The Vahram Papazian group brought new life and quality to Lebanese-Armenian theatrical life by presenting multifaceted Western Armenian, Eastern Armenian and non-Armenian plays.

As an actor, he participated in some ten plays whose directors included Yusuf Shahin, Henri Antoine Barakat, Antoine Rémy and Niazi Mustafa. He also played the chief role in an English-language film made in Canada called "Next of Kin," directed by Atom Egoyan.

He directed more than 100 plays in English, Arabic, French and Turkish. Of these the most unforgettable remain Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Molière's "Les fourberies de Scapin," "George Dandin ou le Mari confondu," and "The Miser," Goldoni's "The Liar," Nikolai Gogol's "Marriage," and most especially, Georges Schehadé's "Histoire de Vasco," which was produced in Lebanon for see THEATER, page 9

Anouch N. Manoukian

NASHUA, N.H. — Anouch N. Manoukian, 90, of Nashua, widow of Nazareth M. Manoukian, died on February 2, 2016 at St. Joseph Hospital.

She was born in Beirut, Lebanon on December 28, 1925, a daughter of the late Manoog and Nellie Haytayan. A well-educated woman, she earned a Bachelor's degree and spoke five languages fluently and played both the piano and the violin.

She began her career as a French teacher in Lebanon and was an accomplished theater costume designer. She and her family immigrated to the United States in 1977 and she had resided in Nashua for the past 39 years.

Manoukian was a volunteer at St. Joseph Hospital for more than 25 years and also volunteered with the American Red Cross.

She was a parishioner and volunteer of St. Vartanantz Armenian Church in Chelmsford,

Mass. and served as the chairman of Women's Guild. She was honored as "Woman of the Year" for her tireless work on behalf of others a few years ago.

She will be remembered as a devoted wife, mother and grandmother, who dedicated her entire life to her family, to God and to helping others.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her husband of 53 years, Nazareth M. Manoukian, who died in August 2002; and a grandson, Michael Manoukian.

Members of her family include two sons, Vatche Manoukian of Hollis and Vahrij Manoukian, R.P.H. ScD and Hollis Selectman; two daughters, Vani of Nashua, and Vera of Manhattan, NY; and five grandchildren, Christine, Jessica, Annie, L.V. and Bella.

Her funeral service was held in St. Vartanantz Armenian Church, Monday, February 8. Interment was in East Cemetery in Hollis.

The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824.

Tribute: Remembering Jean Gazarian, Witness to UN History

NEW YORK (UN News Centre/New York Times) — Jean Gazarian died on January 18, 2016. He was an international civil servant who, working under every Secretary-General of the United Nations, spent more than six decades dedicated to world peace.

A mentor to so many, a true humanitarian, a gentle and kind man, he was highly respected for his integrity and generosity, and inspired love and affection to all those who met him.

From 1946, when the French national joined the UN Secretariat as a translator, to his tenure as director of the Division of General Assembly Affairs, Gazarian devoted his life to international public service.

Jean Gazarian joined the United Nations in 1946, when he was 24. He served first as a translator, then as an editor and, in 1959, was called to work in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to deal with General Assembly affairs. In 1966, he became Director of the Division of the General Assembly Affairs, a position he held for 18 years. A witness to many

world events, he met kings and queens, and presidents, but always remained humble. Ambassador Ahmad Kamal, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), told the UN News Centre: "He was absolutely unique as a person. His knowledge, his devotion to the UN and the manner in which he inspired love and affection among thousands of UN diplomats and staff members made him a prince among men."

"He was absolutely unique as a person," Ahmad Kamal, ambassador and senior fellow at UNITAR, told the UN News Centre. "His knowledge, his devotion to the UN and the manner in which he inspired love and affection among thousands of UN diplomats and staff members made him a prince among men."

In 2013, during the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of UNITAR, Secretary-



Jean Gazarian at the commemoration of UNITAR's 50th anniversary with Ban Ki-moon. UN Photo/Amanda Voisard

General Ban Ki-moon paid tribute to Gazarian, tipping his hat to the wealth of accumulated knowledge accrued by the veteran staff member.

"You had a unique perch, working with the General Assembly for many years. You have truly seen it all... And, I am sure, enough behind-the-scenes intrigue to fill a movie or a memoir. But of course, as a consummate international civil servant, you will never betray your oath of confidentiality," said Ban. "You served several Secretaries-General. Most of all, you earned the respect of colleagues around the world."

Gazarian was never stingy with his vast pool of knowledge, always ready to share his insight and experience of historic moments.

Drawing from his vast experience over the decades, he was also able to offer a personal perspective on a number of issues as well as Secretaries-General, as he did in a 2007 article for the UN Chronicle.

"In the early days of the United Nations, an atmosphere of extreme enthusiasm prevailed. Delegates were convinced they had adopted a system of collective security that would ban all wars forever, a feeling shared by Trygve Lie of Norway, who served as the first Secretary-General," recounted Gazarian.

By 1953, when Dag Hammarskjöld of Sweden took over the post, Gazarian indicated that "the international situation had begun to deteriorate and the earlier euphoria was replaced by an atmosphere of extreme tension between the East and the West."

Diplomats were not Gazarian's only pupils. He had also shared his lessons with UN support staff preparing for promotion examinations. In the 1990s he was a regular figure at workshops where he would present to aspiring professionals first-hand accounts of UN events, such as when Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev pounded his shoe on his desk during a meeting in October 1960 to protest remarks by a Philippine diplomat about Soviet aggression.

As a former director at Drew University expressed: "When he talked, everyone listened."

While working for the General Assembly, he traveled extensively as secretary and coordinator of conferences, held in Geneva, Oslo, Vienna, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Managua, Jakarta, Guatemala, etc.

He also assisted Secretary-General U Thant during his official visit in 1970 to eleven Francophone African countries, where he served as his interpreter. From 1983 to 1985, Jean was Principal Advisor to the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and to the President of the General Assembly. From 1985 to 1986, he was Director of the Office for the Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations. In 1986, he was Secretary of the High Level Intergovernmental Group of Experts regarding the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations. In 1987,

He was one of the pioneers of Model UN, spoke to large assemblies of students from all over the world, and was an instrumental figure of the "UN Semester" co-organized by Drew University.

Gazarian was recognized by governments and universities for his outstanding contribution to the United Nations and world peace: Officier de l'Ordre de La Pleiade, Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (1977). Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Légion d'honneur, France (1984). Grand Officier de l'Ordre de Vasco Nunez de Balboa, Panama (1984). Doctor of Letters, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia (1986). Doctor of Laws, Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts (1996). Doctor en Administration de la Paix, Cercle de Reflexion des Nations (2004). Doctor of Humane Letters, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey (2007).

Gazarian was "a walking encyclopaedia of the UN," according to Maritina Paniagua, a retired UN librarian who worked closely with him, who hailed his amazing institutional knowledge about the Organization.

"He was a true teacher," she added. "When he taught the UNITAR courses to delegates, it was not only the subject matter, but also what to do and what not to do as a delegate. For him, good, solid diplomacy was important. One of his best teaching tools to achieve this goal was through his stories of his experiences at the GA."

Gazarian is survived by his brother, Pierre Gazarian, columnist for The Suffolk Times, and his sister, Marie-Lise Gazarian, Director of the Graduate Program in Spanish, St. John's University, and the Mirimanoff family, from Geneva, Switzerland.

A prayer service, at the Church of the Holy Family, United Nations Parish, was held on Friday, January 29, where friends, colleagues and family paid tribute to Jean Gazarian.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Khatchig Mouradian to Speak at NAASR on Armenian Communities in China

BELMONT, Mass. – Dr. Khatchig Mouradian will present a lecture titled “Don’t Fall Off the Earth’: The Armenian Communities of China from the 1880s to the 1950s,” on Thursday, March 10, at 7:30 p.m., at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Center, 395 Concord Ave.

Hundreds of Armenians journeyed eastward to China in the late 19th century, anchoring themselves in major cities, as well as in Harbin, a town that rose to prominence with the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway. A few thousand others arrived in the region escaping the Armenian Genocide and turmoil in the Caucasus in the years that followed. Many of these

Armenians coupled their personal success with a dedication to community life, helping build small but vibrant communities (even a church and community centers) in Harbin, Shanghai, Tientsin and other cities, despite conflicts, war, and foreign occupation that beset the history of China in the first half of the 20th century. After the Chinese Communist Revolution, Armenians fled the country mainly in two directions: Soviet Armenia and the Americas.

In 2014, Mouradian received the Calouste Gulbenkian Armenian Studies research fellowship to study the Armenian community in China. After conducting archival research and interviews in China, Armenia, and the US,

Mouradian submitted a research report, and is currently working on an edited book on the subject. In this illustrated lecture, Mouradian presents the rich, yet understudied, history of the Armenian communities in China.

Mouradian is a visiting assistant professor at Rutgers University and the coordinator of the Armenian Genocide Program at the university’s Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights (CGHR). Mouradian is also adjunct professor at the Philosophy and Urban Studies departments at Worcester State University. He holds a PhD in history from the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University.

George and Amal Clooney Are Traveling to Armenia in April

By Danielle Saroyan

WASHINGTON – George and Amal Clooney are scheduled to arrive in Armenia on April 22-24 to participate in Armenian Genocide commemoration ceremonies, Novosti Armenia reports.

George Clooney, co-founder of the Not On Our Watch charity foundation, will be presenting the 100 Lives’ Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity alongside Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate Eli Wiesel. As co-chairs of the Aurora Prize, George Clooney and Wiesel worked together as part of the Prize Selection Committee. The Aurora Prize will be awarded on April 24 in Yerevan, Armenia.

On behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity will be granted annually to “an individual whose actions have had an exceptional impact on preserving human life and advancing humanitarian causes.” The Aurora Prize Laureate will be honored with a \$100,000 award. In addition, that individual will select an organization that inspired their work to receive a \$1,000,000 grant.

“We are humbled by the stories of selflessness, courage, strength and generosity,” said Aurora Prize co-founder Ruben



The Armenian community in Manzhouli (circa 1920). Source: Meltickian Collection, Armenian Studies Program, CSU Fresno.






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Since its inception in 2001, TCA's Sponsor a Teacher program has raised over \$563,000 and reached out to 5,627 teachers and school workers in Armenia & Karabagh.





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George and Amal Clooney

Vardanyan. “What we have received is proof that the world is full of inspiring and worthy individuals.”

Amal Clooney is also working with 100 Lives on a different project, called the Amal Clooney Scholarship. This program selects one female student from Lebanon with an interest in promoting human rights and international issues, and enrolls her at the United World College in Dilijan, Armenia. The first Amal Clooney Scholarship was awarded to Pamela Tebchran, a dedicated Lebanese student who graduated top of her class and is fluent in Arabic, French, and English. She will be using the scholarship to pursue her interests in human rights and women’s equality.



Armenian Assembly of America Board of Trustees Co-Chairman Anthony Barsamian and Board President Carolyn Mugar with George Clooney in New York City at the launch of the 100 Lives initiative for human rights.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Actor and Director Fazlian Played Important Role in Armenian, Lebanese Theater

THEATER, from page 7
 the first time in the presence of the author. His production of Aysam Mahfuz's play "Zanzalakht" ("The Chinaberry") was considered a turning point in the annals of Lebanese theater history.

Fazlian taught drama for many years at Lebanon's state, Saint Joseph and Al-Kafaat universities.

In 1986, Fazlian was invited by the Soviet Armenia state to direct various productions. On the invitation of Armenian State Television, he directed Yerukhan's "Tzgnorsi sere" ("The Love of the Fisherman"), a short story. Fazlian

Berj Araz, Missak Boghosian and Hagop Vartivarian were the New York area speakers. Fazlian received the Armenian General Benevolent Union's Certificate of Honor from its president Berge Setrakian, while Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) presented to him an encyclical from Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II accompanied by the St. Sahak and St. Mesrop Medal.

On Fazlian

Levon Torosian wrote in the daily *Zartokn* in 1960 in Beirut that "Fazlian is a madman of the theater in the good sense of the word. He is dedicated in an incorruptible way to the sacred cause of the Armenian theater."

Armen Tarian wrote in the French-Armenian newspaper *Haratch* from Beirut in 1960 the following: "Fazlian has understood well that the director is not a tool copying and repeating the playwright, but is in his own right a creative artist."

Dr. Bakhdiar Hovagimian wrote in 1987 in Yerevan as follows: "Has such a thing ever been seen, that a theatrical figure of Armenian background represents Lebanon's Arab theater in international circles?"

Shake Varsian wrote in Yerevan's *Hayreniki dzayn* in 1987, "Berj Fazlian is a master of energetic, effective, and bold concepts, and a theatrical figure who implements them."

I visited Fazlian for the last time this year on January 5 in a hospital in one of Beirut's suburbs. I saw him as constantly alert. Only his unique eyes remained from the Berj that I knew. I firmly squeezed the hand of the master, kissed him and slowly left the room.

He died in Beirut on February 15, 2016, at the age of 90. His funeral took place in the cathedral at Antelias on February 18.

(Translated from the Armenian)



In Yerevan in 1987, from left, Mher Mkrtichian, Sos Sargsian, Sirvart Fazlian, Berge Fazlian

in 1985 received an award from Vardges Hamazaspian, president of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Diasporan Armenians, and in 2000, received the St. Mesrob Mashdots Medal from Catholicos Aram I in Beirut.

The TCA Greater New York chapter organized Fazlian's 80th birthday celebration on April 30, 2006 in New Jersey. This was the first large expression of respect toward this great artist in the US. Krikor Satamian came from Los Angeles to speak - he first appeared on the stage in a Fazlian production, as did Tamar Hovhannisyan, the widow of Mher Mgrdichyan. Gerald Papasian came from Paris. Garine Kocharyan, Dr. Hrant Markarian, Nora Armani,



WASHINGTON — Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian (left) visited with New Jersey Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (right) following a meeting February 10, in Washington, D.C. Koutoujian thanked Pallone, the Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, for his continued support of the Armenian- American community.

Hilton Worldwide Opens First Hotel in Armenia

MCLEAN, Va. — Hilton Worldwide has opened the DoubleTree by Hilton Yerevan City Centre in the business district of Yerevan, the brand's first hotel in the country.

The 176-room hotel is located near a number of international embassies, and its multifunctional meeting facilities can host up to 700 delegates.

Inside the hotel is a new restaurant, Gold, featuring European and Italian specialties made from seasonal produce. Other amenities include

a spa and gym facilities with a treatment room, Hamam, Finnish sauna and cardio and weight training equipment.

"Armenia's economy is experiencing continuous growth, making it an exciting destination for business and leisure travelers alike. We look forward to delivering our globally-recognized service culture to guests arriving from both inside and outside of Armenia," said Dianna Vaughan, SVP and global head, DoubleTree by Hilton.

Առաջնորդութիւն Հայոց Ամերիկայի Արեւելեան Թեմի
 DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA (EASTERN)
 His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate
 Cordially invites the public to attend

A TOWN HALL MEETING WITH HIS EXCELLENCY RICHARD M. MILLS, JR.
 United States Ambassador to the Republic of **ARMENIA**

TUESDAY MARCH 1, 2016 7 P.M.
 Haik & Alice Kavookjian Auditorium
 630 Second Avenue (at 35th Street)
 New York City

The event is free and open to the public

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
 Armenian General Benevolent Union
 Armenia Fund USA
 Knights of Vartan
 Children of Armenia Fund
 Armenian Students Association
 Tekeyan Cultural Association
 Armenian American Health Professional Organization
 Armenian Engineers & Scientists of America
 Constantinople Armenian Relief Society
 Armenian Assembly of America
 Armenian National Committee of America
 Hamazkayin Armenian Educational & Cultural Society

Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)
 630 Second Avenue, New York City / 212.686.0710
 www.armenianchurch-ed.net

Meet with Ambassador Mills in person to hear his message, and share thoughts about relations between the U.S. and Armenia

The Armenian Churches, Community and Organizations of Greater Boston are cordially invited to attend

A TOWN HALL MEETING WITH HIS EXCELLENCY RICHARD M. MILLS, JR.
 United States Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia

THURSDAY MARCH 3, 2016
 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Meet with Ambassador Mills to hear his message and share thoughts about relations between the United States and Armenia

Hosted by
Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston
 Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall
 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA 02138
 617.354.0632 www.htaac.org office@htaac.org

This event is free and open to the public

Arts & Living

Pianist Sergei Babayan in Concert At Fresno State

FRESNO – Award winning pianist Sergei Babayan will perform in recital as part of the Philip Lorenz Memorial Keyboard Concert Series at Fresno State. The performance will take place at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9, in the Concert Hall on the Fresno State campus.

The concert is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program of Fresno State. Babayan will perform works by Schumann, Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Brahms.

Acclaimed for the immediacy, sensitivity, and depth of his interpretations, Sergei Babayan's performances reveal an emotional intensity and bold energy, equipping him to excel in repertoire ranging from Rameau to Ligeti. Winner of the 1989 Robert Casadesus International Piano Competition in Cleveland, this Armenian pianist returns to Fresno for another display of his "unequaled



Sergei Babayan

touch, perfectly harmonious phrasing and breathtaking virtuosity" (*Le Figaro*, Paris).

One of the most charismatic personalities on today's concert stage, Babayan's vibrantly expressive performances have spirited audience acclaim worldwide. Ever since his arrival in the United States, on his first trip outside of the Soviet Union in 1989, his breathtaking virtuosity and a wide-ranging tonal palette have brought him critical praise and accolades.

Babayan was born in Armenia to a musical family and started to play the piano at the age of three. He began his musical studies at the age of six under Luisa Markaryan and later with George Saradjev. He continued his studies at 19 with Mikhail Pletnev at the Moscow Conservatory and completed post-graduate work there in 1989 as a student of Professor Vera Gornostaeva. He also studied privately with Lev Naumov in Moscow.

After making his New York recital debut in 1990 at Alice Tully Hall to great critical acclaim, Babayan embarked on a busy schedule that has included solo appearances with the Cleveland Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Osaka Symphony, among others.

General tickets for the concert are available for \$25 per person, for seniors tickets are \$18, and tickets for students are \$5.

For more information please contact the Armenian Studies Program or visit fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies.

The Concert is supported by the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation, the Ararat Foundation of Alexandria, Virginia, Grace Jelalian Shahinian Armenian Concerts Fund, and the Leon S. Peters Foundation.



Zabel Yessayan

Book Launch for Yessayan's *In the Ruins* Set for Watertown Public Library

WATERTOWN – In June 1909, Istanbul author Zabel Yessayan journeyed to the scene of the massacres of Armenians in the providence of Adana in March and April as a member of the commission appointed by the Armenian Patriarch to survey conditions and provide relief to the victims.

After spending three months in Adana province, Yessayan returned to Istanbul and wrote a series of articles summarizing her findings. These articles, which include extensive interviews with survivors chronicling the violence, death, and destruction that marked the massacres, were collected in her book, *In the Ruins*, published in 1911.

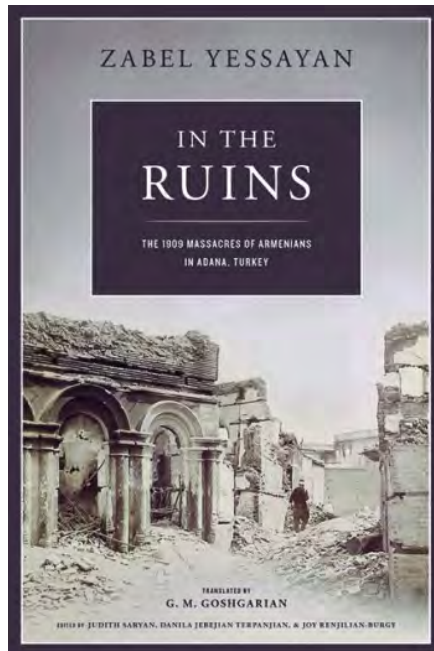
The Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) has now released the first complete English-language translation of this important work, which is considered a masterpiece of literary testimony as well as an original source of crucial details about the Adana Massacres, which are often considered a prelude to the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Included in the publication are photographs as well as an appendix with selected articles and letters by Yessayan that provide additional insight into the events of the period.

In the Ruins, which has been translated by G. M. Goshgarian, will be officially launched on Sunday, March 6, at 2 p.m. at the Watertown Public Library at an event celebrating International Women's Day as well as Women's History Month. Participating in the program, which is open to the public, will be the book's project director, Judy Saryan, her co-editors Danila Jebejian Terpanjian and Joy Renjilian-Burgy, and AIWA Archives Director Barbara Merguerian.

The publication of *In the Ruins* follows the success of two earlier translations of books by Yessayan issued by AIWA Press: *The Gardens of Silihdar*, a memoir of the author's early years in her native Istanbul, and *My Soul in Exile and Other Writings*, a collection that highlights a novel and other selected works. These three volumes contain some of the author's best and most influential works and provide a picture of the scope, breath, and historical significance of her work.

Yessayan (1878-1943) is remembered today as a brilliant writer of novels, short stories, and essays, a champion of women's rights and an active participant in the defining events in the Western Armenian community of the late 19th and early

see LAUNCH, page 12



'Armenia: Open Wound' Exhibition At Brand Library Art Galleries

GLENDALE – The City of Glendale and the Library, Arts & Culture Department announce their partnership with the Armenian American Museum to present the exhibition "Armenia: An Open Wound." The exhibit will be on view at the Brand Library Art Galleries between April 9 and June 11, during the library's regular hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12-8 p.m., Wednesday 12-6 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. A series of weekly programs will accompany the exhibition. Brand Library & Art Center is located at 1601 West Mountain St.

"Armenia: An Open Wound" debuted in Mexico City at the Museo Memoria Y Tolerancia [Museum of Memory and Tolerance] in April 2015 in honor of the Armenian Genocide centenary. The exhibition explores the intricate history of the Armenian people and creates an interactive experience by illustrating early Armenian culture; it shares the story of Armenian livelihoods on their ancestral lands, and prepares viewers to gain a deeper insight into the events which lead to the 1915 Armenian Genocide.

"[The exhibition] seeks to raise awareness about the Armenian Genocide by inspiring reflection, respect for ethnic and cultural diversity, and upholding human dignity" stated Museo Memoria Y Tolerancia temporary exhibitions director Linda Atach Zaga. "The Armenian Cause is rooted in the universal theme of preserving memory as the first step in mobilizing toward global human rights and this exhibition is uniquely designed to encourage critical reasoning among diverse audiences as they relate the Armenian context to broader social justice themes."

The mission of the Museo Memoria Y Tolerancia is to preserve, teach, and promote within Mexican society the history and meaning of genocides and crimes against humanity, as well as the importance of diversity and tolerance.

Designed on the basis of a detailed, didactic route, "Armenia: An Open Wound," sheds light on both the historical and current ramifications of the 1915 Armenian Genocide through survivor testimony, modern-day pursuits for justice, and aims to empower visitors to take responsibility on behalf of all those who have been, and continue to be affected by genocide. In addition to honoring victims and commemorating the Armenian Genocide, this exhibition presents the unique contributions of Armenian Genocide survivors who settled in Mexico during the early 20th century, and the international Armenian diaspora community which have collectively grown to embody the concept of global citizenship.

"It is our honor to announce our partnership with the Museo Memoria Y Tolerancia and we equally commend the City of Glendale Library, Arts & Culture Department for their commitment to engaging diverse collaborative opportunities" stated Armenian American Museum executive development committee chairman Berdj Karapetian. "Armenia: An Open Wound" tells the story of Armenians through a multicultural approach, and exemplifies the eclectic programs and exhibitions the Armenian American Museum aspires to bring to the City of Glendale and the broader Los Angeles community."

The mission of the Armenian American Museum is to promote understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Armenian American experience.

City of Glendale Library Arts, & Culture director Cindy Cleary shared her enthusiasm about the opportunity to partner with the Armenian American Museum by noting, "this see MUSEUM, page 11



ARTS & LIVING

Joan Agajanian Quinn Honored by California Arts Council

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Arts activist Joan Agajanian Quinn was honored as the longest sitting member of the California Arts Council in Sacramento last month. The Council, marking its 40th year as a State arts agency, was established by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., in January 1976.

The CAC celebration took place at the Crest Theater on K Street where former actor, former CAC Chair Peter Coyote introduced Governor Brown, who spoke about the precise formation of the Commission. Coyote agreed “Jerry and I made sure we had an artist from every discipline represented.”

Award winning actress and former CAC member Annette Bening introduced the US Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera with California Poet Laureate Dana Gioia and an array of politicians and performers. Arts Council Director, Craig Watson, thanked the sold-out audience, which included leaders from local art institutions, for attending the special event.



From left, Annette Bening, Joan Agajanian Quinn and Peter Coyote at Sacramento's Crest Theater celebrating 40 years of the California Arts Council.

100 Years of Genocide: Lessons from Armenia

SALEM, Mass. – The Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies welcomes Dr. Peter Balakian for a special day of education and commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on Wednesday, March 2 at 7 p.m. The day's events will culminate in a public lecture by Dr. Balakian as part of the Sonia Schreiber Weitz Series.

An award-winning scholar, poet and author, Balakian is one of the world's most eloquent voices on the Armenian Genocide.

Balakian is the recipient of many awards, prizes and civic citations, including a Movses Khorenatsi Medal from the Republic of Armenia, a Guggenheim fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship, the Spendlove Prize for Social Justice, Tolerance, and Diplomacy; and the Emily Clark Balch Prize. He has appeared widely on national television and radio, including 60 Minutes, ABC World News Tonight, PBS, and Charlie Rose, and his work has been translated into a dozen languages. He currently serves as Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities, professor of English and director of creative writing at Colgate University.

Balakian will read excerpts from his memoir, *Black Dog of Fate: An American Son Uncovers His Armenian Past*, and



Peter Balakian

discuss his experience growing up in a suburban family haunted by memories of the Armenian Genocide. The memoir won the 1998 PEN/Martha Albrand Prize for the Art of the Memoir, and was selected a best book of the year by *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Publisher's Weekly*.

The talk will take place at the Peabody Essex Museum, Morse Auditorium, 161 Essex Street, Salem, Mass.

The program is sponsored by the Cummings Foundation and the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Salem State University.

Tickets are free, but must be reserved in advance at salemstate.edu/peter-balakian/

'Armenia: Open Wound' Exhibition At Brand Library Art Galleries

MUSEUM, from page 10

exhibition supports the Library's mission to offer our community a diversity of ideas that will inspire curiosity and enrich our daily lives." Cleary further expressed that she "hopes all members of the public will share in this unique experience that celebrates the history and the resilience of the Armenian people and commemorates the horrific consequences of the Genocide."

A slate of programs that will complement "Armenia: An Open Wound" is being planned by the Brand Library & Art Center and the Armenian American Museum in collaboration with local and regional community partners. All events at Brand Library & Art Center are free and open to the public.

For more information visit ArmenianAmericanMuseum.org.

Meet French Actor/Director Gerald Papasian

At the screening of his stage Opera Buffa
Gariné

A musical based on Dikran Tchouhadjian's
"Leblebiji Horhor Agha"

In French with English subtitles

Following the film showing:

A traditional chicken dinner will be served with coffee and dessert.

Mr. Papasian will make a presentation on Dikran Tchouhadjian, the inspiration and research to produce a new version of "Gariné" including his discovery of scores in Paris in French translation while originals have never been found, and a general discussion on the current state of the Armenian Culture in Diaspora. The presentation will be in English.

Cash Bar will also be available.

Sponsored by AGBU New England District Chapter
Tekeyan Cultural Association
Amaras Art Alliance

\$35 tickets and info AmarasOnline.com
tcadirector@aol.com, (617) 944-4420 (617) 331-0426

Proceeds benefit the Dikran Tchouhadjian International Institute, a non-profit organisation registered in France and the US, Gerald Papasian Artistic Director

Sunday March 6, 2016
3 PM

AGBU Center
247 Mt Auburn Street, Watertown, MA

About Papasian: born in Cairo to a renowned musical family which established the first major music stores in the Near East: "Les Magasins Generaux de Musique Papasian," he is a graduate of the Melkonian Institute, Cyprus and the State Dramatic Arts Institute, Armenia. A cosmopolitan and multilingual professional, he has worked in Armenia, UK, USA and Canada, directing, translating, adapting plays and operas. He lives in Paris where he is founder/director of the Dikran Tchouhadjian International Institute. In France Papasian works primarily with internationally acclaimed stage actress, director and producer Irina Brook; he is a founding member of her company. Under her direction, Papasian performs in Paris and on international tours in several productions including the role of Sancho Panza (best actor nomination) in *Somewhere La Mancha*. He is currently a visiting lecturer at the University of Michigan's Armenian Studies program in Ann Arbor. His translations of Vahan Tekeyan poems were recently published by The Press – California State University Fresno.



Book Launch for Yessayan's *In the Ruins* Set for Watertown Public Library

LAUNCH, from page 10

20th centuries. Rarely has the life of an individual writer so encapsulated that of her nation.

Born in Istanbul, Yessayan graduated from Surp Khach secondary school and at age 17 went to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. In Paris she began publishing fiction and non-fiction works in both French and Armenian. In 1908, now an established writer, she returned to Istanbul, where her hopes for a new liberal era

were dashed by the 1909 Adana Massacres.

Continuing her literary career, Yessayan became the only woman on the "black list" of Armenian intellectuals to be arrested on the night of April 24, 1915. She managed to elude the police for three months, finally escaping to Bulgaria and on to the Caucasus. After engaging in relief work and publishing interviews with Genocide survivors, she returned to Paris. In 1933 she moved to Yerevan, Armenia, where, five years later, she became a victim of Josef Stalin's purges. She was arrested in 1937 and died in unknown circumstances, probably in 1943.

The translation and publication of *In the Ruins* was made possible by a grant to AIWA from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. It is the latest in the AIWA Press "Treasury of Armenian Women's Literature" series of books.

In the Ruins is available from AIWA through mail, telephone or website orders (list price \$20), as well as from Amazon and bookstores specializing in publications of Armenian interest.

In addition to the March 6 launch of *In the Ruins*, book receptions with Judy Saryan are scheduled in other areas, including Racine, Wisc. (Public Library, February 27); Chicago (AGBU Center, February 28); California (Glendale, Abril Bookstore, April 28, and Mission Hills, Ararat-Eskijian Museum, May 1); and Cambridge, Mass. (Porter Square Books, May 24).

This year AIWA is marking 25 years of promoting and enriching the social, economic and personal advancement of Armenian women worldwide. The celebration will be held September 30- October 2 at the Charles Hotel in Cambridge, Mass. Further information about the celebration or about AIWA activities is available by contacting AIWA at 65 Main St., Watertown, MA 02472; Website (www.aiwainternational.org).



Author Zabel Yessayan (seated, center) with other members of the delegation sent from Istanbul to survey conditions in Adana immediately following the 1909 massacres. *In the Ruins* consists of Yessayan's description of the suffering and devastation she witnessed.

BOOK REVIEW

Apples in Square Boxes Grin at Me

Here is Prof. Rubina Peromian with her fourth volume on the subject,

By Arpine Konyalian Grenier

this one on the literature of second-generation (post-genocide) Armenians. It reads like a compendium of sorts unfolding the even more silent yet drawn out drama that followed the tragedy of 1915; and this, promptly and diligently one hundred years after the events that eventually coined the term "genocide."

At times a mosaic, other times prism, these almost 400 pages have an earthly to reverent touch to them. Housed comfortably inside hardcover red, black, white and lovely grey designs, they feel solid. And I miss something I never had — yes, that Armenia; most Armenians probably miss that too. Peromian unravels as she stitches fact, dreams, emotions, more dreams. She has wrestled with the arduous task of addressing the Armenian Genocide for some time now, and it looks like she will continue doing so, unabashed, curious and dedicated to the documentation of it. Someday, like Mark Twain, I assume she'll be thankfully saying to herself, "Oh, what a ride that was."

So one claims Ararat, having chosen the Odyssey Trail where "... apples in square boxes grin at you/like rice-powdered statues from Dresden," and where, Under the Skirts of Ararat "... the few ... stepped out with a whimper/arched their vertebrae to the gods/until they felt ground/they offered no sacrifice/rather/began to record the new/and transcribe the old..." (I could not resist quoting

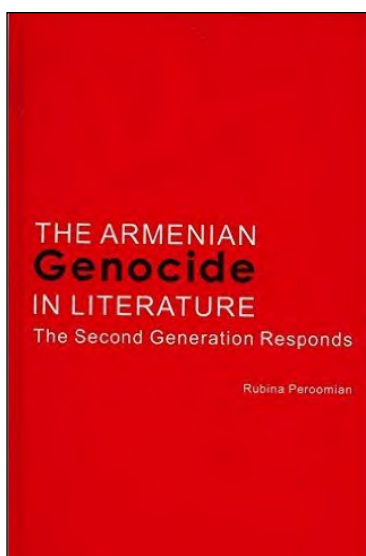
myself from *St. Gregory's Daughter*, University of La

Verne Press, 1991). Everyone is Armenian then.

So Rubina records. Because life is more of the same in space-times; then again, what is space, what is time? Heritage silently presses on, genocide even more so. Peromian continues; she is novelist, journalist, narrator, in our living room, bedroom, family room, everywhere; at the library and at the therapist's too. I hope she explores the nuances of separatist cultures next, as they cannot be characterized solely by the word she uses — ghettoization. The term conveys poor socio-economic conditions; yet, in most post-Armenian Genocide families (including mine) the safety net of separatism came through affluence, education, religion. Another challenging exploration could be studying the effects of atrocity (of any regime) on the use of the mother tongue in future generations. (See Celan.)

This book is available from Amazon. Thanks Rubina.

(Arpine Konyalian Grenier comes from science, music, languages and the arts. She has authored four collections: *St. Gregory's Daughter*; *Whores from Samarkand*; *Part, Part, Euphrates*; *The Concession Stand: Exaptation at the Margins*. Recent and forthcoming work can be found in *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Fence*, *Journal of Poetics Research*, and *The Iowa Review*, to name a few. She lives and writes in Los Angeles.)



The Armenian Genocide in Literature, by Rubina Peromian. Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, 2015



by Christine Vartanian Datian

Banana Orange Bread with Nutmeg Glaze

INGREDIENTS

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup light or dark brown sugar
1/2 cup canola oil
1/2 cup apple sauce
2 large eggs, beaten
2 ripe bananas, mashed
2-3 tablespoons fresh orange juice
1 tablespoon honey
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup chopped walnuts, pecans, or slivered almonds
2 tablespoons fresh grated orange rind

PREPARATION:

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, beat the brown sugar, oil and applesauce together until smooth.
2. Add the eggs and bananas and mix well. Add the flour, orange juice, honey, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, and vanilla, and mix completely. Add the nuts and orange rind, if desired.
3. Pour into a well-greased 9x5 inch loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees for about one hour. Remove from oven and let cool on iron rack. Top with Nutmeg Glaze, slice, and serve.

Nutmeg Glaze

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cup powdered sugar
1/4 cup orange juice concentrate
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
2 tablespoons toasted coconut (optional)

PREPARATION:

In small bowl, combine the powdered sugar, orange juice concentrate, and nutmeg together until smooth. Add the toasted coconut, if desired. Pour or spread over bread as glaze.

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>

present

AIDA ZILELIAN

and her new novel

Wednesday, March 2, 2016
6:30 p.m.

AGBU Central Office
55 East 59th Street, 7th Floor • New York City

Aida Zilelian's breathtaking debut novel follows three generations of a family of Armenian immigrants living in the United States, as they struggle with one another and against the Old World expectations of their community. When Araxi, the oldest daughter of the desperately unhappy Levon and Tamar, goes missing, the remaining family members are forced to confront their painful histories together, and the role each of them has played in driving Araxi away.

Free Admission • Space is Limited
To RSVP please email your full name to rsvp@agbu.org or call (212) 319-6383
Book available for purchase and signing by author



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

MARCH 6 — Author Dawn Anahid Mackeen to sign copies of her book *The Hundred-Year-Walk: An Armenian Odyssey*. St. Vartan Armenian Church, Sunday, Lecture/Book Presentation at St. Vartan Armenian Church. Sponsored by the AGBU, UC Berkeley Armenian Studies Department, and St. Vartan. 650 Spruce St, Oakland, CA.

MARCH 16 — **Abril Books, Wednesday, Book reading and signing**, Author Dawn Anahid Mackeen *The Hundred-Year-Walk: An Armenian Odyssey*. 415 E. Broadway, Suite 102, Glendale, CA

APRIL 15 - DEADLINE. If you are looking to embark on the educational adventure of a lifetime, then consider the American University of Armenia's Summer Program 2016. The program combines unique academic offerings with the benefits of a safe, welcoming, and exciting environment. Participants will also experience the authentic sights, sounds, and flavors of Armenia through the Discover Armenia Educational Tours. Apply at im.aua.am by April 15.

MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 3 — **A Town Hall Meeting with Richard M. Mills, Jr., US Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia**, who would like to meet with the Greater Boston Armenian community to discuss US priorities in Armenia and opportunities for partnership; 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m., hosted by Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Cambridge. Thursday. The ambassador is visiting the area as part of a general effort to get to know, and be known by the Armenian-American community. Open to all. For further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632 or log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/233/>.

MARCH 6 — **Book Launch, commemorating International Women's Day: In the Ruins** by Zabel Yessayan. Sponsored by the Armenian International Women's Association. 2 p.m., Watertown Free Public Library.

MARCH 6 — **Actor and director Gerald Papasian of Paris, France** will speak and present a screening of his production of the musical "Garine" at the AGBU Center, 247 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Proceeds will support the Dikran Tchouhadjian International Institute. The event is cosponsored by the AGBU New England District Chapter, Amaras Art Alliance, and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

MARCH 6 — **St. Stephen's Armenian Church in Watertown will host a Lenten Dinner**, sponsored by the St. Stephen's Ladies' Guild. Begins at 1 p.m. in the church hall, 38 Elton Ave. Board Member Raffi Manjikian will speak on the "Cultural Traditions of Armenian Carpets." Donation: \$25. For more information, call Deanne Nahabedian, (781) 891-7249 or the church office at (617) 924-7562.

MARCH 7 — **St. James Armenian Church's Men's Club will host Houry Panian Boyamian**, principal of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School, who will speak about her father, Karnig Panian's memoir, *Goodbye Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide*. Complete Lenten dinner. Social hour and mezza at 6.15 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. \$15 per person. St. James Armenian Church, Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown.

MARCH 12 — **"Untold Story of an Armenian-American Artist" The Work of Yenovk der Hagopian** — exhibition opening and reception, Adele & Haig Der Manuelian Galleries (3rd Floor), Armenian Museum of America, Watertown. The event is free and open to the public and light refreshments will be served at the reception. Saturday, 2-4 p.m.

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-



The Tekeyan Cultural Association, the Amaras Art Alliance and the Armenian General Benevolent Union of New England on Sunday, March 6, will sponsor a program featuring actor and director Gerald Papasian. During the program, he will screen a production of the opera "Garine," a work based on "Leblebeji Hor-Hor Agha" by Dikran Tchouhadjian, at the AGBU Center, 247 Mount Auburn St., Watertown. Proceeds will support the Dikran Tchouhadjian International Institute. The program will include a talk by Papasian on the production, the filmed version of the production and dinner. See ad on page 11 with further details.

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 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.... Please 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 and Hamazkayin-Boston. Various times, Watertown area. To register, visit <http://www.armeniangenealogyconference.com/registration/>

APRIL 17 — **Erevan Choral Society Spring Concert, "In Commemoration of Our Sainted Martyrs of 1915."** Sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 2:30 p.m., Church Sanctuary, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. The concert is under the direction of Composer Konstantin Petrossian, Music Director and Conductor. Guest Soloists are David Ayriyan (Kamancha) and Gohar Manjikian (Mezzo Soprano), with Nune Hakobyan on the organ and piano. The Armenian and non-Armenian community is invited to commemorate through music the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide. The concert is a gift to the

community.

APRIL 22 — **Save the date. 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. Keynote speaker will be announced at a later date.

MAY 12 — **Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston Presents** the Dr. Michael and Joyce Kolligian Distinguished Speaker Series, with John Prendergast, founder of "The Enough Project," an initiative to end genocide and crimes against humanity, co-founder "The Sentry," a new investigative initiative focused on dismantling the networks financing conflict and atrocities. 7 p.m. Thursday at Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA Info: 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 Ispiryan, 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 27 — **65th Annual Armenian Night at the Pops**, Featuring Boston Pops Orchestra, Keith Lockhart, Conductor; presenting Edvard Poghosian, cello. Presented by Friends of Armenian Culture Society. Symphony Hall, 301 Massachusetts Ave., Boston. For tickets and information, visit facsboston.org

SEPTEMBER 10 — **Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston 30th Anniversary Gala.** Details to follow.

SEPTEMBER 30 — **OCTOBER 2** — **25th Anniversary Celebration**, Armenian International Women's Association. Charles Hotel, Cambridge.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

MARCH 19 — **Book-signing and presentation**, 1-4 p.m., Barnes and Noble, Salem, NH by authors E. Philip Brown and Tom Vartabedian will speak about their book, *Armenians of the Merrimack Valley*.

MICHIGAN

MARCH 18 — **Cultural Committee of St. Thomas Armenian Church presents A Night at the Opera**, Anoush by Tigranian, HD Opera with K. Kasbarian, D. Levonian, A. Garabedian, M. Andonian. Friday, 7:30 p.m., Atrium, 174 Essex Drive, Tenafly, NJ 07670. Wine and cheese reception. Donation \$10 adults & children. For reservations, please contact: Talar Sesetyan Sarafian: (201) 240 - 8541 or Church Office: (201) 567 - 5446.

NEW YORK

March 14 — **"Development of Programs and Evaluation Methodologies Designed to Achieve Gender Equality,"** NGO Panel at the Commission on the Status of Women, sponsored by the Armenian International Women's Association. Moderated by Susan Raymond, PhD, Executive Vice President, Changing Our World, with Shakeh Kaftarian, Ph.D., President, Kaftarian & Associates; Maro Matosian, Director, Women's Support Center, Yerevan; Judy Norsigian, Co-Founder/Editor, Our Bodies Ourselves; Alexandra Pittman, Founder, AVP Global Consulting. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., CUNY Graduate Center, Rm. 1, 365 Fifth Ave. Open to the public free of charge. Info@aiwainternational.org.

APRIL 5 — **Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) presents Sahar 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.



Mirror Spectator



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COMMENTARY

Beware of the Georgian 'Friend'

By Edmond Y. Azadian

This is not the first time Georgia is living up to its title of "friendly foe" with Armenia. Although the cross is prominently featured on the Georgian national flag, Christian brotherhood does not mean much to the Georgian government. Otherwise, some consideration and solidarity would have been warranted between the only two Christian nations amidst an ocean of Islamic countries.

During the Soviet period, all ethnic tensions were subdued by the central government although there was no love lost between Armenia and Georgia, since the two had fought a war before being integrated into the Soviet empire. As a result of that war, the historic Armenian region of Javakhk was integrated into Georgia.

After the collapse of the Soviet empire, the two emerging republics politically developed in opposing directions, pushing their simmering mutual antagonism into political dimensions.

By historic necessity, Armenia aligned itself with Russia, becoming a strategic ally of its northern neighbor and hosting Moscow's military base on its territory. Georgia, meanwhile, veered towards the West, entertaining its dream of becoming a NATO member. Although the Tbilisi government suffered for its Western orientation as a result of President Mikhail Saakashvili's reckless politics, the succeeding government of the Georgian Dream Party did not alter the nation's foreign policy.

During a speech delivered on February 12, President Serge Sargisian, commenting on the implementation of recent constitutional changes, also delved into the political background of the region stating, "with our two neighbors, Georgia and Iran, our relations are developing in good neighborly spirits."

However, that was a politically-correct statement rather than an accurate one, made in order not to exacerbate tense relations with Tbilisi.

In fact, relations with Iran and Georgia are on totally different footings. At times, Iran may ignore some Armenian interests out of political expediency, but on principle, it does not go out of its way to antagonize Armenia.

Both internally and externally, Georgian policies hurt Armenians. Since Georgia's independence, all succeeding administrations have exercised an extremely xenophobic domestic policy, trying to assimilate or alienate minorities. The brunt of that policy has been mostly directed towards the Armenians in Javakhk. Although the policy cost Georgia territorial losses — Abkhazia and South Ossetia — little has changed in the behavior of the central government.

Georgia's foreign policy treats Armenia as a virtual enemy. At the UN and other world bodies, the Tbilisi government has brazenly sided with Azerbaijan and Turkey, to Armenia's detriment, trampling the "neighborly spirit" which Armenia tries to observe jealously and hopelessly.

Armenia is a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and relies heavily on that organization for its security. But escalating tensions with Azerbaijan have raised legitimate concerns, especially after Azeri encroachment on Armenia proper's sovereign territory, in the face of Russia's enigmatic silence. Adding to Armenia's worries is the alarming rate of transfer of Russia's modern weaponry to the Baku government.

Those concerns were raised by Armenian journalists at a press conference with CSTO Secretary Gen. Nikolay Bordyuzha, who gave an indirect and terse answer: "Read the final documents of the annual CSTO ministers' statements, which necessarily refer to the situation in Caucasus."

The same press conference substantiated the fears of the Armenian journalists when he stated, "We are greatly concerned about the situation in the Caucasus, especially in connection with Nagorno Karabagh conflict, where heavy weaponry and tanks are used and there are casualties. Further escalation of the conflict

is unacceptable; the entire Caucasus will explode."

Against this political background, the Tbilisi government further develops its political and economic relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan, tightening the noose around Armenia.

On February 19, Georgia hosted the foreign ministers of Turkey and Azerbaijan, who visited the railway station in Kartzakhi, near the Turkish border. The foreign ministers of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, Elmar Mammadarov, Mikheil Janelidze and Mevlut Cavusoglu, respectively, praised the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway project as a "historic" one and they noted its importance within the context of the new Silk Road connecting Asia to Europe. The railway is scheduled to be completed by 2017 and one segment of it will run through the Armenian-populated Akhalkalaki, after bypassing Armenia itself.

The Azeri Foreign Minister said, "I believe that we are on the right track. It is a joint understanding that we must continue this cooperation because it's a win-win-win for all three countries and the region."

He stopped short of saying "it's a lose-lose-lose project for Armenia."

But what is more worrisome is that in addition to making statements on economic cooperation, the trio have signed a political declaration where they state they place "the utmost importance on the earliest peaceful settlement of the conflict in and around the Nagorno Karabagh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the conflict in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia on the basis of principles and norms of international law, particularly, sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally-recognized borders."

The last eight words are euphemistically intended to express the territorial ambitions of the Aliyev dynasty. By contrast, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) co-chairs have been working on the principles of the final part of the Helsinki declaration, which intends to reconcile territorial integrity with the right to self-determination of the local population.

Georgia recklessly endorses Azerbaijan's position on the settlement of Karabagh conflict while Armenia has cautiously refrained from recognizing Abkhazia's independence to avoid a confrontation with Tbilisi.

With the lifting of sanctions on Iran, the gas market became a hot battleground in the Caucasus, where Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran are competing. At one point, there was talk that Armenia may become a transit route for Iranian gas to Georgia. It seems that the Georgian government has been having second thoughts for fear of angering the government of Baku. Azerbaijan's territory is being considered as a conduit for Iranian gas and Georgia's

Minister of Energy Kakha Kaladze has said that "Tbilisi could consider this option, too."

The Turkish-Georgian cooperation has opened the floodgates for the invasion of Turkish capital in Georgia.

Vahagn Chakhalian, the Armenian political activist in Javakhk who was jailed by President Saakashvili, has issued an appeal to all Armenians, saying, "no to the Turkification of Georgia."

He added: "The seeds that Saakashvili had sown are blossoming in Georgia and the Turkification of the country is developing at an alarming rate and it has almost reached the point of no return."

The statement specially informs that the Turkish investors discriminate even against Christian Georgians by denying them employment and preferring Azeris and Turks instead.

Adding insult to injury, the Georgian government has agreed to host a Turkish military base on its territory, to complete the Turkification of the country.

It is understandable that the US and NATO have welcomed the move "as a contribution to stability." That base would substitute a NATO base, which would irritate Russia to no end. In light of the current escalating tension between Russia and Turkey, stability may become the first casualty.

With a friend like Georgia in the region, Armenia does not need any enemies.





COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Iranian Hatred of Turks Goes Back a Thousand Years

During the past one thousand years, the relationship between the two neighboring Islamic states of Persia and the Ottoman Empire vacillated between peaceful coexistence and outright war. The populations of these two states were not only of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, but were also divided in their Islamic faith – the Persians were Shia, while the Turks were Sunni. The divisions between Iran and Turkey continue to this day.

Many readers are familiar with the anti-Turkish references in the works of Western writers, particularly after successive episodes of Armenian massacres leading to the 1915 Genocide, such as the damning words of French writer Victor Hugo, “The Turks have passed by here, all is in ruins and mourning.”

Yet, little is known about references in Persian literature regarding Turks. Roubina Ohanian, an Armenian native of

Iran, now residing in Glendale, California, has filled that void with her book, *The Interpretation of the Name and Word Turk in Iranian Literature*. Ohanian has meticulously researched and translated from Farsi into Armenian dozens of lines from several notable Persian poets from the Middle Ages who had penned their highly negative impressions of Turks, revealing that Iranian antipathy toward Turks has long roots.

The Persian references regarding Turks come from such well-known poets as Ferdowsi in the 10th Century and Hafez in the 14th Century. Turkic tribes first invaded Persia in the 11th Century, followed by the Seljuks. In the 13th Century, Iran was conquered by the Mongols and then by Turkmen tribes who were finally defeated in 1592 AD. Many wars ensued between Persia and the Ottoman Empire in subsequent centuries.

Ohanian has presented in her book quotations from 13 Persian poets and writers. While Armenians have their own tragic memories of oppressive Turkish rule, it is interesting to learn of the similarly negative experiences of other nations that came in contact with Turks.

Here are several lines from Persian Middle Age poets translated by Ohanian from Farsi to Armenian which I have translated to English:

Ferdowsi (925 - 1020 AD):

“No one has learned wisdom from Turks,
No one will obey a Turk.”

Asadi Tusi (11th Century):

“No one ever saw any loyalty from a Turk;
From Iranians they have seen nothing but loyalty.”

Khawaja Abdullah Ansari (1006 - 1088 AD):

“It would be surprising that a Turk would understand love,
As it would be surprising that a Turk does not rob and steal.”

Nizami (1140 - 1203 AD):

“Even the King did not know,
No such thing as a loyal Turk.”

Anvari (12th Century):

“As you have not started your journey with your gentle horse,
Don't leave, the road is full of bloodthirsty Turks.”

Khaghani (1120 - 1190 AD):

“Drinking blood with a friend is an old tradition,
Turks are blood drinkers and don't recognize their friends.”

Saadli (1184 - 1283 AD):

“At that time you sent me a student,
A Turk; there was no one worse than him.”

Many of these Persian descriptions of Turks would be viewed today as racist as they unfairly label all Turks with the same stereotype. All nationalities have some good and bad among them. The real problem, however, is the violent policies of the Turkish state that brutally oppressed minorities and conquered nations, resulting in mass crimes and genocide against Arabs, Armenians, Assyrians, Cypriots, Greeks and Iranians!

What You Need to Know about Armenia's New Startup Laws

YEREVAN – We are accustomed to complaining about anything that has to do with the Armenian government. So it is only natural that the Armenian government wasn't listening to the country's tech community and laws were not being updated to accommodate new business structures and labor environments.

By Raffi Elliott

Special to the Mirror-Spectator and Abaka

Nonetheless, it is finally happening: legislation is being drafted which will help propel the small, landlocked Caucasian nation into the technology startup big leagues.

In November 2015, the National Assembly released the details about a new law on technology startups which would make founding, operating, and growing a tech startup in Armenia much easier and simpler. The new legislation was adopted on December 14, 2014.

The government finally understood that supporting the tech sector, which accounts for \$450 million a year, or five percent of the entire country's GDP, can be immensely beneficial for a country with no ports, and two out of four borders closed to trade. In no small part, this was thanks to the constant lobbying efforts of the Union of Information Technology Enterprises (UITE), which closely cooperated with legislators. The government, UITE, and international partners have identified four main objectives in enacting this legislation: 1) increasing competitiveness in the industry; 2) empowering and training a well-paid skilled workforce; 3) providing capital for research and development; and 4) attracting direct foreign investment.

The new legislation applies to startups, technoparks, technology centers, incubators and accelerators, as well as educational and research organizations. Falling in one of these categories does not automatically lead to qualification for tax privileges, as the government requires applying for an additional special license. Companies have to be established and operating under the law on state support of the internet technology (IT) sphere, and their activities are limited through the third article of the same law.

Thus, in order to be eligible for this new program, a company would need to be involved in the technology sphere in one way or another. This could mean software and internet companies; consulting, computing systems, data mining, or hosting services; network administration or online media companies; and those that work in education and research in IT. Furthermore, the company must be newly established and independent. It also means that companies which are established branches of foreign entities also do not qualify.

Companies with more than thirty employees are excluded. Companies eligible for this new tax break cannot sell or otherwise transfer the results of their operations under the certificate to other residents or business entities of the Republic of Armenia that work in the IT sphere, except for educational purposes. The new law requires eligible companies to provide quarterly reports ensuring that the startup continues to meet the requirements.

Though Armenia is notorious for its bureaucratic antics, this procedure seems poised to be breaking that trend. All you need is the following: the application document (Arlis 312, 2015);

proof that your startup is a newly-established legal entity (your company should have been chartered no sooner than 3 months before the law passed to be eligible); a written description of the main directors; a written statement containing the names, office positions and contact information of your employees; a list of shareholders; and proof that the company is not a local branch of a foreign company.

As a side note, the law insists that board members must have a “clean” history. Applications will be accepted until the first of January 2017, and the tax benefits will last until 2020. In the last four months, almost 40 new companies, which had previously been working unofficially, have been registered, and the numbers continue to grow.

(Raffi Elliott is a Montreal-born entrepreneur and founder of the medical travel startup www.gettreated.com currently based in Yerevan. He frequently comments on socioeconomic and tech-related issues in Armenia.)

Syria's Strategic Position Keeps Russia Bombing

By Isabel Gorst

When Vladimir Putin went to the rescue of the embattled Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and ordered Russian air strikes on Syria last autumn, defense officials in Moscow said the bombing campaign was time limited, but were vague about how long it might last.

Five months later the war in Syria has become more vicious and complicated and is threatening to escalate into a broader regional conflict drawing in NATO-member Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Western powers are pushing for implementation of a selective cessation of hostilities agreed in Munich last week, and on Monday the United States and Russia agreed on the terms of such a truce to take effect from this weekend.

But a full ceasefire can't happen without Kremlin co-operation and Putin is not in a hurry to ground his war planes.

As Russia continued the bombardment of Aleppo in northern Syria, Britain's Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond was wondering what Putin was about. “The point about dealing with Russia is that they are not transparent,” he told CNN.

“We don't have good visibility about their intentions or whether they have the appetite for a longer engagement [in Syria].”

“As the Kremlin's strongest ally in the Arab world, the Syrian regime is an anchor for Russian power in the Middle East. Syria holds the key to Tartusport, Russia's only naval base on the Mediterranean and a vital outlet for Russia's growing arms sales.

And its location bordering Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel and Iraq provides a foothold in the Middle East that is too important for the Kremlin to lose.

Putin's intervention in Syria, like his invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in 2014, was a reckless gamble.

But from a military perspective it has so far delivered success. While US air attacks launched a year earlier have brought some setbacks for Islamic State, they have failed to change the strategic reality on the ground.

In contrast Russia, with a single air squadron flying hundreds of sorties a day, has shifted the conflict decisively in Assad's favor, allowing government troops to drive opposition rebels out of the Syrian president's strongholds in the east and press north towards the Turkish frontier and the strategic city of Aleppo.

For ordinary Russians the air strikes have been a remarkable show of power, distracting from the unfinished conflict in eastern Ukraine and the grinding dreariness of life under the “new reality”

– Kremlin propagandists' code for economic crisis.

Instead of distressing images from eastern Ukraine, state television has footage to show of the Russian air force's upgraded SU-40 war planes tearing through the skies and even, in one particularly spectacular mission, of cruise missiles launched from 1,300 kilometers away from Syria in the Caspian Sea.

Western powers are still putting pressure on the Kremlin to halt attacks on moderate opposition forces they want to see at peace talks and focus the bombing on Islamic State.

But a cessation of hostilities brokered by the US in Munich last week has reinforced the sense that Russia has stolen the lead in Syria. Under the deal all parties in the conflict were supposed to stop fighting from February 19 to allow humanitarian aid in. The deal was selective, with Russia continuing its ferocious bombardment of Aleppo.

It has become clear over the past few months that Russia has a bigger game to play in Syria than just propping up a client dictator.

Syria, battered by a war that has claimed more than 250,000 lives and ravaged its infrastructure, is now center stage in Putin's drive to overturn the US-dominated post-Cold War world order and restore Russia as a major international power.

It helps that the US, discouraged by other Middle East policy failures, has dithered over Syria. But it's a mark of how far Russia has stolen the lead in Syria that western officials now openly admit that they need Putin onside to bring peace to the region.

As Mark Galeotti, an expert on Russian defence matters, wrote in *Foreign Affairs* magazine last week, “Russia has bombed its way to a seat at the table.”

Major competitor

Putin may find this gratifying, but the risk of the conflict spinning out of control is greater than ever before.

Russia's bombing campaign has already put the Kremlin on a collision course with NATO member Turkey, the ruler of Syria in Ottoman times and a major competitor with other regional powers for influence in the country.

One of the complications of the Syrian conflict is that in addition to the jihadis of Islamic State and the al-Qaeda linked Jabhat al-Nursa, there are many often rival rebel groups involved, each with support from different international players. For Assad any group that challenges the Syrian government is a terrorist and Russia, for the most part, has been prepared to go along with that.

Turkey, furious that Russia had been bombing ethnic Turkish Turkoman rebels in Syria, shot down a Russian war plane in November allegedly for violating its air space.

see SYRIA, page 16



Syria's Strategic Position Keeps Russia Bombing

SYRIA, from page 15

Tensions between the two nations are now focused on Russia's new alliance with Syrian Kurdish rebel groups – also supported by the US – who have put up a strong fight against Islamic State in north east Syria. Ankara is convinced that the Syrian Kurds have links with its long-time enemy, the Kurdish Workers Party or PKK which has been driving a renewed insurgency in southern Turkey.

After Turkey began shelling Syrian Kurdish positions across the border this month, Russia accused Ankara of planning a ground attack in Syria. A cross-border move by Turkey could provoke a Russian air attack that would then challenge NATO to honor Article 5 of its constitution and come to the defense of its member state.

Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Gulf States, alarmed from the start about their regional Shia rival Iran's support for Assad, are also considering deploying ground troops in Syria.

At a time when a wider war is threatening and the west needs to present a united front, rifts are emerging in the European Union over the refugee crisis.

Russia's relentless bombing has unleashed a fresh wave of refugees fleeing Syria, placing an ever-greater burden on neighboring Turkey and the EU. Xenophobia is on the rise in Europe, strengthening the hand of a growing band of far-right politicians supportive of Putin's nationalistic policies.

One of these is Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who has overseen the installation of razor-wire fences on his country's Croatian and Serbian borders to keep refugees out, a move that rights activists say contravenes international law. Yet speaking after a meeting with Orbán in Moscow last week, Putin was full of praise for Hungary's policies.

"Hungary's position and that of its prime minister is to defend European identity, the ideals of one's country and its people," Putin said following the talks.

The refugee crisis is weakening the European Union and diminishing its attractiveness to former Soviet countries that Putin considers part of Russia's sphere of influence, Koert Debeuf, visiting research fellow at the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict at Oxford

University, wrote on the Carnegie blog.

Putin was "pretty happy with the massive refugee influx into Europe as this is destabilizing the region," he added.

While western governments puzzle over Putin's endgame in Syria, most analysts agree that the Kremlin doesn't want to get bogged down in a protracted war in Syria or risk placing Russian troops on the ground.

Memories of the disastrous war waged by Moscow against an Islamist rebellion in Afghanistan that cost hundreds of thousands of lives and spurred the fall of the Soviet Union are still raw in Russia. And, while most Russians support Putin's Syrian adventure, public opinion could change if Russian troops began coming home in coffins.

Emboldened by gains on the battlefield, Assad is determined to press on to the end and regain control over the whole of Syria. "There is no choice for Syria except victory in the war for which it will have to pay a high price," he said on February 16th.

Assad is likely to try to pressurize the Kremlin to stymie peace talks, warning that a new ruler in Syria would not protect Russian interests. "It's an example of the tail beginning to wag the dog," said Alexei Malashenko, an expert at the Carnegie Moscow Centre.

Cracks were beginning to surface in Moscow's relationship with Assad this week after Vitaly Churkin, Russia's envoy to the United Nations, said that the Syrian leader's position did not "chime" with that of its main ally.

Russia was working towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Syria and any attempt to take back full control of the country would be a futile effort, Churkin told the Russian newspaper Kommersant.

"If the Syrian authorities . . . follow Russia's lead in the resolution of this crisis, then they have a chance to get out of it with their dignity intact."

While western powers see no future for a lasting peace in Syria as long as Assad is in power, they may struggle to find a moderate opposition leader even remotely acceptable to all the warring parties.

Russia, which trained many Syrian military officers in Moscow during the Cold War, is bet-

The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party

ADL, from page 1

To hold a much wider second international consultation on April 19-20, 2016 with the participation of members from chapters that are supportive in order to formalize the efforts to reconstruct, reform and rehabilitate the Party.

In order to direct the above efforts, to form a Committee for the Reconstruction of the ADLP.

This Committee For The Reconstruction of The ADLP (RAG Veraganknoui Vartchoutyou) will remain active until such time that unity is restored and the Party reformed along our core values which are: the promotion of democratic and liberal values, occupation of the center ground in diasporan politics, promotion of good governance, independence of judiciary, transparency and accountability and fighting corruption wherever it may be, and championing the cause and universal right of nations subjected to Genocide. To this end the following program is proposed:

To formulate a new vision for our Party based on our core principles and incorporating the demands of a new world and independent Armenia;

To set into motion a process of critical self-evaluation to identify our weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and the threats we face;

To revise our generic by-laws to reflect our new vision, and formulate closer affiliation with ADLP in Armenia and our sister organizations such as the Tekeyan Cultural Association, Ararat Association, Chobanian Institute, Goganian and Dikran Yergat Association and others;

To develop a strategic action plan with defined time lines for the coming 3 years through a cohesive central committee and its affiliated ad hoc professional teams.

The next ADLP General Assembly that should be convened properly, with the participation of all and with the purpose of finalizing the unification of the ADLP, will be requested to have as its main agenda item, the results obtained above.

Armenians worldwide currently face a multitude of challenges in the wake of the commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Genocide. Our Unity & Reform movement aims at reclaiming our traditional role in the diaspora by mobilizing our ranks and the diasporan silent majority in promoting our core values, and in service of Armenia in collaboration with organizations with similar aims and aspirations.

Time is flying and we are losing precious time and failing in our mission. This is our battle cry inviting all to join us in order to rejuvenate and revitalize our Party. Let us break together this vicious cycle we have been trapped in and collectively move ahead to a virtuous one.

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY & REFORM

Edmond Azadian

Dr. Kevork Erzenatzian

Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian

Ardavazt Melkisetian

Hagop Vartivarian

Coordinator/ Vartan Nazirian

February 16th, 2016

ter placed to identify rebels willing and capable of cutting a deal with Assad.

(This analysis originally appeared in the Irish Times on February 23.)

Stapanian Hopes to Change Minds with Historical Novel on Genocide

By Mike Jeknavorian

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – The novel is called *They Fell*, and the title is appropriate. Drawing on Charles Aznavour's *Ils Sont Tombés*, the author uses graphic imagery to convey the historically based horrors and is stretched over 35 character-experiences in the midst of the Armenian Genocide.

Author Stephen Stapanian of Tampa sets the story in the dying days of the Ottoman Empire during World War I. One is reminded that a story can allow a direct communion with another era, and ultimately, with the era's deceased.

In a response to questions submitted via email from FLArmenians.com, Stapanian says that the novel "represents a gift to the Armenian people globally, and to send a message to all of those who suffered . . . that they were not alone as victims of genocide."

Stapanian says that he was originally inspired to write the novel after watching genocide-themed TV miniseries in the 1980s, such as "Roots," "Holocaust" and "Shogun." Over time Stapanian worked on his approach and finally published *They Fell* on August 1, 2015.

The novel uses a love-story conceit, along with excerpts of song lyrics and poems, to draw the reading into the larger context of Ottoman Armenian life in 1915. It was written to evoke a strong emotional response about the genocide, and, fundamentally, to elicit change, he says.

But what change could he bring? The Armenian Genocide is officially recognized by over 20 nations, such as Canada, France, Russia, Germany, Austria, Argentina, the Vatican, and others. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire's successor, Turkey, refuses to accept its own history and continues a decades-long campaign of genocide denial.

Historians mark the beginning of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 1915, when the Ottoman Turkish government rounded up more than 200 Armenian

academics, doctors, businessmen, and religious and community leaders in Constantinople.

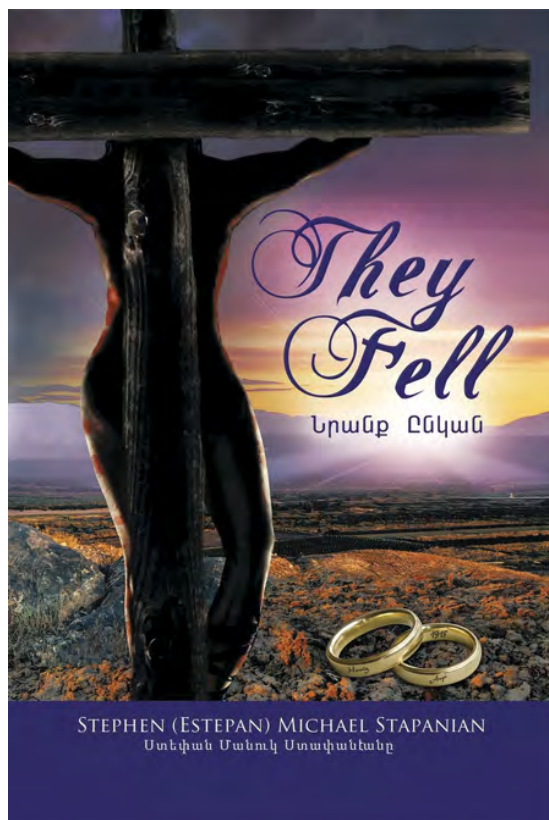
The lack of accountability or prosecution of the perpetrators makes recollection of the genocide sting that much more, for many, as it does Stapanian.

The majority of published works about the Armenian Genocide have been memoirs or historical texts, whereas *They Fell* is a work of fiction based on a historical event.

But given that the novel is predicated on something as gruesome as genocide, should the public only expect to experience a limited amount of entertainment from it?

Hopefully, readers will truly connect with the characters, and in so doing learn something from those who fell and perished in one of man's darkest chapters, Stapanian said.

(Mike Jeknavorian is *FLArmenians Lifestyle* Contributor.)



German Bundestag Holding Debate On Armenian Genocide

BUNDESTAG, from page 1

The German Bundestag held heated debate on the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2015, a day after German President Joachim Gauck used the word "genocide" to describe the events of 1915.

While the Greens and the Left Party supported the term "genocide," the federal government and the coalition parties had certain reservations. A single joint resolution is still being worked out. It's unclear whether the final text will include the word "genocide" or not. It's

also hard to predict when the Bundestag will hold a final voting on the bill.

Ozdemir hopes the ruling coalition and the opposition will manage to give a common assessment to the Armenian Genocide. "This would be an important message on the 100th anniversary of the Genocide. First, it's necessary to call it 'genocide,' second, it's necessary to accept the German share of guilt. Third, we should do our utmost to reach the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border," he said.

Reception Held in Honor of NY Tekeyan Benefactors

RECEPTION, from page 1

Also attending the reception was the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations Zohrab Mnatsakanyan.

All these guests wholeheartedly supported the extensive, innovative and, consequently, expensive activities TCA organized in 2015.

In his remarks, host Hagop Vartivarian dwelled in particular on the philanthropy of the Nazarians. He recalled their ties to the *Armenian*

Mirror-Spectator in Boston, *Azg* in Yerevan, and, in general, with the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL). When Artemis Nazarian's birthday was noted, she pointed out that having grown up with the ADL ideology through her uncle Charlie Sulhian, she continues her service to her people in the same spirit.

The ambassador provided information on United Nations programs and answered questions from the guests.